

A Nuclear Option  
original screenplay by Philip Sedgwick

WGAw # 1451210

Philip Sedgwick  
1041 W Roller Coaster Rd  
Tucson AZ 85704  
520.888.1920  
480.213.7958 (mobile)  
philip@philipcsedgwick.com  
www.philipcsedgwick.com

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FADE IN:

**BLACK SCREEN**

As we hear O.S. campaign comments from MCCAIN, PALIN and FOX COMMENTATORS about the "scam" of Global Warming, a LEGEND READS:

LEGEND

The following story never happened.  
Or that's what we have to say because  
of "need to know" classifications.  
It could have happened. It might  
have happened... but it didn't... or  
so we must lead you to believe. But  
what if it did?

BLACK SCREEN. A beat...

LEGEND (CONT'D)

...of course, this story never  
happened.

**EXT. FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING**

LEGEND READS: NOVEMBER 4, 2008, FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA

From an AERIAL POV we pass over the downtown area of the town, settling in on a remote neighborhood toward the mountains where city lights yield to darkness on the cusp of nature undisturbed.

We focus in on a house at the edge of the last hint of neighborhood - one of the last lights leading to the black of night.

FOX COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

(on TV)

Needless to say, the incumbent party  
is reeling from the losses... I am...  
well... I am speechless... I have  
serious concerns about the future of  
this country...

**INT. TELEVISION ROOM - NIGHT**

A large LCD TV hanging on a wall carries the election coverage of the 2008 United States Presidential Election on FOX.

We see the back of a MAN sitting on a couch, engrossed in the returns.

FOX COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

The announcement should come at the top of the hour. Moments from now. We're just waiting for the call from Fox election central... seconds away. Exit polling results from California and Oregon and Washington are not good for McCain and Palin... coming to the top of the hour. This should be it...

A PHONE RINGS. Annoyed, the MAN answers.

JAMES

James Hurst.

We look directly into the man's eyes. Though late 40's, and in decent shape, he looks older in this moment, stress paling his looks. He blinks repeatedly, frowning back a hint of tears. He chugs a gulp of wine from a large wine glass.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Yeah, I'm watching. Can't believe this shit. Who's in charge of buying the votes, anyway?

FOX COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

The news we've been expecting... Fox News projects Barack Obama as the 44th President of the United States.

James stares at the TV, phone barely dangling in his hand.

JAMES

Shit! Yeah, I'm still with you. What were you saying? Really?

We see a WOMAN pass behind him, PHOEBE TOWNS. James leans his head back, checking out Phoebe as he listens on the phone. She's attractive in an organic kind of way, early 40's with crystal clear eyes that suggest crisp intelligence. She offers a conciliatory smile, pats James' shoulder and points to his wine glass. James affirmatively indicates an interest in more wine. She disappears.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Okay. Okay. I'll e-mail the PowerPoint... again.

Phoebe returns with two abundantly poured glasses of wine. She sets his down, sipping hers. She surveys him as...

JAMES (CONT'D)

Fine. Later.

He terminates the call, gratefully reaching for the glass.

PHOEBE

Thought you could use a refill.

James nods, checking out her butt as she turns to sit nearby.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

JAMES

You're not sorry. You wanted him to win.

PHOEBE

(going for peace)

I'm mean... I'm sorry it's hard for you.

Muting the TV, he goes for his wine, offering up his glass.

JAMES

To a better future?

CLINK.

PHOEBE

Well, it's good that... That you're here.

His lips tighten; eyes narrowing to slits.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

You've got a good, solid job.

JAMES

It's my old job. And I had to limp back to it, tail between my legs... like a beaten stray dog who doesn't know any better.

PHOEBE

But you're teaching. Teaching's a good thing. A noble thing...

JAMES

(cutting her off)

...as long as I stay on track with the curriculum and offer no opinions of my own. How noble is that?

PHOEBE

There's that. But at least you don't have to deal with...

JAMES

Those guys?  
(pause)  
Dirk called.

Her scrunched up mouth tells us Dirk is one of those guys.

JAMES (CONT'D)

They want me to debrief.

PHOEBE

Debrief? Why do you need to debrief?

James shrugs.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

I just wish you'd realize that you  
could stand on your head and shit  
ice cream and those guys wouldn't be  
happy.

JAMES

(sarcastic)  
Ice cream without corn syrup, of  
course.

PHOEBE

Yeah. Funny. You eat that shit and  
watch what happens.

JAMES

You don't understand the big picture.  
It's a lot more complicated than you  
evidently realize.

PHOEBE

Oh, I understand the big picture.  
Those guys who claim to get the big  
picture only see a snapshot. They  
have no clue that world turns,  
struggling to evolve, like a moving  
picture not in frozen slices of time  
conveniently spun and framed to suit  
political agendas.

James leans back from the onslaught.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

They have no vision. No sense of  
the future. No respect for heritage.  
In this past eight years, the earth  
and everything on it has been set  
back three hundred years. They tried  
to kill the planet... and for what?  
(MORE)

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

Money. Greed. Before you know it,  
there won't be any bears for you to  
look at in the backyard.

JAMES

I don't look at the bears in the  
backyard.

PHOEBE

Maybe you should. You're a geologist.  
How can you not love the Earth and  
everything on it?

He guzzles his wine, handing her the empty glass with a head  
nod. She shakes her head, disappearing for just a moment...

PHOEBE (O.S.)

(for her benefit)

Who was your slave last week?

She returns, wearing a put on smile and carrying a full glass  
for both of them. She hands James his glass and takes a big  
swallow of her own, surveying him.

Those tight lips again. He turns away, restoring sound to  
the election coverage and leans closer to the TV pretending  
to watch, shutting her out.

PHOEBE

I have to leave early in the morning.  
Got meetings.

No response. Phoebe shrugs, SIGHS and heads out, tossing  
over her shoulder.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

I'll be in there.

**INT. JAMES' BEDROOM - LATER**

The clock on the nightstand reads 3:23 A.M. James enters  
noisily BUMPING about, not concerned with Phoebe's sleep.

He drunkenly fumbles and bumbles his way into bed. Finally,  
he manages to get under the covers. Lying flat on his back,  
he rolls to one side potently FARTING, then dropping back  
flat.

JAMES

Whoa!

He places his hand on the headboard, trying to halt the world  
from spinning.

INT. JAMES' BEDROOM - MORNING

Light pours in between a crack in the window shades. James, lies on his side, arm over his head, drooling on the pillow. More GAS, which wakes him with a start.

He looks around, disoriented, grappling with reality and a nasty damn hangover. He tenderly touches his head and checks the less than delightful taste in his mouth. He manages to sit up, looking around. He reaches for the TV remote.

JAMES

Oooh!

He CLICKS on a TV, which obediently comes to life, on Fox, of course. A CUTE, BLONDE PERKY COMMENTATOR runs on and on.

FOX COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

(on TV)

America wakes up to a historic reality today. With two hundred thirty two years of history behind us, we have the first African-American President.

JAMES

(MOANING)

Fuck!

FOX COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

One of his first efforts will be no doubt the environment and reversing some of the progressive changes instituted during the past eight years of the present administration.

Wagging the remote at the screen, James manages to get his feet on the deck.

JAMES

That was a terrible fucking sentence. You think we don't know that, you bimbo butt?

FOX COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

In lighter news...

He makes his way to a robe, dangling on a nearby chair, glaring at the TV over his shoulder, he hits MUTE on the remote in a behind the back move and dons the robe.

A NOISE O.S. James freezes, listening. A beat. He crosses to the bedroom window, peeking out.

JAMES

Bears?

He rubs his hung over head, silently BURPING into his hand, heading out of the bedroom...

JAMES (CONT'D)  
If there's a God, she left me some coffee.

**INT. JAMES' KITCHEN - LATER**

There is a God. James pours a cup of coffee. He turns to savor the first sip, then...

**A GUN**

Roughly jabs into his temple.

JAMES  
What the fuck?

The gun pokes his head again, then makes a wagging motion. "Move!"

**INT. JAMES' LIVING ROOM - SAME**

A MAN sits in the living room, holding coffee in a paper cup. He wears a crisp, expensive suit. This is ALVIN YORK, 36, a brainy, rising star in the current administration. He makes a motion to...

The MAN WITH THE GUN, a GOVERNMENT GOON, who now comes into view. He wears a cheap, bland suit and an angry look that aches to smash heads. The goon shoves James, who struggles to keep the coffee in his cup.

Between Alvin and the goon and their ominous governmental looks, we get a distinct sense these are the kind of dudes who do not take no for an answer.

ALVIN YORK  
(to the goon)  
Jesus. What? Your testosterone shot finally kicking in?

Alvin York motions for James to take a facing seat. Without getting up, he extends a hand.

ALVIN YORK (CONT'D)  
Morning, James. Alvin York. Pack your bags. We have a plane ready.

James dumbly shakes his hand. He blinks, working to clear his head and follows the directive to be seated.

JAMES  
Who do you work for?



ALVIN YORK  
 (staring him down)  
 Well, when you get down to it, we  
 all work for the same people...

Alvin flashes a toothy, political smile.

ALVIN YORK (CONT'D)  
 ...don't we?

JAMES  
 Why didn't you guys just get me a  
 ticket? Flying like this... special  
 airplanes and all... isn't very  
 green, is it?

Alvin wags a finger at him, admonishing in advance.

ALVIN YORK  
 Green's not the point...  
 (that smile again)  
 Is it?

JAMES  
 (re: the other guy)  
 A goon with a gun? You need to bring  
me in at gunpoint? What's wrong  
 with you people?

ALVIN YORK  
 His calendar was clear this morning.

Alvin surveys James, waiting for some sort of response that  
 never comes.

ALVIN YORK (CONT'D)  
 You know... some question your  
 loyalty.  
 (deliberate pause)  
 Given the people you hang out with.

Deep furrows appear in James' forehead. He's pissed, but  
 grits his jaw to temper his response.

JAMES  
 Phoebe has nothing to do with this.

ALVIN YORK  
 So say you. Seems Honcho isn't very  
 pleased with you.

James shrugs, "Who's Honcho?"

ALVIN YORK (CONT'D)

You know. Honcho. Seems he believes that your recently intensified affiliation with one Miss Phoebe Towns... especially with her increasingly visible and pesky environmental campaigns... might have something to do with the fact that you carelessly and evidently intentionally fudged the data to disprove Global Warming that the Honcho asked you to prepare. And I might add, a task for which you were paid handsomely.

James nods. "Oh, that Honcho." He adds a GULP of concern to his reaction. Covering, he goes for a sip of coffee.

ALVIN YORK (CONT'D)

Seems your "pull it out of your ass" methods made a mockery of the contention he wanted to advance.

SILENCE.

ALVIN YORK (CONT'D)

So he wonders... why would you do that?

James checks out the goon; his weapon is still drawn. James squints and head tosses to the goon for Alvin's benefit. Alvin nods, put it away, which the goon does, but with a bit of an "aw shucks" look. Slightly relieved, James makes a motion that he needs more coffee. Alvin nods an okay and James rises, crossing to the kitchen.

ALVIN YORK (CONT'D)

So you understand the need for our sensitivity in our bringing you to DC?

JAMES (O.S.)

Sensitivity, yes. Strong arm tactics, no. I'm a geologist for fuck's sake. Not a goddamn Jihadist.

James returns, sipping on his fresh cup. He sinks back into his seat.

ALVIN YORK

The meeting you're getting ready to have isn't going to happen. You never have and never will meet Honcho... even if you do... and especially if you do.

JAMES

Thus the phone call last night... a record of distraction.

ALVIN YORK

Thus.  
(pause)  
Clear?

Resigned to the plan, James affirms with another nod.

ALVIN YORK (CONT'D)

You should also know that it is the Honcho's expressed desire that no one... and I mean no one... will interfere with or sabotage anything regarding or relating to any of his high priority agendas...

Alvin's eyes dart to the goon for effect.

ALVIN YORK (CONT'D)

And in the moment, he is specifically concerned with matters environmental and those matters of energy development potential.

James frowns, digesting the sentence. He throws a defiant stare at Alvin. The stare is returned, then Alvin plucks a PSP from his suit coat pocket and commences a game of baseball, and without looking up...

ALVIN YORK (CONT'D)

Go pack. No calls. No Internet.  
Get your shit together.

Obediently, James stands just as...

A DEEP LOUD RUMBLE SHAKES the room.

Alvin continues his game unconcerned, but the goon jumps, bracing, looking around for the cause. His hand goes inside his jacket, ready to draw his heat.

JAMES

Just a tremor. Hasn't been one of those in a long damn time... years, in fact. You guys bring rumbling and tumbling and bumbling everywhere you go, do you?

The goon recovers tough guy mode. He gives James a look meaning, "get your ass in gear." James crosses to the kitchen for one more cup and then crosses O.S. to pack, offering a coffee salute to the frowning goon.

**EXT. WASHINGTON AIRPORT - EXECUTIVE TERMINAL - LATE  
AFTERNOON**

James steps off the plane. The goon carries his suitcases to a gate near an office, setting them down. Without a word, he's gone. James looks back at the jet... sealed shut.

James looks around for any sign of a ride. Nothing. A HEAVY SIGH. He pulls a cell phone out of an overcoat pocket, dialing and waiting. Dropped call. Frustrated, he dials again.

A CAR HORN HONKS repeatedly. James ignores it, going for attempt three on his call. More HONKING.

Directly in front of James, a MAN jumps out of a low end Lexus, waving and yelling at James. This would be DIRK GREENWAY, late 30's, an unpleasant, slimy political brown noser. Though neatly dressed, his tightly cropped hair and attitude make him seem older than the thirty he is. His accent is thick, mid-Texas.

DIRK

James! James!

James finally notices, jamming the phone back into his pocket with notable agitation.

JAMES

Lovely. Dirk.

He grabs his bags, tosses them back seat and climbs in.

**INT. DIRK'S CAR - CONTINUOUS**

A quick handshake occurs between James and Dirk with a major lack of eye contact. James fusses with his briefcase, working to keep it close, but off his lap.

JAMES

No goons?

DIRK

Be nice.

JAMES

Didn't mean you. I'm just surprised to see you... and only you.

DIRK

Yeah well, all of sudden it's assholes and elbows around here. Nobody knows what the fuck is going on.

JAMES

There's a surprise.

DIRK

Anyway, they know they can find you,  
as much as you use your phone.  
There's more agents out on the streets  
these days than a dog has fleas in  
Odessa on a hot summer afternoon  
when you're out of lemonade.

Dirk offers a quick glance as he impatiently fights his way through traffic. A HONK and hand motion directly other drivers here and there, which allows him to check his watch and shake his head in disgust.

DIRK (CONT'D)

Anyway, given the financial crisis...

JAMES

There's that.

An awkward silence as Dirk manages to clear traffic. James notices the route taken.

JAMES (CONT'D)

So we headed to the White House?

Dirk SIGHS, not looking forward to his messenger role.

DIRK

Well... uh... no.

JAMES

You mind telling me where we're  
headed?

Dirk bites at the air, not wanting to answer. Saved by...

James' MOBILE RINGS. He glances at caller ID. A hint of a smile.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Hey... Just landed in DC.

He gets a pissed off glare from Dirk. Shouldn't have gone there. Noticing...

JAMES (CONT'D)

Listen, I can't talk now.

His smile fades to a frown as he takes in the conversation.

JAMES (CONT'D)

For how long?

More listening. A deeper frown. James blows out the side of his mouth, pissed off building.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You know what? That's awfully inconsiderate.

Dirk makes a big deal of CLEARING HIS THROAT, then strains to be loud and under his breath at the same time.

DIRK

Hello? GPS. We're almost there. Get off the fucking phone.

JAMES

I really gotta go.

He shuts off his phone and settles deeper into his overcoat, shivering and stewing over the recent call.

HONKING crazily, Dirk whips around a car, swerving so severely James drops the phone.

DIRK

Asshole!

He reaches to the floorboard just as Dirk hits a pothole. James' head bangs on the dashboard.

JAMES

OW!

**EXT. NONDESCRIPT OFFICE BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER**

Out the window of the car we see a nondescript office building, built in post WW II style. There are no signs. Nothing. It's just grey and uninviting, perfect for all sorts of clandestine meetings and unsavory conversations.

JAMES

Not quite the White House.

DIRK

Nope. That's why it's perfect. Anyway, the big guy's busy.

JAMES

Does he know you call him the big guy?

Dirk shakes his head no. Not a chance.

**INT. OFFICE BUILDING CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS**

At the end of a bland corridor, Dirk opens a door to a conference room for James to enter into...

**INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

As James enters, he struggles to adjust to the lousy lighting, nervously tugging on his jacket.

A U-shaped table layout with a DOZEN SEATED ATTENDEES, none of them can be clearly made out. One individual seems to be in definite control. Everyone calls him "HONCHO," and throughout the film we never get a clear look at his face.

