

CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER

A Screenplay

by

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From the Novel

by

Tom Clancy

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**FOR EDUCATIONAL
PURPOSES ONLY**

SEAMAN
Chief -- come here!

The Chief hurries forward -- stares into the cabin.

THE SALON (FROM THEIR POV)

It's a vision straight out of De Sade: a man in his fifties and a younger woman are lying in a tidepool of their own blood, stripped naked, slashed and butchered beyond belief.

The salon's been ravaged, too, pillows and cushions ripped apart, carpets askew, great chunks of paneling torn from the bulkheads.

Then a BOAT ENGINE barks to life off the port bow. The Chief and Seaman run forward, just as a jet black Scarab digs away. Two MEN are in the boat, both Latins.

The Chief whips out his sidearm, PUMPS THREE SHOTS after them, turns and yells to his Captain on the cutter.

CHIEF
Coming around the bow, sir.
Killers! Stop 'em!

The Scarab arcs around in front of the yacht, heading off and away.

The Captain turns to a GUNNER manning a .50 caliber.

CAPTAIN
Fire!

The Gunner squeezes the trigger; the fifty BELCHES.

Slugs tear into the Scarab; the boat EXPLODES.

MAN (OVER)
Son-of-a-bitch!

EXT. CAMP DAVID, MARYLAND - DAY

Marine choppers crowd the pad.

SAME MAN (OVER)
Wes Carter was a friend of mine.

INT. THE GREAT ROOM OF THE MAIN LODGE

Admiral JAMES GREER and four other men are seated before a fireplace. Three of the men are in their 50's, one slim, preppy, another short and fat with cryptic, owlsh eyes. The third man is pale, fragile-looking, and the fourth tall and tan, with silver hair; looks like a rich old cowboy.

CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER

FADE IN:

EXT. THE GULF STREAM - DAY

A Coast Guard CUTTER PASSES INTO FRAME. The bridge of the cutter: A Radar TECH calls from his station.

TECH
Sir... could you take a look at
this?

The CAPTAIN turns away from a chart, crosses over to the display; the Tech points to a blip on the screen.

CAPTAIN
At anchor?

TECH
No, sir, seems to be drifting -- has
been since I came on watch.

The Captain studies the blip.

TECH
Pretty big displacement, sir.
Mother ship?

CAPTAIN
Could be.

He turns to his WHEELSMAN.

CAPTAIN
Come about -- new course,
Three-Zero-Nine.

WHEELSMAN
Aye, aye, sir -- new course,
Three-Zero-Nine.

The cutter veers off.

TIME CUT TO:

ANOTHER PART OF THE STREAM

The Empire Builder, a sleek 100-foot Feadship, lies adrift in the water.

The cutter appears -- throttles back -- comes alongside the yacht. A CHIEF and SEAMAN leap forward; the Seaman goes forward, the Chief makes for the stern.

The sailor reaches the hatch to the salon -- stops in his tracks -- sucks in a breath.

A sixth man is standing before them with his back to the fire. He's in his middle years, a simple, hardscrabble face (that masks a fierce determination): Meet the PRESIDENT of the United States, who, at this moment, is fuming with indignation.

PRESIDENT

He was a damn good friend! And, one hell of an American, too.

The Pres crosses to a table covered with 8x10 photo blow-ups of the crime scene. He picks up one of the shots, grimaces, tosses it back, zeros in on the Pale Man.

PRESIDENT

Mr. Director, you're certain these murderers tie in with them drug bums?

FBI Director EMIL JACOBS nods.

JACOBS (PALE MAN)

Yes, Mr. President. Both men had extensive records of activity within the Bogota operation.

Suddenly, the Admiral winces; the Pres catches it.

PRESIDENT

You all right, Admiral?

Greer mops his (perspiring) brow.

GREER

I'm fine, sir.

PRESIDENT

You agree with the FBI?

GREER

I do, sir. They were definitely in the employ of the cartels. Our people on station down there have confirmed it.

The President turns back to the fire; Greer winces (again).

PRESIDENT

I am sick and tired of those monkeys. I promised the American people I'd do something about this drug problem, and we haven't done squat.

He spins back to the room, nails Owl Eyes.

PRESIDENT

Jimmy, I want these goofs to get a message.

National Security Advisor JAMES CUTTER shifts his considerable bulk.

CUTTER

What sort of message, Mr. President?

PRESIDENT

That poison of theirs is gonna stop flooding in here like piss from a tall cow.

He turns to the Cowboy.

PRESIDENT

We're gonna shut 'em down, Judge! And while we're at it, I wouldn't mind bustin' some butt, if you know what I mean?

CIA Director Judge ARTHUR MOORE's eyes ricochet off Cutter's, back to the Pres.

MOORE (THE COWBOY)

I hear you, sir.

The Preppy leans forward.

PREPPY

Mr. President... Are you suggesting a course of action?

PRESIDENT

Yeah, Ritter, I am: DO SOMETHING! Let those jaboloneys know we're all fed up with their bullshit.

WILLIAM RITTER, CIA Deputy Director/Operations, shares an eye with Cutter. Cutter turns back to the President.

CUTTER

Sir -- what you're asking for -- it can't be accomplished through routine police agencies.

The Pres waves a hand at Greer, Ritter, and the Judge.

PRESIDENT

What the hell you think I got CIA here for?

MOORE

But, Mr. President, even we have limits in this kind of effort.

CUTTER

This type of endeavor requires maximum resources.

PRESIDENT

Interpret that for me, please.

CUTTER

Sir, either our national security is threatened by these people, or it is not.

PRESIDENT

Yeah... well, I said that, too, didn't I?

CUTTER

Yes, sir, you did.

The President turns, looks at the fire, then turns back to the others.

PRESIDENT

Boys, let's just put it this way: I want some pay-back -- and y'all better see I get it!

He starts out of the room. Cutter and Ritter exchange a conspiratorial look; Greer catches it -- then he suddenly oofs out a breath -- starts to rise -- clutches his middle -- and crashes to the floor, groaning.

GO TO BLACK

FADE UP:

EXT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Establish.

INT. THE HOSPITAL

Ryan comes down a corridor, stops at a door, opens it.

Greer's on a bed, stable now, talking to a doctor. When the door opens, both men look to it. Ryan stops, starts to back out of the room.

GREER

No -- come in.

Ryan enters, Greer gestures at the doctor.

GREER

Captain Collins -- Jack Ryan.

Ryan and COLLINS share a nod. There's a CPO working on Greer's bedside phone. He hangs up the receiver and turns to the Admiral.

CPO

Excuse me, Admiral -- the line's secure.

GREER
Thanks, Chief.

CPO
Sir.

He picks up his tool box and exits; Greer gestures at Collins.

GREER
The good doctor, here, is about to break the bad news.

RYAN
I'll come back, sir.

GREER
Stay -- I want you to hear it.
(at Collins)
Go ahead, Doc.

COLLINS
Well, sir... the tests indicate you have a cancerous growth on the lower right quadrant of your pancreas.

GREER
Is it operable?

COLLINS
Perhaps...

GREER
That sounds like a "no," Captain.

COLLINS
Judging by your cholecystogram, I suspect the tumor is -- mature.

GREER
Too big to slice into.

COLLINS
(nods)
That would be my opinion, sir.

A beat, then Ryan jumps in, impatient.

RYAN
So, what's the prognosis?

He looks to Greer, shakes his head in apology.

RYAN
I'm sorry, sir...

GREER
That's okay -- I was just about to ask.

They both turn back to Collins.

COLLINS
Radiation -- drug therapy.

GREER
But, no cures.

COLLINS
No cures, sir.

Greer looks away for a moment, then back to Collins.

GREER
Thank you, Captain.

COLLINS
I'll be in later, sir.

The Doctor exits; Ryan turns back to Greer, frowning.

GREER
You look troubled.

RYAN
I... I'm very upset, sir.

GREER
(sighs)
Me, too -- but the world goes on.
Speaking of which, I talked to the
Judge this morning. I told him I
wanted you appointed my Deputy.

Ryan blinks, taken aback.

RYAN
Sir...

He shakes his head, starts to protest. Greer holds up his hand.

GREER
I need you! I need your brain --
your intellect. I want you to watch
and listen very carefully.

Ryan's brow knits.

RYAN
For what, sir?

GREER
Anything -- everything.

He beckons him closer; Ryan leans in.

GREER

(low)

My office safe -- L33-R16-L22-R7.

(as Ryan nods)

Repeat it.

RYAN

(also low)

L33-R16-L22-R7.

Ryan steps back, shakes his head.

RYAN

I don't understand, Admiral... Is something happening? About to happen?

GREER

(smiles)

That's for you to tell me, son.

EXT. THE CANAL ZONE, PANAMA - NIGHT

Establish.

INT. A WATERFRONT BAR - NIGHT

A stripper's on stage, grinding her stuff for a handful of customers.

Ritter and a man are at a table in the rear of the club. The guy's mid-50's, solid build, gunfighter eyes. Ritter's just said something; the man's weighing his words.

MAN

If I hear you right, we're talking revenge.

RITTER

Retribution is a more acceptable word.

MAN

Whatever -- you want to hurt them.

RITTER

Precisely.

MAN

What's the objective?

RITTER

The targets represent a clear and present danger to the security of the United States.

MAN

The President said that?

RITTER
His words. Can you do it?

MAN
I can do it. But, I run the op my way. No interference. You give me the targets. I do the rest.

RITTER
Agreed.

MAN
I'll need an insertion team.

RITTER
A team? You can have a brigade.

MAN
I don't want a fucking brigade, Ritter. I want ten light fighters -- Hispanics -- the best ninjas you've got.

RITTER
You can pick them yourself.

MAN
I fully intend to. I'll also need air support -- some radical communications.

RITTER
Done.

MAN
You realize that running a lash-up like this has its boundaries. If you increase the assets -- try and make it more effective -- you'll get blown sure as hell.

RITTER
I know the drill, man.

He checks his watch, takes an envelope out of a briefcase, passes it to the man, who opens it, glances inside.

MAN
Operation SHOWBOAT...
(smiles)
Sounds appropriate.

Ritter gets up; they exchange a stare.

MAN
Why are we bothering?

RITTER
Why we're bothering isn't your concern.

MAN

I got to tell you, I don't like it.

RITTER

We don't pay you to like it, Clark.

He walks off; CLARK sucks a tooth.

EXT. A HACIENDA (OUTSIDE BOGOTA) - NIGHT

It's a huge, rambling adobe sprawled across a mountain top, surrounded by walled gardens, festooned with concertina wire and blinding floodlights; sort of Frank Lloyd Wright meets Ludwig the Mad.

INT. THE MAIN SALON OF THE HACIENDA

Two men are in the room. One is behind a desk, mid-40's, a patron-type right down to the white suit and stiletto cigar. The other guy's younger, slicker, soap opera-handsome.

PATRON

It's none of your business why we did it. He had it coming -- that's all you have to know.

HANDSOME

I understand, Patron... but, I repeat: The man was extremely close to their White House.

PATRON

(smiles)

That doesn't surprise me.

HANDSOME

But, Jefe...

PATRON

(sharp)

Forget it, Cortez, it's over.

Colonel CARLOS CORTEZ shakes his head.

CORTEZ (HANDSOME)

No, Senor Escobedo, it's not!

ERNESTO ESCOBEDO sits up; the line got his attention.

ESCOBEDO (PATRON)

Why do you say that?

CORTEZ

There's a rumor in play... Some people within their government are advocating an offensive against you.

MAN

What are you telling me? The United States is going to declare war on us?

CORTEZ

Not a war -- not in the open, at least. But the possibility of covert retaliation is very real.

Escobedo takes a beat.

ESCOBEDO (THE MAN)

You've confirmed this?

CORTEZ

My sources believe it's true.

Escobedo sits back, fires up his cigar.

ESCOBEDO

So, how do you suggest we react to such a threat?

CORTEZ

I have a plan... It'll be expensive.

ESCOBEDO

Mmmm, with you, it's always expensive. How much?

CORTEZ

Three million, perhaps, to begin.

ESCOBEDO

And what's this three million buy us?

CORTEZ

Men, arms -- vehicles.

ESCOBEDO

And, who'll lead these men, Colonel?

CORTEZ

I will, of course.

ESCOBEDO

Aha! You're willing to give up the pleasures of Washington for the hazards of the field?

CORTEZ

I'm here to serve you, and the cartel.

Escobedo studies him, gets up.

ESCOBEDO

No, Cortez, I think you're here to serve yourself, as usual.

CORTEZ

Jefe...

ESCOBEDO

Never mind... Do what you have to.

Escobedo starts out of the room; Cortez smiles, thin.

EXT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Establish.

INT. THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Judge Moore is behind his desk. Ryan's standing across from him.

MOORE

Look, Jack, I know how you feel about him -- I feel the same way. But, we both know his chances of making it are pretty damn slim. And, our business here is to serve the country. He wants you to succeed him. And, I think you're ready for it. What do you think?

RYAN

I -- I don't know, Judge. I suppose I am technically... but I lack political sophistication.

MOORE

You'll pick that up.

(smiles)

Besides, politics aren't supposed to have much place in what we do here. The important thing is, the President likes you and The Hill likes you, so...

The Judge's INTERCOM BUZZES; he leans into the box.

MOORE

Yeah...?

WOMAN'S VOICE

(amplified)

Mr. Ritter's here.

MOORE

Send him in.

The door opens and Ritter enters.

MOORE
(at Ritter)
Hello, Bob.

RITTER
(nods)
Judge...

MOORE
You're just in time. I'm about to
appoint Dr. Ryan Acting Deputy
Director, Intelligence.

Ritter tries to hide his surprise.

RITTER
Really...?

His eyes hit Ryan's, they share a look; it's obvious
there's no love lost between these two.

MOORE
The appointment's provisional, of
course. If James recovers, wants to
come back, well and good. But, in
the meantime, we've got an excellent
replacement.

RITTER
Yes, of course...

Moore picks up a letter, rises.

MOORE
I've ginned up a memo for your
department heads. Here's your copy.

Ryan takes it from him.

MOORE
Did the Admiral have a chance to
fill you in on the Camp David
session?

RYAN
Yes, sir.

MOORE
So, you know the President's calling
for a full-court press on this one.
(as Ryan nods)
I want you and your people all over
it. I want to know who bought the
hit -- who signed their death
warrants.

RYAN
I understand, sir.

Ryan's eyes flicker off Ritter, back to Moore, who extends his hand.

MOORE
You've got some big boots to fill,
Doctor. Good luck!

Ryan shakes the Judge's hand.

RYAN
Thank you, sir.

He starts out of the office.

RITTER
Ryan...

Ryan stops, turns back.

RITTER
Need-to-know still applies.

RYAN
Of course.

Ryan walks out, Ritter turns to Moore, shaking his head.

RITTER
Too soon, Judge. You brought him
along too fast.

MOORE
(smiles)
Come on, Bobby -- you got a hard-on
for him because he's been involved
with two highly successful field
operations. You're "OP's" -- and
you hate getting poached on, I
understand that. But we can't have
Intelligence going adrift just
because you want to keep him out of
some loop. Right?

Ritter nods, grudgingly.

RITTER
I guess...

EXT. A MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN - NIGHT

The screen is black -- but it isn't matte, it's more
organic -- as if the darkness were alive.

We HEAR a man's voice OVER.

MAN
(amplified)
Where are they?

ANOTHER ANGLE - SLIGHTLY LIGHTER

We're on the camouflaged face of a young Hispanic-American soldier. He speaks into a radio mike.

SOLDIER

Just around that corner, Captain.
Five of them.

ANOTHER ANGLE

We SEE a campfire in the middle distance.

SOLDIER.

One's sitting by the fire. One's walking around with an SMG. Other three are sleeping.

ANOTHER ANGLE -- On the CAPTAIN, also H-A, also in warpaint.

CAPTAIN

(into radio)

Only five?

SOLDIER (V.O.)

(amplified)

That's all I count, sir.

CAPTAIN

Okay -- move in.

He CLICKS the radio off, gestures O.S. Two more troopers come forward; he points to the right and left. The grunts nod and hurry OUT OF FRAME.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Back to the Soldier as he moves through the darkness in a tight crouch, exaggerating his steps, putting each foot down carefully, silently.

FLASH CUT - We SEE the Soldier illuminated through a pair of night goggles.

BACK TO SCENE

The Soldier stops -- his head swivels slowly -- something's bothering him; he doesn't know what. FLASH CUT -- The night goggles POV.

BACK TO SCENE

The Soldier takes a moment, shakes it off, and continues forward, pausing 20 yards from the campfire, where he kneels, sights his rifle on the sentry, and FIRES A (SILENCED) ROUND.

The sentry drops like a stone.

The man at the fire starts to get up -- the Soldier FIRES again; the man goes down with a thud. The three guys who were sleeping come out of their bedrolls, groping for their weapons.

The two other troopers that the Captain sent forward spring out of the darkness and RIDDLE the three men.

The Soldier rises, shoulders his weapon.

CLARK (V.O.)

Kid, you are very good.

The Soldier jerks around, startled; Clark grins at him.

SOLDIER

Who the fuck are you?

Floodlights suddenly pop on, illuminating the (training) area. The five "dead" men are back on their feet, removing their flak jackets, picking off the wax bullets they took during the action.

Clark gestures at the Soldier.

CLARK

Come on.

They walk over to the Captain and his men.

CLARK

We'll score that one a success, Captain. I liked your discipline on the approach and your move on the objective was excellent.

He gestures at the Soldier.

CLARK

This point man you have is terrific. He almost picked me up.

The Soldier lays a hard eye on Clark, who smiles and holds up a pair of night goggles.

CLARK

I cheated, kid... I froze every time your head turned. What you heard was my breathing.

Clark sticks out a hand.

CLARK

Name's Clark.

The Soldier shakes his hand.

CHAVEZ

Sergeant Chavez, sir. Can I ask a question?

CLARK

Shoot!

CHAVEZ

What are we training for?

CLARK

I don't know -- not my department, Chavez.

(smiles)

But, you're gonna be working with us.

He pats Chavez on the shoulder; walks off.

EXT. RYAN'S HOUSE ON CHESAPEAKE BAY - MORNING

Establish.

INT. RYAN'S BEDROOM

Ryan and CATHY are getting dressed. She's got a phone to her ear.

CATHY

(into phone -
annoyed)

Doctor, you're not listening: She is my patient and I decide the procedure... You'll what? -- Okay, go to Dr. Polk, I don't give a damn what you do!

She slams down the phone, exasperated.

CATHY

Oohh! The man is driving me crazy.

RYAN

Who?

CATHY

Williams. That creep!

She starts to walk past him; he takes her arm.

RYAN

What's the problem?

CATHY
 (hesitates)
 Nothing... I don't want to bother
 you with it.

RYAN
 It's no bother... talk.

A beat; she sighs.

CATHY
 Remember, I told you about Sara
 Winters?

RYAN
 Yeah, Major Winters' daughter -- a
 retinal tumor. How's she doing?

CATHY
 Not good. It's both eyes now. And,
 one of them has to come out.