A PowerPoint display presentation is up and projected, ready for action. An AERIAL VIEW OF LAND NEAR THE GRAND CANYON.

HONCHO

Mr. Hurst. Glad you could join us.

JAMES

Least I could do.

(under his breath)

Thanks for the lead leaf invitation.

DIRK

Let me catch you up.

Dirk smartly heads to the front of the room, taking over the presentation, backing up the Power Point display. We see a slides of: A WIND FARM, A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, OFF SHORE DRILLING RIGS, DAMS ON THE TVA, HOOVER DAM and again GRAND CANYON AERIAL VIEW.

DIRK (CONT'D)

So here's the deal. In these last days we're going on fast track to secure rules and regs the President wants in place before HE...

(disdain for Obama)

...gets his hands on the reigns.

Oh, sorry. Have a seat.

JAMES

(takes his seat)

Of course.

DIRK

Using the economic crisis as a ruse to secure whatever energy sources we want, we're going to look as if we're going alternative in developing energy sources. But brilliantly...

HONCHO

(interrupting)

...we're working behind the scenes to set systems in play to put alternative energy into futures speculation just like oil. Hey, if the energy is green and we're getting our green out of it, we don't give a fuck what it is. You know?

JAMES

Sure. Makes perfect sense.

Dirk flips the slides forward back to the shot near Grand Canyon.

DIRK

Here's where you come in.

(points to the screen)

We're working to get clearance to mine Uranium here... out in your neck of the woods. As you can see, it's only a couple miles from the big ditch. Naturally, the tree huggers are going to go ape shit if they find out. Your job is if they find out, you have to calm the masses... indirectly, of course, by providing us with data to dissuade hysteria.

JAMES

And they'd be upset because?

DIRK

Isn't it obvious?

HONCHO

He's probably hung over.

JAMES

Aren't you? The election should have driven all of you to drink.

Honcho SNAPS his fingers twice. "Enough!"

DIRK

Anyway, the Colorado River runs through the canyon. They'll claim we'll contaminate the river and ruin the drinking water for Vegas, Phoenix and LA. Course LA gets water from up north, as well. From the Sierras... a point to be made with that.



JAMES

And we don't care about Vegas or Phoenix?

James digs in his satchel to pull out a pad. He reaches in his jacket for a pen...

DIRK

Don't write any of this down.

James throws a frown across the room. Honcho leans closer, scowling, pointing a stubby, gnarly finger at James. He looks a lot like Cheney, or Rove. Though we can't be sure of his identity, his rough, raspy voice sounds familiar.

HONCHO

And if you fuck this one up, I'll personally climb up your ass and set up camp. I promise I'll pitch a tent so big...

DIRK

So, start thinking of assurances to calm contingencies.

JAMES

Contingencies?

DIRK

Yeah, like what if there was a landslide? Or an earthquake?

James frowns, feigning doubt. Bad acting.

JAMES

An earthquake in Arizona?

ANONYMOUS MEETING MEMBER (O.S.)

(scary voice from the dark)

1887, 1906, 1910... caused construction crews to bail... 1912, 1935, 1950, 1958... something you should already know.

JAMES

Jesus! What no volcanoes?

HONCHO

Enough! If you must fudge facts, at least give them some appearance of credibility. Your Global Warming fiasco looked like you did the work when you were hammered out of your mind.

James points back with his pen, on the edge of defiance. He thinks better of it.

HONCHO (CONT'D)  
Maybe it's your green girlfriend.  
She voted blue didn't she?

JAMES  
Made my face red at the polling place.

HONCHO  
You're not funny. In fact, I'm  
thinking you're a fucking idiot.

Honcho inserts a long pause to create awkwardness. It's successful. James flushes, looking away from Honcho, then dipping his head submissively.

HONCHO (CONT'D)  
Can you do this or not?

DIRK  
We need total secrecy on this.

HONCHO  
And total competence.

JAMES  
So if you think I'm such a fuck up,  
why do you even want me?

Dirk comes over, leaning down in James' face. His veins bulge, his face reddens. He gives a quick glance Honcho's way, then...

DIRK  
I'll tell you why. Because you're  
perfect. You have the cover of a  
teaching job... you have no family.  
What was it... parents killed in a  
landslide when you were seven, leaving  
you emotionally guarded and aloof?

JAMES  
And presently I don't belong to any  
bowling leagues.

Dirk grabs his jacket, intensifying his assault, going tough guy. He looks back at Honcho, then gets in James' face.

DIRK  
Damn you!

JAMES  
Are you acting or are you really  
pissed off at me?

Dirk drops his grip, making a little circle before coming back around, pointing directly into James' face.

DIRK  
You'd be so easy to dispose off.  
(to the others)  
Except for his bleeding heart, tree  
hugging girlfriend.

HONCHO (O.S.)  
Well... there's no "situation" we  
can't handle.

Pissed but clearly getting the threat, James buttons up. His jaw tightens.

DIRK  
Do you understand?

James nods, the seriousness bringing a GULP to his throat.

Honcho shakes his head in disgust. He slides back from the table into the darkness, making his way to a special door. Honcho opens the door. The light of the corridor comes in. Honcho's body is surrounded by the bright light... almost a supernatural aura of power and an aura that conceals his identity. One final emphatic pointing of that gnarly finger.

HONCHO  
No fuck ups.

The door closes and we're back in muted darkness. As James gathers his junk, he fires a scowl into the darkness where Honcho was last seen.

**EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS**

James steps out, following Dirk. As the door closes behind him, he looks at Dirk, who picks at his fingernails. James leans up against the wall, exhaling a SIGH.

DIRK  
Cheer up. I'm taking you to a party  
tonight.

JAMES  
That's just fucked up.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Inside a darkened hotel room, we HEAR a KEY go into a LOCK. The door opens and light pours in.

James' figure enters, the door closing behind him. He drops bags, fumbles in the dark and finally a light CLICKS on. He peels off his overcoat, tossing it to a chair.

He surveys the room. He tosses his bags on the bed, fetches a remote and CLICKS ON the TV.

Straightaway, there's T. Boone Pickens making his pitch for alternative energy. James shakes his head, flipping to the next channel. MSNBC. Rachel Maddow.

RACHEL MADDOW

Since they won't go away soon enough,  
we've started the Lame Duck Watch.  
Tonight, the truth about off shore  
drilling and Palin's pipeline to no  
where.

James flips to the next channel. CNN.

JAMES

Fuck you. Deep water drilling's  
safe and you know it.

He mutes the TV. We see images of a HUGE ICEBERG adrift at sea. KHYRON reads: NEW YORK BY NEW YEAR?

He crosses to check out the mini-bar. Rubbing his chin, he assesses shave status while he surveys the booze. A quick watch check. He grabs two bottles of red wine and crosses to the bed.

James settles back on the bed, pushing his luggage out of the way and rummaging for his cell phone in the satchel. No luck. MOANING he gets up, rubbing his head, trying to remember. Ah! He grabs his overcoat and retrieves his phone from a pocket.

Back to the bed, he settles in, checking text messages and voice mail. From his frown we'd guess he's not seeing what he's looking for. He opens one of the bottles of wine, guzzles it then unscrews the other one.

Waiting for the wine to hit, he closes his eyes, drawing in a couple of breaths. The mobile RINGS, startling him.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Shit!

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)  
 (checks caller ID)  
 Hey. I was just about to call you.  
 (listens)  
 No, nothing worth talking about.

**INT. SOMEWHERE IN FLAGSTAFF - NIGHT**

We can't see Phoebe's location at first, other than she's outside.

PHOEBE  
 I'm really sorry. I didn't mean this to be a surprise. I know we had talked about me going on the Antarctic trip in January, but the *Aurora Explorer* had a cancellation... so I jumped at it. And there's the iceberg... chances like this don't come along every day.

Phoebe looks about as if justifications hang on trees. The rapid breaths we see in the cold air, indicate her angst and eagerness to end this call.

We pull back to see we are in...

**EXT. JAMES' DRIVEWAY - FLAGSTAFF**

A BLACK RANGE ROVER with heavily tinted windows sits tucked away at a turn around area at the end of a driveway.

A WHITE PRIUS parked behind the SUV serves as support for Phoebe.

PHOEBE  
 December... the first or so. We can talk about it later. There's nothing we can resolve now.

Phoebe pulls herself off the car. She quietly opens the door of the Prius, pulling out a large envelope and juggling stuff. She crosses to James' SUV.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)  
 I know that changes Thanksgiving.

She uses a set of keys to open the SUV... lots of keys, car keys, house key, more. Then, she opens the white envelope, dropping the keys into it. As she maneuvers with the envelope, we see words hurriedly written with a Sharpie: I'M SORRY. P.

She seals the envelope and places it inside the SUV.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

It's just one of those things that happened.

She activates the lock of the SUV from the inside and quietly closes the door.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

I gotta go, too.

End call. She looks up into the sky, wiping away a tear.

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

Frustrated, James folds his arms, holding the phone in place with his chin. A SIGH. Finally, he terminates the call on his end.

Immediately, the mobile RINGS.

JAMES

What? Oh, hi Dirk...

His eyes widen. He goes to the mini bar, retrieving another wine.

JAMES (CONT'D)

How'd you know about her trip? I think she leaves tomorrow... Yeah, that sounds right. Okay. Okay... OKAY. I'm on it. I know. I understand. Adios. Sayonara.

He hangs up.

JAMES (CONT'D)

They think I'm stupid.

He slugs on the wine.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Or always drunk.

Immediately his PHONE RINGS again.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(annoyed)

James Hurst... Senator Douglas, hello sir. Thank you, but I think I'm a bit weary for a party... Yes sir. You insist. Of course. Yes. Thank you. I know where that is. Thank you.

End call.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Praise be. Praise be, my ass.

Quickly, he dials, spewing out a message.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Dirk. Change of plans. Senator Douglas is having a thing. I'll be doing that tonight. So no need to pick me up. Thanks anyway. Later.

End call.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Asshole.

**EXT. WASHINGTON STREET - THE RESTORATION HOUSE -NIGHT**

A CAB pulls up in front of a 19th Century brick building, painted a most curious shade of yellow.

James gets out, handing what appears to be too much money into the cab.

JAMES  
Keep it.

He turns, adjusting his overcoat and checking out the building. Inviting light comes from within and PARTY GOERS can be seen through the window, evidently enjoying the gala.

James checks his breath for the smell of booze. He puts a breath freshener strip in his mouth and heads up the steps.

Across the street, a LONE FIGURE in dark clothes lights a cigarette once James turns away, obviously watching his every move.

**INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS**

James is greeted by CLASSICAL MUSIC and a BLACK VALET WEARING A TUX. The valet helps James out of his overcoat, then gracefully gestures to an adjacent room.

**INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

James enters, looking for a familiar face. He sees Dirk. Quickly, he turns away. Spotting a bar he crosses to it, ordering from a BLACK BARTENDER.

JAMES  
Merlot please. Something from Napa if you will.

The bartender nods and James is approached by a NEATLY GROOMED MAN (40's), in a blue suit, white shirt and a conservative uniform style yellow tie. This would be JEFF STRONG, an expert networker, broad smiler, hand shaker and...

JEFF STRONG

Good evening, Mr. Hurst. I'm Jeff Strong, director of the Restoration House. The only truly save haven and gathering place for God-loving conservative politicians inside the Beltway. Welcome to our festivities.

JAMES

James Hurst. I'm surprised you're even having festivities, given the election and all.

He gets an annoyed, tight-lipped reaction from his host. With a head toss, James goes for the save.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Thank you for the gracious invite...

JEFF STRONG

Oh that was from...

Jeff scans the room, looking to point out someone.

JEFF STRONG (CONT'D)

...and speak of the devil.

The cocky and bold SENATOR BARTON DOUGLAS, 58, sporting a tailored suit that makes his no longer svelte figure acceptable, strides directly toward them. His tie is loosened, and he's clearly in a "let the good times roll" mode. Senator Douglas extends his hand, careful not to disturb the contents of the triple scotch in his other hand. One of those huge political smiles.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Senator Barton Douglas, conservative with a conscience... from the Great State of Tennessee.

A firm, politically motivated handshake and with obligatory strong eye contact. James only now reaches for his wine. He offers a polite salud to the senator and to Jeff Strong, who notably, carries no adult libation.

JAMES

Sir. My pleasure. James Hurst.

His immediate mission complete, Jeff crosses to mingle with other PARTY GOERS in the BG.



SENATOR DOUGLAS

I hear you're quite the climate expert.

JAMES

Depends upon who you ask and when.

Douglas nudges him, moving in. He checks to see who's standing nearby.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Being two God-fearing sorts as we are, we might have a lot to discuss about the myth of Global Warming.

JAMES

I'd rather see it as a reality than a myth... and a reality we need to rectify.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Certainly you're aware of the economics of Global Warming.

JAMES

God has nothing to do with Global Warming. Or the economics behind it. It's people that cause it and you can't pray it away. Simple as that.

The Senator frowns, pulling back slightly, shocked.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

You believe in Global Warming?

James confirms with a nod as he downs his wine.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

You haven't gone green on us, have you? How powerful is that girl friend of yours?

JAMES

Jesus! Everyone is more afraid of Phoebe than they are concerned about what I know. How do you even know she exists?

The senator defensively leans back, shrugging off the question and wags an index finger of admonishment.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Language.

JAMES  
 (apologetic)  
 Sorry...  
 (then stern, affected)  
 No, I haven't gone green.

To hold the senator captive, he savors a sip of wine, winking a promise of more good stuff to come, eyes darting as he tries to recover his original point from the effects of wine.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
 By rectify I mean find a way to take  
 the issue off the table... a real  
 solution not a "hope and pray"  
 solution...

Douglas leans in, WHISPERING.

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
 And you think you have a "real"  
 solution that can do that?

James downs the rest of the wine. He motions for a refill, which comes quickly.

James nods and with another wink, goes to tug on the Senator's arm. He misses. James goes for a firmer grip, another miss. With a head toss, he leads the senator out of the main room, back into...

**INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS**

In the foyer, James looks for a secret place to talk. This time he successfully grabs the senator's arm and they duck behind a coat rack. The Valet watches with interest, going for nonchalance.

JAMES  
 I have a new plan... just came to me  
 this morning.  
 (broad gesture)  
 A boom... as if a sign from...  
 (head motion upstairs)  
 ...Him.

The senator falls into hook, line and sinker mode. James' intoxication clearly shows as his words slur.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
 I can fix Global Warming... not that  
 there is such a thing as Global  
 Warming... but if there were... was...  
 I could fix it.

The senator eagerly motions, "go on."

JAMES (CONT'D)

Well, not I can personally... I don't mean to sound omnipotent... But I have the idea that a group of "we" could do.

James eyeballs the valet, who pretends to be busy brushing a scarf and more, seems to be listening.

The senator gives the valet a paranoid glance. He tugs James' arm, leading him down the hallway. The senator checks the coasts. Seeing that the valet has moved O.S., the senator opens a small door to what looks to be a broom closet. He motions for James to enter.

**INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS**

They walk down a brick-lined tunnel lined with a cobblestone base and modest lighting. Their FOOTSTEPS ECHO in SYNCH.

James checks it out, amazed.

JAMES

Where are we?

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Under the street.

James scans for cameras.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

No worries. No surveillance and few... very few... even know this exists.

Satisfied, James finishes his wine. No bar here, so he sets his glass on the ground.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

This was part of the Underground Railroad from back in the Civil War. Kind of ironic, isn't it?

JAMES

(not getting it)  
Oh yeah. I love irony.

Douglas hand motions for James to spill the goods. James furrows his forehead, missing the cue. Douglas motions again. Now James gets it. He leans in close to the senator, lowering his voice, once again looking around like a paranoid conspirator.

JAMES (CONT'D)

If you know where we can get a couple nukes...

James waits, holding for confirmation. Douglas finally nods.

JAMES (CONT'D)

We put them under carefully selected, unstable volcanoes.

He uses his hands to simulate a large explosion and a volcanic eruption, and SPUTTERING SALIVA RICH RUMBLES.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Before you know it, we have a cloud of ash in the air. Soon to blanket the Earth, it filters out the sun's naturally warming rays and poof, we drop the temperature on the planet. No more Global Warming.

The senator stares at him, assessing the validity of the claim and if he's being put on.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

You shitting me?

James slugs the senator's arm, then drunkenly salutes.

JAMES

I shit you not, senator sir.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

What about disruption to air travel?

JAMES

We'll live with it. I hear tell ships are gaining in popularity as a mode of travel. Think of how this could benefit Orbitz and Travelocity.

James waves a finger in the air, like checking the wind. He's very tipsy.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Buy travel stock, I say. Fuck the economic downturn. Buy green energy, too, while you're at it. You never know who's behind it. You know? Might be a gold mine.

Douglas leads him onward, locking his arm in James'.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Come on. I have a present for you.

Down the underground passage to a small door. No checking to see if things are clear this time, Douglas opens the door and motions James inside.

**EXT. POLARIS RECEPTION ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

From a closet like door, James enters a reception room, followed by Douglas.

A vacant secretary desk sits under a logo with a compass and a north star boldly above the Big Dipper, bearing the words: POLARIS GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEMS. The rest of the greeting room is filled with two plush leather couches and a perfectly polished glass coffee table with nothing on it except a beautiful bowl filled with shiny red apples.

An open door reveals beautifully carpeted hallway heading away from the reception area. Lovely environmentally responsible lighting lines it, leading past many rooms with many shut doors.

James checks it out.

JAMES

Wow! No magazines? These guys must be right on it with their business.

James points at the spotless glass table.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Whoa! Look at that. Don't leave your fingerprints! Where are we?

The senator lifts his chin, a pleased as punch smile. He gives the slightest head toss toward to a hallway.

From within the hallway a STUNNINGLY DRESSED WOMAN (late 40's) emerges, gracefully gliding to greet them. An air of sophistication and political astuteness, she is the poster child of D.C. charm. She renders the senator with the slightest nod, proceeding directly to James with a hand extended. This would be...

MARY ANN

Good evening, Mr. Hurst. Mary Ann Hall. Welcome to Polaris. How are you this evening?

JAMES

You know me? You know me, too?

The Polaris logo catches his eye. He points at it, a crooked smile, going for funny.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Well, I'm a little lost.

She nods, feigning amusement with a slight smile, "funny, haven't ever heard that before."

MARY ANN

Would you care for a beverage?

The senator nudges him, encouraging...

SENATOR DOUGLAS

They have everything... and I mean everything... not just liquid refreshments.

Senator Douglas nods, adding a smile, quite pleased with the offerings.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

Everything.

James checks the taste in his mouth.

JAMES

Maybe a ginger ale.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

(eagerly)

Is Eve in?

MARY ANN

Of course... and expecting you. She'll be with us directly.

Directly isn't long at Polaris. From down the hallway, Eve (26), emerges from one of those rooms, heading to the reception area. She is dressed in an evocative, sexy in your face, favorite fetish style. Her face is more than lovely and with demeanor that feels extra, ultra intense. She carries a silver tray upon which are perfectly placed doilies and a crystal glass of sparkling ginger ale.

Eve pauses in front of James, winking at the senator, then smiling demurely at James. A bit of what appears to be a curtsy. She allows James to take his drink, then placing the tray on the table. She crosses to Douglas, giving him a kiss on the cheek. She knots her arm in his and drags him away with the slightest tug.

As she leads Douglas down that hallway, he casts a shit-eating grin back over his shoulder.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Have fun. When you're done, they'll show you how to get back. Call me tomorrow. We'll talk more about that thing we talked about. Be blessed!

And they're gone, leaving a bewildered James with Mary Ann.

JAMES

I suspect I'm a bit more inebriated than I suspected... because I'm not getting how he can render blessings while heading down the road to adultery... and maybe hell.

MARY ANN

Is there anything at all that you'd like?

(off no reaction)

Would you like some company?

JAMES

I'm talking with you.

MARY ANN

Would you care for a companion for the evening?

James frowns, sitting back, slowly making sense of it all. He rubs his hand over the top of his head. "Ah! Got it." He smiles, going for gracious and appreciative.

JAMES

Thank you. But I have a girl friend.

Mary Ann raises her eyebrows, waiting for the more that will inevitably follow.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Sort of. I think. She's on a cruise.

MARY ANN

Tropics?

JAMES

Arctic. She's going up to look at that damned iceberg. She's kind of an environmental enthusiast... which can get to be a real pain in the ass, really. We're not exactly peas in a pod... more like...

MARY ANN

Succotash?

James frowns, missing whatever she might mean. He downs the ginger ale. Mary Ann points at his glass. He nods "no thanks."

JAMES

You should meet Phoebe. She'd like you I suspect.

Mary Ann frowns, connecting dots of her own.

MARY ANN

Phoebe Towns? The activist? The "don't shoot the wolves" girl?

JAMES

Yeah. Heard of her? She's starting to make a splash.

Mary Ann stands, directing James to his feet.

MARY ANN

Perhaps we should get you back where you're staying.

James stands quickly. Too quickly. He weaves. She offers an arm of support.

**INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT**

James wobbles down the hotel hallway. He passes the ice machine, looking in at a MAN PRETENDING TO GET ICE, who seems very interested in James' arrival.

JAMES

If you find any icebergs, knock on my door.

He staggers to his door, multiple attempts at inserting the key.

Finally, James enters his room and the door closes.

He hear STUMBLING and a CRASH O.S.

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

Fuck!

Back down the hallway, the man holding the bucket of ice, checks his watch and throws the ice bucket in a trash bin, heading out, pulling out a phone and texting as he goes.



**EXT. PIER - HALIFAX - NOVA SCOTIA - DAWN**

From the POV of what could be a interested observer, we see a taxi pull up on a pier, coming to a halt at a large ship's gangway.

Weary, Phoebe gets out, dragging a large duffel with her. She checks out the ship, a HUFF to rally her energy and she pulls out a bag of what appears to be camera gear.

Gauging by the way she struggles with her bags, they're heavy. She trudges up the gangway, passing by a banner on the ship's gangway reading: *Aurora Explorer*.

**EXT. AURORA EXPLORER - QUARTERDECK - CONTINUOUS**

Phoebe tosses her duffel on the deck, taking more care of the delicate cargo in the camera bag.

An OFFICER IN DRESS BLUES makes a quasi-salute, reaching for her camera bag. Phoebe motions she's got that one. Get the other one.

PHOEBE

Where were you when I was climbing  
those god-awful steps?

The officer gives Phoebe a thorough once and twice over. She gives him a look, "what a sailor." Taking in his silence, she shrugs and gives the officer an incredulous and indignant look. "You helping with these bags or what?"

**INT. SENATOR DOUGLAS' OFFICE - MORNING**

Senator Douglas sits in his overstuffed chair, making a pyramid with his fingers, waiting, thinking and nefariously grinning as he stares out the window. His office is what you'd expect. Pictures of the family and political photo ops, a cross and religious pictures decorate the walls and credenza. Notably among the religious pictures, a copy of the vintage, "Jesus on the Mountain" painting. A Bible sits strategically placed on his desk.

His phone RINGS.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Yes? Send them in.

The door to his office opens. His SECRETARY, also exactly as you'd expect, 29, cute, perky, professional, motions for the guests to enter.

In stride THREE MEN in ultra-expensive suits. They are all brick shit house kind of guys, bulging under those suits... chiseled, emotionless, machine-like.

One, clearly the leader, carries a briefcase sporting a logo of a BLACK COUGAR'S PAW WITH A WHITE SKULL AND CROSS BONES IN IT, SURROUNDED ON BOTH SIDES BY BLOOD RED LAUREL-SHAPED LIGHTNING BOLTS, very reminiscent of the BLACKWATER emblem. No doubt these guys are covert government mercenaries.

Douglas makes a gracious gesture for the men to sit and be comfortable. The leader and one other mercenary sit; one remains standing as if guarding the conversation. The leader leans forward and places his hand on *The Bible*, looking skyward for a moment of reflection.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

Praise be.

MERCENARY LEADER

Praise be.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Gentleman. I am in need of a few easy to use nuclear devices.

The two sitting mercenaries trade looks. There's caution, suspicion, guarded reserve.

MERCENARY LEADER

With all due respect, senator, why would you need nukes?

The Senator shakes his head, amused with himself and the plan. He makes that finger pyramid thing again, going for an air of superiority. He wags his head side to side, getting expressionless stares in return, off which...

SENATOR DOUGLAS

It seems I have a plan to prevent Global Warming... or at least to arrest its progress. Of course, there is no Global Warming so this is likely just a prophylactic measure...

Douglas SNICKERS at his reference. The mercenary leader fights an eye roll.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

I am assuming such devices are not inexpensive?

The leader nods, confirming the speculation.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

And hard to get?

Emphatically, the mercenary leader shakes his head no.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

I need five. At least five.

The leader looks at his seated companion. Raised eyebrows. The mercenary leader looks back over his shoulder, nodding to the standing mercenary, who pulls out a smart phone and bangs away on it. Concern crosses the senator's face.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

Is that thing secure?

The leader gives him the look, "Are you serious??" The texting mercenary taps the leader on the shoulder. He doesn't look back.

MERCENARY LEADER

What are you planning to do? Blow up the heathens?

SENATOR DOUGLAS

That's your job, isn't it? Aren't you in charge of killing infidels?

Douglas receives a stabbing frown in return. He CLEARS his throat, then...

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

No. Nothing like that. See we're going to detonate devices under unstable volcanoes, causing them to bellow smoke and ash and thus...

Makes a lovely wah-lah gesture...

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

Reducing the temperature of Earth and poof, Global Warming is gone, and corporations can go on as they have for... well, you know...

MERCENARY LEADER

Which mountains?

The stumped look on Douglas' face suggests he's pulling the answer out of his ass. Never thought this far through.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Um... West Coast... um... there's one always going in Hawaii, so that would be good.

MERCENARY LEADER

Do you mean Kileaua? Moana Kea? Moana Loa?

The senator shrugs, making a bigger gesture. Do bigger.

MERCENARY LEADER (CONT'D)

None of my concern, but shouldn't  
you think this thing through?

MERCENARY 2

Mexico confirms... I say we do that  
mountain in California... Shasta...  
up there in woo-woo California.  
Wipe out all those new age hippie  
fucks and their ugly fucking sandals.

The mercenary leader SNAPS his fingers, silencing the  
comments. The senator frowns, mentally retracing his original  
agenda.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

That mean you can't do it?

MERCENARY LEADER

No sir. We can.

SILENCE. Stares and glares.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

So do it.

More silence and stillness fills the thick, dead air.  
Mercifully, the lead mercenary stands. A head nod to leave  
and the mercenaries swiftly exit.

**INT. CORRIDOR - SENATE OFFICE BUILDING - A MOMENT LATER**

The mercenaries noisily head down the hallway, in step.  
Without so much as a look sideways or at each other.

MERCENARY 2

What an asshole.

MERCENARY LEADER

Call Honcho.

The texting mercenary gets on his phone.

**INT. SENATOR DOUGLAS' OFFICE - MORNING**

Senator Douglas' secretary KNOCKS on the open door. Douglas  
motions her in.

SECRETARY

Just a reminder... you have the dinner  
with the food additives lobby  
tonight...

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
Will they have food?

SECRETARY  
(eyeroll)  
You have to go.  
(singsong)  
Contributors.

The Senator takes on the tone of a little kid not wanting to take a bath.

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
I know. I'll go.

SECRETARY  
Don't take any interns. They can't help themselves... they just have to Twitter and post on Facebook.

She looks back to the reception area, a WOMAN stands awaiting a proper entry.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)  
Cindy Grasser is here.

Douglas shakes his head. No idea.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)  
She's a lobbyist for the deep water drilling people.

Ah, that Cindy Grasser. He makes a motion to let her pass.

The secretary exits, giving the lobbyist a head toss. As CINDY GRASSER (31), passes by her, she renders a judgmental scan. Jealousy or protectiveness?

We see that Cindy is dressed in a tight-fitting blue business suit, her skirt respectably short and perfectly slitted for maximum leg crossing effect.

The senator stands, coming around his desk to offer her a chair, which he holds for her. Then, he crosses to the door to close it, shutting out one more disgusted look from his secretary.

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
Mrs. Grasser.

CINDY GRASSER  
Miss. Miss Grasser.

The senator stands next to her chair, crowding just a bit.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Before we begin, let cut to a bit of the chase... I have to go to this damnable food additive dinner tonight. And I'm completely slammed today... I have almost no time to chat... as much as I would love to. Would you like to join me for the dinner tonight? It'll be boring as hell...  
(checks for reaction)  
Pardon my French.

CINDY GRASSER

*Enfer.*

SENATOR DOUGLAS

What?

CINDY GRASSER

In that context, I believe hell is *enfer* in French.

He nods, "oh," recovering, goes for it.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

But what would be heavenly, we can have a few cocktails and later get down to brass tacks... And deep drilling.

CINDY GRASSER

Just to be clear... I'm here to present an agenda of offshore windmill farms.  
(off his frown)  
And I'd love to...

A smile brightens his face. He puts a dismissive hand on her chair.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

I'll send a car... at six.

Crossing back to the door, he opens it and before Cindy can leave...

Eve barges in, squeezing past the secretary. She's dressed on the smutty side of professional, followed by the secretary, who makes an apologetic hopeless hand gesture.

Cindy does her best to stifle a LAUGH and quickly clears the area.

SECRETARY

Eve is here... she won't wait.

He nods, waving Eve in and the secretary out. He quickly closes the door, and returns to his seat, allowing Eve to be seated on her own. With a scowl, Eve looks back over her shoulder as she does.

EVE

Who was that?

SENATOR DOUGLAS

You aren't supposed to come here.

EVE

Is she a...  
 (quotes with her  
 fingers)  
 ...lobbyist?

SENATOR DOUGLAS

You aren't supposed to come here.

EVE

Why did you leave me like that last night?

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Work. Calls. I can't stay all night there and show up at my place at sunrise... how would that look?

EVE

Like a call home?

An indifferent head nod. Maybe.

EVE (CONT'D)

You around tonight?

SENATOR DOUGLAS

I have a thing.

Eve looks back over her shoulder into the wake of Cindy. She nods, biting her quivering lip.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

Is being a jealous trollop part of your professional code?

EVE

Is fucking everything in sight part of your professional code?

Douglas stands, he's done. Eve bites her lip again, this time with a hint of trepidation, shifting it to a pout.

EVE (CONT'D)

Will you call me?

SENATOR DOUGLAS

If you don't call me first.

Unsatisfied, she turns, departing in a HUFF OF DEEP BREATHS, leaving his door wide open.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

Shit. Give me a knife. I'll cut out a rib. Better than having my balls in vise.

SECRETARY (O.S.)

James Hurst called.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

About damn time. Get him on the phone, would you?

Douglas wanders back to his desk, plopping heavily into his seat. He closes his eyes, reflecting. He opens his eyes, catching a look at the painting of Jesus on the Mountain. He mimics the pensive posture of the painting. Satisfied with his piety, he LAUGHS, giving the picture a wink and a salute. He grabs the phone.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

James, my boy. Put on some nice duds. You're going to dinner.

**INT. HONCHO'S OFFICE - SAME**

Honcho sits on a couch, his arms stretched out wide. We only see him from the back. Standing in front of him, at something that looks like parade rest, is the mercenary leader.

Honcho's head nods, his hands coming up to the top of his head.

HONCHO

Who came up with this idea?

MERCENARY LEADER

It came from Douglas. But as you know, he...

(finger quotations)

...disappeared with James Hurst last night.

HONCHO

Polaris?



Getting a confirming nod, the Honcho muses, then...

HONCHO (CONT'D)

Okay. Permission granted. You know what to do. Take care of it. All of it.

MERCENARY LEADER

Yes sir.

HONCHO

No fuck ups!

MERCENARY LEADER

Sir!

The mercenary comes to attention, then smartly exits.

**INT. BANQUET HALL - EVENING**

Senator Douglas impatiently waits for the arrival of guests in an ornately decorated corridor outside a lavish banquet hall.

James, slightly underdressed for the event, enters. His stride and pursed lips indicate this is not his number one choice for the evening.

The senator exuberantly approaches, a dramatic handshake.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

James, my boy, welcome.

JAMES

Thanks. Not exactly my thing. I prefer quiet dinners for two.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Succotash, James. Think of it this way... you have to eat, don't you?

JAMES

Yeah, and I've also got to get some work done.

The senator pats him on the shoulders, coaxing...

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Stop being a stick in the mud. I don't care if it's not your thing. There's more available female fodder in there than you can shake a stick at...

JAMES

Thanks but my stick doesn't feel  
like it needs shakin'.

The senator puts his arm around James in a sweeping motion, "nonsense, my boy." He leads him to the entry way where we watch as...

Cindy emerges from an official car. Decker out, she heads straight to the senator, offering her hand. He gives her hand a kiss, with a wink intending to promise more of such things to come.

James looks away, embarrassed, disgusted.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

(to James)

James Hurst, may I present Cindy  
Grasser. Ms. Grasser, Mr. Hurst.

James forces a smile and a handshake.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

Ms. Grasser is going to be chatting  
me up about offshore windmills and  
maybe other green things.

JAMES

I'm sure she is.

A magnanimous gesture by the senator to a bar...

SENATOR DOUGLAS

A libation to start the evening?

CINDY GRASSER

That would be lovely.

She takes the senator's arm. Douglas freaks, too cozy. To offset, he snags James' arm and they look like they're ready to skip down the yellow brick road.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Come on. I'll buy you a spirulina  
margarita... speaking of green.