RYAN
 And, the other one?

CATHY
 It can be saved -- maybe.

RYAN
 Go on...

TIME CUT:

THE RYAN KITCHEN

Ryan's at a window, sipping coffee; Cathy's at the stove,
 fixing breakfast. He turns, their eyes connect.

RYAN
 Let me see if I've got this
 straight: If you treat the remaining
 eye with radiotherapy, it could kill
 the retina.

CATHY
 Very possibly.

RYAN
 So, you want to go into surgery with
 lasers and remove the tumors.

CATHY
 Yes.

RYAN
 (trying to
 remember)
 You've done this procedure?

CATHY

No -- but I've assisted it.

They share a look.

RYAN

Why doesn't Williams want to use the lasers?

CATHY

"Too radical -- too dangerous!"

RYAN

Is it?

CATHY

It's dangerous, yes -- but it's so much better for her. I mean, you can't imagine what chemo does to a child. It tears them up... it's, it's dreadful.

She leans into him; he pats her back.

CATHY

I can't subject her to it, Jack. I just can't.

He holds her back, smiles.

RYAN

Then don't, Cathy. Fight for her. Make it happen.

He kisses her forehead; she scrunches up her face.

CATHY

Williams called me a shrew. Am I a shrew?

RYAN

(smiles)

Of course you are -- that's why I married you.

They kiss -- then we HEAR a boy child O.S.

BOY

Daddy!

Ryan and Cathy turn to the sound... and there's a towheaded three-year-old in p.j.'s, clutching a small plastic submarine.

BOY

My boat...

Ryan reaches down and swoops the kid into his arms.

RYAN
What seems to be the problem?

BOY
Won't float.

RYAN
Not supposed to, J.R. It's a
submarine -- goes underwater.

JOHN PATRICK RYAN, JR. blinks.

J.R. (BOY)
Goes on top, too, sometimes.

RYAN
Yeah...

J.R.
Then it does float.

Ryan looks to Cathy, grins; proud poppa.

CATHY
Why don't we just take him out of
nursery school and get him into
Anapolis?

RYAN
Not a bad idea.

Cathy's eye catches something out the window. She steps
over and looks down; there's a black Lincoln towncar idling
in the driveway. A driver's at the wheel.

CATHY
You expecting someone?

Ryan (and J.R.) step over to the window; he looks down,
sees the car.

RYAN
Oh... ah, that's my driver.

Cathy raises an eyebrow.

CATHY
Full time?
(as he nods)
I'm impressed.

We HEAR their ten-year-old daughter SALLY call from O.S.

SALLY
Mom-mee! Help me!

CATHY
Coming, Sal.

She turns back to Ryan, smiles, wicked-like.

CATHY
As I recall, limos have very large
back seats.

He smiles back (same way).

RYAN
I'll have to check that out.

CATHY
Not without me, you don't.

She pecks at his nose and exits; Ryan and son smile after her.

INT. ADMIRAL GREER'S OFFICE (WHICH IS NOW RYAN'S) - DAY

Ryan's standing at a wall covered with photos. One of them is a formal portrait of Greer in full uniform. Ryan studies the photo, melancholy.

RYAN
(a whisper)
Shit!

WOMAN (O.S.)
My sentiments, exactly.

Ryan turns to the woman; she's mid-50's, grey-haired, a handsome, tailored lady, carrying a cardboard box.

WOMAN
Good morning, Doctor.

RYAN
Morning, Nancy.

NANCY sets the box on the desk, and begins packing up Greer's personal items.

NANCY (THE WOMAN)
I'm sorry I didn't get this cleared
yesterday.

RYAN
I'm sorry you have to clear it, at
all.

She smiles, They share a beat, then it's back to the moment.

RYAN
So -- what's the day look like?

NANCY
The multi-agency task force session
is at eleven hundred.

RYAN
Whereabouts?

NANCY
FBI -- the Director's office. The briefing papers are in your safe.

RYAN
That it?

NANCY
(smiles)
You wish. The NATO report is due in at noon. You'll have to read and initial it. You have a staff conference at fourteen hundred -- a China briefing at fifteen-thirty.

RYAN
(smiles)
Anything else?

NANCY
There will be.

RYAN
Thanks.

She picks up the cardboard box and walks out, closing the door behind her.

Ryan goes behind the desk, reaches under the center drawer -- we HEAR a FAINT BUZZ -- then a panel on the left wall slides back, revealing a safe.

He crosses to the safe, cocks his head, recalls the combination, spins it in.

The safe door pops open; Ryan lifts out a thick manila envelope labeled EYES ONLY. He closes the safe, steps back to the desk, sits down, opens the envelope, and takes out a dossier on Wesley Hardin and his wife, Elaine.

There's a stack of press clippings on top: "Multi-Millionaire and Bride Found Murdered on Yacht" -- "Hardin International Buys United Intelligence" -- "Hardin Lands Panama Project," etc. It appears the man was a major player.

Ryan sits back, starts reading into the file.

TIME CUT:

THE OFFICE

Ryan's in front of a computer screen, studying a financial statement for "HARDIN INTERNATIONAL."

The door opens, Nancy looks in.

NANCY

Excuse me...
 (as he looks up)
 The car's downstairs.

RYAN

Thanks.

He looks back to the screen, makes an entry in a notebook, slips the book into his coat, shuts off the terminal, crosses back to the desk, gathers up the dossier, steps to the safe, opens it, and places the envelope inside.

There's a stack of papers on a lower shelf. He lifts them out, riffs through them, starts to put them back, then his eye catches something: The shelf is covered with a rubber mat -- at the edge of the mat, the tip of a (3x5) card is visible.

Ryan lifts the mat, slips the card out, and we SEE a safe combination (R7-L12-R16-L14) lettered in ink.

He studies the card a moment, then places it back under the mat, closes the safe door, steps back to his desk, pushes the under-drawer BUZZER, and the wall panel slides shut.

Ryan stares at the panel a moment, then turns and starts out of the office.

EXT. FBI HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Establish.

INT. THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Emil Jacobs is behind his desk. Two men and a young woman are seated across from him and a dark, attractive, 30-ish lady is at his elbow, taking notes.

FIRST AGENT

They flew into Miami from Bogota on the 10th. Two days later, they signed on as crew for Hardin. The Empire Builder sailed from Lauderdale on the 14th.

SECOND AGENT

Small crew for such a big boat.

JACOBS

The man was on his honeymoon -- probably didn't want a lot of people around.

The office door opens and Ryan walks in. Everybody gets up (except Jacobs).

JACOBS
Morning, Doctor Ryan.

RYAN
Sir.

The First Agent extends his hand.

FIRST AGENT
Bill Murray, FBI.

SECOND AGENT
Walt Smith, Treasury.

THIRD AGENT
Rita Williams, DEA.

Handshakes all around; Jacobs gestures at the lady taking notes.

JACOBS
Moira Gomez, my executive assistant.

Ryan and Moira share a nod; he settles into a chair next to Murray.

JACOBS
(at Ryan)
So, what do you make of the killings?

RYAN
I'd say they were executions, sir.

JACOBS
Colombian cowboys hit a respectable American businessman?

RYAN
You're assuming he was respectable.

MURRAY
You're assuming he wasn't?

RYAN
I ran his numbers -- there was very little substance to his "empire." All of the deals were shells -- most of them gone belly up. In fact, I couldn't find any cash at all. Anywhere.

SMITH
He must have had some income. How could he afford to run that yacht?

RYAN
Good question. By the way, where is it?

MURRAY
Miami. I had it sealed until we
could check it out.

RYAN
Let's do it.

MURRAY
How's tomorrow?

RYAN
Set it up.

MURRAY
Moirra...

She nods, makes a note. Jacobs sits back, studies Ryan.

JACOBS
You really figure he was tied to the
cartels?

RYAN
That's my hunch, sir.

Jacobs gets up, crosses to a window, looks out to the
west (towards the White House). The Director takes a beat;
sighs.

JACOBS
I hope to hell you're wrong, Doctor.

EXT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - LATE AFTERNOON

We're in a VIP lounge on the top floor. Greer's in a
wheelchair, Ryan's standing across from him. The Admiral's
been leafing through Ryan's notebook; he looks up.

GREER
Who else knows about this?

RYAN
Jacobs -- the Task Force people.

GREER
That's all?
(as Ryan nods)
Good. Keep it that way.

RYAN
Why?

GREER
Are you forgetting that Hardin and
the President were big-time buddies?

RYAN
No.

GREER

So, what if your hunch doesn't pan out?

Ryan frowns; Greer nods.

GREER

I know -- they always do. But what if this one doesn't? If the old man hears you're investigating his pal -- and the guy turns up clean -- you have just stepped into a very deep pile of horseshit.

He passes Ryan the notebook.

GREER

The time to tell him is when -- and if -- you got the goods on Hardin.

RYAN

I'll get them.

GREER

(smiles)

I know you will, son -- that's why you're driving the bus.

A Navy CORPSMAN enters the lounge.

CORPSMAN

'Scuse me, Admiral -- Captain Collins is waiting for you in x-ray.

Greer holds up his hand.

GREER

Okay, be right with you.

He turns back to Ryan.

GREER

Anything else?

RYAN

Ah, yeah, there is...

Greer waits for it.

RYAN

Today, when I was putting some things in your safe...

GREER

Your safe, Jack.

RYAN

Yes, sir -- I stumbled onto something.

GREER

The file card with the combination
on it?

(as Ryan nods)

I figured you might.

RYAN

Should I know what it opens?

GREER

You should: Bob Ritter's safe.

RYAN

Does he have yours?

GREER

I hope to hell not.

Ryan blinks, doesn't get it.

GREER

Why do I have it? Well, I could say
it's because in case he gets
kidnapped -- held hostage --
somebody has to get into his box in
a hurry.

RYAN

But, that's not why.

GREER

Nope, it isn't. I have it, because
I don't trust the son-of-a-bitch.
Never have -- not from the day he
signed on.

He turns, calls to the Sailor.

GREER

Let's roll, Corpsman!

EXT. A (BOLIVIAN) JUNGLE CLEARING - NIGHT

There's a Dodge panel van parked at the edge of the
clearing. Clark is standing next to it. The vehicle's
rear door is open, revealing two (communications)
TECHNICIANS sitting before an array of sophisticated
transmission equipment.

We hold a moment, then one of the Techs gets up, steps to
the van door, and calls to Clark.

TECH

On the scope, sir -- due northwest.

Clark turns -- looks up -- we HEAR the WHOP-WHOP of a
HELICOPTER'S ROTORS.

Suddenly, a huge, blacked-out Sikorsky Pave Low chopper THUNDERS in over the treeline.

The helo arcs around and touches down in the middle of the clearing.

A CREWMAN appears in the door, shouts.

CREWMAN

Go! Go!

The squad of Hispanic-American soldiers (from the earlier SCENE) start pouring out of the chopper. The men have switched their camouflage fatigues for tan khaki; each grunt is loaded to the gills with weapons and ammo.

Eight men come out -- then Chavez -- followed by his Captain. As each man hits the ground, they turn hard left to avoid the tail rotor -- race ten steps from the helo -- and drop to their bellies under the whirling blade.

The Crewman shouts into the helicopter.

CREWMAN

Clear! Clear! Clear!

The chopper's ENGINES WHINE -- the main rotor CHURNS, whipping up a hundred-knot downwash. The copter lifts off, and in the blink of an eye, its spectral shape vanishes into the night sky.

Clark hurries over and ducks down next to the Captain.

CLARK

Nice insertion, Captain. Everybody okay?

CAPTAIN

Yes, sir.

Chavez crawls up and INTO FRAME; Clark smiles at him.

CLARK

'Lo, Chavez. Welcome to Indian Country.

He looks to the Captain, nodding at Chavez.

CLARK

I'll take you in a ways -- get you oriented.

The Captain nods; Clark looks back to Chavez.

CLARK

Ready, kid?

CHAVEZ

Ready, sir.

Clark and Chavez rise, drop into a crouch, and disappear into the jungle.

EXT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

INT. DDO RITTER'S OFFICE

Ritter's at a window; tense, on edge, waiting. A PHONE RINGS.

He steps to his desk, picks up the receiver, listens for a moment, hangs up, turns, looks PAST CAMERA.

RITTER

They're in!

Cutter's in a wing chair, sucking on an unlit pipe. He removes the briar, looks at Ritter, nods with a curious smile.

CUTTER

Congratulations, Bobby! Now, you have your own little war.

EXT. ESCOBEDO'S HACIENDA - DAY

Cortez, Escobedo, and a third man are on a terrace overlooking the grounds. The new guy's fat and flashy; cocaine-chic. In the b.g. we SEE swarms of troops setting up gun emplacements, clearing fire zones, planting mines. The fat guy gestures at the action.

GUY

Are you are expecting an invasion, Colonel?

CORTEZ

A wise man is prepared for any contingency, Senor Diaz.

DIAZ shakes his head.

DIAZ (THE GUY)

I think the whole thing is crazy. They wouldn't dare set foot in here.

We HEAR a man call from O.S.

MAN (OVER)

Colonel...

Cortez turns, looks PAST CAMERA.

CORTEZ

Ah, gentlemen -- come here.

ANOTHER ANGLE -- as two men approach (with their backs TO CAMERA).

CORTEZ

Senor Escobedo -- Senor Diaz -- may
I present my trusted aides, Major
Sipo...

ANOTHER ANGLE -- ON SIPO; a thin, mustached Latin with a bright red scar on his left cheek.

CORTEZ (CONT'D)

Captain Ramirez.

ANOTHER ANGLE -- ON RAMIREZ; he's a big one, rodent-eyed, black-as-coal, scary as hell.

Sipo and Ramirez CLICK their heels; the Major turns to Cortez.

SIPO

The fire zones are ready for your
inspection, sir.

CORTEZ

Excellent...
(at Escobedo)
With your permission.

Escobedo nods; the Colonel and his Officers walk off.

Diaz watches after them a moment, turns back to Escobedo, snorts.

DIAZ

Cubans! I've never trusted Cubans.

ESCOBEDO

(smiles)
Who do you trust, Hector?

Diaz smiles back at him.

DIAZ

Only you, Ernesto -- only you.

EXT. U.S. COAST GUARD BASE (MIAMI) - DAY

The Empire Builder is end-tied off a pier. A phalanx of armed seamen stand guard over her.

The deck of the yacht is awash with FBI agents, searching every nook and cranny of the boat.

INT. THE SALON

More agents, plus Murray, Rita, a C.G. LIEUTENANT, and Ryan, who's standing at a bookcase, riffing through a volume. He sets it down, picks up another; his eye snags the Lieutenant.

LIEUTENANT

Be nice if we knew what we were looking for.

RYAN

We'll know when we find it, Lieutenant.

Back to the book.

EXT. THE FOREDECK

Two AGENTS are disemboweling an inflatable Zodiac rubber boat, slicing the vessel into pieces, examining each new section with care. One of the Agents slices open a panel, squeezes it; his face lights up.

FIRST AGENT

Hello!

The Second Agent turns, watches as the First extracts a small waterproof pouch from inside the rubber panel.

SECOND AGENT

What is it?

The First Agent slits the pouch open, reaches in, takes out a clear plastic box; inside are five PC computer disks.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SALON

Ryan's staring at the box; the rest of the gang is staring at him. He looks to Murray.

MURRAY

Jackpot?

RYAN

Let's find out.

CUT TO:

INT. A COMPUTER ROOM AT FBI/MIAMI - NIGHT

Ryan and Murray are at a terminal; a TECH is scrolling through a (blank) disk. The disk ENDS; the Tech looks up.

TECH
That's it -- 'nother blank.

MURRAY
Shit!

TECH
Anymore?

Ryan opens the plastic box, takes out the last disk, passes it to the Tech, who slips it into the port, calls it up -- and BANG! -- there it is: Columns of figures and rows of (coded) words.

RYAN
(smiles)
Yes!

EXT. A JUNGLE AIRSTRIP - LATE AFTERNOON

A (typical) drug smuggler layout; narrow runway hacked through the cane, small fuel shack, piles of gas cans, scattering of guards.

There's a Beechcraft King Air on the strip; guys are humping cartons of you know what into the plane.

We HEAR Chavez's VOICE OVER.

CHAVEZ
VARIABLE, this is KNIFE. Stand by to copy.

ANGLE -- on Chavez and three other squad members, crouched down next to a stand of trees that border the runway. Chavez has a cellular phone to his ear.

MAN (OVER)
KNIFE, this is VARIABLE, your signal is five by five. We are ready to copy. Over.

INTERCUT - CLARK'S COMMUNICATION VAN

One of the Techs is on with Chavez.

CHAVEZ (OVER)
We're at Objective Reno. There's a twin engine aircraft -- some people are loading boxes into it. Over.

Clark steps in behind the Tech, takes the phone from him.

CLARK
(into phone)
Reno, can you read the tail number?
Over.

BACK TO SCENE

Chavez rises up a bit; he can't see the numbers from his POV.

CHAVEZ
(into phone)
Negative. Angle's wrong. But he
has to take off right over us.

INTERCUT - THE VAN

CHAVEZ (OVER, CONT'D)
No security assets are evident at
this time.

Clark snaps a switch on the panel, barks into a mike.

CLARK
This is VARIABLE. Reno reports bird
in the nest, time zero-six-one-six
Zulu... Roger. Will advise. Out.

Clark picks up the phone.

CLARK
Assets are at plus one hour, Reno.

BACK TO SCENE

Chavez smiles.

CHAVEZ
That should do just fine, VARIABLE.
Over and out.

TIME CUT - THE AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

It's raining now, pouring, in fact. The runway is lit by a line of sputtering flares; the King Air is at the far end, ENGINES REVVING.

Chavez and Squad are hunkered under the trees, squinting into the rain.

The engines PEAK -- the plane RUMBLES down the strip -- lifts off over the trees... and disappears into the rain.

CHAVEZ
Damn! ... Anybody catch it?

Nobody did; Chavez grabs up the cellular phone.

CHAVEZ
(into phone)
VARIABLE, this is KNIFE.

CLARK (OVER)
Did you get a tail number? Over.

CHAVEZ
Negative -- Visibility's dogshit.
But, he got off twenty-fifty-one,
Lima, heading north-northwest.

INT. CLARK'S COM VAN

Clark's at the panel..

CLARK
(into phone)
We copy, Reno. Out.

He turns to the Tech.

CLARK
Sic 'em!

EXT. THE SKY (ABOVE THE GULF OF MEXICO) - LAST LIGHT
A U.S. Air Force F-15 SCREAMS INTO FRAME.

INT. THE F-15

The RADIO CRACKLES.

MAN (OVER)
Two-Six-Alpha, this is Eight-Three,
Quebec. Do you read? Over.

The fighter PILOT answers.

PILOT
Eight-Three, Quebec, this is
Two-Six-Alpha. I read you five,
over.

MAN
We have a target on profile, bearing
one-nine-six, range two-one-zero
your position. Course
zero-one-eight, speed two-six-five.
Over.

PILOT
Roger, copy. Out.

The Pilot dials in his navigation computer; the jet banks
left, flashes out of sight.

EXT. ANOTHER SLICE OF SKY

The King Air DRONES INTO FRAME.

INT. THE KING AIR

Two young Americans are crewing the plane; the PILOT is at the controls, the CO-PILOT's dozing in his chair.

GARTH BROOKS CROONS from a CD PLAYER.

EXT. THE SKY

The F-15 appears; the Pilot spots the Beechcraft a half mile ahead, three thousand feet below.

INT. THE F-15

The Pilot flicks a switch on the communication panel.

PILOT
Eight-Three, Quebec, this is
Two-Six-Alpha. I have eyeballs on
target. Tallyho!

MAN (OVER)
We copy, Two-Six-Alpha. Over and
out.

EXT. THE SKY

The fighter swoops down and tucks in behind the King Air. The Pilot throttles back, matches the Beech's airspeed.

INT. THE F-15

The Pilot switches on the jet's landing lights; flicks a toggle on the com panel.

PILOT
Aircraft in view, you are in
restricted airspace. Identify
immediately, over.

INT. THE KING AIR

The Pilot bolts up in his seat.

PILOT
Holy shit!

The Co-Pilot wakes with a start.

CO-PILOT
What...?

The F-15 Pilot's VOICE BOOMS from the speaker.

PILOT (OVER)
Aircraft in view, if you do not
identify I will open fire. Over.

CO-PILOT
Oh, man -- what do we do?

PILOT
Fuck 'em! Who's he kidding? He's
not gonna shoot.

The Pilot leans into the stick; the Beech dives down.

EXT. THE SKY

The F-15 Pilot kills his lights; hits the throttle, zooms
up five thousand feet, executes a hammerhead, and tucks the
plane into a nose-down attitude.

The King Air's on the deck now, twenty feet off the water.

INT. THE F-15

The F-15's radar locks on the Beech. The Pilot sucks in a
breath, flexes his finger on the "guns" button.

The King Air appears on the fighter's Heads-Up Display; the
Pilot FIRES.

EXT. THE SKY

A line of green tracers lance through the darkness.

The Beechcraft EXPLODES in a fiery ball.

The F-15 flares UP and OUT OF FRAME.

GO TO BLACK

EXT. WASHINGTON - DAY

Establish.

INT. A BRIEFING ROOM

The lights are DOWN. Cutter, Moore, Ritter, Jacobs,
Murray, and two other MEN are seated at a conference table.
Ryan's standing next to a projection screen.

RYAN
Three years ago, Hardin went into
business with Ernesto Escobedo.

He CLICKS the remote; a DEA mug shot of Escobedo flashes on
the screen.

RYAN

Escobedo's the head of the Bogota cartel. DEA estimates his annual take at two billion, six.

CUTTER

Where did Hardin fit in?

RYAN

The scheme was based on real estate developments -- eleven major shopping centers from Fort Worth to Atlanta.

CLICK; another SLIDE pops on, this one of Hardin behind a broad expanse of desk (with an autographed photo of the President in prominent display).

RYAN

He set himself up as the general partner representing foreign money.

FIRST MAN

Escobedo's drug profits?

RYAN

Yeah... Then he brought in legit investors -- built the centers -- and they turned out to be profitable.

RITTER

Define profitable.

Another SLIDE: It's the rows of figures and coded words from the disk, now encrypted to read as an accounting ledger.

RYAN

Hardin pulled out over eight hundred million during the last three months. He ran the sanitized money through offshore banks...

JACOBS

Then back to the cartels.

RYAN

Not exactly...

Another SLIDE: Swiss money transfer records.

RYAN

Instead of shipping the funds to Bogota, he dropped them straight into a numbered account in Zurich.

CUTTER

Who had access to it?

RYAN

Just Hardin. He structured it so that he was the only one who could get in.

RITTER

Is the money still there?

RYAN

Every penny.

MOORE

And, we have the number?

Ryan nods; the Judge grins.

MOORE

Then, let's go get it!

SECOND MAN

The Colombian government wouldn't like that, Judge. I'm sure they'd consider it their money.

MOORE

Screw 'em! We spend that much a month trying to keep their damn drugs out of here.

JACOBS

Judge Moore's right. That is our money.

FIRST MAN

They'll never let you keep it.

JACOBS

Sure they will. They'll cut a deal. I know those folks down there.

CUTTER

Are you volunteering to handle it, Mr. Director?

JACOBS

Consider it done.

Ryan CLICKS again; the room lights come UP. Cutter turns to Moore; they share a look.

MOORE

I guess you'd better tell the old man.

CUTTER

No way, Judge, it's not my investigation.

He looks back to Ryan, smiles.

CUTTER

This one belongs to Ryan.

Ryan blinks.

INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - DAY

The President is standing behind his desk, a flustered look on his face.

PRESIDENT

I just can't hardly believe this, Doctor. I mean, how could he get tied up with vermin like that?

Ryan's standing across the desk; Cutter, Ritter, and Moore are seated around him.

PRESIDENT

I'm sorry, Mr. President, but he did.

The Pres looks away, sighs.

PRESIDENT

Jesus! I knew the man for forty years. We went to school together, for chrissake. Hunted -- fished -- catted around. Hell, for a time, there, he was my very best friend.

He turns back to Cutter.

PRESIDENT

Why, we damn near went into business, once.

CUTTER

It's a good thing you didn't, sir. There's enough damage to control, as it is.

PRESIDENT

Yeah, you're right -- press is gonna have a friggin' field day with this. And, me facing a goddamned election that we all know I could lose.

MOORE

Don't say that, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT

Why the hell not? It's true!

He looks away again, shakes his head.

PRESIDENT
 (more to himself)
 Wesley, Wesley, Wesley... you
 no-good, rotten son-of-a-bitch! How
 could you do this to me?

Eyes shift around the room; the Pres turns back to Ryan.

PRESIDENT
 Eight hundred million bucks, eh?

RYAN
 Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT
 (smiles)
 Well, I guess there's one thing to
 be said for this mess: At least
 them drug boys are gonna end up with
 a nice big dent in their wallets.

MOORE
 Amen!

The President turns to Cutter.

PRESIDENT
 Speaking of whom, this don't change
 nothing, Jimmy.

Cutter's eyes flick off Ritter's back to the Pres; Ryan
 catches the look.

CUTTER
 I understand, sir.

Ryan's eyes narrow.

INT. GREER'S SUITE AT BETHESDA - DAY

Ryan's at the Admiral's bedside.

GREER
What did he understand?

RYAN
 That's what I want to know.

GREER
 But, you have to know, Jack!
 You're a Chief of Directorate, now.
 There isn't anything that goes on in
 that agency that you aren't supposed
 to be aware of. You must know.
 You brief Congress, remember?

RYAN
 Yes, sir.

Greer pulls himself up in bed.

GREER

You tell Ritter for me, that need-to-know crap stops at my office door.

RYAN

You mean my office door, sir.

GREER

(winks)

Now you're getting it... You said Jacobs is going down to meet with their Minister of Finance...

(as Ryan nods)

Might be a good idea if you tagged along. Get a look-see for yourself.

RYAN

We're leaving tomorrow night.

GREER

I do like the way you move, son.

Greer's smile suddenly disappears; he grabs his middle, lets out a moan.

GREER

Oh, my -- get the nurse, quick!

Ryan sprints to the door, opens it, calls out.

RYAN

Nurse... nurse!

A NURSE and two Corpsmen are at a station up the hall; they turn to Ryan.

RYAN

The Admiral -- hurry!

The Nurse snaps to.

NURSE

Go!

She double-times down the hall with the Corpsmen on her heels. Ryan steps aside, the Corpsmen rush to the Admiral.

Ryan starts back into the room; the Nurse holds up her hand.

NURSE

I'm sorry, sir, you'll have to leave.

Ryan hesitates.

NURSE
Now, sir. Please!

Ryan takes a beat, nods, backs out of the room.

EXT. THE (COLOMBIAN) JUNGLE - NIGHT

Our POV is THROUGH NIGHT VISION GOGGLES, FRAMED on a cocaine processing plant (which is really nothing more than a couple of tin-roofed shacks and a half-dozen peasants cooking down coca leaves in a bathtub-like kettle).

There's a guy with an AK-47 standing sentry over the action.

Our VIEW WIPES to semi-darkness -- CLOSE ON CHAVEZ. He's in full warpaint, a small radio at his lips.

CHAVEZ
(hushed)
Just one sentry, sir -- looks like a walk-in.

INTERCUT - THE CAPTAIN

He's surrounded by five of his squad.

CAPTAIN
(into radio)
We're there on ten. One...
(to the squad)
Let's move! Two...

The squad (and Captain) hurry OUT OF FRAME.

CAPTAIN (O.S.)
Three...

BACK TO SCENE

CHAVEZ
(to himself)
Four...

He clicks off the radio, raises his rifle -- counts out in silence -- and when he reaches ten, he FIRES a (SILENCED) ROUND into the sentry.

The guard collapses like a house of cards.

The peasants at the kettle grab at a stack of M-15's. The Captain and his men burst out of the jungle, FIRING from the hip. The six campesinos bite the dust in the blink of an eye.

Chavez runs forward to the Captain; their eyes flash off the bodies, back to each other's.

There's a large pile of bagged leaves next to them; Chavez nods at it.

CHAVEZ
What do we do with the coca, sir?

CAPTAIN
Nothing -- leave it.

CHAVEZ
Why don't we burn it?

The Captain shakes his head.

CAPTAIN
They'd spot the fire.

The Captain whirls around, shouts at his squad.

CAPTAIN
Okay -- we're gone!

Chavez's eye catches the body of the fallen sentry. He stares down at the man -- his first "kill."

CAPTAIN (O.S.)
Chavez...

CHAVEZ
(without turning)
Sir.

CAPTAIN
Move out.

Chavez takes another beat, then turns and vanishes into the cane.

EXT. JOHNS HOPKINS HOSPITAL (BALTIMORE) - LATE AFTERNOON
Establish.

INT. DR. WILLIAMS' OFFICE

WILLIAMS, a skinny, flint-eyed man, is on his feet. So's Cathy; both in surgical greens, both red hot.

A third man sits in the middle of their harangue, calmly evaluating the dialogue.

WILLIAMS
I'm telling you, Ryan, if you inject that child with conjugated prophyrin -- and you don't kill all those tumors -- that cancer will be in her brain within a week.

CATHY

And I'm telling you, Williams, if you subject that eye to six thousand rams of cobalt, you're going to fry it to a cinder. And then where is she, Doctor?

WILLIAMS

She's blind, Doctor -- but she ain't dead!

He sighs, shakes his head, turns to the seated man.

WILLIAMS

Tell her, Dr. Polk!

POLK clears his throat, looks up at Cathy.

POLK

I must agree with Williams about the dangers of the injection of the photosensitizers. They will stimulate the tumors, and if you don't get them all, they'll most certainly spread into the cranial sack.

Cathy frowns, Williams smiles.

POLK

However, since the possibility of a Stage Five recovery is unfavorable, at best, and if her parents are fully cognizant of the risks involved...

CATHY

They are.

POLK

And, you're absolutely confident that you can perform the procedure...

Cathy's eyes flash on Williams, back to Polk.

CATHY

I am.

POLK

Then I see no reason why you shouldn't attempt the surgery.

Now, Cathy smiles, Williams frowns.

CATHY

Thank you, Dr. Polk.

POLK

Don't thank me yet, Doctor.

He gets up, starts out; Cathy and Williams share a glare.

EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE HELO PAD - DAY

A chopper's WHOOPING UP in the b.g. The President is hurrying towards it, dodging questions from a horde of REPORTERS.

FIRST REPORTER

(shouting)

But you did know him, sir,
correct?

The Pres cups a hand behind an ear (Ronnie Reagan-style). He squints, shakes his head, "tries" to recall.

SECOND REPORTER

The New York Times reported today,
that you and Hardin were lifelong
friends. Is that true, Mr.
President?

PRESIDENT

(shouting back)

Who?

SECOND REPORTER

Wesley Hardin.

PRESIDENT

(shakes his head)

No, no -- I mean, who said it?

SECOND REPORTER

The New York Times.

The President reaches the boarding stairs of the 'copter, turns back to the press, smiles.

PRESIDENT

The New York Times, eh?

He shakes his head, holds the smile.

PRESIDENT

Just goes to show you what some
folks'll do to sell newspapers.

A Marine Guard salutes, the Pres returns it, gives the assembled a big wave, and disappears into the helo.

EXT. ESCOBEDO'S HACIENDA - DAY

Establish.

INT. CORTEZ'S QUARTERS IN THE HACIENDA

He's on the phone. Major Sipo and Captain Ramirez are across the room, playing cards.

CORTEZ
 (into phone)
 ... of course there's nothing to worry about. I'm in complete control of the situation...
 (off-guard)
 What?... Are you sure? -- When?

The room door bursts open; Escobedo struts in, followed by three CARTEL-TYPES.

ESCOBEDO
 (barks)
 Off the phone, Colonel!

Cortez jumps to his feet.

CORTEZ
 Jefe...
 (into phone)
 I'll call you back.

He hangs up.

ESCOBEDO
 They struck the camp at Corona del Mar last night. Everyone is dead.

A little dandy named ROJAS pops off in a squeaky tenor.

ROJAS
 Three plants in ten days. What do you say about that, Cortez?

CORTEZ
 I'm doing the best I can, Senor Rojas.

ROJAS
 Which is obviously not good enough. I have lost twenty men -- and three planes.

FIRST CARTEL TYPE
 I have lost four planes. And, furthermore...

A servant enters with a cellular phone. Escobedo holds up a hand.

ESCOBEDO
 Enough! Stop...

He takes the phone from the servant.

EXT. A HILLTOP OUTSIDE BOGOTA - DAY

Clark's communication van is parked under a tree.

INT. THE VAN

Clark's studying a map table. The Techs are on duty in front of the panel. Suddenly, one of them perks up.

TECH
Bingo!
(at Clark)
CAPER traffic...

Clark hurries over to the panel.

TECH
Diaz calling Escobedo.

The Tech FLICKS a SPEAKER on.

ESCOBEDO (OVER)
Yes...?

DIAZ (OVER)
We've lost another delivery.

INTERCUT - THE DINING ROOM

Escobedo frowns.

ESCOBEDO
(into phone)
What happened?

INTERCUT - EXT. DIAZ'S HACIENDA

He's in a bathrobe, standing next to a pool, with a phone to his ear. A trio of young monokini'd señoritas frolic in the b.g.

DIAZ
The damned plane didn't appear.
Just like the others.

INTERCUT - ESCOBEDO'S

ESCOBEDO
We meet tomorrow night. Everyone
must be there.

INTERCUT - THE VAN

DIAZ (OVER)
Good. We'll go together.

The transmission ends; Clark takes a beat, smiles.

BACK TO SCENE

Escobedo hands the phone to the servant, turns on Cortez.

ESCOBEDO

This has to stop, Cortez!

CORTEZ

I agree, Patron. But, as for the planes, there's little I can do about it. However, I've increased the guards on the camps. The next time they attempt to destroy one, we'll be ready for them.

ESCOBEDO

You'd better be, Colonel -- or I'll send your head back to Fidel in a sack.

He and the others start for the door.

CORTEZ

Senor Escobedo...

Escobedo stops, turns back.

CORTEZ

I must speak with you.

ESCOBEDO

So, speak.

CORTEZ

Alone, por favor.

Escobedo turns to the others.

ESCOBEDO

I'll be along...

They exit. Cortez jerks his head at Sipo and Ramirez; they step out onto a terrace off the room.

ESCOBEDO

(impatient)

What?

CORTEZ

I've just spoken with my contact in Washington... He tells me this man Hardin stole a fortune from you.

ESCOBEDO

Tell me something I don't know, Cortez.

CORTEZ

They have traced the funds to Switzerland. The Director of their FBI is coming to Bogota to discuss how the money can be -- distributed.

Escobedo slams a fist on the desk.

ESCOBEDO

Bastards! They murder my people -- destroy my planes -- and now they steal my money.

Escobedo's eyes go hard.

ESCOBEDO

When does this man come here?

CORTEZ

Tomorrow.

Escobedo takes a beat, nods to himself.

ESCOBEDO

We kill him!

Cortez reacts, shakes his head, adamant.

CORTEZ

No, patron, please don't! I beg you -- you mustn't.

Escobedo reacts, suspicious.

ESCOBEDO

Since when does a Yankee life concern you, Cortez?

CORTEZ

It doesn't, Jefe -- not a bit. But if you think we have problems with the Americans now -- that's nothing like the trouble we'd have if this man were assassinated in our country.

ESCOBEDO

It's worth it!

CORTEZ

But, it's not, Senor. If you kill him, they'll come down on us like the wrath of God. There'll be no defense from it, Jefe. It could cost you everything.

Escobedo weighs the Colonel's words.

CORTEZ

You have to trust me on this,
Patron... we can't be the ones who
kill him.

Escobedo takes another beat, grunts.

ESCOBEDO

Maybe you're right, Cortez.

CORTEZ

Thank you, Senor Escobedo.

They share a look, Escobedo grunts again, walks out of the room. Cortez turns; Sipo and Ramirez are standing in the terrace doorway.

The Colonel grins, conspiratorially.

EXT. RYAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ryan's limo purrs at idle in front of the house. Cathy swings her car down the drive, parks, gets out, nods at the limo driver, and starts up the front steps.

INT. RYAN'S STUDY

He's behind his desk, packing a briefcase. He unlocks a drawer, takes out a file, drops it into the case, looks back to the drawer.

There's a 9 mm automatic lying there. He picks up the gun, studies it.

ANGLE - THE FRONT HALL

Cathy pulls off her coat, drops it on a bench, starts for the door to Ryan's office.

BACK TO SCENE

Ryan hefts the automatic (as if, perhaps, he's trying to decide whether to take it with him or not).

Cathy appears in the doorway, stops, SEES the gun in his hand, bites her lip.

He stares at the pistol a moment longer, then sets it back down, closes the drawer, locks it.

Cathy sighs audibly.

Ryan turns -- they share a look -- a PHONE on the desk RINGS; he answers.

RYAN
 (into phone)
 Hello? Yes, hello, Captain
 Collins -- How is he? ... I see ...
 Please keep me plugged in... Thank
 you, Captain, I appreciate it.
 Goodbye.

He hangs up; his eyes dart back to hers.

RYAN
 He's out of ICU.

CATHY
 Thank God.

She crosses to him.

CATHY
 Are you all packed?

Ryan snaps the briefcase shut.

RYAN
 All done.

CATHY
 Be careful.

RYAN
 I'm always careful.

CATHY
 (droll)
 Mmmm, I remember.

He steps to her, pulls her close, they kiss, separate.

RYAN
 What happened with Dr. Polk?

CATHY
 He agreed with me -- I've scheduled
 her surgery for Friday.
 (sighs)
 Now, the question is, can I do it?

RYAN
 You can do it!

Another kiss, then he picks up the briefcase, slings a trenchcoat over his arm, grabs a carry-on bag, and we TRACK them OUT of the office and DOWN the hall.