CINDY GRASSER

That sounds awful.

A NEWS CAMERA CREW approaches the senator. As a scramble for positioning occurs and the camera's light goes on, James steps back, not wanting any part of this. Cindy leans in with the opposite agenda, damn near placing a breast on the senator's arm. He gives Cindy a look... "My dear, you look good enough to eat!"

**EXT. AURORA EXPLORER - MAIN DECK - NIGHT**

Bundled in a parka, Phoebe watches the last lights of land slip over a dark horizon. A shiver. She turns and heads...

**INT. AURORA EXPLORER - GALLEY - CONTINUOUS**

Phoebe unzips her parka as she wanders into the galley. In one area, LOWLY SAILORS dive into their chow, NOISILY CHATTING and LAUGHING. They notice Phoebe, but know better than to make their observations of a paying passenger evident.

In another area of the mess deck, PAYING PASSENGERS and those who appear to be DOCUMENTARY FILM MAKERS enjoy their food. A MESS DECK SAILOR caters to these folks, bringing beverages, refills and seconds.

As Phoebe scans for a seat, the officer previously on the quarterdeck glides out of no where. He steps directly in her path, extending a hand.

WARREN RAINES

Good evening, ma'am. I'm afraid we got off to a poor start. I'm Warren Raines.

A head toss to his epaulets.

WARREN RAINES (CONT'D)

Executive Officer of the *Aurora Explorer*.

She ignores his hand, darting a sharp, cold look at him.

WARREN RAINES (CONT'D)

I couldn't help but notice you above deck a moment ago. May I interest you in dining with the officers tonight?

PHOEBE

Mr. Raines. I'm here on an environmental quest. I'm not here to socialize with an officer who has no doubt seen more ports than he has storms.

WARREN RAINES

I just thought...

Phoebe steps around his blockade. She finds an empty chair with THREE MEN wearing jackets that sport logos reading: THE ECO-CHANNEL. Hand shakes and friendly conversation from the get go. The mess deck sailor, approaches with a tray of beer. The beers are eagerly received.

**INT. BANQUET HALL - EVENING**

James sits next to Senator Douglas at a TABLE OF TEN. While the room BUZZES WITH CHATTER, James pokes at a salad. He reaches in his pocket, checking his phone. Nothing. As he lets out a BREATH, his shoulders sag to match.

Cindy, daintily and demurely dabs her lips, then excuses herself. Only now does Douglas lean in for conversation. But first, he looks over both shoulders as if preparing to tell an ethnic joke.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

So... things are good.

JAMES

(missing it)

Great.

Douglas leans in closer.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

What I mean is... the plan is in place...

James leans back, working to refocus his eyes on the senator, lost. The senator looks around, folds up his napkin and stands.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

I need to go to the can. How about you?

JAMES

I'm fine.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Come.

The little hand gesture signaling "follow me" and a stare indicates the senator is confident that his whims will be satisfied. Annoyed, James gets up to follow.

JAMES

I don't know if I like "come" and follow me to the bathroom as part of the same conversation.

**INT. MEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

James and the senator walk into the men's room. Douglas cases the joint. He makes a dismissive head toss to the door to a JUNIOR POLITICIAN who frets with getting his hair just so.

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
Congressman...

The junior politician makes a final check of his teeth for dinner debris and crosses to exit.

Douglas checks under each of the stalls, coming up smiling.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
Not a single wide stance to be found.

He motions James closer.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
The plan?

A frustrated hand wave from James. Get there for fuck's sake.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
Global Warming...

James nods no. The senator realizes that he has no recollection of his suggestion.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
My God, man. How drunk were you?

James shrugs.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
Volcanoes? Ding ding. Ring any bells in the cranium of yours?

James' eyes widen. Douglas nods at him, prompting him to follow the thought train and very quietly...

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
A nuclear option... It's all good.

James' mouth drops.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
We're getting five units.

JAMES  
And by units you would mean...

Douglas nods, filling the blank. He folds his arms with a touch of pride and a sense of finality.

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
Worked it out this afternoon, I did.  
Three on the west coast.  
(MORE)

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
 One in Hawaii. And one in  
 Greenland... or was it Iceland?  
 Maybe it was Newfoundland.

James blanches, reacting with a new level of horror. His mouth forms the word, "Phoebe." The senator continues, taking in James' reaction.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
 Or one of those other "lands." I  
 forget. A country with a name ending  
 in land. How stupid is that? It's  
 like ending a country's name in  
 "stan." What's a stan? Who is stan?

JAMES  
 When is this going down?

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
 Not sure. If you want her to be out  
 of harm's way, you'd better call  
 her. But I heard... she wasn't your  
 girlfriend anymore. Guess we all  
 are entitled to our delusions.

He points over his shoulder.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
 Gonna pinch one. Want my innards to  
 be clear for later.  
 (a wink)  
 You know?

The senator wiggles an index finger, then pats himself on a butt cheek that he sticks out.

Grossed out is outdone by bewildered. James exits. After difficulty navigating the door...

**INT. BANQUET HALL - HALLWAY - EVENING**

He pauses in the lobby, retrieving his phone. He dials.

**EXT. AURORA EXPLORER - MAIN DECK - NIGHT**

Phoebe stands with one of the Eco-Channel guys watching the Northern Lights punctuate the clouds. She reaches in her jacket, pulling out her phone. It flashes and vibrates...

PHOEBE  
 Hello? Hello?

She holds up the phone, questioningly. "What? Phones don't work at sea?"

WARREN RAINES (O.S.)

You won't get any reception.

Phoebe and the Eco-Channel man turn to face the X.O. He's damn near gleeful with the news he imparts.

WARREN RAINES (CONT'D)

The aurora interferes with any signals in the atmosphere. Satellites are unreliable at best... we're all just... isolated little islands out here in the middle...

PHOEBE

Yeah, so how do you even know where we are?

WARREN RAINES

We still have hand instruments... such as the sextant.

Phoebe shakes her head disgusted, turning away. The cable guy follows suit, shutting out the X.O., who stands nearby for a second, rocking on his heels. He checks out the sky and with a SIGH caves to the reality he's not wanted. Off he goes and Phoebe picks up on the dropped conversation.

PHOEBE

So, it's a toss up. I see over population as a huge issue. In a generation or two, Earth won't be able support the people onboard. Somehow these religious zealots need to realize that it's okay to have sex and not breed. We don't need to propagate the species! Enough is enough!

Her hand apologetically covers her mouth. Too far? She assesses her companion, who gives her a silly grin, likely the result of beer enhanced infatuation.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

And people can't think anymore. They believe whatever line of shit they hear from a "news" source. No fact checking. No thinking. Just an enormous swallow of whatever shit they're fed. Personally...

She hangs it out there to see if he's still listening or plotting a move. A bit of a head nod, so...

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

I think it's engineered food additives that are polluting the brain's ability to think. Not only are people getting fat... they're getting more complacent and stupider by the meal.

ECO-CHANNEL GUY

Fat, dumb and oblivious.

She points at him, "Bingo."

**INT. BANQUET HALL - HALLWAY - EVENING**

James dials again. Nada. Frustrated, he sticks his phone in his pocket. Nearby, Cindy comes out of a bathroom. Noticing James, she crosses to him, coming up on his flank.

CINDY GRASSER

Hey.

Startled, James jumps. He turns to her.

JAMES

Oh. Hi. You startled me.

She widens her eyes, mouthing sorry, then hands him a business card, making it look like a formality. He politely takes the card, putting it in a jacket pocket.

CINDY GRASSER

Having fun?

JAMES

Are you?

CINDY GRASSER

I'm working.  
(looks around)  
Where's...

A bit of an eye roll and a wink.

JAMES

He's pumping his colon.

She makes a yucky face.

JAMES (CONT'D)

He's feeling lucky.

CINDY GRASSER

(bigger eye roll)  
Oh, I'm not going to fuck him.  
(MORE)



CINDY GRASSER (CONT'D)

A good lobbyist only makes a politician think they're going to get some. Once they get some, you can't nudge them anymore. Anyway, I don't jump in the sack with men I'm not attracted to.

JAMES

That's noble.

She shakes her head at his lame remark. Her real point being she's attracted to him, she leans in just enough to let that be known.

Douglas emerges from the men's room, checking out the interaction. He figures he's got it nailed, so he glazes right over it.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Let's go learn about food additives.  
Yum. Frankenfood.

CINDY GRASSER

You making fun of food engineering?

SENATOR DOUGLAS

I don't eat that shit. Only organic for me.

Cindy puts out a feeler look to James. "That true?" A shrug in return. The senator leads the way.

He reaches to put his arm around her. Becoming aware of his surroundings, he halts the action, clasping his hands behind his back instead.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

And I still can't wait to hear all about which way the wind blows.

**EXT. AURORA EXPLORER - MAIN DECK - NIGHT**

Phoebe walks with her head down into the wind. She struggles for balance. She reaches for a door leading inside as...

The X.O. comes out on deck.

WARREN RAINES

Hello again. What a lovely, fortuitous coincidence.

Phoebe gives him a chilly look. And into the ship she goes, leaving the X.O. to sample the night air alone.

**INT. AURORA EXPLORER - PHOEBE'S CABIN - MOMENTS LATER**

Fighting the confines of a small bunk, Phoebe attempts a text. Send. Did it go? She drops back on the bed, arm over her eyes. Her body gives up an involuntary SOB.

**INT. BANQUET HALL - EVENING**

APPLAUSE for a SPEAKER at a podium, sucking up the praise from the political choir.

James finds his moment. He folds his napkin, pushes back his chair, and leans in, uttering an MOS aside to Douglas. Before he can get a protest, James pats the senator's back and makes a run for it.

Cindy leans back out of the senator's line of sight. She gives up a "call me" gesture.

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER**

James stands over a packed suitcase, his mobile tucked under his chin. It drops. No matter. Can't get through anyway.

He checks his watch, ZIPS a suitcase.

**INT. SENATOR DOUGLAS' OFFICE - MORNING**

The senator, looking more than a trifle unfulfilled, sits behind his desk, staring at papers. Commotion in his reception area draws his attention and in bursts...

MRS. DANA DOUGLAS, head down, chin forward, face red. She's ten years his junior, perhaps a former lobbyist and dressed in a shade of red paled only by her face. She wears a mood so green, she's good to kill.

DANA DOUGLAS

You bastard!

SENATOR DOUGLAS

What?

In the BG, we see the secretary hold somebody off from entering as she closes the door.

DANA DOUGLAS

I saw the news last night.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

So?

DANA DOUGLAS

I saw that lobbyist drop her boob on your arm. And I saw how you liked it.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Oh, so that's what this is about?

DANA DOUGLAS

Yes! That's what this is about. Again!!

SENATOR DOUGLAS

I never fucked her.

DANA DOUGLAS

Bullshit!

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Call her and ask her.

DANA DOUGLAS

She's a lobbyist. She'll say anything... as will you, you piece of shit!

The senator puts his hands up in a peace offering.

DANA DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

I'll be at the residence tonight. You'd better be there too!

Dana Douglas storms out. A beat. In storms Eve. Again, the secretary closes the door. Again, she motions for someone to hold in the outer office.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

What are you doing here?

EVE

I saw the news last night.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Congratulations. So did the most of the rest of the free world.

EVE

Who the fuck was that with you?

SENATOR DOUGLAS

James Hurst. You met him the other night.

Eve wags a menacing finger, "fuck you," and "watch it," all in one.

EVE

I'm talking about the woman trying  
to stick her tits into your ribs.  
Evidently you don't remember much of  
what we talked about the other night.

He rubs his chin, pensively, working to recall. Hmm.

EVE (CONT'D)

Never fuck with your hooker.

He gives her a blank stare. She renders that pointing finger  
again. This time, it kind of looks like a gun.

EVE (CONT'D)

Drop your drawers.

Douglas ponders the options. He stands, going for his belt.

**EXT. JAMES' DRIVEWAY - FLAGSTAFF - AFTERNOON**

A TAXI pulls in behind the SUV. James gets out and retrieves  
his bags, dragging them near his SUV. Wearily, he leans  
against the SUV, vacantly checking it out. He notices  
something inside.

He fishes for his keys, pops the lock.

**EXT. WOODS - SAME**

From the woods, we watch James lean into his vehicle.

As he retrieves the white envelope inside, we see a very  
serious rifle pull up into view. At the end of the very  
serious rifle, a silencer.

**THROUGH THE SCOPE OF THE RIFLE**

James fumbles with the envelope, finally opening it. He  
reads. A STREAM OF MOS OBSCENITIES pour from his mouth. He  
stomps about. He looks up to the sky, SCREAMING to the  
Almighty Above, "FUUUCKKK!" As he does, keys drop from the  
envelope. He stoops to pick them up just as...

The scope recoils, A MUFFLED SHOT outbound. MISS.

ASSASSIN (O.S.)

Fuck!

The SOUNDS OF RELOADING. A GROAN, that quickly turns to a  
LOW MENACING GROWL.

**A BEAR**

On its hind legs, takes a swat at the unseen assassin. A GRUNT as our view falls backward. The bear leaps forward...

**EXT. WOODS - SAME**

The bear RIPS into the FLESH of a lifeless human body wearing a ripped up camouflage jump suit. Nearby, the rifle and a box of spilled bullets.

**EXT. JAMES' DRIVEWAY - FLAGSTAFF - SAME**

James jams the note and keys into his briefcase. He grabs his bag. He wipes away a tear and gazes at the woods. Did he hear something? Probably not. A SIGH and a look above.

JAMES

Can anything else go wrong?

**EXT. SONORAN DESERT - NORTHERN MEXICO - DAY**

We look across the barren expanse of the desert and down into a huge pit that looks like a festering scar on the Earth's skin. It appears to be a quarry of sorts, perhaps once a test mine. Only this one has many burned spots on the ground.

Beyond a nearby hill, a white flag at top a long pole appears. It gains height as a JEEP, carrying THREE BAD LOOKING HOMBRES, ONE POSTED AT A MACHINE GUN, comes into view and races directly toward the quarry.

**EXT. IN THE QUARRY - DAY**

The jeep pulls into the quarry. The hombres scout the terrain. The hombre at the gun more than at the ready.

Around the quarry, lie scores of spots of scattered bones... human skulls, ribs... vertebrae. In the charred spots, charred bones. This is the termination point for many a desert journey.

The jeep slows, making a little circle, finally finding its spot.

Silence except for the WIND. After a moment, a LONE FIGURE walks out of the heat waves, down the road leading into the quarry. The figure appears to be wearing a side arm, but that's it. Hombre 1 gets out of the jeep, adjusting his belt, getting a feel for the location of his holster. He fixes the position of a gaudy cross necklace.

HOMBRE 1

El hombre is loco.

The other two hombres nod their agreement and their hands indicate they're good for a go.

The figure continues walking directly at the jeep. We now see he wears a camouflage jump suit like the one seen on the assassin in Flagstaff. On it is that very spiffy puma logo directly over the heart. As the man boldly strides closer, he becomes recognizable as the mercenary leader.

He stops but five feet from the front of the jeep.

HOMBRE 1 (CONT'D)

Buenos tardes.

MERCENARY LEADER

Buenos tardes.

The mercenary leader makes a strange pursing of his lips... an attempt at a whistle? The hombres LAUGH. He SPITS, then places his fingers to his mouth. Now a WHISTLE comes out... shrill, loud, piercing.

Out of the sand emerge scores of camouflaged mercenaries in full combat gear. What the hombres perceived as a likely turkey shoot, now places them in the center of the arcade.

We HEAR a VEHICLE approach. The hombres look off nervously, scanning to see what's next.

A HUMMER bounds into view, speeding into the quarry. It skids to a halt in a cloud of dust.

The mercenary leader opens the passenger door, removing a large metal briefcase. He opens it on his knee. Jam packed with neatly banded hundred dollar bills.

MERCENARY LEADER (CONT'D)

Dinero para una bomba.

Making a point not to close the briefcase securely, he tosses it to the ground. A few bills escape.

The second hombre jumps out to fetch the loose money. The third hombre tightens his grip on the machine gun.

The mercenary leader reaches into the vehicle removing four more briefcases. Then, he turns facing hombre 1, pointing to each of the cases, counting...

MERCENARY LEADER (CONT'D)

Dos, tres, cuatro y cinco bombas.

Hombre 1 and the mercenary leader have a Mexican standoff, staredown version, for what seems like an eternity.

Hombre 1 reaches behind his back, quickly pulling out a strange looking pistol. He points it into the air.

Nervous trigger fingers everywhere bring guns to the ready. MAGAZINES ENGAGE... A CLATTER OF COCKING WEAPONS.

MERCENARY LEADER (CONT'D)

Steady!

HOMBRE 1

Amigos, relajaren.

Hombre 1 FIRES A FLARE into the sky. Despite the bright sky, it blazes with nova-like brilliance.