CATHY
 (at the stairs)
 Kids! Come on, Daddy's leaving.

As Ryan and Cathy reach the front door, ten-year-old SALLY RYAN and her brother J.R. bound down the stairs.

Sally's first into Ryan's arms.

SALLY
Goodbye, Daddy.

RYAN
You be good while I'm gone, Sal.

SALLY
I will...

A kiss, then it's J.R.'s turn.

J.R.
Daddy, when you comin' back?

Sally clucks, rolls her eyes.

SALLY
(stern)
J.R., aren't you ever going to learn? We never ask Daddy where he's going, where he's been, or when he's coming back.

J.R. takes the lecture to heart; he looks like he's about to burst into tears. Ryan ruffles his son's hair.

RYAN
Soon, J.R. -- I'll be home soon.

He sets him down, leans over, gives Cathy a peck, then gathers up his gear; his eyes shift back to her.

RYAN
Take care.

CATHY
You, too.

Ryan exits; the family watches after him.

EXT. EL DORADO AIRPORT, BOGOTA, COLOMBIA - DAWN

A Cadillac limo idles on the tarmac next to a Chevy sedan. The Caddy's rear window is down, a distinguished-looking gent peering out, his patrician brow wrinkled with concern.

The limo and car are surrounded by six Colombian Police Jeeps bristling with soldiers and machine guns. Everyone's up, alert; something major's going down.

A U.S. Air Force executive jet flares in overhead, touches down and starts taxiing for a remote cargo hangar. The Jeeps peel out after it with the limo and Chevy in their wake.

The plane rolls to a stop, the Jeeps screech up, the soldiers pour out and form a perimeter around the area.

The jet's door opens, a man drops down onto the runway, clocks the scene, looks back to the plane, nods. A ladder unfolds, Ryan and a second man come down fast, followed by Jacobs.

The Cadillac and Chevrolet pull up. The limo's rear door opens and U.S. Ambassador to Colombia, ANDREW FERRIS, hops out, shakes hands with Jacobs.

FERRIS

Emil, good to see you.

JACOBS

You, too, Andy... Ambassador Ferris -- Dr. Ryan -- he's in for Admiral Greer, now.

FERRIS

I heard -- nice to meet you.

They shake hands, Ferris gestures at the open limo door, Jacobs enters the car. Ryan's about to follow -- Ferris holds up a hand, smiles, points at the Chevy.

FERRIS

Would you mind riding in the chase car, Doctor? I have a couple of things I'd like to go over with the Director.

RYAN

Oh -- no, of course.

FERRIS

Thank you.

He gets in the car, the man who jumped down from the plane gets into the front seat next to the driver. Ryan and the second man get into the Chevrolet. One of the Jeeps moves off, followed by the limo and sedan, trailed by another Jeep.

EXT. THE MOTORCADE (AS SEEN THROUGH BINOCULARS)

We PAN the vehicles out of the airport.

Major Sipo lowers his field glasses, reaches into a coat pocket, pulls out a cellular phone, punches SND.

A beat; Ramirez answers.

RAMIREZ (OVER)

Si...?

SIPO

(into phone)

Salieron del aeropuerto.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BOGOTA

Ramirez is standing next to a Public Works truck which is parked in the center of a busy intersection.

RAMIREZ
(into phone)
Si, si.

He snaps off the phone, turns to the truck's DRIVER.

RAMIREZ
Diez minutos.

The Driver grabs a two-way radio, exits the truck, climbs up onto the cab, gets into the tub of a cherry picker, and begins craning up towards an overhead traffic light.

Ramirez turns, hurries off towards a building across the intersection.

EXT. THE OUTSKIRTS OF BOGOTA - DAWN

The motorcade rushes PAST CAMERA.

INT. THE LIMO

Jacobs is staring out the side window. Ferris has just said something -- the Director turns to him.

JACOBS
That wasn't my question, Andy. I asked if you think they'll play ball?

FERRIS
Are you kidding? Those goons in the Ministry of Finance are salivating. We sprinkle a couple million around, we can bank the rest.

Jacobs looks back to the window, back to the shanties and rampant poverty; he sighs, muses.

JACOBS
We've never been especially good neighbors, have we?

FERRIS
What are you saying?

JACOBS
You know damn well what I'm saying: When it suits us to have these countries run by thugs, we let it happen. Let it? Hell, we make it happen.

FERRIS
Democracy comes hard down here.

JACOBS
(smiles)
Nice line, Mr. Ambassador. Guess
that's why I'm the cop and you're
the diplomat.

EXT. THE INTERSECTION

Our POV is from the cherry picker. The truck Driver is
staring up the highway -- then he spots the motorcade --
picks up the radio, snaps it on.

DRIVER
Vienen.

THE INTERSECTION - ANOTHER ANGLE

We're in a third floor apartment. Ramirez is standing at a
window overlooking the square. He's got a radio to his
ear.

RAMIREZ
A que distancia?

DRIVER (OVER)
Quinientos.

Ramirez clicks the radio off, looks out across the square
towards a similar building where another Latin is standing
in a third floor window. Their eyes lock; Ramirez raises
his fist, then turns and focuses on another man in a
building diagonally across the intersection.

He repeats the gesture, then looks back to the room and
beckons at two men with an antitank grenade launcher.

The men set up the rocket at the window, the loader slips a
projectile into the tube, taps the gunner on his shoulder,
the gunner takes aim on the intersection.

THE CHERRY PICKER... as the motorcade approaches, preceded
by an aging pick-up with a bedfull of kids and dogs.

The Driver flicks a switch on the traffic signal; the light
goes GREEN (in favor of the motorcade).

The traffic accelerates.

Then the Driver hits the switch again -- the light goes
RED.

The pick-up driver reacts, slamming on his brakes. The
lead Jeep skids up behind the truck, the limo driver
wrestles the Caddy to a lurching stop.

QUICK CUTS TO THE THREE APARTMENT WINDOWS... as the grenade launchers FIRE their missiles.

The ROCKETS SCREAM down in perfect triangulation -- the LIMO EXPLODES in a blinding FLASH.

INT. THE CHEVROLET

Ryan and the second man from the plane are in the rear, a THIRD MAN is next to the driver.

All four react to the explosion.

THIRD MAN
Jesus Christ!

The driver stands on the brakes, doors fly open, Ryan and the other men pour out of the car.

Ryan starts for the limo -- the Caddy's gas tank ignites -- a sheet of flame billows out, forcing him back.

He stands there, staring at the burning wreckage, helpless, unable to respond.

GO TO BLACK

FADE UP:

INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - DAY

The President's alone, behind his desk, watching a TV set.

INSERT - THE TV

A live CNN Special Report on "... the assassination of FBI Director Emil Jacobs in Bogota, Colombia, earlier today."

A MAN speaks OVER a floodlit shot of the intersection where the motorcade was attacked. The picture carries an acknowledgement: Courtesy HOY TV.

WOMAN (V.O.)
... Andrew Ferris, American
Ambassador to Colombia, was also
killed in the explosion, along with
two other members of the escort
party.

The Pres frowns, reaches for a phone.

PRESIDENT
(into phone)
Get Cutter... I'll hold.

MAN (OVER, CONT'D)
 Jacobs, a Towson, Maryland, native,
 graduated from Notre Dame University
 and Fordham Law. He began his FBI
 career...

The Pres MUTES the SOUND.

INTERCUT - EXT. GEORGETOWN - DAY

Establish (Cutter's) elegant townhouse.

PRESIDENT (OVER)
 You watching this thing?

INT. CUTTER'S LIBRARY

Cutter and Ritter are on their feet, eyes riveted to the TV.

MAN (OVER, CONT'D)
 ... and after two decades of
 meritorious field service --

Cutter pinches a remote, turns to a SPEAKER PHONE.

CUTTER
 (into phone)
 Yes, sir, I am.

PRESIDENT (OVER)
 I don't get it. I thought his going
 there was a secret.

Cutter's eyes ricochet off Ritter's.

CUTTER
 It was, sir, top secret.

PRESIDENT
 Then how in hell did they know he
 was coming?

CUTTER
 We don't know, Mr. President. We're
 looking into it.

INTERCUT - OVAL OFFICE

PRESIDENT
 You figure it was the cartels?

CUTTER (OVER)
 I'd have to go with that, sir.

PRESIDENT

Me, too, I guess -- though I gotta admit, I didn't think they were stupid enough to pull a stunt like that.

CUTTER

I'm afraid they are, sir. They truly believe they can get away with anything.

PRESIDENT

Well, they can't. Not by a damsite. They cannot go around killing my FBI Directors.

CUTTER

Nor your ambassadors.

PRESIDENT

Damn straight!

INTERCUT - CUTTER'S LIBRARY

PRESIDENT (OVER, CONT'D)

It's time to turn up the heat, Mr. Advisor. You hear me?

CUTTER

Loud and clear, Mr. President.

The Pres CLICKS OFF; Cutter hangs up the phone, looks away, takes a beat, turns back to Ritter.

CUTTER

You said Clark intercepted a signal about a cartel powwow?

RITTER

Yeah -- it's on for tonight.

CUTTER

Does he have the target identified?

RITTER

Yes...

A beat; Ritter gets it.

RITTER

We hit it!

CUTTER

Hard!

RITTER

It could be done -- but I need some extraordinary resources.

CUTTER

(smiles)

Ask, and you shall receive.

EXT. THE U.S. EMBASSY, BOGOTA - DAY

Establish.

INT. AN OFFICE IN THE EMBASSY

Ryan and three other men are in the room. One of them is 30-ish, dark, Hispanic-American. Another's dressed in the uniform of a U.S. Army MAJOR. The fourth man is older, swarthy, a COLONEL in the Colombian Police.

Ryan's hefting a grenade launcher (like the ones used in the assassination).

MAJOR

It's an RPG-7D -- standard-issue Soviet light antitank weapon.

RYAN

It used to be issue, Major -- they replaced it two years ago.

HISPANIC MAN

Is it traceable?

COLONEL

Possibly.

Ryan turns, eyes the Colonel.

RYAN

Never! There are millions of these things, scattered all over the world.

The Colonel shrugs, offers no counter. Ryan sets the launcher down on a desk, the office door opens, an AIDE sticks his head in, addressing the Hispanic man.

AIDE

Consul Morales, you have a call on seven.

MORALES tenses; "seven" hit a nerve.

MORALES (HISPANIC MAN)

Ah -- thanks, Powers.

POWERS nods, exits. Morales steps behind the desk, gestures at the phone.

MORALES

Excuse me -- I have to take this.

He lifts the receiver, turns his back to the others.

MORALES
(into phone)
Morales...

RITTER (OVER)
Can you talk?

MORALES
Not really.

INT. RITTER'S OFFICE AT CIA

RITTER
Okay, then listen: Tell Clark the
asset will be in place at twenty-two
hundred.

MORALES (OVER)
I'll tell him...
(lower)
But I still think it's a mistake.

RITTER
I don't give a shit what you think,
Morales. Is he there?

INTERCUT - THE EMBASSY

Morales turns back to the room, his eyes land on Ryan.

MORALES
Yes...

RITTER (OVER)
Keep him covered.

MORALES
I will.

Ritter hangs up, so does Morales, nodding at the phone.

MORALES
Sorry about that.
(checks his watch)
Ah, can you join me for supper,
Doctor?

RYAN
Yeah -- okay.

Morales BUZZES an INTERCOM; Powers answers.

POWERS (OVER)
Sir?

MORALES

Book a table at Zorro's -- nine o'clock.

POWERS

Yes, sir?

Morales looks up, smiles.

MORALES

Now... where were we?

Ryan gives him a side-of-eye; this guy needs watching.

EXT. A PENTHOUSE IN DOWNTOWN BOGOTA - DAY

Cortez and Escobedo, face-to-face in a living room.

ESCOBEDO

(sharp)

I repeat -- for the last time -- I had nothing to do with it! I didn't order their deaths.

CORTEZ

Yes, senor, and I believe you. But the Americans may not.

ESCOBEDO

The hell with them!

A WOMAN appears in a doorway.

WOMAN

Senor Escobedo...

ESCOBEDO

What?

WOMAN

Senor Diaz called -- he will pick you and the Colonel up at seven.

ESCOBEDO

Yes, all right.

He waves her off, turns back to Cortez.

ESCOBEDO

What more can they do to us, Cortez?

CORTEZ

I hope we don't find out, Patron.

EXT. THE GULF OF MEXICO - LATE AFTERNOON

The aircraft carrier U.S.S. Ranger PASSES to the WEST, cruising into a fiery sunset.

INT. THE CARRIER'S MAGAZINE

This is the ship's ammo center; all the ordinance for the carrier is stored here.

CAPTAIN ROBBY JACKSON and a CPO are at a test bench, inspecting a 54C Phoenix air-to-air missile.

CPO

How many are we gonna shoot, sir?

ROBBY

Ten to twenty -- enough to tell whether the fix works or not.

CPO

What about Sparrows?

ROBBY

Thirty -- same on the Sidewinders.

A tractor RUMBLES UP, towing a pallet of sky-blue two-thousand pound "smart" bombs, fitted with seeker heads on their noses and movable fins on the tails. The tractor pauses, waiting for an elevator.

Robby eyes the bomb, the CPO eyes him. They share a look, the Chief smiles.

CPO

Them's the new ones.

ROBBY

(shrugs)

You've seen one smart bomb, Chief, you've seen 'em all.

CPO

Not quite, Cap'n.

He raps a knuckle on the bomb casing -- the SOUND is DULL -- not metallic.

Robby reaches out and taps the bomb.

ROBBY

That's not steel.

CPO

Cellulose, sir. They made the friggin' things out of paper. How you like that?

ROBBY

(nods)

Stealth.

CPO

Sure gonna make one hell of a bang.

ROBBY
 (more to himself)
 And, when the smoke clears, they'll
 wonder what the hell it was.

EXT. THE CARRIER - DUSK

There's a launch in progress; A-14's SCREAMING down the
 catapults, vaulting off into the darkening sky.

Robby's in the greenhouse, overlooking the flight deck.

The last F-14 hurtles up and off; Robby turns to the LAUNCH
 DIRECTOR.

ROBBY
 That's it, right?

DIRECTOR
 Ah... one more, sir.

Robby looks to a computer screen that outlines the launch
 activity.

ROBBY
 What "one more" -- all we're putting
 up is six 14's.

DIRECTOR
 There's an A-6, too, sir -- launch
 directive just came down from CIC.

Robby steps over to the window, scans the deck.

An A-6 Intruder is taxiing into launch position. One of
 "those" baby-blue bombs is slung under the airplane.

Robby spots the bomb; his eyes narrow. The Intruder hooks
 up in the catapult -- flashes down the deck -- disappears
 into the mist.

Robby stares after it; looks away in thought.

EXT. ROJAS'S HACIENDA - LAST LIGHT (THROUGH BINOCULARS)

Our POV is from a nearby hilltop. We SEE Rojas and his
 bodyguards in the courtyard of an opulent mansion.
 Limo-loads of cartel-types are arriving.

EXT. THE HILLTOP

Clark turns away from the glasses, looks to Chavez who's
 standing next to a tripod-mounted GLD (Ground Laser
 Designator).

CLARK
 Is the laser secure?

CHAVEZ

Yes, sir.

Clark checks his watch.

CLARK

Okay, now all we have to do is wait.

Clark studies Chavez.

CLARK

How much time you got left?

CHAVEZ

Two years.

CLARK

Staying in?

CHAVEZ

What else? There's nothing out there for me.

CLARK

Don't be too sure. I might just have a slot open.

They share a look; Clark smiles.

CLARK

That is, unless you got something against dirty wars.

Chavez holds his look.

CLARK

Have you, kid?

CHAVEZ

I don't know, Mr. Clark. I've got to get through this one first.

CLARK

Don't sweat it, Chavez. I'll get you through.

EXT. ZORRO'S ROOFTOP RESTAURANT, BOGOTA - NIGHT

The restaurant's perched on the top of one of the city's tallest buildings. It's a formal kind of place; upscale diners, a white-tied string quartet.

An elevator door opens, Ryan and Morales get off. Morales steps to the MAITRE D', steps back to Ryan.

MORALES

Just be a second -- let's grab a drink.

They cross to a bar; Morales signals the BARTENDER, who hurries up to them.

BARTENDER
Que gustan tomar, senores?

MORALES
Absolut...

He looks to Ryan.

RYAN
Same.

BARTENDER
Hielo?

Morales looks back to Ryan, who nods.

MORALES
(to the Bartender)
Si!

The man walks OUT OF FRAME. Ryan gives the place an eye.

RYAN
Pretty classy.

MORALES
Hey -- how often do I get to entertain a Deputy Director?

RYAN
Acting Deputy Director.

The Bartender returns with their vodkas. They each pick up a glass, Morales raises his.

MORALES
Absent friends.

Ryan nods, they both take hits, share a look.

MORALES
So -- I suppose you'll be returning to Washington.

RYAN
I guess.

MORALES
When would that be?

RYAN
(smiles)
You trying to get rid of me, Morales?

MORALES
 (smiles back)
 Of course not, Doctor. Just let me know when you're ready so that I can arrange your flight.

A Bogota POLICE CAPTAIN walks past, spots Morales, stops.

CAPTAIN
 Peter!

MORALES
 Ric...
 (at Ryan)
 Captain Diego -- Dr. Ryan.

DIEGO (CAPTAIN)
 Ah, yes, I heard you were coming down.

They shake hands; Ryan eyes the uniform.

RYAN
 You're with the Bogota Police.

DIEGO
 Si... I am the Director of Criminal Investigation.

RYAN
 That means you're on the Jacobs case?

DIEGO
 Of course -- Finding the assassins is my highest priority.

RYAN
 Have you made any arrests?

DIEGO
 None, as yet.

RYAN
 Who do you think was behind it?

DIEGO
 (smiles)
 If I knew that, Dr. Ryan, I would arrest them.

RYAN
 You must have a hunch, Captain.

Diego shifts his weight; he's not used to answering questions. Morales reads him, steps into the breach.

MORALES

They have a number of suspects.
It's just sorting them out that's
taking the time.

Diego waves O.S.

DIEGO

Excuse me... I see my party. Good
meeting you, Dr. Ryan... Call me,
Peter.

The Captain hurries off.

RYAN

He heard I was coming down? How
could that be?

Morales smiles, shakes his head.

MORALES

That's Bogota for you, Doctor. This
place is Chinatown: Everybody knows
everything.

RYAN

Except who killed Emil Jacobs.

The Maitre d' approaches.

MAITRE D'

Senor Morales -- your table is
ready.

Morales gestures.

MORALES

Shall we...?

Ryan turns, walks off; Morales frowns.

EXT./INT. A HIGHWAY OUTSIDE BOGOTA - NIGHT

A 600SEL Mercedes is WAILING down a narrow road, bordered
on both sides by dense jungle.

Escobedo and Diaz are on the rear seat, Cortez is up front
next to the DRIVER.

INTERCUT - THE ROAD AHEAD

Major Sipo is kneeling ten yards off the concrete, hidden
by the undergrowth.

We HEAR the CAR approaching.

Sipo raises a (silenced) sniper's rifle, fitted with a
night scope.

The car rushes INTO FRAME -- Sipo aims for the right rear wheel -- FIRES... the TIRE BLOWS.

The DRIVER cranks the wheel -- the Mercedes sloughs across the road, skids to a rude halt.

ESCOBEDO
Son-of-a-bitch! What happened?

DRIVER
A tire, Patron.

ESCOBEDO
Then change it! Pronto, pronto!

He looks to Cortez.

ESCOBEDO
Call Rojas.

Cortez slips a cellular phone out of his pocket, dials.

INTERCUT - A HIGHRISE APARTMENT ON MIAMI BEACH - NIGHT

A WOMAN is sitting at a desk in a negligee, filing her nails. A PHONE RINGS. She picks it up.

WOMAN
Diga me!

INTERCUT - THE MERCEDES

CORTEZ
I wish to speak to Maria.

BACK TO SCENE

WOMAN
Momento...

The Woman places the phone in the cradle of a switching box and presses a button.

INTERCUT - THE MERCEDES

We HEAR a BUZZ-BUZZ -- Rojas answers.

ROJAS (OVER)
Si...?

CORTEZ
We've been detained...

INTERCUT - THE HACIENDA

Rojas is in a hallway, on a phone. The cartel-types are milling around in the b.g., huffing and puffing.

ROJAS
(into phone)
How long?

CORTEZ (OVER)
Twenty minutes -- at most.

ROJAS
Hurry -- they're getting nervous.

The LINE CLICKS off.

EXT. THE SKY ABOVE COLOMBIA

The A-6 Intruder (with the smart bomb attached) WHISTLES INTO FRAME.

INT. THE A-6

The Pilot's on his radio.

PILOT
Bravo Whiskey, this is Zulu X-Ray,
over.

EXT. THE HILLTOP (NEAR THE HACIENDA)

Clark grabs up the radio.

CLARK
Zulu X-Ray, this is Bravo Whiskey.
Read you five-five. Over.

PILOT (OVER)
Status report, over.

CLARK
We are in place. Mission is go.
Say again, mission is go.

PILOT
Roger, copy, go mission. We are ten
minutes out. Start the music.

INTERCUT - THE HILLTOP

Clark turns to Chavez.

CLARK
Light her up!

Chavez throws a switch on the GLD -- peers into the laser's eyepiece.

Now, we're FOCUSED on a white Cadillac limo parked in front of the Hacienda. A red dot appears in the FRAME -- Chavez maneuvers it -- centers it on the Caddy.

CHAVEZ

The target is lit.

CLARK

(into radio)

The music is playing...

INTERCUT - THE A-6

The BOMBARDIER/NAVIGATOR is in the rear seat, staring at his scope. The red dot appears in the lower left quadrant.

BOMBARDIER/NAVIGATOR

Got it!

PILOT

Yeah, Bravo Whiskey -- music sounds fine, Over and out.

EXT. THE JUNGLE ROAD

The Driver's changing the tire. Escobedo's standing over him, anxious.

ESCOBEDO

Come on, come on...

The Driver tightens the last lug nut, rises, starts to pick up the ruptured tire.

ESCOBEDO

No -- leave it!

Escobedo jumps into the back seat, the Driver races around the car, gets in behind the wheel; the Mercedes SCREECHES away..

INT. THE A-6

The Bombardier-Navigator's clocking his scope; the crosshairs are converging on the red dot.

BOMBARDIER/NAVIGATOR

Any time now...

EXT. THE A-6

We're CLOSE ON the bomb as four SHOTGUN SHELLS FIRE, driving down the "ejector feet" onto small steel plates on the upper side of the bomb case.

The bomb separates -- the aircraft jerks up; it just lost eleven hundred pounds.

PILOT
Breakaway, breakaway! Coming in.

FLASH CUT - THE HILLTOP

Clark turns to Chavez.

CLARK
Better brace yourself!

FLASH CUT - THE MERCEDES

The car comes up over a rise -- we SEE Rojas's hacienda in the distance.

EXT. THE HACIENDA

The bomb soars in -- nails the Caddy mid-roof -- DETONATES with a THUNDEROUS ROAR. The explosion's shock wave penetrates the house and grounds, disintegrating everything into millions of tiny fragments.

FLASH CUT - THE HILLTOP

Clark and Chavez stare at the action.

FLASH CUT - THE MERCEDES

The Driver's eyes pop open, he hits the brakes. Escobedo lets out a gasp.

ESCOBEDO
Mother of God!

FLASH CUT - THE ROOFTOP RESTAURANT

Ryan and Morales are at a table; Ryan has his back to the skyline.

MORALES
But, what I don't understand is,
what does Escobedo gain by killing
them?

RYAN
Who said he killed them?

MORALES
You don't think it was him -- his people?

RYAN
It could have been -- but, as you point out -- what was his motive?

MORALES
Yeah, that's the question. I mean...

He stops talking -- stares PAST CAMERA -- his eyes go wide.

Ryan turns... the sky behind them is lit up with a great white light.

RYAN
What the hell is that?

MORALES
Ah... heat lightning, probably. It's fierce down here.

The SONIC BOOM from the explosion ECHOES across the landscape.

The ROAR FADES; Ryan turns to Morales.

RYAN
Heat lightning?

MORALES
(shrugs)
Guess not.

Ryan's brow wrinkles.

EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE - MORNING

Establish.

INT. CUTTER'S OFFICE

He's scanning an "EYES ONLY" brief. The INTERCOM BUZZES.

CUTTER
Yes?

WOMAN'S VOICE
Director Ritter is here.

CUTTER
Send him in.

A beat, the door opens, Ritter bounds in, an excited smile on his face.

RITTER

We missed Escobedo and Diaz -- but we got Rojas, d'Alejandro, Fernandez, Wagner and three or four more -- plus the usual collateral damage.

The line jars Cutter.

CUTTER

What do you mean?

RITTER

I mean there were a bunch of security people and -- unfortunately -- Rojas's family was there. His wife, a couple of kids -- some servants.

Cutter bolts up straight in his chair.

CUTTER

What the hell are you talking about? This was supposed to be a surgical strike.

RITTER

(hot)

Well, for Christ's sake, man, what do you expect? We used a bomb, remember? You don't do surgery with bombs -- despite what the 'experts' say.

CUTTER

But -- this is coldblooded murder.

RITTER

(hotter)

You said the gloves were off. You said treat it as a war. I'm sorry if there were extraneous people around -- but, dammit, there always are.

CUTTER

What if the papers get hold of it?

RITTER

Tell you what -- if you don't tell the newsies, neither will I.

CUTTER

Get serious, Bobby. If the media...

RITTER

Screw the media! You've got media on the brain. You're the one who's been arguing for turning us loose on these characters.

Cutter gets up, shakes his head.

CUTTER

I know, I know... and I'm not changing my mind about that. It's just, I mean, I hadn't bargained for the death of innocent people...

He looks out across the court towards the Oval Office.

CUTTER

And, more importantly, neither had He.

RITTER

So, don't tell him.

Cutter spins around, stares at him.

CUTTER

Would you?

RITTER

That's not my call, Jimmy.

He starts for the door.

CUTTER

No more bombs, okay?

Ritter walks out without answering. Cutter turns, looks back towards the Oval Office.

EXT./INT. U.S. EMBASSY, BOGOTA - DAY

Ryan is standing in a courtyard, talking to Colombian Army Major and a Bogota Police Officer (MOS).

Our POV is from a window in Morales' office on the second floor of the embassy. He's standing at the corner of a drape, looking down at Ryan and talking on the phone.

MORALES

(into phone)

Yeah, he's crawling all over it -- talking to the local cops -- bugging the National Police.

INTERCUT - EXT. A TENNIS CLUB IN GEORGETOWN - DAY

Ritter's in whites, a cellular phone to his ear.

RITTER

Goddammit, I was afraid of this.
We've got to get him out of there,
Morales.

MORALES (OVER)

I agree, but how?

RITTER

I don't know -- let me think. In
the meantime, you stay on top of
him. I want your best people
covering his ass. You got that?

BACK TO SCENE

MORALES

Got it, boss.

He hangs up, peeks out the window; Ryan and the others are gone. He turns back to the room -- Ryan's standing in the doorway -- Morales blinks, recovers.

MORALES

Doctor... What can I do for you?

RYAN

I'd like to take a look at the
bombsite.

MORALES

The bombsite...? The hacienda that
blew up last night?

RYAN

That's the one.

MORALES

Yeah, well -- I'm afraid that's
gonna be hard to do. The military's
closed all the roads into there.

RYAN

So, I'll fly in.

MORALES

Well, yes, you could do that.
What, exactly, is it you want to
see?

RYAN

(measured)

I'd just like to take a look at it,
Morales... unless you've got a
problem with that?

MORALES

(flip-flops)

No! Hell no, Doctor, no problem at all. Flying out's a good idea. How's this afternoon.

RYAN

(flat)

Fine.

His eyes narrow; Morales shifts his weight.

MORALES

Anything else...

Ryan holds his stare a moment, then shakes his head, walks OUT OF FRAME. Morales lets out a breath.

EXT./INT. EL DORADO AIRPORT (GENERAL AVIATION LOUNGE) - DAY

Ryan's dressed in field clothes, standing at a window, looking out on a flight line.

CLARK (O.S.)

'Scuse me...

Ryan turns; Clark smiles, amused.

CLARK

Are you the gent who wants to go take a look at a hole in the ground?

RYAN

(smiles back)

That's me.

Clark sticks out a paw.

CLARK

I'm Clark, Doctor Ryan. Nice to know you.

EXT./INT. AN EL DORADO RUNWAY

A Piper Chieftain runs up its props, swings into the wind. Clark's flying the plane; Ryan's in the right seat.

The Chieftain hits the power curve, Clark releases the brakes, the Piper scurries down the runway and lifts off, banking to the southwest.

INT. THE CHIEFTAIN

Clark jerks a thumb to the rear.

CLARK

There's some coffee in a thermos back there. Could you pour me a cup?

RYAN

Sure.

He turns in his seat, picks up a thermos, pours Clark a cup -- turns back to set the thermos down -- spots a pair of MAC 10 machine pistols and a 12-gauge riot gun.

Ryan looks back to Clark.

RYAN

Expecting trouble?

CLARK

(smiles)

Always.

They fly along in silence a moment; Ryan breaks it.

RYAN

Are you with the Embassy?

CLARK

Nah -- strictly freelance. Actually, most of the time I'm up in the mountains -- gold prospecting.

Ryan clocks him; somehow he doesn't look like a gold prospector.

RYAN

That so? How's business?

CLARK

It's been better.

More silence. Now, they're at 2,000 feet, crossing a highway lined with army vehicles. Ryan gestures at the convoy.

RYAN

How much does the Colombian Army get involved in the drug war?

CLARK

Not much.

RYAN

Why's that?

CLARK

Lots of temptations... Say you're a captain -- One night you decide to patrol one part of your area, but not another. That could be worth a hundred grand.

RYAN

And, someday that captain grows up
and becomes a colonel.

CLARK

With a lot more territory.

RYAN

What about the police?

CLARK

Worse. And the judges -- they're
the worst of all.

RYAN

Sounds like a hard cycle to break.

CLARK

Break?

(turns to Ryan)

No way, Doc! The drug biz is
bulletproof.

RYAN

You make it sound hopeless.

CLARK

That's not a favorite word of mine,
but, yeah, it's about as close to
hopeless as it gets.

Clark banks the Chieftain left, begins climbing into an
overcast sky.

INT. ADMIRAL PAINTER'S QUARTERS ABOARD THE KENNEDY

The Admiral comes through the hatch, followed by Robby.
PAINTER crosses to a bar, pours himself a drink.

PAINTER

All right, now, give it to me one
more time.

ROBBY

I know I'm not cleared for this,
sir...

PAINTER

Just keep talking, Captain.

ROBBY

Yes, sir. After the plane launched,
I went up to CIC and followed it on
radar. It crossed the beach into
Colombia -- came back out from a
different direction. Then, this
morning, CNN's rattling about some
humongous explosion outside Bogota.

Painter takes a swallow.

PAINTER

You're telling me the smart bomb
that took out the druggie house fell
off one of my A-6's.

ROBBY

Yes, sir, I think so... You didn't
know?

PAINTER

No, Robby, I didn't.

Painter slams his glass down.

PAINTER

Jesus Christ, what lunatic set up
this abortion?

They share a look.

PAINTER

I gotta find out where those orders
came from.

ROBBY

Has to be an Agency job, sir.

PAINTER

Yeah, wouldn't doubt it was.

ROBBY

For what it's worth, sir, I have a
good friend who's pretty senior
there.

PAINTER

Who's that?

ROBBY

Jack Ryan.

PAINTER

Oh, yeah, I've met him. He was on
the Kennedy for a day or two, back
when we were chasing that Russkie...

Painter catches himself, smiles.

PAINTER

Yeah, Ryan -- good man. Go talk to
him.

ROBBY

Yes, sir.

EXT. THE SKY OVER BOGOTA - DAY

The Chieftain slips out of a fog bank, swoops down into a valley. Rojas' ruined hacienda lies spread out below. An enormous crater yawns where the house once stood. Dozens of ambulances and security vehicles dot the scene.

Ryan and Clark survey the damage.

CLARK

Woo -- that must have been one big kaboom. Never saw a car bomb do that much damage.

RYAN

Who said it was a car bomb?

CLARK

That's what I heard at the airport.

Ryan looks back to the bombsite, flashes a skeptical frown.

EXT. THE HACIENDA'S AIRSTRIP

The Chieftain touches down.

EXT. THE BOMBSITE

Ryan, Clark, Captain Diego, and assorted other uniformed types are surveying the wreckage. A pair of ambulance attendants pass by, toting a corpse on a stretcher. Ryan's eyes follow the pair, then back to Diego's.

RYAN

Do you have a death toll yet?

DIEGO

(shrugs)

It's very difficult to say. The force of the explosion was so enormous -- they'll be searching for weeks.

CLARK

Man, they must have lit a ton of dynamite to get a pop like that.

RYAN

Try five tons -- and even then you couldn't punch a crater that deep.

CLARK

So, you're thinking it was something else.

DIEGO
Oh, no -- it was most definitely a car bomb. We have what is left of the vehicle.

RYAN
Can I see it?

DIEGO
Of course, Doctor, right this way.

He walks OUT OF FRAME. Ryan and Clark share a look, follow after the Captain.

EXT. A SHED AT THE AIRSTRIP

The shattered remains of the white Caddy limo (that Chavez sighted on), are spread out over the floor of the shed. Ryan's inspecting the collage of rubble, picking up pieces of metal and trim, studying them, placing them back, picking up another.

Finally, a torn section of roof panel attracts his careful attention.

RYAN
(to no one)
What happens to a car when you set off a bomb inside it?

CLARK
It explodes.

RYAN
Ex-plodes.

Clark nods; Ryan holds up the roof section, traces a finger along the ragged edge of the painted surface.

RYAN
It's part of the roof panel -- the edges curl down -- not up.

CLARK
The car im-ploded.

RYAN
Looks that way to me.

DIEGO
You're suggesting it was a bomb that landed on the car?

RYAN
I am, Captain.

DIEGO

But, then where are the bomb fragments? We've searched the area with great care. None have been found -- not a trace.

RYAN

Well, keep looking, Captain -- they have to be there.

We HEAR a COPTER WHOPPING IN overhead.

A Jet Ranger circles a pad, sets down. Two security-types drop to the tarmac, big, mean apes with shoulder-holstered Mac's over their Hawaiian shirts. Then Cortez steps out in full uniform, followed by Escobedo in a flowing white trenchcoat.

Two of the military-types in Ryan's party excuse themselves and hurry over to the new arrivals; handshakes and bear hugs all around.

Escobedo and the others start walking off towards the bombsite.

Cortez lingers a moment; his eyes find Ryan's, they hold a stare, then the Colonel turns and walks after his boss.

Clark nods at the group.

CLARK

The dude in the white coat's Escobedo.

RYAN

I know. Who's the Colonel?

CLARK

Carlos Cortez. Ex-Cuban Intelligence. He's the cartel's lobbyist in Washington -- that is, when he's not down here playing soldier.

Ryan studies Clark.

RYAN

I must say, Clark, for a "gold prospector," you sure are plugged in.

CLARK

Just like to keep up to date.

EXT. THE SKY

The Chieftain breaks through a cloud; Bogota's up ahead. The plane's RADIO is SQUAWKING.

MAN (OVER)

Roger, Piper Four-Zero-Niner-Two...
you're in the Bogota frame -- Runway
Nine's all yours, Clark.

CLARK

(into radio)

I copy Bogota, runway nine. Thanks,
Eddie.

Clark shuts off the radio.

RYAN

I see you're pretty well known.

CLARK

Yeah, I guess -- well, it's no
wonder. My work brings me in and
out all the time.

Clark gestures behind them (changing the subject).

CLARK

Back there, you sounded like you
knew a lot about explosives.

RYAN

It's a hobby.

CLARK

Really? That's funny, it's a hobby
of mine, too.

RYAN

(smiles)

Now, why doesn't that surprise me?

Clark returns the smile, looks back to the horizon.

EXT. EL DORADO AIRPORT GENERAL AVIATION HANGARS - NIGHT

The Piper taxis up to a closed hangar door. Clark kills
the switch, Ryan opens the door, gets out, Clark follows
him down.

There's an Embassy town car in the b.g. A young DRIVER's
leaning against a front fender. As Ryan hits the tarmac,
the Driver snaps up straight.

Then one of Clark's Techs starts rolling back the hangar
door, revealing the communications van, the other Tech, and
a wall of shelving loaded with weapons and electronic
equipment.

The Tech turns toward the plane -- his eyes hit Clark's --
Clark shouts.

CLARK

Shut that door!

The Tech jumps inside the hangar, yanks the door shut.
Clark turns to Ryan, grins.

CLARK

Lot of thieves down here. Can't
dare let 'em see what you've got.

Ryan takes a beat; this guys definitely no gold
prospector.

CLARK

It was a pleasure flying you, Doc.

Ryan takes another beat, nods.

RYAN

Thanks for the ride, Mr. Clark.

He turns, makes for the town car. Clark watches after him.

INT. A BEDROOM IN THE U.S. EMBASSY RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Ryan's asleep; the PHONE wakes him up.

RYAN

(into phone)

Yeah...

INTERCUT - MORALES' OFFICE

He's on the phone; his Aide's standing across from him.

MORALES

Sorry to wake you, Doctor -- you
just had a signal from Bethesda. A
Captain Collins...?

RYAN

Read it.

Morales looks to a paper on the desk.

MORALES

Admiral Greer's condition
deteriorating. Critical surgery
scheduled tomorrow oh-nine hundred.

BACK TO SCENE

Ryan twists around, his feet hit the floor.

RYAN

How soon can I get out of here?