A moment, then we hear a HEAVY TRUCK ambling across the rough terrain. A beat up WW II VINTAGE TROOP TRUCK, covered with a tattered canvas bounces its way into the quarry.

The mercenary leader's eyes flinch each time the truck bounces over a bump.

Finally, the truck arrives. The DRIVER jumps out, quickly handing the keys to Hombre 1, who then opens the back flap and climbs up. He offers a hand to the Mercenary Leader, pulling him up...

#### **INTO THE BACK OF THE TRUCK**

Where he is greeted by FIVE GREY CONTAINERS, with different colors of bright paint more or less covering raised text reading: UNITED STATES AIR FORCE. SAC. AUG 1963.

Hombre 1 pops open the five containers. Each contains a compact, and no doubt potent, nuclear device. He waves, "wah-lah," handing the mercenary leader the keys to the truck.

They jump out of the truck.

#### **EXT. DESERT QUARRY - CONTINUOUS**

The truck driver and Hombre 1 check the rest of the metal briefcases. Satisfied, Hombre 1 offers a salute to the mercenary leader.

HOMBRE 1

Gusto. Hasta la vista.

He grabs two briefcases, loading them in the jeep. The truck driver hombre makes two fast trips, gathering up the rest of the money. Loaded up, away they go.

The mercenaries watch the hombres depart. A MERCENARY standing next to the leader, wiggles an itchy trigger finger.

The leader puts out a calming hand, then hands him the truck keys.

MERCENARY LEADER  
Make yourself useful.

The itchy finger mercenary climbs into the truck as the leader, secures the back.

GEARS GRIND. The TRUCK'S REAR WHEELS SPIN, spewing sand.

The driver leans out, looking back. He mouths, "Shit!" The truck rocks back and forth, quickly digging itself into a rut.

MERCENARY LEADER (CONT'D)  
God dammit!

The leader walks to the cab, opens the door and pulls the driver out, tossing him to the ground.

The truck stalls, heaving to a lurching halt, decidedly stuck in the sand.

The driver holds up an arm, protecting his face, expecting a punch.

MERCENARY LEADER (CONT'D)  
Get up. Muscle up.

He waves his arm, gathering his flock of soldiers.

MERCENARY LEADER (CONT'D)  
Let's get this piece of shit out of the sand... CAREFULLY out of the sand.

**INT. SENATOR DOUGLAS' OFFICE - TWILIGHT**

The senator wearily clears his desk. His mobile RINGS. He TAPS the speaker phone on.

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
Douglas.

MERCENARY LEADER (O.S.)  
(on speaker phone)  
Tengo cinco huevos.

Douglas leans forward.

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
What?



MERCENARY LEADER (O.S.)  
 (on speaker phone)  
 We have five eggs.

Getting it, Douglas quickly takes the phone off speaker, putting it to his ear.

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
 Hold on.

He crosses to his office door, checks on his secretary and closes the door as inconspicuously as possible. Back with the phone, he speaks loudly, slowly, and in staccato cadence.

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
 When will the eggs reach the nest?

**INT. ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE ROOM - SAME**

In the dark shadows we see Honcho and Dirk sitting near a pile of sophisticated electronic gear, wearing headphones, listening in on a call. Honcho disgustedly shakes his head. A nearby phone RINGS. Honcho pulls off his headset and grabs the phone.

HONCHO  
 What?

He rubs his head, working to make sense of what he's hearing.

HONCHO (CONT'D)  
 He missed who? Who was he shooting at?

His grip tightens on his phone.

HONCHO (CONT'D)  
 A bear? What the fuck was he doing in Flagstaff?

He SLAMS his fist on the table.

HONCHO (CONT'D)  
 You idiot. That's not what I meant when I said take care of it... Don't you interrupt me! Now listen to me clearly. I said take care of it. That meant get the fucking bombs. And "all of it" meant execute the plan, you moron. I don't remember ordering you to execute the planner. Good thing, because you fucked that up.

Honcho paces, his anger growing. He massages his heart.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

He's no threat. Just a pain in the ass. It's Douglas that's off his fucking rocker. If anyone needs to get shot it's that asshole... No. NO! That was not an order.

Honcho picks up a pencil off the table, breaking it in his hand.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

Stop! Stop cackling like a fucking chicken and listen. Where is he now? You know what? Forget it. Stand down. I'll take care of this myself.

He SLAMS his phone on the table. It bounces to the floor. Even more pissed, he throws the broken pencil as hard as he can. A SIGH, then he retrieves his phone on his hands and knees, checking that he did not break it.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

(GRUMBLING)

Send a boy to do a man's job and look...

(YELLING)

Alvin!

**INT. JAMES' LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON**

James dozes on the sofa, remote in his hand, Fox news on TV on mute. Video of the wayward iceberg fills the screen, then cuts back to one of those CUTE BLONDE NEWSCASTERS. A Khryon reads, COAL MINES DEEMED SAFE. A KNOCK, jolts him awake. Fuzzy. It doesn't compute. The KNOCK gets louder.

James stands, stretching out a yawn.

JAMES

Coming.

A DOOR OPENS and CLOSES O.S.

James slows, listening. He looks around for a weapon. He spots a bowling trophy. He grabs it...

Before he can take a step forward, a mercenary in a black jump suit reaches to take the trophy and neatly set it back in place. He mercenary wags his finger at James, "no, no, no."

Alvin York follows the mercenary into his TV room.

ALVIN YORK

What are you doing here?

JAMES

I live here. What are you doing here?

ALVIN YORK

No one told you that you could leave.

JAMES

Oh, I need permission?

ALVIN YORK

Yes. You do.

Alvin makes a head toss, "let's go."

JAMES

You realize all this flying around is not green, don't you? What? I bought my own ticket.

ALVIN YORK

Really. I mean really. You do not want to piss me off. If you piss me off, you piss off Honcho... And you don't want to do that, do you?

Alvin walks to a picture of James and Phoebe.

ALVIN YORK (CONT'D)

Have you heard from her? How's that trip of hers going?

**INT. CONFERENCE ROOM**

James is pushed into the room by a mercenary. He checks out the room. A full pot of coffee, water and a bowl of fruit are at the ready. On a large conference table in front of him are rolled up maps. Lots of rolled up maps.

James crosses to the maps, checking them out. Over his shoulder as he unrolls the corner of the top map we see a large topographical from the USGS for Mount Rainer. Next, a similar map for Mount Hood.

JAMES

Uh-oh.

More map corner checks. Another topo map for Mount Shasta. Mount Redoubt. And many more.

HONCHO (O.S.)  
 (on an intercom)  
 We don't have any maps for volcanoes  
 in Iceland yet. But we'll just follow  
 the protocol of what you lay out on  
 these.

James looks around, quickly determining he's being watched  
 from another room. He nods, getting the drift.

HONCHO (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Hungry? We'll get you whatever you  
 want to eat.

JAMES  
 What is this? A last supper?

HONCHO (O.S.)  
 That just depends. Could be.

JAMES  
 So, I'm being illegally detained?

HONCHO (O.S.)  
 Stop being a pussy. Think of it  
 this way... you're a writer in  
 Hollywood. The director needs some  
 new action scenes. You can't leave  
 the writers' room until you knock  
 out the scenes. You hunker down and  
 get the job done. And while you're  
 at it they bring you all the chow  
 you want.

James paces in a little circle.

HONCHO (CONT'D)  
 I want you to figure out where to  
 put the devices on which of these  
 mountains such that we can induce  
 full-blown volcanic eruptions and  
 make them appear to be totally organic  
 events.

(CHUCKLES)  
 Can't wait to hear the Armageddon  
 freaks go off on this.

JAMES  
 The plan is flawed, you know. We'll  
 just cover the earth with ash and  
 it'll trap in all the pollution. If  
 we could seal the toxins in we'll  
 create a greenhouse. Earth will be  
 just like Venus.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

And the people on it, including you, will be baking, corroding, rusting in our own pollution. The atmospheric pressure would increase... and...

HONCHO

I've checked it out with a few other geologists. They tell me that won't happen.

James POUNDS on the table. One of the maps rolls to the floor.

JAMES

Why don't you get them to do your shit work?

HONCHO

Because they were only asked about theoretical models. You know the plan. Hell, it's your plan. Now be a nice geologist, pick up the map and get to work.

James retrieves the map, but refuses to unroll it.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

That's the problem with you number crunchers. You stumble onto a world changing idea and once it looks like it might actually happen, your nuts shrivel up into raisins and take refuge behind your Adam's apple.

JAMES

What if I need sleep?

HONCHO (O.S.)

Get this done and you can sleep.

James folds his arms.

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

Get this done and I might even let you go home... or to another party at the Restoration House... or get a girl at Polaris... I might even let you live.

James shivers, fighting to be cool.

JAMES

Fine. I want some tom kai gai.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

Lots of it. Thai hot. And I want  
two bottles of Cab. Stag's Leap.  
The high end shit.

HONCHO (O.S.)

Oh, so you can drink and not fuck  
up? Not a chance.

(to someone O.S.)

He'd be so fun to water board.

James throws his best defiant glare at where he thinks the  
see through mirror is.

**EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - EARLY MORNING**

Looking very haggard, James struggles out of an office  
building. He gazes upward at the sky. SNOW FLURRIES drop  
from DARK CLOUDS.

**EXT. AURORA EXPLORER - MAIN DECK - DAY**

Thick fog surrounds the *Aurora Explorer* as she inches forward  
in the dark water. It seems that all non-essential hands  
and passengers are on deck, crowding the ship's port side.

The Eco-Channel guys excitedly film something in the sea.  
Passengers point and we follow to see...

A WHALE ushers her CALF along in the water. It's nature at  
its best, delighting even the saltiest mariners.

Phoebe leans over, taking shots with her camera. The X.O.  
crowds in next to her, getting daggers from Phoebe.

PHOEBE

Shouldn't you be on the bridge or  
something?

WARREN RAINES

Maybe we can chat more this evening.

PHOEBE

Sure. If hell freezes over.

A SHRILL, REPETITIVE CHIRPING ALARM shatters the air. The  
whales dive for cover. The X.O. runs to the bridge.

**WIDER ANGLE**

Barely evident in the fog is a huge slice of ice immediately  
ahead on the *Aurora Explorer's* starboard bow.

The ship shudders, digging down into the waters as the engines  
grind to full reverse.

The sea behind the fantail churns violently. Then...

A SICKENING, LINGERING TEARING SOUND... ICE ON METAL. SCREAMING, BARKING OF ORDERS, frantic scrambling on deck all moot as the ship suddenly and severely lists to starboard.

### ON DECK

PASSENGERS and CREW TUMBLE, sliding across the ship on the wet deck. A FEW PEOPLE manage to catch onto the skimpy lifeline. MOST ONBOARD plunge into the freezing waters of the Atlantic, their screams as chilling as the sea.

PHOEBE falls with them, though from her position, she slams into the bulkhead of the superstructure. GASPING to reclaim her breath, she attempts to get a foothold. Her feet slip on the wet deck. Scrambling and slipping, she looks like a cartoon character seeking get away traction.

SCREAMS for help replace ORDERS BARKED by crew. Moment by moment the SCREAMS become fewer and those heard, fainter.

### PHOEBE

Scans her surroundings. Next to her, a RUSTING FIRE AX secured to the bulkhead. Above, an INFLATABLE LIFE RAFT, neatly tucked into a bucket-like holder with a manual release button about six feet above her.

She slides on her butt to the fire ax. Tugging and tugging with all her might, she frees the ax. The head promptly falls off, leaving her only with an ax handle.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

Shit!

The SHIP GROANS, listing further to starboard.

Again, Phoebe falls back against the superstructure, looking straight up into the sky.

Above, the clouds begin to part. A hint of blue. A ray of sunlight.

She scrambles, turning over. The increased severity of the list of the ship makes a climb up the deck to the lifeboat manageable. Determined, Phoebe GRUNTS and GROANS to her goal.

As she reaches for the life boat container, another LOUD TREMBLE from the ship. Phoebe holds on, squeezing out a LAUGH and a CRY at the same time. She pulls herself over the container housing the lifeboat. Taking as firm a stance as she can get, she takes a hack at the release button. Miss. Another WHACK. Glancing blow.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

Shit.

She SCREAMS at the sunbeam as if it were God.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

Help me would you!?

Frantically, she pounds at the release button, making contact. She GASPS, pounding harder and faster, demonstrating unrivaled ferocity.

POP! The life raft releases, tumbling over Phoebe, knocking her to her butt. She slides, grabbing onto a fire hose.

### **THE RAFT**

SPLASHES into the sea below.

### **PHOEBE**

Loses her grip. She clutches at air then falls into the icy drink. She SPLASHES down next to the raft. She disappears under the surface.

### **EXT. OCEAN**

The raft bobs on the sea, miraculously right side up. In the dark sea around the raft, nothing.

Then, a dark shape and on that dark shape a body. The shapes become clearer. A human, lying face down and motionless, barely hangs on the tail of the adult whale. From the parka, we know this is Phoebe.

The whale's tail gently lifts, coming right up next to the life raft.

### **ON THE WHALE**

Phoebe struggles with her senses and the camera wrapped around her neck, nearly strangling her. She shakes her head, tugs at the camera strap and COUGHS UP some water. Her survival instincts recover. She sees a red handle, near a small decal reading PULL TO INFLATE. She needs no invitation.

A RUSH OF AIR and the raft inflates, it's protective canopy perfectly taking shape, a promising tent of survival. The impact knocks her back. She slips, barely holding onto her savior.

The whale inches closer to the raft. Phoebe slides forward, reaching for the raft. Short. A huge intake of air and a lunge. Determination wins. She catches the side of the raft, clinging onto the opening leading inside the raft.



GRUNTING and GROANING she struggles forward. The whale lifts its tail again... ever so slightly, allowing Phoebe an easier and more direct path to scramble into the raft.

A final determined lunge. Phoebe tumbles into the life raft.

**INT. LIFE RAFT - CONTINUOUS**

Upside down, Phoebe GASPS for air, struggling to settle down. She reaches in her pocket. There's her phone. She repeatedly hits the power key. Nothing. A SOB. Realizing the camera is still around her neck, she places it as far from the raft's door as she can.

She turns, facing the entry of the raft, getting a feel for the bounce of the raft. She moves to the door, sticking her head out. She cringes at the biting cold, then blows warm into her hands and onto her cheeks.

A scan of the water nearby reveals a FEW FLOATING BODIES, two wearing ECO-CHANNEL JACKETS, none showing any signs of life.

A shape of gray appears near her. The head of the WHALE comes into view, her eyes compassionate and full of concern. Phoebe CRIES, climbing half way out of the life boat, her belly on its very edge. She reaches to the whale, putting both hands on its body.

PHOEBE

(SOBBING)

God love you, you magnificent creature. Thank you. Thank you.

After a moment, the whale gently dives, leaving Phoebe leaning, arms outstretched over a black sea.

Another shape floats to the surface, nearly under her hands. A MAN'S BODY floats face down, X.O. epaulets on the shoulders.

Phoebe recoils. A GASP, then she VOMITS, falling back into the raft. She ZIPS the door shut, curling up into a SHIVERING, SOBBING FETAL BALL.

**INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY**

James shakes his head, looking out the window. Next to him, Senator Douglas watches and waits.

JAMES

You got to get me out of this.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

No can do.

JAMES

I curse the day I met you.

Senator Douglas shrugs. Not going to dignify that.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Why did you invite me to the party, anyway? Why did you single me out?

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Sometimes you just have to do what you're told.

JAMES

Honcho had me captive all night.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Don't be so dramatic.

JAMES

Dramatic?

Douglas stares him down. "Yes, dramatic."

JAMES (CONT'D)

It might backfire.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Backfire how? You think the nukes are defective?

JAMES

What if the ash creates a greenhouse effect and it's the start of the end? The end of the world?

The senator shakes his head, disavowing the new idea with a dismissive wave of a hand. He adds a playful wink and his not so playful, conniving smile.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Maybe with offshore windmills, we can blow the bad air to places where there's no volcanic cloud.

(a delighted CHORTLE)

At least we can sell truckloads of "waiting for the Rapture" folding chairs.

JAMES

We can't get the bombs deep enough.

No response from the Senator. Pissed, James looks out the window.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

It's covered.

JAMES

How is it covered?

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Maybe somebody double-checked your work. This time, at least. Besides... how do you know that this isn't what God wants to happen?

JAMES

What!?

SENATOR DOUGLAS

It's God's hand. God gave you the idea and the insight to pass it on to me.

JAMES

I was drunk out of my mind.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

The Lord works in mysterious ways.

JAMES

You can't believe that shit!

SENATOR DOUGLAS

I do.

JAMES

How do you know it's not God's plan for me to stop this?

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Because I prayed it's not.

A moment of SILENCE.

JAMES

You're fucking nuts.

The senator puts on a most righteous look.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Gonna drop you off now. Gotta pick up the missus. We'll chat later. You're in this...