MORALES (OVER)

There's a courier flight at one --
have you into Dulles by seven.

RYAN

Get me on it.

He hangs up, gets up, hurries OUT OF FRAME.

EXT. A JUNGLE CLEARING - NIGHT

Our POV is THROUGH a NIGHT SCOPE: We're FOCUSED ON another processing plant (far larger than the earlier site).

Scores of workers shuffle through the clearing, humping coca bales, stirring giant kettles, loading product onto trucks. Armed guards walk the perimeter; this one's no piece a' cake.

Our VISION WIPES -- to Clark and Chavez -- who are two hundred yards from the plant. Clark sucks that tooth, shakes his head.

CLARK

Lot of shooters out there.

He picks up a radio, speaks into it.

CLARK

What's it look like, Captain?

INTERCUT - THE CAPTAIN (AND ANOTHER WIDE POV OF THE PLANT)

His eyes roam over the landscape.

CAPTAIN

(into radio)

I read forty guns, all SMG's as far as I can tell.

CLARK (OVER)

Gimme a time check.

The Captain looks to his watch.

CAPTAIN

Twenty-three, twenty-five, and... thirty.

BACK TO SCENE

Clark checks his chronograph, punches a button.

CLARK

And, mark! Okay, we go on twenty-six.

He snaps off the radio, tucks it into his jacket, turns to Chavez; they share a look.

CLARK
Could get ugly.

CHAVEZ
Is that why you're here, sir?

Clark grins, Chavez returns it.

CHAVEZ
Ninja owns the night!

CLARK
You better fuckin' hope he does,
kid.

He eyes his watch, cocks his machine pistol.

CLARK
Stay close.

He pushes off towards the plant; Chavez dogs his heels.

EXT. THE CLEARING

Clark and his people burst out of the jungle, laying down a HAIL of GUNFIRE.

Some guards are hit, but most take cover -- start RETURNING FIRE -- suddenly, we've got a semi-gunfight going on.

EXT. THE ROAD LEADING TO THE PLANT

A pair of 6X trucks are lumbering up the road.

Major Sipo is in the first truck, next to the driver. The SOUND of GUNFIRE echoes through the cane; Sipo cocks an ear, strains to listen.

More GUNFIRE.

SIPO
(at the driver)
Da le! Ahora!

He leans out the side window and motions for the other truck to speed up; the convoy accelerates down the road.

EXT. THE CLEARING

Clark and Chavez are next to a boiling kettle, BANGING away at the guards.

Suddenly, the trucks swing into the clearing -- the tailgates drop -- and out come Cortez's troops, who hit the ground FIRING.

CLARK
Son-of-a-bitch!

A line of slugs RIPS into the kettle. Clark slips on his night vision goggles, PANS the clearing -- picks up the Captain and his guys dug in on the left, taking HEAVY FIRE.

He pulls off the glasses, yells at Chavez.

CLARK
Left flank -- let's go!

He starts away -- stops, turns back -- SEES Chavez in a crouch, moving into the action.

CLARK
Chavez! No...

A STREAM of BULLETS rains in -- Clark ducks down, starts after Chavez -- the stream becomes a TORRENT.

Clark BANGS off a CLIP -- the torrent turns into a FLOOD. There's no way he can move forward... so he backs off, trailing into the jungle.

Sipo's head comes out from behind a tree. He surveys the firefight -- gestures to a soldier, who steps near him.

SIPO
Circule las trocas!

The soldier nods, waves to his squad; they vanish into the night OUT OF FRAME.

Clark's a hundred yards away now, clocking the action with the night goggles: The Captain and his seven guys are knee-deep in shit and running out of ammo.

Sipo's troopers rush in behind them and open FIRE. Three of the ninjas go down (one dead, two wounded). The Captain and the four others fight their way out of the trap and fall back to the cane line.

Sipo's men start in after them, but the Major calls them off.

Clark follows the action with the goggles, then PANS BACK to the plant.

Chavez is standing in the middle of the clearing, his hands up, flanked by two of Sipo's thugs.

The Captain and his guys come running up towards Clark; he calls out.

CLARK
Captain -- here!

The Captain jogs up to him.

CAPTAIN

They got Chavez, sir -- two others.
One KIA.

CLARK

I know... Make west -- across the
river. I'll get back to you on the
radio link.

The Captain nods, trots off with his guys.

Clark watches them disappear up the trail. He looks back
to the clearing, his eyes narrow.

EXT. BETHESDA - MORNING

Ryan's limo swings into the entrance drive. Ryan hops out,
starts into the hospital.

INT. THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE GREER'S SUITE

Ryan comes up the hall, stops at Greer's room, opens the
door.

His jaw falls; the bed's empty. He steps into the room,
stares down at the bed; his shoulders slump.

RYAN

(sighs)
Why...?

GREER (O.S.)

Well...

Ryan spins around; Greer's across the room, in an armchair,
his feet up on an ottoman, a blanket around his shoulders,
that old warm smile on his face.

GREER (CONT'D)

If you want to know the truth, I'm
just getting plain tired of lying on
a bed.

Ryan blinks, confused.

RYAN

I... You're okay, sir?

GREER

I wouldn't go quite that far --
but I am doing better than they
projected.

RYAN

But -- the operation?

GREER

What operation, Jack?

Ryan adds it up, shakes his head.

RYAN
You're not going into surgery this morning.

GREER
I sure do hope not.

Ryan crosses over, sits down on the arm of a chair, frowns.

GREER
Talk to me, son.

TIME CUT - THE HOSPITAL VIP LOUNGE

Greer's in a wheelchair, Ryan's standing across from him.

GREER
You didn't see the message -- the one Captain Collins is supposed to have sent?

RYAN
No... I guess I should have asked for a hard copy, but it never occurred to me that Morales would lie about something like that.

GREER
Pete Morales?
(as Ryan nods)
That figures -- he's one of Ritter's flock. Real dope. He ran the Panama screw-up.

RYAN
Have you ever heard of a freelancer named Clark?

The Admiral's face lights up.

GREER
Oh, boy -- don't tell me he's down there, too.

RYAN
What's his story, Admiral?

GREER
Clark? ... He's a wild man. But, he's awful good.

They share a look.

GREER
One thing's for sure -- if those two are on the ground, you just know there's wet work going on.

EXT. ESCOBEDO'S HACIENDA - NIGHT

Floodlights rake across an inner courtyard. Chavez and the two other (wounded) ninjas are chained to a wall surrounded by their captors. One of the guys is sagging fast; he looks like he might not make it.

Our POV is from a window in Escobedo's study. Cortez is looking down on the prisoners, with a phone to his ear. He turns and looks out onto a terrace where Escobedo and Diaz are arguing (MOS).

CORTEZ

No suspicions, whatever... I am positive -- Yes, very well, I will try.

He hangs up, looks back to the ninjas a moment, then turns and steps out onto the terrace; his eyes lock onto Escobedo. Cortez smiles.

ESCOBEDO

Something pleases you, Colonel?

CORTEZ

A most encouraging phone call, Patron.

ESCOBEDO

Yes...

CORTEZ

One of my contacts -- they suggest that if I come to Washington, it may be possible to arrange a peace between us.

ESCOBEDO

What are you talking about?

CORTEZ

Just that, Jefe -- an end to their aggression -- a more lenient posture from their drug police.

DIAZ

Are you trying to tell us you know agents within their government who could grant such arrangements?

CLARK

I do.

DIAZ

I refuse to believe that.

CORTEZ

But, it's true, Senor. Providing one thing...

They both wait for it.

CORTEZ

I must have the authority to negotiate on your behalf.

ESCOBEDO

Negotiate what?

CORTEZ

Small details, nothing more. It might be necessary to make certain compromises -- adjustments.

Escobedo studies Cortez.

ESCOBEDO

Do you truly think such a thing is possible?

CORTEZ

I do, Jefe. Especially, now.

DIAZ

Why now?

CORTEZ

With the unfortunate deaths of Senor Rojas and your other associates, you and Senor Escobedo are in absolute control of the region's product.

DIAZ

Yes...?

CORTEZ

The Americans know this. And, if I come to them as your official emissary, they must respect the power behind my efforts.

Escobedo and Diaz exchange a look; the Patron turns back to the Colonel.

ESCOBEDO

I'll consider it, Cortez.

CORTEZ

Thank you, Patron -- Senor Diaz.

He CLICKS his HEELS, exits; Escobedo and Diaz share a look.

DIAZ

You put too much trust in him, Ernesto. You give him the wholesaler codes -- the shipping routes. If it weren't for you and me, he'd have it all.

They hold the look.

EXT. RYAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ryan's limo comes up the drive and stops. He gets out, the Driver opens the trunk, takes out the luggage, and follows Ryan up onto the porch. The Driver sets down the bags.

RYAN

Thanks.

DRIVER

Anything else, sir?

RYAN

Just wait for me.

DRIVER

(surprised)

Oh...

RYAN

What?

DRIVER

I didn't know you'd be going in today, sir.

RYAN

Why wouldn't I?

DRIVER

Ah, well, it is Sunday...

Ryan looks at his watch, looks back to the Driver.

RYAN

It is Sunday!

DRIVER

(smiles)

Yes, sir.

RYAN

(smiles back)

See you in the morning.

DRIVER

Yes, sir.

He walks off, Ryan turns to the alarm panel, punches in the code, keys the lock, enters the house.

INT. SALLY'S BEDROOM

She's fast asleep; Ryan's standing over her. He bends down, brushes her cheek with his lips.

INT. J.R.'S ROOM

The door opens, Ryan tiptoes in -- but, accidentally, steps on a plastic duck. The TOY SQUEAKS -- J.R. stirs.

INTERCUT - JACK AND CATHY'S BEDROOM

Cathy bolts awake at the SOUND -- freezes -- listens.

BACK TO SCENE

J.R. rolls over -- goes right off to sleep. Ryan crosses to his son's bed, kneels down, smiles.

INTERCUT - THE HALLWAY

Ryan's bedroom door opens, Cathy comes out, two-handing a .38 S&W. She starts down the hall, barefoot, quiet as a cat.

BACK TO SCENE

Ryan's still kneeling by J.R.'s bed. Cathy appears in the doorway -- swings the gun up -- realizes it's her husband -- relaxes, crosses over, kneels down behind Ryan, wraps her arms around him.

CATHY

Ooo, I'm glad you're back.

RYAN

Me, too.

They rise up and kiss; the DOORBELL RINGS. They exchange a look, Ryan starts for the door.

INT. RYAN'S FRONT DOOR

Ryan swings the door open; it's Robby (in uniform).

ROBBY

Hope I didn't get you up, buddy.

Ryan smiles, steps aside, Robby walks in, they shake hands.

RYAN

What are you doing here?

ROBBY

I have to talk to you.

Cathy appears at the head of the stairs, pulling on a robe.

CATHY

Robby, hi! Is Sissy with you?

ROBBY
 Hi, Cathy. No, she's home. Said
 she'd call you later.
 (looks back to
 Ryan)
 Can we talk?

TIME CUT - RYAN'S STUDY

Robby's sipping coffee; Ryan's behind his desk, thinking.

RYAN
 Why did you go up to CIC and follow
 the A-6 on radar?

ROBBY
 Don't know. Something just felt
 strange about it.
 (smiles)
 Maybe hangin' with you spook-types
 rubs off.

They share a smile; Ryan concentrates, nods.

RYAN
 (to himself)
Cellulose -- that's why there were
 no bomb fragments.

He looks back to Robby.

ROBBY
 And, that's not the end of it: I
 flew in with one of our Air Rescue
 Chiefs. He said the Coast Guard
 picked up a dooper off Veracruz. The
 guy claims he was shot down by a
 U.S. Air Force fighter.

Ryan gets up from behind the desk.

RYAN
 You going home from here?
 (as Robby nods)
 Could you drop me at Langley?

ROBBY
 You bet!

EXT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Ryan comes across the parking lot, enters the Agency.

INT. CIA

He slips his I.D. necklace on, crosses the lobby, nods at a
 guard, starts up a staircase.

INT. RYAN'S OFFICE

He enters, crosses to the desk, reaches under the drawer, BUZZES the wall panel aside, steps to the safe, opens it, lifts up the lower mat, and slips out the 3x5 card (with Ritter's combination on it).

Ryan memorizes the number, puts the card back, closes the safe, turns back to the desk, BUZZES the panel into place, heads for the door.

INT. THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE RYAN'S OFFICE

Two security guards walk past the DDI's door. A beat, the door opens, Ryan steps out, checks the corridor, crosses it, and tries a door marked DDQ.

INT. RITTER'S OFFICE

Ryan slips in, walks through the secretary's area, and enters Ritter's private office.

He crosses to the desk, reaches under the drawer -- we HEAR a BUZZ -- a panel on the side wall slides away, revealing a safe.

Ryan walks over to the safe -- thinks a moment -- starts spinning the dial.

A last digit -- the safe door springs free -- Ryan opens it, takes out a stack of files, sets them on Ritter's desk, turns on a lamp, starts culling through the folders.

Inside the front cover of each file is a summary sheet describing what Operation "WHATEVER" is all about. He riffs through EAGLE EYE, CAPER, RECIPROCITY, finally hits SHOWBOAT, scans the summary; sucks in a breath.

RYAN

Holy shit!

He shakes his head, keeps on reading.

INT. A COPY CENTER AT CIA

Ryan's at a Xerox, feeding in documents from the SHOWBOAT file. He picks up a SAT photo, stares at it: It's a downshot of Rojas' ruined hacienda.

Ryan copies the photo.

EXT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - MORNING

A limo pulls up -- the driver gets out, sprints around the car -- opens the rear door; Ritter exits the limo, starts into the building.

INT. RYAN'S OFFICE

Ryan turns away from a window (still dressed as he was last night). He walks into his bathroom, turns on the tap, looks into the mirror, staring at his reflection.

RYAN

(to himself)

You know what you are? You're a thief.

(the advocate)

As a senior executive, I'm entitled to full exposure -- the rules don't apply.

(reverse)

That's a dangerous way to think, Ace.

Ryan holds the stare a moment, shuts his eyes.

RYAN

Do I have any idea what the hell I'm doing?

INT. RITTER'S OFFICE

Ritter comes through the door, nods at a pair of SECRETARIES.

FIRST SECRETARY

Morning, sir.

SECOND SECRETARY

Good morning, sir.

The First Secretary gets up, grabs a pad, follows Ritter into his chamber, shuts the door, starts reading from her notes.

FIRST SECRETARY

General Calvi's office called -- the EAGLE briefing is at four.

Cooperman, from State, wants to talk to you about...

The office door bursts open, Ryan pushes into the room, trailed by the Second Secretary.

SECOND SECRETARY

Doctor!

(at Ritter)

I told him to wait, sir.

RYAN

Ladies, would you please leave us alone.

The ladies look to Ritter; he nods, they exit.

RITTER

What's going on, Ryan?

RYAN

I'm asking you the same question.

RITTER

You want to give me a hint what you're talking about?

RYAN

I'm talking about Operation SHOWBOAT, Ritter!

Ritter reacts, but holds his mud.

RITTER

Get the hell out of my office.

RYAN

Shut it down!

RITTER

You are way out of line, mister. That is a paramilitary counter-terrorist op.

RYAN

Really? Let's see if Congress agrees.

RITTER

You've got no proof.

RYAN

I've got chapter and verse.

Ritter's eyes flash off his safe, back to Ryan.

RYAN

It's over, Ritter! Get your elves out of there -- now!

He turns, walks out of the office; Ritter bites his lip.

EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

Establish.

INT. CUTTER'S OFFICE

He's at the mantel, fingering a string of worry beads. Ritter's across the room, fuming.

RITTER

I told the Judge he was making a mistake with him. The guy's nothing but a fucking Boy Scout.

Cutter takes a beat, pockets his beads.

CUTTER
You know, Bobby, maybe it's a
godsend, his finding out.

RITTER
What?

CUTTER
I've been thinking -- this whole
thing could turn into a long, dark
tunnel.

RITTER
But, it's working. You've read the
body count. If anything, we should
be escalating it.
(snorts)
That son-of-a-bitch! We've got to
get rid of him.

Cutter sits down behind his desk, puts his feet up, leans
back, schemes.

CUTTER
What if you called Clark and ordered
him out without his ninjas?

RITTER
How do they get out?

CUTTER
Who cares? Maybe they don't.

RITTER
You're not serious? Tell him he's
got to leave his people in there?

CUTTER
What would he do?

RITTER
Come on -- you know Clark. He'd
come up here and cut my nuts off.

CUTTER
You think?

RITTER
I know damn well he would. I'd be
dead by morning.

Cutter takes a beat, looks back to Ritter, nods at a phone.

CUTTER
Call him!

EXT. A RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD IN BOGOTA - DAY

We're FRAMED ON a tidy, one-story ranch; suburbia, Colombian-style.

A PHONE RINGS OVER THE SHOT.

INT. THE HOUSE

Clark's at a dining room table, studying photo blow-ups of Escobedo's house and the fortifications surrounding the hacienda.

A PHONE behind him keeps RINGING; he finally turns and picks it up.

CLARK
(into phone)
Yeah...?

RITTER (OVER)
The party's over!

CLARK
Since when?

RITTER
As of now.

CLARK
That can't be.

INTERCUT - CUTTER'S OFFICE

CLARK (OVER)
We've got assets in place, remember?

RITTER
(into speaker
phone)
I hate to say it, buddy, but I'm
afraid they're history.

CLARK
Bullshit, they are! What the hell
happened?

CUTTER
(into speaker
phone)
Ryan happened, Clark.

He and Ritter exchange a look.

CLARK
That you, Skipper?

CUTTER

It's me, Gunny.

INTERCUT - CLARK'S HOUSE

CLARK

What the hell's going on, sir?

CUTTER (OVER)

Like I said -- the Doctor stuck his big nose into it. He came back from Bogota -- said he knew all about SHOWBOAT -- threatened to take a walk up the Hill if we didn't close the store immediately.

CLARK

Okay, we close it. Get me some air and they're out of here.

INTERCUT - CUTTER'S OFFICE

RITTER

I guess you're not hearing us, pal. There is no air -- no nothing. He's shut us down tight.

CLARK (OVER)

Does he know they're still in there?

RITTER

I told him.

CUTTER

He said, tough shit -- and, that's a quote. And, he also said to tell you, if you're looking for your com van, it's on the way to Panama.

CLARK

No! I can't raise my people without it.

RITTER

Hey, talk to Ryan.

He CLICKS OFF the SPEAKER, looks to Ritter.

RITTER

(grins)

Very nice, Jimmy. Why didn't I think of that?

CUTTER

(grins back)

'Cause you didn't go to Yale, Bobby, that's why.

EXT. WASHINGTON - DAY

Ritter's limo glides through traffic.

INT. THE LIMO

He's on the phone.

RITTER

Goddammit, don't argue with me. Get
it out of there -- right now!

INT. MORALES' OFFICE AT THE (BOGOTA) EMBASSY

MORALES

(into phone)

Okay, okay -- but, what do I tell
him?

RITTER (OVER)

That's all taken care of. Call me
when it's gone.

MORALES

Right.

He hangs up, makes for the door.

EXT. EL DORADO AIRPORT (CARGO AREA) - DAY

There's a Caribe Airlines cargo jet on the tarmac, motors
at the IDLE.

One of Clark's Technicians is behind the wheel of the
communications van, steering the vehicle up the plane's
loading ramp. The other Tech is in the cargo bay,
directing the procedure.

INTERCUT - THE AIRPORT ENTRANCE

A Jeep comes ROARING through the gate; Clark's at the
wheel.

BACK TO SCENE

The communications van inches into the plane, hits the
shocks, the jet's ENGINES start WINDING UP.

ANGLE - THE AIRPORT

The Jeep SCREECHES around a corner, heading for the cargo
jet.

One of the Techs spots Clark at the wheel.

TECH
Come on, move it!

The cargo door starts closing, the pilot releases the brakes, the plane begins rolling down the apron.

A U.S. Embassy sedan is parked in the foreground; Morales is in the back seat, clocking the take-off. He, too, spots Clark.

MORALES
Oh, shit!
(at the driver)
Let's get out of here!

The sedan takes off.

Clark stands on the Jeep's accelerator, racing after the jet.

CLARK
Stop! Stop that damn airplane.

The jet swings out onto a runway, the pilot pours on the gas, the plane hurtles down the tarmac, lifts off into the sky.

Clark slows the Jeep to a stop, stares after the jet, slams his palm on the steering wheel.

He sits there for a moment, formulating his next move, reaches a decision, U-turns the Jeep, heads back towards the airport.

EXT. THE JUNGLE - NIGHT

The Captain and his five ninjas are dug in, just off a trail. One of the TROOPERS is working on the radio.

TROOPER
VARIABLE, this is KNIFE. Come in,
please, over.
(pause)
VARIABLE calling KNIFE -- come in,
please...

He inspects the radio, turns to the Captain.

TROOPER
Batteries are starting to fade, sir.
Should I stop?

The Captain frowns, shakes his head.

CAPTAIN
Keep trying.

TROOPER
 (into radio)
 VARIABLE, this is KNIFE. Come in,
 please -- over.

EXT. RYAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Our POV is THROUGH BINOCULARS; we're on a bluff three hundred yards from the house.

The front door opens, Cathy exits, dressed for work, the kids come out next, dressed for school, and then Ryan in sweats, dressed for a jog. They walk down to her car, he buckles the kids in, pecks at their noses, comes around to Cathy's window, leans down.

EXT. THE CAR

RYAN
 Good luck, today.

CATHY
 (frowns)
 Thanks -- I'm going to need it.

RYAN
 Come on, Cathy -- you're going to do it.

CATHY
 I'm taking a big chance, Jack.

RYAN
 You're not, babe! You know
 you're right...
 (as she nods)
 When you're right, you can't lose.

CATHY
 (smiles)
 Is that the way it works, mister?

RYAN
 That's the way it works, ma'am!

They kiss, he stands back, the car pulls away.

Ryan watches after it a moment, does a stretch or two, then starts jogging down the driveway.

EXT. THE BLUFF

The BINOCULARS PAN him OUT OF FRAME.

Clark lowers the glasses, gets into a Dodge sedan, drives off up a dirt road.

EXT. RYAN'S GATE

He trots out of the drive, turns right, starts down a (deserted) blacktop.

The Dodge comes up over a rise, slows.

Clark squints; SEES Ryan in the distance. He pulls the Glock out of his belt, cocks the gun, lays it on the passenger seat.

Ryan keeps on loping down the road. The Dodge approaches -- he HEARS it coming -- but doesn't pay any attention.

Clark accelerates, coming up fast behind Ryan -- but just when we're certain he's going to hit him -- Clark swerves the wheel and nails the brakes.

Ryan dives for the ditch. The Dodge whips around, skidding to a stop. Clark jumps out with the gun.

Ryan crawls up out of the ditch, spitting dust.

RYAN

What the hell do you...

He stops; Clark approaches with the Glock leveled on Ryan.

CLARK

Turn around -- slow.

Ryan turns, Clark steps up, slips a pair of thumb cuffs on him, leads him back to the Dodge, opens the trunk, points at it with the gun.

CLARK

Get in.

RYAN

Hey, come on, eh...

CLARK

IN!

Ryan obliges; Clark slams down the trunk lid.

GO TO BLACK

FADE UP:

INT. A (CUT-RATE) THIRD FLOOR HOTEL ROOM - DAY

A dirt-streaked window affords us a buck-ugly view of industrial D.C.

The door opens -- Clark pushes Ryan into the room, shoves him down on a chair, shuts the door, picks up a phone, and sets it on a table in front of Ryan.

CLARK

Okay, I'm gonna make this real easy. You call Ritter, tell 'im SHOWBOAT is back on -- or, I blow your head off.

RYAN

I can't do that, Clark. It's an unauthorized operation.

CLARK

It's a Company operation, man. "Authorized" has nothing to do with it.

RYAN

I don't play that game.

Clark studies him, nods to himself.

CLARK

I can hear it.

RYAN

What?

CLARK

Greer.

Clark's mood suddenly shifts.

CLARK

How's he doing?

RYAN

Better.

CLARK

That's good.

A beat, and he's back to tough guy, pointing the Glock at Ryan's head.

CLARK

Listen carefully, Doc -- every minute you fuck with me, my people get deeper into the shit.

RYAN

What people?

CLARK

My grunts -- they're still in-country. You know that -- Ritter told you.

RYAN

No, he didn't, Clark! I told him to get everybody out -- then close it down.

CLARK

That's not the way they play it back.

RYAN

So, they're lying. What else is new?

Clark kicks it around.

CLARK

Okay, they could be lying. But, now that you know they're in there, what are you gonna do about it?

RYAN

I'm going to help you get them out.

CLARK

You mean that?

RYAN

Take these things off and I'll show you.

Clark steps behind Ryan, slips the cuffs off. Ryan massages his thumbs, picks up the phone, dials.

RYAN

DDO's office... Is he there? Jack Ryan -- interrupt him.

(at Clark)

Where the hell are we?

CLARK

26th and M.

RYAN

(into phone)

Ritter? Stay where you are. I'll be there in twenty minutes!

INT. RITTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Ryan and Clark are standing across the desk from the DDO; Ritter's copping a plea.

RITTER

Look, come on -- you said shut it down, I shut it down! That's it, I'm out of it.

RYAN

You can't leave those people in there.

RITTER

I didn't -- you did!

CLARK
Stop screwing around, Ritter. I
want those assets.

Ritter takes a beat, turns to Ryan.

RITTER
You said you had "chapter and verse"
on SHOWBOAT.

RYAN
I do. What about it?

Ritter points at Clark.

RITTER
I give him back his toys -- you give
me back your proof.

Ryan wets his lips, takes a beat, nods, resigned.

RYAN
Okay...

Ritter brightens, sits down behind his desk, picks up a
pen.

RITTER
(at Clark)
So, what do you need?

CLARK
The van -- the Techs.-- some
choppers.

Ritter starts making notes.

RITTER
What kind of helos?

CLARK
A Pave Low for the guys... and two
Cobras.

Ryan and Ritter both react.

RITTER
Gunships?

RYAN
What the hell for?

CLARK
The cartel people nabbed three of
the ninjas.

RITTER
Oh, great!

CLARK

Not important. I'll bust 'em out.
Just get me the air support.

RITTER

Jesus Christ, man, you should have
told me. That kind of crap hits the
fan, we're dead.

CLARK

So are they, Ritter, if I don't get
the hell back down there.

Ryan takes a moment, gets a thought.

RYAN

Hang on a second...

They both turn to him.

RYAN

How do I know this isn't just a play
to get the op going again?

CLARK

There's one sure way to find out.

RYAN

You mean, go with you?

CLARK

That'd do it, wouldn't it?

He turns, starts out of the office. Ryan looks to Ritter,
the DDO shakes his head.

RITTER

Don't even think about it, Ryan.
This is "OP's" -- you're
Intelligence.

RYAN

Your ops could use some
intelligence, Ritter.

He pivots, follows after Clark.

EXT. JOHNS HOPKINS - DAY

Establish.

INT. AN OPERATING AMPHITHEATRE

Cathy is poised over a table, assisted by her TEAM.
There's a TV MONITOR suspended next to her.

INSERT - THE MONITOR

An ECU of Sara Winter's eye; the laser beam is flicking across the retina area, "snipping" out black spots (the tumors).

ANGLE - THE VIEWING ROOM

Doctors Polk and Williams are observing at another MONITOR. Polk sucks in a breath.

INSERT - MONITOR

The beam "kills" a spot.

BACK TO SCENE

Polk exhales, smiles.

POLK
Damn, she is good.

Williams nods, reluctantly.

WILLIAMS
Yeah, she's not bad.

Polk gives him a side-of-eye, looks back to the monitor.

INT. A SURGEON'S LOUNGE - LATER

Cathy's at a window, looking down on a children's playground where a half-dozen tykes are romping. She's sipping coffee, still in her greens.

The lounge door opens, Dr. Williams looks in, sees her.

WILLIAMS
Ah, there you are...

She turns, they share a look.

WILLIAMS
Congratulations, Doctor -- you did it. She's going to make it, fine.

He smiles, starts away; an ORDERLY approaches.

ORDERLY
You have a call, Dr. Ryan -- line six.

CATHY
Thanks.

She crosses to a desk, picks up a phone, punches 6.

CATHY
 (into phone)
 Dr. Ryan...

EXT. DULLES AIRPORT - LATE AFTERNOON

A Caribe Airlines executive jet lifts off the runway.

RYAN (OVER)
 Hi!

INT. THE JET

It's a ten-passenger layout; Ryan's in the rear, on a phone, Clark's up front with a map of Bolivia spread out across a desk. The rest of the plane is empty.

CATHY (OVER)
 Hi, yourself!

RYAN
 (into phone)
 So, how did it go?

INTERCUT - THE LOUNGE

CATHY
 Great! Real good.

RYAN (OVER)
 I told you. I knew you'd pull it off, kid.

CATHY
 Thanks to you. You really nailed it for me this morning.

INTERCUT - THE JET

RYAN
 How's that?

CATHY
 What you said -- "When you know you're right, you can't lose!"

Ryan's eyes flick over the cabin. Boxes of ammo, grenades, crates of machine guns are strapped into passenger seats.

CATHY
 It really does work, doesn't it?

Ryan's lost in thought.

CATHY
 You there?

Ryan comes out of it.

RYAN
Yeah -- sure it does...
(under)
I hope.

CATHY
What?

RYAN
Nothing...

CATHY
Where are you, in the car?

RYAN
No... Ah, I'm going away for awhile.

INTERCUT - THE LOUNGE

Cathy's smile fades.

CATHY
Oh? Well, have a safe trip.

RYAN
Thanks.

CATHY
I'm not going to say it, Jack.

RYAN (OVER)
Good.

CATHY
(saying it)
Be careful.

BACK TO SCENE

Ryan smiles at the line, turns off the air phone, rises, walks up to Clark, who's plotting over the map.

RYAN
Where are they being held?

CLARK
Escobedo's Hacienda -- thirty clicks
east of Bogota.

He reaches in his briefcase, takes out the file of photo
blow-ups, passes them to Ryan.

Ryan scans through the shots, whistles low.

RYAN
This place looks ugly.

CLARK
Mmm, it's no tin can. But, we can
pry it open.

RYAN
How many guns in there?

CLARK
A hundred or so.

RYAN
And, you're going to take them down
with six ninjas?

CLARK
We're gonna take them down.

RYAN
I'm an observer, Clark.

CLARK
I forgot... Guess we'll have to find
you a nice safe place to watch from.

They share a look.

RYAN
There's a difference between being
brave, and being an idiot.

CLARK
Who's talking brave, Doc? It's my
job.

He turns back to his map.

EXT. ESCOBEDO'S HACIENDA - DAY

Chavez and the two TROOPERS are still chained to the wall
in the courtyard. The more seriously wounded guy is
moaning low, collapsing on his chains.

TROOPER
I ain't gonna make it, Chavez.

CHAVEZ
Bullshit, you are! We all are.

He looks out across the fields toward the hilltop where he and Clark ran the smart bomb op.

CHAVEZ
He's not gonna leave us in here,
man. I know it.

SECOND TROOPER
Don't make no book on it, Blood.

EXT. THE HILLTOP

Ryan's scoping out the house THROUGH BINOCULARS.

CLARK (OVER)
How far's the courtyard from the
gate?

Ryan SHIFTS FOCUS -- FIRST ON the prisoners -- then a SLOW
PAN to the gate.

RYAN
Three hundred meters -- give or
take.

CLARK
Perfect! Nice straight shot. We
walk in -- pluck the guys -- walk
out.

Ryan lowers the glasses, turns to Clark, who's making notes
on a diagram of the house and grounds.

RYAN
Are you crazy? That's a free-fire
zone. There's no cover -- no
fall-back.

Clark looks up, smiles.

CLARK
Just wanted to see if you were
paying attention.

He runs a finger along the diagram, tracing a path into the
hacienda from the rear.

CLARK
We call the Cobras in along the
ridge line. They blow the fence --
we're down the back garden in thirty
seconds.

(to himself)
Chain cutters...

He makes a note; Ryan taps the map.

RYAN
Smoke the rear of the house -- come
back out the same way.

Clark studies him.

CLARK
Marine Infantry, right?
(as Ryan nods)
Yeah, I remember from your files.

RYAN
Have you been checking me out, Mr.
Clark?

CLARK
Just like to know who the players
are.

He folds up the diagram, takes the glasses from Ryan,
studies the layout, then FOCUSES on Chavez.

CLARK
Hang tough, kid.

EXT. EL DORADO AIRPORT - DUSK

That same Caribe Airlines cargo jet is back on the tarmac,
now off-loading the communications van. Clark and Ryan
are clocking the procedure. The van rolls off the ramp,
one of the Techs FIRES it up, swings around and up to
Clark. The Second Tech rolls down the passenger window.

CLARK
Find 'em!

TECH
Yes, sir.

The van pulls off, heading for Clark's hangar.

RYAN
What if they can't find them?

CLARK
(shrugs)
Then I go in by myself.

He walks off; Ryan watches after him.

EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT

A squad of Cortez's people are moving through the bush,
hunting the ninjas.

The Captain and his guys are hugging the ground. The
Trooper with the radio is lying on his side next to the
officer.

Suddenly, a VOICE CRACKLES through the RADIO.

VOICE (OVER)
KNIFE, this is VARI--

The Captain grabs the Trooper, rolls him over on his belly, MUFFLING the SOUND... but one of Cortez's guys heard it. He stops, dead still, listens -- turns around, pokes his AK-47 at a shadow, turns back, listens, walks on.

The Trooper sits up, dials down the volume, whispers into the radio.

TROOPER
VARIABLE, this is KNIFE. Come in, please, over.

INT. CLARK'S HANGAR - NIGHT

Ryan and Clark are at a table, going over the diagram. Ryan points at a meadow leading down from the ridge.

RYAN
If they did their job right, that field should be mined.

CLARK
I was just thinking the same thing.

Clark looks up.

CLARK
You may have missed your calling.

The Tech shouts O.S.

TECH
Got KNIFE, sir!

Ryan and Clark cross to the van, step up next to the panel; the Tech FLIPS to SPEAKER.

TROOPER (OVER)
KNIFE, calling VARIABLE. Come in, please, over.

CLARK
KNIFE, this is VARIABLE. Where's your Captain, over?

CAPTAIN (OVER)
I'm here, sir, over.

CLARK
Get out your map...

EXT. THE HACIENDA - NIGHT

Cortez, Escobedo, and Diaz are in the courtyard. The floodlights are on, illuminating Chavez and the guys.

Diaz is pacing and ranting, as usual.

DIAZ

I say we kill them and dump their corpses on the Embassy doorstep. We give them a warning: They can't send their dogs down here to murder us.

CORTEZ

That's a powerful warning, senor. But, if you kill them, you end up with three dead soldiers.

DIAZ

Si...?

CORTEZ

As our Middle Eastern friends have proven, three live Americans are worth a great deal more.

Escobedo turns to Cortez.

ESCOBEDO

They'd be useful in your "negotiations."

CORTEZ

They would, indeed, Patron. I assure you, their CIA will be desperate to get them back.

DIAZ

You're loco -- the both of you! The Yankees will never deal with us.

ESCOBEDO

Why not? They've dealt with worse.

He walks off; Cortez and Diaz share a look.

EXT. A HELICOPTER CARRIER - NIGHT

A pair of (long range) Cobra gunships lift off the flight deck, bank up and away. A shard of lightning CRACKS across the sky, silhouetting the war birds.

TIME CUT - EXT. A JUNGLE COASTLINE

The choppers SNARL THROUGH FRAME, heading in-country.

INT. THE LEAD COBRA

The PILOT FLICKS ON the RADIO

PILOT
VARIABLE, this is SNAKE, do you read
me, over?

EXT. A HILL ABOVE THE REAR OF ESCOBEDO'S HACIENDA - NIGHT

The communications van is in the foreground, flanked by two Ford Broncos. Ryan's at the tailgate of one of the trucks, passing out ammo to the Captain and his six ninjas.

Clark's next to the van, on a radio. We SEE there's a high chain-link fence halfway down the hill from their position.

CLARK
SNAKE, this is VARIABLE, read you
five-by-five. What's your ETA?
Over.

INT. THE COBRA

PILOT
VARIABLE, we are four minutes from
target, over.

CLARK
SNAKE, I copy four minutes. Get
your reference up, over.

The Pilot dials in a computer screen: The diagram of Escobedo's house appears, overlaid with a map grid.

PILOT
VARIABLE, reference is up, over.

EXT. CLARK

He looks to his copy of the diagram; Ryan walks up next to him.

CLARK
SNAKE, that double line running
across grid square eight -- that's a
fence. I'd like to lose a chunk of
it, over.

PILOT (OVER)
I copy, VARIABLE, over.

RYAN
The field!

CLARK

Right...

(into radio)

SNAKE, the meadow running down to the house -- square nine -- cut me a path through there, please, over.

PILOT

Roger, VARIABLE. Anything else? Over.

CLARK

That'll do it, SNAKE. But, don't run off -- we may need you coming out, over.

PILOT

I copy, VARIABLE, over and out.

Clark turns off the radio, checks his watch, looks around the area, back to Ryan.

CLARK

This place safe enough for you?

Ryan shifts his weight, doesn't answer.

CLARK

Sure you don't want to change your mind?

RYAN

Positive.

They share a long look; Clark grins.

CLARK

See you 'round the campus, Doc.

He turns, calls out to the ninjas.

CLARK

Let's move out!

The Captain and his Troopers follow Clark to the edge of the field; the ninjas fan out along the line.

EXT. THE COBRAS

The Cobras dive INTO FRAME, skimming the treetops. Up ahead, we can SEE the glow from Escobedo's house.