(gestures to his neck)

...up to here.

(MORE)

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

Just remember, James, you started all this and when it happens it'll have your name all over it. If anything goes wrong... well, Thy Will be Done.

The limo stops and the senator leans across James opening the door. A firm head nod. "Out."

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER**

James enters a hotel room, a bit nicer than last time. He drops his bag by the bed and CLICKS on the TV. CNN this time. He falls back on the bed, exhausted.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

(on TV)

All we know at this point is that the *Aurora Explorer*, a ship that was headed to the huge iceberg that broke away from the arctic, struck an iceberg.

James blinks, taking in the story. He bolts upright, turning up the volume.

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

Here we see the paralyzed ship from a Navy P-2 that happened to be on patrol and monitoring volcanic activity in the region.

**ON THE TV**

The view circles around a crippled ship, listing severely, on the verge of capsizing. No life rafts. A FEW BODIES lifelessly bob on the waves.

NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)

Rescue ships have not yet been able to reach the area. And we have no confirmed manifest for the vessel and we do not know if there are any survivors. We do know, however, of a Canadian television crew and one American onboard the vessel based in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Joining me here in the studio is Angela Skowron, who has been following the story.

ANGELA SKOWRON

That's right, Bill.

(MORE)

ANGELA SKOWRON (CONT'D)  
 We have confirmed that Phoebe Towns,  
 an environmental activist from  
 Flagstaff, Arizona was on the ship.  
 Evidently, she was documenting the  
 breakaway iceberg.

NEWSCASTER  
 That's either very brave or very  
 silly.

ANGELA SKOWRON  
 Seems she comes from an intrepid  
 family. Her father was killed in  
 Africa during an elephant stampede  
 that occurred when animal rights  
 activists attempted to interfere  
 with illegal hunters. Her mother  
 perished in the sinking of a research  
 vessel on the Amazon River... a  
 sinking in which curiously no bodies  
 were found.

NEWSCASTER  
 That's a dubious lineage.

ANGELA SKOWRON  
 It is. It seems that Miss Towns  
 graduated from Rutgers with a degree  
 in chemical engineering and with  
 honors, I might add. Since then,  
 she has been part of various  
 environmental organizations. She  
 spent a year as an at-sea activist  
 for the NO FLUKES anti-whaling  
 organization based in New Zealand.

NEWSCASTER  
 Amazing!

ANGELA SKOWRON  
 On her Facebook page...

**BACK TO JAMES**

JAMES  
 She has a Facebook page?  
 James pulls out his phone, dialing.

**ON THE TV**

NEWSCASTER  
 Oh my god, look at that!

The ship rolls over, stern rising upward, one last slight turn from her screws. And she heads below the waves.

The TV signal breaks up, fragmented color pixels yielding to black. Then, RAINBOW BROADCAST TEST BARS.

**INT. LIFE RAFT - SAME**

Inside the raft, dimly illuminated, by low level emergency lighting, Phoebe downs some sort of survival ration. CHOKING down the lousy food, she CRIES, losing some of the food. She pulls up her knees and drops her head between them, silently SOBBING.

**INT. EXECUTIVE OFFICE - SAME**

Alvin York stands by a TV, official folders under his arm as the Honcho, sitting in a rocking chair takes in the same newscast.

HONCHO

God dammit! Now she's going to be more of a celebrity than before. I hope she drowns out there.

ALVIN YORK

Do you want to make sure that happens?

HONCHO

No. Having an environmental martyr might be worse.

Alvin nods, opening a folder, scanning info.

ALVIN YORK

She's a real pain in the ass. She was arrested in California for picketing a logging company. And she's currently organizing a campaign to interfere with aerial hunting in Alaska. And that's just going to piss off you know who.

HONCHO

Fuck you know who and her goddamn waders, too.

Honcho POUNDS his fists on the arms of the rocking chair, then flails his arms about causing his head to bob up and down and looking a bit like a puppet on strings.

**INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY**

The senator waits, grinning, drumming his fingers on his leg. The door opens and Dana Douglas enters.

She's got a face on her that indicates extreme displeasure.

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
You better hope that face doesn't  
freeze that way.

DANA DOUGLAS  
Fuck you.

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
Fuck me? Oh, I get it. You want an  
encore performance from our record  
breaking, history making sex of last  
night?

DANA DOUGLAS  
No. I want a divorce.

He leans back, surprised. He rubs his forehead as if that  
can bring clarity. He checks to see if the driver is giving  
the conversation any attention. He lowers his voice just in  
case, angrily sputtering.

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
What the hell are you talking about?  
Have you lost your mind?

DANA DOUGLAS  
How long have you been fucking that  
lobbyist slut you were with the other  
night?

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
I've never fucked her.

DANA DOUGLAS  
Is that a fact?

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
Yes. That's a fact.

Dana peers into his face.

DANA DOUGLAS  
Which lobbyist did you fuck?

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
I didn't fuck any lobbyist.

DANA DOUGLAS  
Who was it then?

Her arms fold, a fiery stare.

DANA DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
Who did you fuck?

SENATOR DOUGLAS  
What makes you think I fucked anyone?

DANA DOUGLAS  
What? I'll tell you what. The doctor  
just told me I have chlamydia.

Douglas leans back stunned.

DANA DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
Who?

Silence.

DANA DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
Who? You've been fucking for at  
least a couple weeks now. God dammit,  
who?

She whips off a high heel, an expensive brown shoe with a rosette, and POUNDS on him. He covers his head with his arms.

**INT. POLARIS RECEPTION ROOM - DAY**

James quietly enters the reception room. It's vacant. He CLEARS his throat, announcing himself. Eve pops out of a door, looking into the foyer. She disappears.

James figures that's all that's needed. He takes a seat with a BIG SIGH. He eyes the apples, reaching for one, but FOOTSTEPS O. S. stop him from grabbing one.

Mary Ann, looking extra professional, enters.

MARY ANN  
James. How are you?

He pulls in a GULP of air, preparing to speak. Nothing comes out. Immediately, Mary Ann crosses to him, sitting close.

MARY ANN (CONT'D)  
Are you okay?

He shakes his head, his shoulders heavily sagging.

JAMES  
That crazy ass senator.

MARY ANN  
Shouldn't you be more concerned about  
Honcho?



JAMES  
What do you know about that?

MARY ANN  
More than enough.

He drops his head in his hands.

JAMES  
Phoebe's ship sank.

MARY ANN  
I know.

Mary Ann moves in closer, ensuring that her knee touches his for some support.

MARY ANN (CONT'D)  
I'm so sorry.

James looks at her, his eyes welling with tears.

JAMES  
I'm guessing... you know people...  
The night when he brought me here I  
was pretty drunk... I told him we  
could cover the earth with a volcanic  
cloud like Sherwin fucking Williams.

MARY ANN  
And they jumped on it without any  
consequence speculation or model  
testing.

James bites his lip, puffing out his cheeks.

MARY ANN (CONT'D)  
That's what I despise about these  
people. They cannot think ahead.  
They have no sense of consequence.  
They're oblivious to the fact that  
everything that happens affects every  
other thing and everyone.

JAMES  
I need to get Douglas backed off and  
the Honcho, too. Otherwise, I'll be  
flipping burgers... or dead.

Mary Ann pats his leg.

MARY ANN  
I'll make some calls.  
(MORE)

MARY ANN (CONT'D)

Meanwhile, we need to see if we can  
find out about Phoebe.

(a wink)

I know this admiral.

**MONTAGE**

-- Mary Ann emphatically makes a point while talking on the phone. Big sell.

-- James sits in front of the TV, flipping channels, wearing a blank stare. He reaches in his jacket pocket. Something unfamiliar. He extracts Cindy's card. He looks at it smiling, then wads it up and pitches it across the room toward a trash can.

-- Eve sits in front of Senator Douglas, hands folded, head down. He reads her the riot act MOS.

-- Dana Douglas walks up the steps of Restoration house.

**INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - FOYER - DAY**

Dana Douglas steps into the foyer. No one stands to greet her. FOOTSTEPS coming down from upstairs.

Jeff Strong bounces down the stairs to greet her, but more, he's hurrying to keep her from snooping. He looks around to see if it looks like she's had a chance to get into anything. He extends a hand, rendering an official smile to go with it. She shuns his hand.

DANA DOUGLAS

What the fuck is going on here in  
your little safe haven frat house?  
Where do you hide the hookers?

JEFF STRONG

I assure you, Mrs. Douglas, you'll  
never find a prostitute on these  
premises.

DANA DOUGLAS

That so?

JEFF STRONG

It is, indeed.

DANA DOUGLAS

Then how come one of the hookers you  
forced on my husband gave him and me  
chlamydia?

He recoils slightly, his firm righteous resolve fading.

JEFF STRONG

I have no idea what your husband told you. However, I assure you, the Restoration House allows no prurient activity on premise and no one affiliated with the Restoration House, promotes, sanctions or participates in any illegal or amoral activity.

DANA DOUGLAS

Wow! Really? You might want to invite your lawyers over for afternoon tea after I have my media party.

Angering, Jeff cuts her off with a wag of an authoritative and powers that be backed index finger.

JEFF STRONG

...hopefully you can put on a cooler head. You might want to think about the threats you're issuing, and more, the consequences of them. What it would mean to the senator? His political stature? His role as a prominent member of the country's moral and religious leadership?

DANA DOUGLAS

The senator can go fuck himself for all I care. Course, because of you, he doesn't have to fuck himself, does he?

Complete, she storms out. Jeff whips out a phone, dialing at the speed of light.

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY**

James reads Phoebe's Facebook page, his phone at the ready. He looks at the phone. Nothing. A SIGH.

He heads to the mini bar, removing a bottle of wine. He checks his watch, deliberates and puts the wine back in the bar.

**INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - FOYER - LATER**

Jeff Strong stands in the way of Senator Douglas' entry. Behind him, stands a NICELY DRESSED MUSCLE MAN, just in case.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

Do you know how weird it is for you to call me over here and then tell  
(MORE)

SENATOR DOUGLAS (CONT'D)  
me I can't come in? God, man. Talk  
about double signals.

JEFF STRONG  
I'm sorry, Senator. It has to be  
this way. At least until things  
cool off. Your wife came by and  
threatened ugly things... going to  
the media... lawyers. That sort of  
nonsense. We can't have any negative  
press. Especially not now.

Jeff issues a firm head nod for emphasis. The senator looks  
at the floor, pondering what's next.

JEFF STRONG (CONT'D)  
I can offer you one thing.

Now, he's got the senator back.

JEFF STRONG (CONT'D)  
Shall we pray?

Douglas frowns, making a distasteful pucker.

**EXT. REMOTE AIRSTRIP - MEXICO - DAY**

FIVE WELL USED, UNMARKED C-47/DC-3 TYPE AIRCRAFT, sit parked  
on a tarmac next to an ancient fuel pump, various pieces of  
rusted airport gear and brand new fire extinguishers on  
wheels.

A WINDSOCK RATTLES around in the breeze.

The LEFT ENGINE on the LEAD PLANE, parked closest to the  
runway, COUGHS to life, sputtering out a flame and blue smoke.  
The engine works it way up to speed.

On the SECOND PLANE in the row, the port engine engages,  
noisily coming to life.

TRUCKS can be heard, getting louder, and getting louder fast.

PLANES THREE, FOUR and FIVE, each fire up the port engine,  
a coordinated action. The first plane in the row engages  
its second engine.

**FIVE TROOP TRANSPORT TRUCKS**

CRASH THROUGH THE PERIMETER FENCE, mowing down anything in  
their way.

The first plane gets underway. The LEAD TRUCK cuts out after  
it.

The plane swings its tail around, barely missing the truck, which swerves out of the way. The plane detours off the tarmac, across a dirt patch, severely bouncing as it makes hay for the runway.

The lead truck reverses, backs onto pavement, resuming chase. MEXICAN SOLDIERS cling to the side of the truck, ready to fire.

The other trucks reach the tarmac, blocking the four remaining planes.

SCORES OF ARMED MEXICANS jump from the troop trucks, their chatter drowned out by engine noise. Quickly, and with precalculated order, they surround the remaining four planes.

Now on the runway, the getaway plane commences take off roll, engines straining. The rear door opens. A MERCENARY hangs out with an assault rifle, FIRING AWAY.

The front tires on the truck blow out. It drops, SPARKS FLYING as it skids on its rims, SCRAPING to an impotent halt.

MEXICANS leap from the side and back of the truck, returning FIRE at the plane.

The plane's tail flaps back and forth, wagging a taunting good-bye. The plane's door closes and gaining speed, its tail lifts. Despite the shower of bullets, the plane lumbers airborne, circling into the blue.

The MEXICAN LEADER adorned with an automatic rifle, who we now see is HOMBRE 1 from the weapons deal, shakes a fist at the departing plane. He turns and waves at the troops covering the four planes. The squadron sits, both engines idling and ready, but no place to go.

The leader walks in front of one of the cockpits, making a cut sign to the PILOTS.

We see a hand extend out from the side window. A MIDDLE FINGER tests the winds.

HOMBRE 1

Idiot.

He raises his automatic rifle. It's tangled in his cross necklace. Freeing the gun, he SPRAYS the cockpit with bullets. The PILOT'S and CO-PILOT'S BODIES convulse with the shower of lead. Then, he shoots into the plane's engines. The engines SPUTTER and FLAME OUT, quickly dying. Lingering flames trickle out of the cowlings.

Hombre 1 waves a fanning gesture. Men fetch the nearby fire extinguishers and spray out the fires, careful to avoid leaking fuel.

Hombre 1 strolls in front of the next plane in the row. He makes a cut motion to the cockpit of the next plane. No response, engines keep running. He SHOTS OUT the tires of the plane. Then, he points his gun to the plane's wing making a most serious, "I mean business" gesture.

The engines on the plane cut. One by one, the other planes follow suit.

Slowly the doors of each plane open and THREE CREW MEMBERS IN CAMOUFLAGE JUMP SUITS and TWO PILOTS EXIT each of the planes. The Mexicans disarm and secure the hands of the mercenaries and flight crew with plastic ties, roughly loading them into their trucks.

Without warning, the plane with the shot out engines EXPLODES INTO A FIREBALL, knocking those standing to the ground.

Hombre 1, jumps up, pulling and tugging on everyone to get in the trucks and haul ass.

MERCENARY LEADER  
Vamanos. Alla arriba. Bombas.

The trucks hurriedly depart.

A SECOND EXPLOSION... FLAMING DEBRIS scatters about the area, showering the remaining aircraft. It's only a matter of time before the rest catch fire and explode.

#### **EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - DUSK**

Under clear skies, a life boat bobs on the ocean's surface. We hear the drone of a LARGE PROPELLER DRIVEN AIRCRAFT.

A GREEN FLARE DROPS to the water, smoking, sputtering out.

Near the marker, we see a small PARACHUTE collapse as its payload SPLASHES in the sea. A BUOY pops up and a BRILLIANT STROBE COMMENCES, FLASHING every couple of seconds. GREEN DYE brightens the dark water.

#### **EXT. RESTORATION HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON**

Senator Douglas exits the Restoration House, adjusting something in an inside overcoat pocket, then pulling his overcoat tightly about him. He gives a paranoid glance up and down the street.

From behind a tree, across the street from Polaris, we get a glimpse of a WOMAN'S FIGURE, cautiously observing his course.

As she leans out a slight bit further to observe, we recognize the woman as Dana Douglas on an emotionally charged reconnaissance mission.

**DANA'S POV**

The senator steps into the street, moving in the direction of Polaris, then briskly picks up his pace. He hesitates at the base of the brothel, again casing the street.

Out of no where, darts a WOMAN, decked out in all black - boots to cap. The woman runs up to him, stopping but a yard away - a gun jammed right at his heart.

DANA DOUGLAS

No! Barton! Look out!

Dana runs to intercept.

The senator's hands fly into the air.

**SENATOR DOUGLAS' POV**

Eve's angry face stares him down, her eyes wild, gun trembling in her hands.

EVE

(SPUTTERING)

You cheating bastard!

BANG! Smoke clouds the view at point blank range. Our view falls backward, dropping and facing the sidewalk. A TRICKLE OF RED comes into view, flowing right up to the soles of Eve's black boots.

SENATOR DOUGLAS

(weakly)

God dammit.

Another pair of shoes come into view. These shoes are familiar, expensive brown pumps, each adorned with a rosette.

Douglas lifts up to see Dana staring down at him, next to Eve.

They have two things in common and one is an angry look of contempt for the wounded senator. Mary Ann appears, on a cell phone, joining the scowling women.

MARY ANN

(on phone)

Terrific. It's Senator Douglas.

You might want to secure the block...

if you know what's good for everyone.

SIRENS in the BG. The ROTORS of a helicopter can be heard on the inbound.

MARY ANN (CONT'D)

You can so do that. And you better.  
Keep the media the fuck away from  
here.