EXT. THE LINE AT THE EDGE OF THE FIELD

We HOLD a moment -- then the gunships ROAR IN overhead, racing down the meadow, twenty feet off the deck, MINI-GUNS BLAZING -- cutting a path through the field -- EXPLODING the mines.

FLASH CUT - RYAN

FLASH CUT - CLARK

FLASH CUT - CHAVEZ

FLASH CUT - ESCOBEDO'S DINING ROOM

Cortez, Diaz, and the Patron are entertaining a quintet of Latin lovelies. The revelry is interrupted by the GUNFIRE. The señoritas scream; Cortez leaps to his feet.

CORTEZ

The prisoners -- they've come for them.

He whips out a pistol, heads for the door. Escobedo and Diaz hurry after him.

EXT. THE FIELD

CLARK and the ninjas spring up and start running down the meadow, following the path cut by the mini-guns.

The Cobras close on the chain-link fence -- their CANNONS BELCH -- a twenty-foot-wide section of the wire disappears.

Ryan's spotting the action with night goggles.

A squad of Cortez's soldiers appear beyond the fence. A FIRE FIGHT ensues -- Cortez's guys take some hits -- fall back.

Clark stands up, starts charging through the shattered wire -- catches a ROUND in his right thigh -- goes down.

Ryan sees him take the hit.

RYAN

Damn!

The Captain also SAW Clark go down; he starts towards him -- then (he) gets whacked -- pitches forward into the dirt.

Ryan lowers the goggles -- takes a beat -- then sprints down the hill and dives in next to Clark.

CLARK

What are you doing here?

RYAN

That's what I'd like to know.

He inspects Clark's wound, frowns.

RYAN
It's bad -- must have caught the
artery.

CLARK
Screw it! Help me up...

He twists around, grabs his machine pistol, starts to rise,
collapses in pain.

RYAN
Forget it -- you're not going
anywhere.

Ryan looks up, spots the Captain lying twenty feet away.

RYAN
(at Clark)
Stay put -- don't move!

He gets up into a crouch -- zigzags across the field --
falls in next to the Captain: He's dead.

Ryan shut his eyes, snaps them open, grabs up the Captain's
AR-15, tugs an ammo belt off the dead man's shoulder --
stares at the officer for a second -- then drops into the
crouch and races back to Clark.

CLARK
How is he?

Ryan shakes his head.

CLARK
Shit!

The (late) Captain's radio Trooper is behind a rock,
BANGING away with his rifle; Ryan calls to him.

RYAN
Over here!

The ninja ducks out from behind the rock, scurries over to
Ryan and Clark.

RYAN
Give him your radio.

TROOPER
Batteries are real low, sir.

RYAN
Give it to him!

TROOPER
Sir!

He tugs the radio off, passes it to Clark. Ryan looks to
the hacienda, turns to Clark.

RYAN

Call the Cobras back in -- tell them to keep everyone past the courtyard busy.

CLARK

Gotcha!

Ryan picks up the Captain's rifle, jams in a new clip of ammo, turns to the ninja.

RYAN

Ready?

CLARK

Wait...

He reaches into a pocket, pulls out a pair of heavy-duty cutters, hands them to Ryan.

CLARK

You'll need these.

A HAIL of SLUGS RAIN IN. Everybody ducks, then it's heads back up.

RYAN

If we get that far.
(at the ninja)
Let's go, Trooper!

They hurry off through the torn wire. Clark snaps on the radio.

CLARK

SNAKE, this is VARIABLE, come in, please, over.

Nothing; he whacks the radio against a rock, tries again.

CLARK

SNAKE, calling VARIABLE -- come in please, over.

PILOT (OVER)

(low - static)

VARIABLE, this is SNAKE -- just barely hear you, over.

CLARK

Hit the house and everything south of it. Over and out.

Meanwhile, back at the hacienda, the other five ninjas have managed to fight their way into the rear garden and are now only twenty yards from the courtyard (and the prisoners).

Then the gunships dive INTO FRAME, their mini-guns SPRAYING the house and grounds (beyond the courtyard).

Cortez, Escobedo, and Diaz are on a terrace, pinned down by the Cobras' FIRE. A line of BULLETS RICOCHET off the terrace railing.

DIAZ

Ernesto, come on! We have to get out of here.

ESCOBEDO

(smiles)

Go, Hector -- go hide with the women!

He inches up over the railing, TRIGGERS a ROUND from his Beretta... and then a SLUG NAILS his forehead, dead center. Escobedo's head snaps back against Diaz's chest; he cradles the dying man in his arms.

DIAZ

No, Ernesto -- you cannot die.
No.

Too late; Diaz turns, glares at Cortez.

DIAZ

You did this! You and your "plans" -- your hostages.

CORTEZ

Senor...

DIAZ

When this is over, you are gone.

CORTEZ

But, Senor Diaz...

DIAZ

You are through! Finished!

They stare at each other.

DIAZ

You are all done with us, Cortez!

Cortez takes a beat, smiles.

CORTEZ

I hear you, Senor...

His pistol comes up, he FIRES TWICE, Diaz staggers back, drops away, dead.

Cortez turns, checks out the fire fight -- decides it's time to go -- heads back into the house.

Ryan and the Trooper battle their way up to the other ninjas. Ryan surveys the action, gestures at three of the ninjas.

RYAN
 You guys stick with us...
 (at the other two)
 You cover coming out.

He turns, starts for the courtyard with the four troopers right behind him.

EXT. THE COURTYARD

Six guys with AK-47's are guarding the prisoners, three at each end of the court. Ryan and his troops come up behind one trio -- the ninjas take the goons down -- the other three guards begin FIRING across the court.

The (radio) Trooper pops all three; BING, BANG, BOOM!

Ryan and the ninjas rush up to Chavez and the others. Ryan pulls out the chain cutters, SNAPS Chavez's bonds; the kid stares at him.

CHAVEZ
 Where's Clark?

RYAN
 He's up on the hill.

Chavez picks up on one of the dead guard's AK-47's. Another goon appears behind Ryan -- about to whack him. Chavez swings up the rifle -- DROPS the guard.

Ryan and Chavez exchange a look.

RYAN
 Get going!

He spins back to the badly-wounded prisoner, cuts his chains. The guy slumps against Ryan; he calls to two of the troopers.

RYAN
 Come here -- take him.

The ninjas hurry over, each grabs an arm, start dragging the guy out of the courtyard.

Ryan cuts the last prisoner free. The ninja's got a leg wound, so he leans against Ryan and they hustle out of the courtyard and start up the meadow.

The two "cover" ninjas come out of the garden, backwards, PUMPING SLUGS and tossing smoke GRENADES at the remains of Cortez's "army."

When they catch up with Ryan, one of them relieves him of the wounded prisoner, while the other ninja picks up his Captain's body, hefts it over his shoulder, and starts trudging up the field.

EXT. THE HILL

Clark's SEEN it all (THROUGH HIS NIGHT GOGGLES); he lowers the glasses, smiles (as best he can).

Chavez runs up, drops in next to Clark. They share a look.

CLARK

Hello, Chavez.

CHAVEZ

I knew you'd come.

Chavez spots Clark's wound, digs out his aid kit, starts dusting the gunshot wound with antiseptic powder.

Ryan dives in next to them.

RYAN

(at Chavez)

How is it?

CHAVEZ

Has to be closed, fast!

Chavez wraps a bandage pack over Clark's thigh, ties it tight. Clark looks to Ryan -- to Chavez -- back to Ryan.

CLARK

Thanks, Doc.

A beat, Ryan nods, takes Clark's arm.

RYAN

Come on, let's get you out of here.

They pull Clark to his feet and start up the hill.

GO TO BLACK

FADE UP

INT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Ryan's standing at a hallway window, looking out over Rock Creek. Greer's next to him in the wheelchair.

A NURSE looks away from a phone.

NURSE

(at them)

He's waking up.

Ryan steps behind the chair, begins wheeling the Admiral up a corridor.

INT. A HOSPITAL ROOM

Clark's in the bed -- his eyes flutter open -- the first thing he SEES is Greer's thousand-watt smile.

GREER

Hello, Clark.

CLARK

Lo, Admiral.

Clark glances out the window, back at Ryan.

CLARK

Bethesda?

(as Ryan nods)

What the hell am I doing here?

GREER

My idea... Jack called me when you got to Panama. Told me about the op -- about that big hole in your leg. I suggested he bring you on home -- maybe try and convince you to come in out of the hot sun -- get back to Intélligence where you belong.

CLARK

I don't know, sir -- I've been in the bush a long time. I'm not sure I'm ready for civilization.

A 30ish NURSE sticks her pretty face through the door. She and Clark have a little eye contact; she smiles.

NURSE

Sorry, I'll come back later.

She closes the door. Clark looks to Greer, grins.

CLARK

Let me think about it, sir.

(at Ryan)

Did Chavez and the guys get back to Fort Ord?

RYAN

Yeah -- everything got shipped home. Everybody...

They share a moment.

RYAN

Someone should have to pay for this.

CLARK

(kidding)

Well, you could always indict Ritter for murder.

GREER
 (not kidding)
Accessory to murder.

His eyes hit Ryan's; Ryan nods.

RYAN
 You're right, Admiral -- he didn't
 run an op like that without
 permission. Somebody had to back
 his play.

They hold the look.

RYAN
 Cutter.

GREER
 He'd be my first choice.

EXT. GEORGETOWN - LATE AFTERNOON

We're FRAMED on Cutter's townhouse.

INT. THE TOWNHOUSE LIBRARY

Cutter is sitting behind a desk, staring PAST CAMERA.

CUTTER
 You are a loose cannon, man! I
 mean, Jesus Christ, what the hell
 did you go and kill Jacobs for?

REVERSE - CORTEZ

He's standing across the desk.

CORTEZ
 An unfortunate necessity... but
 aside from that, the operation's a
 total success.

CUTTER
 How do you figure that?

CORTEZ
 We have what we wanted: I'm in
 absolute control of the product.
 And, to show good faith, I'll
 unilaterally reduce cocaine
 shipments to your country by half.

CUTTER
 Not good enough! He wants it
 stopped.

CORTEZ

(smiles)

He couldn't be that naive. We all know it will never stop. If your citizens wish to destroy their brains -- someone will always make it possible. But, at least now, I can regulate the trade -- minimize the dislocation of your cities -- your society. The business is disorderly, violent. I can restructure it.

CUTTER

In return for...?

Cortez lifts an eyebrow.

CORTEZ

You forgot our arrangement?

CUTTER

Refresh my memory.

CORTEZ

We agreed that I would become a de facto member of your organization.

Cutter gets up, walks around the desk, shaking his head.

CUTTER

Frankly, I've been giving it a lot of thought and... well, I just don't see how we're going to make it fly. I mean, there's just no slot to fit you in -- no room in the mix.

Cortez's eyes sharpen.

CORTEZ

Make room, James!

CUTTER

I'm sorry, Carlos, I don't think I can do that.

CORTEZ

Then I'll inform the world that your country waged a savage war against Colombia. Committed murder on an epic scale.

CUTTER

You can't blackmail the United States government.

CORTEZ

Oh, but I can -- and will!

A DOORBELL CHIMES O.S.: Cutter and Cortez share a look.

Cutter exits, shuts the door behind him, crosses an entry hall and opens the front door.

It's Ryan, scowling; Cutter blinks.

CUTTER

Doctor... come in.

Ryan steps in, Cutter closes the door, smiles cheerfully.

CUTTER

What can I do for you? ... Drink?

He starts into a parlor.

RYAN

This is not a social call.

CUTTER

I see.

Cutter stops, turns back.

RYAN

I just came out of Colombia.

CUTTER

Yes, I heard you were "in the field." Pleasant trip?

RYAN

Quite the opposite. A lot of people died down there. Including two American soldiers.

CUTTER

That's unfortunate. But, then, every enterprise has its risks.

Ryan's hand flashes out, grabs Cutter by the shirtfront.

RYAN

I know you ran that op, Cutter.

CUTTER

Let go of me!

Ryan tightens his grip.

RYAN

You ordered it, didn't you?

CUTTER

Ordered the U.S. military into combat? That's absurd, Doctor. I have no such authority.

RYAN

Then who did?

And, then Ryan realizes "who" did -- and Cutter realizes (he's) figured it out.

CUTTER

Are you prepared to blow the whistle on Him?

RYAN

If I have to.

The library door cracks open, Cortez peers out, cocks an ear.

CUTTER

I applaud your integrity, Doctor, but going public with this incident could have major consequences.

RYAN

Yeah, like you ending up in prison.

CUTTER

Far beyond that, I'm afraid. It would cause a great deal of turmoil...

His eyes hit Cortez's.

CUTTER (CONT'D)

Upset a number of delicate balances.

RYAN

You should have thought about that before, Cutter.

Cortez steps through the door, reaches into his coat, slips out a pistol. Cutter's eyes flare at the gun; Ryan senses his alarm, spins around, stares at Cortez -- recognizes him -- puts it together; turns back to Cutter.

RYAN

You two...? Our National Security Advisor's in bed with a drug dealer?

CUTTER

I can explain...

RYAN

Don't bother.

Cortez thumbs back the gun's hammer; Ryan reacts to the CLICK, grabs a coat rack standing next to him, hurls it at Cortez -- who ducks -- FIRES, misses. Ryan rushes the Colonel, they crash to the floor, Cortez drops the gun, it skitters across the carpet.

The fight is brief -- a couple of blows apiece -- then Cortez breaks free, crawls to the gun, snatches up the pistol. Ryan dives in on him, they struggle -- the GUN goes OFF.

An anxious beat... Cortéz falls back, dead.

Ryan gets up, turns to Cutter, they stare at each other.

RYAN

You were dealing with him? How could you?

CUTTER

It's none of your business.

RYAN

It's everybody's business, Cutter. And, I'm going to make sure they all know.

CUTTER

With what? You have no proof -- you gave the file back to Ritter.

RYAN

I said I'd give it back to him...
(smiles - thin)
I just never got around to it.

CUTTER

You gave him your word, Ryan.

Ryan's eyes get icy.

RYAN

My word? You mean my bond?
My pledge? My honor? Is that
what you're talking about, Cutter?

Cutter bites his lip.

RYAN

How dare you even speak of such things.

He brushes past him and out the front door. Cutter looks back to Cortez, shuts his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

Establish.

INT. THE OVAL OFFICE

The President and Judge Moore are sitting by the fire, talking.

The door opens, a WOMAN steps in.

WOMAN
Mr. President...

The Pres turns to her.

WOMAN
Dr. Ryan is outside.

The President and the Judge exchange a look.

PRESIDENT
He's not on the calendar, is he?

WOMAN
No Sir, he isn't -- but he
insists on seeing you.

The Pres takes a beat, nods.

PRESIDENT
Okay -- give us a sec.

She steps out, the President looks back to Moore.

PRESIDENT
What you suppose he's after?

MOORE
I have no idea. But, I think I'll
get out of here and let you find
out.

He crosses the room, exits by another door. The President
steps to his desk, BUZZES the INTERCOM.

WOMAN (OVER)
Yes, sir?

PRESIDENT
Send the Doctor in, please.

The Pres sits down behind his desk. The door opens, Ryan
enters, steps to the desk, the President waves at a chair.

PRESIDENT
Sit down.

RYAN
(firm)
I'll stand, sir.

PRESIDENT
What's on your mind, Doctor?

RYAN
It has to do with a covert operation
called SHOWBOAT, sir.

PRESIDENT
SHOWBOAT? ... What about it?

RYAN
Did you authorize it?

PRESIDENT
I did.

RYAN
Why, sir?

PRESIDENT
You know why? The citizens of the United States want us to stop the flow of drugs. And, besides, what we did down there is chicken feed compared to what their garbage does to us -- our kids.

He grunts, shakes his head.

PRESIDENT
Those sonsabitches... I swear, sometimes I'd like to level that whole damn country -- and Peru and Ecuador while we're at it.

RYAN
I'm afraid you've got that backwards, sir. It's not their fault -- it's ours. They only grow the drug, we're the ones who use it -- crave it -- kill for it. The source isn't the problem...
(points O.S.)
The problem's out there in the street.

The Pres shifts his weight, agitated.

PRESIDENT
Is that what you wanted in here for -- to give me a lecture 'bout narcotics?

RYAN
No, sir.

PRESIDENT
Then get on with it, please -- I got a goddamned press conference at eight.

Ryan squares his shoulders.

RYAN
Sir, SHOWBOAT wasn't carried out in accordance with the law. It was an illegal operation.

PRESIDENT

Mmm... I guess you could say it wasn't strictly kosher. But, that's only because we couldn't go wide with what we had to do down there.

RYAN

But, you didn't have to. All you had to do was notify Congress -- do it covertly -- but legally.

PRESIDENT

You really think them yahoos up there would've went along with it?

RYAN

They might have.

PRESIDENT

When donkeys fly!... Look, if you're gonna be as successful as I think you could be, you gotta know somepin': Congress is one big swamp. You fall in there, you never climb out. You want to get things done in this town, sometimes you can't cross all the T's -- dot all the I's. So what?

RYAN

So, you broke the rules, sir. And, as Acting Deputy Director of Intelligence, it's my duty to report it to the House Intelligence Oversight Committee.

PRESIDENT

Whoa! Hold the phone... you're reporting me, Ryan?

RYAN

You're damn right I am, sir!

PRESIDENT

(heating up)

You can't talk to me that way!

RYAN

I take no pleasure in it. But those men who died in that op had a right to expect you to perform your duties in an honorable manner.

The President rears up out of his chair.

PRESIDENT

(boiling)

How dare you come into this office -- this sacred chamber -- and bark at me like some junkyard dog. I AM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA! This is my country!

There's a picture window behind the President. We can SEE the Washington Memorial -- the Lincoln Memorial -- the Jefferson Memorial -- the Capitol beyond.

Ryan looks out at the icons of our liberty, waves a hand across the panorama.

RYAN

You're dead wrong about that. It's their country -- OUR country. And, as long as I serve it, it's going to stay that way.

He turns, starts for the door.

PRESIDENT

Ryan...

Ryan stops, turns back, the Pres smiles.

PRESIDENT

Come on... I know you're not going through with this.

RYAN

Why wouldn't I?

PRESIDENT

'Cause you're too damn smart. You finally got yourself a chip in the big game -- suddenly, you're a major threat. You could nail my hide to the barn -- but you're not gonna do it.

RYAN

I'm not?

PRESIDENT

Nope. I peg you as a fella who uses his bean. You're gonna tuck that chip away -- save it for a time when your own fat's in the fire. And, then you whip it out -- I cash it in -- life goes on. The ol' Potomac two-step, Jack...

(winks)

That's the jig for us.

Ryan stares at him a moment, shakes his head.

RYAN

Sorry, Mr. President, I don't dance.

He turns, walks out; the Pres frowns.

EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

A light rain is falling. Ryan comes through a pedestrian security gate, walks down to Pennsylvania Avenue, pauses, looks back out at Jefferson and Lincoln and Washington, takes a moment, then nods, as if satisfied that he's spoken for them... and for us.

Ryan turns, pulls up his coat collar, walks off into the rain.

FADE OUT.

THE END