Jarred back to reality by sirens, Eve turns to bolt. Dana grasps at her, managing to snag her arm.

DANA DOUGLAS

Who the hell are you?

EVE

Fuck you.

Dana hauls off and slugs EVE. Not the best contact, just enough to stagger her from a moment. Eve retaliates. She delivers a blow that knocks Dana backward on her butt.

Dana jumps to her feet, ready to rumble. Eve hovers, ready to go, too. Mary Ann intercepts Dana, giving Eve a look. "Run." Eve runs.

DANA DOUGLAS

What the hell are you doing? You  
let her get away!

MARY ANN

Don't worry about it.

Dana looks down at her husband, who tries to get up on one arm, falling back with a GROAN. He reaches out to touch one of her shoes. She moves her foot back, just out of reach.

DANA DOUGLAS

I hope it hurts.

An AMBULANCE arrives, PARAMEDICS jump into action.

DANA DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

You better double glove.

**EXT. NATIONAL MALL - EVENING**

POLICE and a FEW SWAT MEMBERS surround a tree. A SWAT OFFICER swaggers on scene.

SWAT OFFICER

What's up?

A POLICEMAN points into the tree.



SWAT OFFICER (CONT'D)

This better not be a cat.

The SWAT officer shines a flashlight into the tree. As he moves it about, we barely make out Eve, cowering and clinging to the branches.

SWAT OFFICER (CONT'D)

Ma'am, can you get down?

EVE

I can. But I'm not gonna.

Eve reaches in her pocket, pulling out something fast. In the poor light, we can't make it out.

The Swat Team leader instinctively ducks prompting, a NEARBY POLICE OFFICER and SWAT TEAM MEMBER to open FIRE.

Eve tumbles from the tree, crumpling on the ground with a THUD. Something rolls away from her.

#### **A FLASHLIGHT BEAM**

Shines on her face. Blood oozes from her mouth and something yellowish sticks out. The SWAT OFFICER'S fingers poke at her mouth. A piece of something pulpy in her mouth.

SWAT OFFICER

What the hell?

The flashlight's beam finds the object that fell from her hand. An apple... with a bite missing.

SWAT OFFICER (CONT'D)

Shit! This isn't going to be good.

Eve's body spasms, jerking out one last movement. The officers jump back.

SWAT OFFICER (CONT'D)

Shit! I hate when that happens.

#### **INT. HOTEL ROOM - EVENING**

James works away, lying on the bed laptop draped over him. The TV is on low, news of the day, of course.

He places his arm over his face. He shudders, fighting tears.

JAMES

Please Phoebe. Be safe. Please God.

**EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - MORNING**

The lifeboat aimlessly drifts in blue water and under a vivid blue sky.

**INT. THE LIFE RAFT - SAME**

Phoebe sits, huddled over something. Dark circles, gnarled hair and a cut and bruise on her forehead cannot diminish the determined fire in her eyes.

**PHOEBE'S HANDS**

Tremble in the cold, struggling for the dexterity to manage her mobile phone. She carefully lifts out the battery and SIM chip. Gently she blows into the phone, working to dry it. Becoming frustrated, she drops her hands.

PHOEBE

Shit!

Something catches her attention. We hear it, too. The UNMISTAKABLE DRONE OF A BOAT'S ENGINE grows louder and louder.

She UNZIPS the opening of the lifeboat, sticking her head out to see...

A COAST GUARD MOTOR WHALEBOAT - with THREE SAILORS, one with boat hook extended. In the distance, a bright white COAST GUARD CUTTER waits at the ready.

**INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY**

Dana Douglas, reading *The Bible*, sits by the senator who sleeps in a drug-induced stupor.

Mary Ann quietly walks in.

MARY ANN

Mrs. Douglas.

Dana looks up, a scowl crossing her face.

MARY ANN (CONT'D)

We didn't get a chance to meet before.  
I'm Mary Ann Hall...

DANA DOUGLAS

Oh, I know who you are. You're the whore pimp who farms out sluts to politicians so lobbyists and greedy war mongers and other bastards can get their way...

MARY ANN

Actually, you have that wired a bit backward...

DANA DOUGLAS

Is that so? We'll see how backward it is

Mary Ann closes on Dana, who recoils, pulling up into a tight leg cross.

MARY ANN

Don't even think like that.

DANA DOUGLAS

Why not?

MARY ANN

It's bigger than you know.

DANA DOUGLAS

So tell me.

MARY ANN

You have kids?

DANA DOUGLAS

Two.

MARY ANN

Think of them... what they'll go through. What a scandal would do to how they perceive their God-fearing father. Be a big girl and suck it up.

DANA DOUGLAS

By suck it up you mean ignore it?

MARY ANN

No. I mean fix it. All of it. Get your relationship back. Isn't forgiveness the key?

DANA DOUGLAS

You know how messed up it is to hear that from the woman who unfixed my marriage?

Big staredown.

DANA DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

(defiant)

You know what saved him? God.

Mary Ann fights an eye roll, widening her eyes in pretend amazement.

DANA DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

The director of the Restoration House gave him a *Bible* and told him to read scripture. James stuffed it in his coat... And it slowed the bullet. If that's not a "praise God," what is?

MARY ANN

Eve... the woman... who shot him...

A cold stare from Dana as she wipes away a tear.

MARY ANN (CONT'D)

...is dead.

DANA DOUGLAS

Good. I hope she rots in hell.

Mary Ann smiles, pursing her lips as she reaches into her purse removing a small plastic kit. She turns away. We see her prepare one of two hypodermic needles.

**EXT. COAST GUARD AIRFIELD - MORNING**

Blowing snow does not dissuade a gathering of PRESS from convening. An OFFICIAL LOOKING CAR without marking arrives. An OFFICER jumps out, struggling to push the zealous press from crowding.

A COAST GUARD HELICOPTER magically descends out of the snow, bouncing a bit as it lands.

The door opens. Phoebe, bewildered by the gathering, is led off the aircraft and to the waiting car.

The press presses, blitzing her with an assault of questions devoured by the wind and helicopter rotors.

**EXT. EXECUTIVE OFFICE - DAY**

Heavy snow falls outside the window. Honcho, with his back to us, enjoys the scene.

Dirk is seated, hands on knees, tense as can be.

HONCHO

So I guess there won't be any Global Warming talks today, eh, Dirk?

DIRK

No sir!

HONCHO

You kiss ass. Don't you have any opinions of your own?

A LOUD KNOCK O.S.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

Come!

In walks the mercenary Leader, again wearing a suit and looking a bit sun-burned. He tosses a folder on the desk. On them we see NUCLEAR and TOP SECRET LOGOS. Honcho glances up at the window, evidently using its reflection to survey the room.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

Do you know where they are?

MERCENARY LEADER

We have a guess.

HONCHO

I have a guess, too. Somewhere within a thousand miles of some shit hole in northern Mexico.

The mercenary leader, gives a "yes sir," head nod, intent upon covering his ass. Honcho SIGHS heavily.

DIRK

Are you preparing something in case someone goes to the press?

HONCHO

Who would be dumb enough to go to the press? We'd smear them into a shit hole they'd never climb out of... just like we always do. Go to the press. Fucking liberals. That's their answer for everything. Nobody has any balls. Nobody gets into the fight. Bunch of pussies.

Honcho clasps his hands behind him.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

I'd like to know how do you propose we get our men out of Mexico?

He gets blank stares.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

I'm tired of that fucking geologist.

Honcho SNAPS his fingers. The mercenary fetches the nuclear labeled folders and carries them to Honcho, avoiding eye contact.

**INT. POLARIS RECEPTION ROOM - DAY**

Phoebe tentatively enters the quiet reception room, checking it out. Mary Ann emerges.

MARY ANN

Phoebe Towns! I can hardly believe it.

PHOEBE

Me either. For a couple of reasons.

They give each other the best old girlfriends hug. As they do...

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

Honestly, I've been wanting to see you for years.

MARY ANN

Really?

PHOEBE

Yeah girl. It's good to see you. Hell, it's good to see anyone.

Hug complete, Mary Ann motions for Phoebe to sit.

MARY ANN

Have you seen James?

PHOEBE

Not yet. Phone got ruined. Haven't had a chance to call with the press and all.

Mary Ann reaches in her pocket and pulls out a phone. She pitches it to Phoebe. Great grab.

MARY ANN

He's had his plate full.

PHOEBE

Me too!

MARY ANN

Same ole Phoebe. Can I get you something?

PHOEBE

I'm okay. You wouldn't believe the royal treatment I got from the Coast Guard. Probably shouldn't eat for two weeks.

MARY ANN

You're welcome for that.

Phoebe misses Mary Ann's hint as she checks out the reception area.

PHOEBE

GPS? You're into GPS?

MARY ANN

If you mean girls pleasing senators, yes.

Phoebe bites her lip, slowly catching the drift.

PHOEBE

Makes sense. If my memory serves me correctly, weren't you voted the girl most likely to conceive at Rutgers?

MARY ANN

You were voted most likely to secede.

PHOEBE

Yeah, I got me an independent streak.

MARY ANN

You should see James.

PHOEBE

What ever happened to that baseball player you used to sneak out to bang?

MARY ANN

Joined a special ops thing. Never got it out of his blood. He got wired into a secret military group. Was killed in one of those controversial shoot outs in Baghdad in '04. Friendly fire sort of incident believe it or not.

PHOEBE

Like Pat Tillman?

MARY ANN

Worse.

Phoebe cringes, wishing she hadn't gone there.

MARY ANN (CONT'D)

Wouldn't have been so bad if I hadn't been there.

PHOEBE

What were you doing there?

MARY ANN

You know... some things are better not to know.

As Mary Ann nods firmly, punctuating her point. Then a head toss at the phone. Phoebe commences a text message.

**EXT. DESERT QUARRY - DAY**

Two CANVAS TOPPED TRUCKS and a VERY NEW ALL TERRAIN SUV wait in the quarry where the weapons deal previously took place.

A HELICOPTER breezes in, quickly setting down. We watch THREE MEN duck the rotor planes, heading to the trucks. We see these men are the mercenary leader and the two mercenaries previously accompanying him in the meeting with Senator Douglas. The two mercenaries each carry two briefcases. All of the mercenaries are armed with only side arms.

The HELICOPTER lifts off.

From the drivers side of one of the trucks, emerges Hombre 1. He makes a head nod.

HOMBRE 1

Hola, Mo, Larry y Shep.

He motions for the briefcases to be opened. Money. Lots of it. Satisfied, he cuts loose with an effortless and SHRILL WHISTLE.

The ABDUCTED MERCENARIES and FLIGHT CREWS jump from the vehicles, one by one, hands still secured with plastic. They are followed by their Mexican guards.

MERCENARY LEADER

Cut them loose.

HOMBRE 1

You do it. Not my job, man.

MERCENARY LEADER

Whatever. Get out of my fucking sight.



With a sinister grin, Hombre 1 gestures. The guards pile into the SUV, some in seats. Two curl up in the back compartment, pulling the tailgate in on themselves. The briefcases get tucked away. Once confident, the payload is secure. Hombre 1 offers a slight bow.

HOMBRE 1  
Gusto. Hasta la vista.

Hombre 1 jumps in the SUV and off they go.

**EXT. MOUNT SHASTA - DAY**

On an absolutely glorious day, we view a wide panorama of the mountain.

Somewhere on the mountain, slightly above the tree line. THREE MEN IN HEAVY DUTY OVERALLS and wearing sidearms fuss with an ordinance container, finishing the trek from a nearby HELICOPTER perched on a small clearing. We've seen this container before.

The men struggle, carefully positioning the container near a hole drilled into the mountain that quickly disappears into darkness.

The LEADER STANDS, wiping his hands together. On his overalls we see that Blackwater-like logo once again. As sweat trickles down his face, he nods approval. The other two men pop the lid. There's the bomb.

The two men wipe their hands dry on rags, preparing to lift the precious cargo.

The leader puts up his hand, halting the operation. He listens, squinting as he looks into the sky. HELICOPTERS, getting closer.

He steps away, scanning the horizon. Three helicopters fly inbound, heading directly to their location.

LEADER  
What the hell?

He checks his phone. No alerts.

LEADER (CONT'D)  
Close that up.

His helpers quickly comply as the helos settle onto the rough terrain.

From each helicopters jump a most unlikely group of commandos: SPIRITUAL DEVOTEES ARMED TO THE HILT and wearing ugly sandals.

Within seconds the mystical militia surrounds the bomb planting team. Considering the odds, none of the well-trained mercenaries even think of drawing a sidearm.

Last to emerge from the helicopters is a GURU, draped in scarlet and saffron. He motions to a few devotees.

Obediently, they scramble to attend to the bomb... and they seem to know what they're doing.

Another motion. Another group of the men swiftly disarm the bomb team, herding them to the helicopters.

The guru crosses to face the operation's leader. The guru shakes his head side to side, and with a satisfied smile, wags his index finger.

GURU

Do not mess with Mother Nature.

**INT. EXECUTIVE OFFICE - DAY**

From behind we see the honcho, SLAM down a phone. Present in his company: Dirk and Alvin York.

HONCHO

God dammit! God dammit!

Dirk pours some water and sets it on a table next to Honcho. He picks it up, hurling it across the room. Dirk crosses to pick up the mess. Alvin stands tall, holding his PSP in his hands, concealed behind his back.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

Every fucking thing is fucked.

DIRK

What can I do?

HONCHO

You can't do anything. You're an incompetent butt licking weasel. I'm sending you to Siberia... or maybe Alaska. You can see Siberia from there. Fuck.

(points at Alvin)

You're going too.

Honcho scratches his head with both hands.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

Get me that bitch who runs Polaris. And I want that fucking geologist. Let me be clear. By that I mean I don't care if I ever see him alive.

ALVIN YORK  
Understood.

HONCHO  
And never bring that fucking game in  
here again.

ALVIN YORK  
Sir.

The game slips into Alvin's pocket and Dirk and Alvin depart.

HONCHO  
Fuck. Fuck! FUCK!!

**EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

James steps out of his hotel into the brisk air. He shivers. Cold or an indication of concern? He looks up and down the street, then commences walking.

Behind him, we see a MAN IN BLACK wearing a black *ushanka* with grey flaps appear from around the corner.

The HOOTING of an OWL echoes off the buildings.

James continues down the street. He stops, turning to check the terrain.

The man in black fakes a phone call, turning away from James. He lights a cigarette to add to the decoy.

After a big SIGH, James steps across the street...

**EXT. PARK - NIGHT**

The park is void of people, filled only with trees poorly and illuminated under a few scattered lights.

James hesitates. Again he looks around, checking his watch, in the lousy lighting. He treks on.

Behind him the man in black follows at a safe distance.

Now in the park, the man in black stops at a trash bin, flicking away his cigarette. Reaching in his overcoat pocket, he removes a pistol equipped with silencer. He leans on the top of the trash bin, steadying himself.

James unwisely stops under a street light, once again satisfying his paranoia with a look. He sees no one...

The man in black takes aim.

An OWL silently swoops in from out of nowhere, snatching the *ushanka* off the would be assassin's head.

He jumps, jerking the gun off target. A SILENCED SHOT.

James continues walking at a brisk pace.

The STREET LIGHT under which he stood SHATTERS with the impact of a wayward BULLET.

James wheels about. The OWL flies over his head, dropping the *ushanka*, scaring the crap out of James. Not in the mood to investigate, he picks up his pace, trotting off to his destination.

The man in black takes off after him, watching James instead of where he's going. He runs into a water fountain, toppling over the top of it, ass over tea kettle. His gun errantly SHOOTS. A pained GROAN.

The man in black lifts his pants. Blood trickles down his ankle.

**EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

Phoebe waits in front of the restaurant. James trots into view, slowing once Phoebe is in sight. Timidly, he waves. She waves back. Awkward.

JAMES

Hey. You okay?

PHOEBE

Actually yes.

JAMES

Got your note.

She looks away, biting her lip, comes back at him preparing an explanation, words ready to spew.

James puts his finger on her lips. "Shh." He nods. "It's okay."

Phoebe forces a quivering smile. She tries her best to ignore the tear tricking down her cheek. Phoebe leans forward, giving James a peck on the cheek. She pulls back, looking at him, a bit amazed. She touches his forehead.

He gives her a look, "What?"

PHOEBE

It's freezing. How can you be sweating?

JAMES  
 Didn't want to be late... so I kinda  
 jogged some of the way.

PHOEBE  
 That's not true.

JAMES  
 Do you want some wine? I want some  
 wine.

PHOEBE  
 Did Obama get elected?

JAMES  
 Near as I can remember.

She hooks her arm in his, leading him into the restaurant.

PHOEBE  
 Let's make a pact.

He gives her an "uh-oh" look.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)  
 Tonight we talk about nothing heavy.  
 Okay? Just fun and food.

JAMES  
 Okay.

PHOEBE  
 And let's remember that in a universe  
 not so far away and not all that  
 long ago, we used to like each other.

JAMES  
 Perfect.

**INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

Phoebe polishes off the last of something on her plate.  
 Totally clean. She looks at it embarrassed.

She eyeballs his plate, noticing that he's mostly picked  
 around at his food. And more, there's still some wine in  
 his glass.

PHOEBE  
 You okay?

JAMES  
 Worried.

PHOEBE

'Bout what?

JAMES

You said nothing heavy, remember?

She nods, chewing her lower lip.

PHOEBE

Is it those guys?

He motions her closer with a beckoning index finger. She leans in.

JAMES

You really want to hear this?

PHOEBE

Two bottles of wine says yes. A sober me would say no.

JAMES

Is that a no?

PHOEBE

No.

James inches closer.

JAMES

(whispering)

Night I got here, I got totally hammered. Told some stupid senator we could stop global warming if we planted nuclear devices under volcanoes and lit them up and covered the Earth with an ash cloud.

She pulls back, horrified. He motions her back in with his finger.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(whispering intensifies)

They're trying to do it.

PHOEBE

What are we going to do? We can't let this happen.

JAMES

I don't know what to do.

PHOEBE

Does anybody know... other than these guys? I mean... should we call the media?

JAMES

They're just going to think we're drunk. How'd that sound?

PHOEBE

When's it gonna happen?

JAMES

I have no idea.

She leans back, looking for another drop of wine in her glass. James slides his glass to Phoebe. She goes for it as a WAITER returns with the bill folder. As he departs...

PHOEBE

Is your room safe?

JAMES

(head shake no)  
Ever hear of Polaris?

She makes a quick head nod, "let's go."

**EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

James and Phoebe stop outside the restaurant. James looks around and all about. Phoebe decides it's a good course of action and does the same. Satisfied the coast is clear, they head onward.

A few brisk steps and TWO BLACK CARS, TINTED WINDOWS pull curbside, double parking. TWO GOONS jump out of each car. Two grab James, one on each arm. Two grab Phoebe, same drill.

GOON

Come with us. Quietly is better.

James and Phoebe trade looks. He nods his head yes; she shakes her head no. He goes with the drill. She struggles, GRUNTING and GROANING.

The two goons on the more compliant James smoothly get him in the lead car, which dashes off into the dark.

PHOEBE

James! No!

She turns to one goon, giving him a good shin kick. He lets go. She thrashes loose of the second goon. Making a quick bolt for it.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

Get off me, you stinking shit!

Goon 1 catches her. She lifts her legs up, kicking, clawing gouging.

A MALE PASSERBY heads toward them, slowing, cautiously taking it all in.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

Call Channel 4. We're being abducted.

Don't just look at me! Do something!!

The passerby checks out the situation. The goon gives him a "don't get in this" look.

GOON

She can't hold her liquor.

The passerby walks by a few feet away. Phoebe clutches at him, trying for a grab. She gets air. The man picks up his pace, wanting none of this. A quick look back.

PHOEBE

Call 9-1-1! Help! Help!!

The goon shakes her, wrapping his arms around her tightly.

GOON

Shut the fuck up! You make this hard it's not gonna be so fun.

At the restaurant, the waiter comes out, checking out the commotion.

PHOEBE

Help!

The waiter runs to help. The second goon returns. The waiter prepares to dive onto the goon holding Phoebe. But the second goon cold cocks the waiter. He's down and out.

The second goon pulls a needle out of his pocket tries to get to Phoebe's arms. With the grip the other goon has, that doesn't work. He lifts up her coat.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

Help. Help me God dammit!

She kicks and flails.

PHOEBE (CONT'D)

I've survived a ship sinking at sea  
and lived on a raft in the middle of  
(MORE)



PHOEBE (CONT'D)  
a frozen fucking ocean for days and  
come back to this...

GOON  
Shut up!

PHOEBE  
Fuck you!

**THE NEEDLE**

Slams into Phoebe's thigh.

**PHOEBE**

Jolts with the impact. In a second, her rage fades. Her eyes roll back and she's a dead weight for the goons to carry to the waiting car.

**INT. HOLDING CELL**

Phoebe lies on the floor of a small concrete cell void of anything. Her clothes are torn, her face bruised, a lip split.

The DOOR to the cell NOISILY OPENS.

Phoebe can barely lift her head.

The mercenary leader enters, roughly lifting her to her feet and securing her hands behind her back.

PHOEBE  
Can I have some water?

MERCENARY LEADER  
No worries. In no time you're going  
to get more water than your little  
heart desires.

He pulls plastic securing straps extra tight on her wrists.

PHOEBE  
Ow!

MERCENARY LEADER  
That hurt? You ain't seen nothing  
yet, bitch.

**INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

From behind, we see Honcho sitting at a long table.

A FIRM KNOCK.

HONCHO

Come!

The mercenary leader pushes a weak, wobbly Phoebe into the room. She squints trying to make out Honcho's identity.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

Ah, the infamous and complication  
creating Miss Phoebe Towns.

Phoebe offers her best scowl of defiance.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

In but a few moments, we'll be able  
to get down to business.

Waiting, waiting, then the door opens and in walks Dirk.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

Nice of you to join us.

DIRK

They just got here.

The Honcho stands, motioning let's go. Dirk opens the door he just entered. The mercenary leader roughly pushes Phoebe out, tossing a wink at Honcho.

HONCHO

Come on. Let's settle all this,  
once and for all.

**INT. OMINOUS CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS**

This hallway is not decorated. Grey and green walls. Grey concrete floor. Pipes and wiring the only decor. Despite the long hall, not a single EXIT SIGN in sight. This is not good.

Honcho leads the way, briskly striding down the corridor. Dirk must take huge steps to keep up.

Phoebe follows, chin up, but tears streaming down her face.

The mercenary leader keeps a hand on his side arm.

Down the hallway and finally to an anonymous door. Honcho stands back waiting for Dirk to open it. He hangs back, wanting to be the last to enter.

**INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

The room is large, but barren. No windows. A chair, in which James is seated. In the corner of the room a board... obviously a water board.

Nearby, buckets of water, sponges, rags, restraining devices.

Behind him, stand TWO HOODED AND WELL ARMED GUARDS in black jump suits without ID or logos. They're scary and they're silent, their still posture adds to the grim mood.

James and Phoebe trade worried looks. Honcho steps between them, giving both a disgusted and pissed look. As the mercenary leader pushes Phoebe up against the far wall.

HONCHO

I'm not happy.

SILENCE.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

Someone fucked with my plans...

(leaning into James'  
face)

...a plan that actually started out as your plan. But then it became my plan. I love my plans. And I hate people who fuck with my plans.

Honcho paces, his anger building, moving to face the wall where Phoebe is standing. He talks to the wall, but he directs it at Phoebe and James.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

It seems some devotees... devotees of Sri Who Gives a Fuck... armed fucking devotees... intercepted the only bomb we had left and took three of our agents captive. Fucking devotees!

He winds up as if going to punch something. He's not close enough to James. He swings, stopping his fist just short of the wall.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

How did the best funded, meanest bunch of mercenary assholes on earth get taken by a bunch of root chomping, robe wearing, religious whack jobs? What happened to the device? Does anybody know? Huh? DOES ANYBODY KNOW? NO!?

Honcho comes around to face Phoebe.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

Now we have religious nuts with a bomb!

Did one of the hooded guards SNICKER? Honcho thinks so. He strolls behind them, checking them out like a D.I., hassling new recruits.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

It's not funny. Know what else is not funny? Someone persuaded Mexicans, who we normally rely on to be part of our team, to flip on us. How did that happen?

Honcho looks between Dirk, the mercenary leader and James.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

Our men got captured. Planes lost. Four weapons lost. Nuclear debris to dispose of. Men got killed. And it cost me a lot of fucking money.

Honcho moves in front of James, leaning down to get in his face, hands on his thighs.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

I hate wasting money. But what pisses me off even more is people... stupid people with airy fairy ideals getting in my way!

As Honcho goes on, spit flies out, showering James, who fights the urge to cower. He defiantly raises his chin, greeting whatever spittle makes it his way.

Honcho turns to the mercenary. A head nod. The mercenary pulls out his side arm.

PHOEBE

No!

Honcho wheels to Phoebe, pointing.

HONCHO

Shut the fuck up!

The mercenary chambers a round.

One of the hooded guards whips off the hood, revealing her identity. It's Mary Ann. She raises her weapon at the mercenary leader. She shakes her head angrily. "Don't do it."

Startled looks all around.

MERCENARY LEADER

Hall! Mary Ann fucking Hall!

MARY ANN

Paybacks are a bitch, Bill.

She fires two rounds into him with phenomenal precision. The first to his hand, knocking his pistol free. The second, spot on the bridge of his nose. His eyes spread as he drops backward with a sickening flesh on concrete sound.

Dirk quickly reaches for the loose pistol. Mary Ann drills his hand. Dirk recoils SOBBING and MOANING.

Mary Ann motions to Honcho. Hands up. No argument there.

Mary Ann crosses to Phoebe, cutting her hands loose as she keeps an eye on Honcho. Phoebe gives Mary Ann a look of amazement as she rushes to James.

MARY ANN (CONT'D)

What? I wasn't always a madam.

He makes a head nod at the other hooded guard. The guard secures the wayward sidearm, bringing it to Mary Ann. Then the guard reaches into a large pocket on well equipped pants, removing a case. The guard opens the case, revealing five serious needles.

Honcho strains to see.

HONCHO

What the fuck are you doing?

MARY ANN

Shut up! I'm so tired of your shit. Who else knows about this?

HONCHO

York.

MARY ANN

Text him. Let me see it before you send it.

Honcho frowns as he texts, giving a quick angry look.

HONCHO

Douglas, too.

MARY ANN

No worries there.

Honcho offers the phone to Mary Ann. She takes it, checks it and sends it.

MARY ANN (CONT'D)

Now we wait.

DIRK

My hand.

MARY ANN

Wrap it in your jacket, you candy  
ass. It's not much of a hole. You're  
barely bleeding.

**INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER**

Mary Ann sits facing the door, the other guard, standing  
next to her, poised for action.

Honcho stands, leaning against the wall, nodding off.

James and Phoebe sit close to each other on the floor, her  
head on his shoulder.

Dirk lies curled up in a ball, his hand wrapped his suit  
coat.

The door opens. Alvin steps in. Seeing the situation, he  
takes a step back.

MARY ANN

In!

Alvin surveys the situation, electing to comply. He enters,  
giving Mary Ann a disgusted look.

ALVIN YORK

Ah man. Not you.

Mary Ann offers a head nod. "Yes, me." He closes the door  
behind him.

James jumps to his feet. He crosses to Alvin and reaches in  
his suit pocket, capturing his PSP. James holds it in front  
of him, then SMASHES it to the floor. "So there!"

MARY ANN

Let's get on with it. All of you,  
roll up your sleeves.

HONCHO

What are you doing?

She motions for the second guard to do the deed.

The guard crosses to Alvin York. He rips off Alvin's jacket,  
jabbing him in the arm through his shirt with the serious  
needle. He GRIMACES, a trickle of blood where the needle  
entered. A moment. His eyes roll, spittle oozes from his  
mouth and down he goes.

Dirk watches, horrified, trembling.

HONCHO (CONT'D)

What is this shit?

The guard proceeds to Dirk. He sags even before the needle enters his arm. The guard YANKS him upright, doing the deed. Once the drug kicks in, the guard lets go. Dirk drops like a rock.

Mary Ann crosses to get in Honcho's face.

MARY ANN

It's so new you don't even know about it. And it works. Once this gets to your brain, you won't remember any of this. In fact, you won't be able to remember who won the election. Or which hand you use to wipe your ass.

She makes a quick gesture to her neck.

The guard moves on to Honcho. He extends his arm, resigning himself to the fate.

Instead, the guard jabs the needle into his neck. Honcho makes the most unpleasant GURGLING GROAN a human can render, then drops to the floor, unconscious.

**INT. POLARIS RECEPTION ROOM - DAY**

Mary Ann enters with one of those beautiful silver trays. This one carries a coffee pot, cream, sugar, organic cookies and three cups.

James and Phoebe sit on one of the sofas, knees touching.

Mary Ann sets to pouring coffee. Done being hostess, she sits, neatly folding herself onto the other sofa.

PHOEBE

Wow!

MARY ANN

Yeah, well now I need an income stream.

James and Phoebe sip the coffee. Phoebe makes a YUMMY sound.

MARY ANN (CONT'D)

Shade grown.

JAMES

You know... over these past days... obviously there's been a lot of stuff to chew on... I think it's time for me to honor the Greek god Prius.

PHOEBE

There is no Greek god Prius.

JAMES

By that I mean, I can get around in ways that are far more... how shall we say... globally appropriate?

MARY ANN

You can say green and not turn to stone even if you are one of those red state fellas.

JAMES

That's just it. I can't stand myself when I'm the fake data bitch of these greedy assholes. I love trees and I love nature.

(stands, bellowing)

There! I said it! I love trees!  
And bears!

Curious looks from Mary Ann and Phoebe.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I have a proposal.

A mixed look crosses Phoebe's face. "Is this for me? Goody. No, I mean oh shit."

JAMES (CONT'D)

(goes for professional posture)

We should start a consultancy firm. A green, planet helpful, humankind improving firm.

MARY ANN

Let's go after crappy food. Until people stop eating shit, they'll never be able to think clearly.

Head nods of agreement.

JAMES

I'll address environmental matters. I am a geologist, after all.



Here he gets a look of doubt from Mary Ann and firm head shaking from Phoebe. She wags a finger at him.

PHOEBE

Yeah well, from now on, you run all your plans by us first. You hear me?

James renders a salute to Phoebe. A pause, then she playfully nudges into him.

**EXT. AIRSTRIP IN MEXICO - DAY**

The burned out skeletons of four aircraft lie on a tarmac amongst a scattering pile of burnt out random debris. Surrounding the site, RED TAPE and signs reading PELIGRO.

A COYOTE approaches the hole in the fence where the trucks previously crashed through. He sniffs the air. He runs away.

**INT. RELIGIOUS COMPOUND - MOUNT SHASTA - DAY**

The mercenaries who attempted to place the bomb on Mount Shasta join in GROUP MEDITATION with other DEVOTEES, led by the GURU.

**INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

In the middle of the room, three chairs are pulled together. On those chairs sit Jeff Strong, Dana Douglas, a *Bible* in her lap, and Senator Douglas, arm in sling. Their heads are bowed, being lead in MOS prayer by Jeff.

A WOMAN walks through the room, tip toeing so her heels make no noise.

Senator Douglas turns his head to check out the passing woman.

Dana Douglas gives him a firm SMACK DOWN with her *Bible*.

**INT. TV STUDIO**

From the rear, we see the Honcho being wired up for an interview. In front of him a table is set for reporters.

PRODUCER

Thank you for taking time to talk with us on Thanksgiving, sir.

We hear unintelligible GRUMBLING from Honcho.

INT. JAMES' DINING ROOM - THANKSGIVING - DAY

As we watch the festive gathering, we hear the V.O. of Honcho answering questions for the press.

MALE PRESS MEMBER (O.S.)

Sir, is it true that an effort is being mounted to mine uranium precariously close to the Colorado River?

HONCHO (O.S.)

I have no knowledge of such a plan.

James dining room is well decorated for the holiday, obviously with a woman's touch. On a wall we see a beautifully framed photo of A WHALE AND HER CALF SWIMMING IN THE OCEAN.

On the table, dressing, gravy, cranberry, mashed spuds and all the trimmings await.

FEMALE PRESS MEMBER (O.S.)

Can you confirm that you did in fact order water boarding at Gitmo?

HONCHO (O.S.)

I don't remember any such order. I don't remember anyone even mentioning water boarding at Gitmo.

James enters carrying a turkey, that he carefully places at the head of the table. He turns, looking back to throw a smile at Phoebe, who beaming, brings a bowl of succotash to the table. Behind Phoebe, Mary Ann, enters, carrying two bottles of wine, with a third tucked under her arm.

MALE PRESS MEMBER (O.S.)

Sir, was Blackwater involved in the killing of those twenty-four civilians in Baghdad last week?

HONCHO (O.S.)

I don't recall Blackwater being involved in that or any such incident.

James nods thankful approval and we PULL BACK out a window and upward, taking on an AERIAL POINT OF VIEW...

FEMALE PRESS MEMBER (O.S.)

What do you have to say about the slaughtering your party took in the recent election?

HONCHO (O.S.)

Oh. Was there a slaughtering? Who won that thing, anyway?

FEMALE PRESS MEMBER (O.S.)

You're joking, right? Are you all right, sir?

HONCHO (O.S.)

Fine, thanks. My mind's never been clearer.

We drift over snow-capped Mt. Humphrey glowing in late afternoon sunlight and we...

FADE OUT: