

(Name of Show)

("Title of Episode")

by

(Name of First Writer)

(Based on, If Any)

Revisions by

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in Order of Work Performed)

Current Revisions by
(Current Writer, date)

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Phone Number

OVER BLACK we hear the sounds of a city -- car horns in traffic and the din of a teeming crowd. All around us people chatter in a babble of different languages -- Hindi, Arabic, Philipino, Farsi, and finally Russian.

EXT. STREET/ DEIRA DISTRICT/ DUBAI - DAY.

Dressed in slacks and a polo shirt, a BURLY RUSSIAN BODYGUARD talks on his mobile phone as he scopes the busy street.

BODYGUARD 1
(In Russian)
Baladiya Street secure.

Across the street, CROWDS flow past, spilling in and out of the cafes and bazaars.

INT. APARTMENT/ DEIRA DISTRICT/ DUBAI - DAY.

Bottled water and snacks are laid out on a table in preparation for a meeting -- Halva, pistachio nuts, dates and a large bowl of fruit. In the background we see two more BODYGUARDS checking the room for listening devices.

EXT. STREET/ DEIRA DISTRICT/ DUBAI - DAY.

Two Mercedes pull up on the busy street. More BODYGUARDS step out, eyes scanning the passing crowds before their boss emerges. VADIM MANEVICH is a strikingly handsome man in his 40's, pale blue eyes and a melancholy air.

Across the street, two PRETTY LOCAL GIRLS dressed from head to foot in black hijabs, glance at the handsome Russian, then giggle to themselves as they continue on their way.

INT. APARTMENT/ DEIRA DISTRICT/ DUBAI - DAY.

BENNY SHAKEEL, a portly Indian in his 50's, pours himself a scotch, the only man drinking alcohol at the table. He sits opposite Vadim, as vulgar and jovial as the Russian is restrained.

BENNY SHAKEEL
I take them myself. One pill,
five fucks a night, and even then
I'm hard.

At his signal, ONE OF HIS ASSOCIATES empties a box of blue pills on the table.

EXT. BAZAAR/ DEIRA DISTRICT/ DUBAI - DAY.

Still giggling, the two pretty local girls we saw earlier enter a crowded bazaar. Ignoring but enjoying the lewd remarks of the LOCAL MEN they enter a fashion store filled with International brands and colorful adverts -- Guess Jeans; Armani perfume; Comme De Garcon t-shirts.

INT. APARTMENT/ DEIRA DISTRICT/ DUBAI - DAY.

Sipping tea, VADIM addresses Shakeel in perfect English.

VADIM

What if I want to move other merchandise through Mumbai?

SHAKEEL

I control the port. I own the police. Any paperwork you need, no problem.

VADIM

And Dawood Ibrahim?

SHAKEEL

That goat fucker. I ride his mother with my big dick.

EXT. HAIR SALON/ BAZAAR/ DEIRA DISTRICT/ DUBAI - DAY.

The two girls have shed their Hijabs and are wearing trendy jeans and name brand t-shirts. Using the latest hair products from the West, the HAIRDRESSER tints their dark hair blonde.

INT. APARTMENT/ DEIRA DISTRICT/ DUBAI - DAY.

Still studying Shakeel with quiet disdain, Vadim nods to one of his associates. The man opens a small paper wrap to reveal a sprinkling of diamonds.

SHAKEEL

(Pretending to be disappointed)

The problem is in India women are fussy, they don't want synthetic diamonds.

VADIM

Why don't we ask your wife if she agrees.

Shakeel grins, downing his scotch.

SHAKEEL

Motherfucker.

He holds out a sweaty hand to seal the deal.

EXT. MOTORBIKE GARAGE/ DEIRA DISTRICT/ DUBAI - DAY.

Looking almost unrecognizable in their western clothes and dyed hair, the two local girls flirt with a MOTORBIKE DEALER they know. He leads them to a red Honda scooter.

EXT. STREET/ DEIRA DISTRICT/ DUBAI - DAY.

Vadim walks out into the bright sunlight, surveying the busy street -- the greedy shoppers; the crammed window displays; the crowded stores with their multi-lingual signage -- the globalised world. Looking away wearily, he climbs into the back seat of his Mercedes.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET/ DEIRA DISTRICT/ DUBAI - DAY.

The two girls ride pillion on the scooter, liberated in their new outfits, laughing without a care in the world.

INT/EXT. MERCEDES/ STREET/ DEIRA DISTRICT/ DUBAI - DAY.

Vadim stares out, oblivious to the sights and sounds of the city. There's a melancholy air about him, a detachment from the world.

His BODYGUARDS sit on either side of him. One of them looks out of the window and notices the two pretty girls on their scooter. He stares at them until they notice him. They giggle coyly then ride on.

The DRIVER continues then slows at a red light. The scooter stops alongside the Mercedes, the girls still giggling under the admiring gaze of the bodyguard. Vadim still looks far away, lost in thought.

The lights change and the cars set off again, the scooter moving alongside the Mercedes. Vadim catches the eye of the girl riding on the back. She stares at him a moment, betraying just a hint of nerves --

And suddenly the scooter swerves towards the mercedes. The girl on the back reaches out and slaps a plastic charge on the side of the car. As it sticks, the scooter veers away --

Vadim ducks instinctively as an explosion rips through the car, a searing white flash filled with glass and shrapnel --

INT. CHARITY GALA/ MUSEUM/ LONDON - NIGHT.

Loud applause and wolf whistles. Framed by a moving spotlight a stunning SUPER-MODEL in a fur hat and mink coat sashays across the stage.

CHARITY AUCTIONEER O/S
 Lot number seven, and my personal
 favorite, a dinner date at
 Harry's Bar with super-model,
 Natalia Balakin!

There's more applause. Dozens of tables are spread across the sumptuous museum gallery, the GUESTS wearing tuxedos and couture dresses for the annual London Russian ball.

CHARITY AUCTIONEER
 I'm going to start the bidding
 myself, on behalf of myself, four
 thousand pounds!

Instantly hands shoot up to outbid him.

EXT. MUSEUM/ LONDON - NIGHT.

A cab door opens and a handsome man in a tuxedo steps out. ALEX GODMAN, 30's, looks immaculate except for a tiny plaster covering a cut above his eye. Bracing himself, he heads towards the museum, SECURITY GUARDS hovering outside.

INT. CHARITY GALA/ MUSEUM/ LONDON - NIGHT.

We follow Alex as he makes his way through the lavish hall. The bidding for the supermodel continues, but Alex himself draws admiring glances from the young Russian girls at their tables.

CHARITY AUCTIONEER O/S
 Six thousand!...Six thousand five
 hundred!...Seven thousand!...

Loud applause rings out, but Alex barely seems to notice, his eyes scanning the room, moving past the extravagantly dressed Russian beauties and their burly husbands until he finally spots his family up ahead.

CHARITY AUCTIONEER O/S
 Eight thousand!...Eight thousand
 five hundred!...

As Alex arrives at the table, his uncle BORIS, late 50's, leaps up from his chair to get the attention of the auctioneer, holding up nine fingers.

CHARITY AUCTIONEER
 Nine thousand from the gentleman
 over there!

The whole family cheers. Alex moves round the table, hugging and kissing everyone before he sits...There's his father, DMITRI, 60's, the patron of the family...then his glamorous mother, OKSANA, dressed from head to toe in Chanel....Sitting next to her is his younger sister, EVA, who already looks stoned, and her Nigerian boyfriend, FEMI...ALEX finally sits down next to his fiancée, REBECCA, an aristocratic American beauty who's relieved to see him.

REBECCA
 (Quietly)
 Where were you?

ALEX
 I had to take a call.

REBECCA
What happened to your eye?

ALEX
I bumped it.

Alex looks away before she asks him to elaborate and slips his arm around his Uncle.

ALEX
Don't get too carried away.

Boris's hand shoots up in response, raising his bid.

CHARITY AUCTIONEER
Ten thousand from the gentleman
in the white suit!

The table claps and cheers when Alex's father, Dmitri, downs his vodka and sticks up his own hand.

DMITRI
(Bellowing in Russian)
Eleven thousand!

CHARITY AUCTIONEER
I have eleven thousand pounds!
Twelve thousand anyone? Twelve
thousand pounds for dinner with
an angel?!

Rebecca glances at Alex, still curious what happened to his eye, but his attention is focussed on his father now, teasing him -

ALEX
In England the whole table bids
together.

DMITRI
(In Russian)
In Russia we don't share our
women.

His wife, Oksana, raises an eyebrow.

OKSANA
Your women?

She sticks up her hand.

OKSANA
Twelve thousand!

The whole table erupts in laughter, even Rebecca. On stage, the super-model applauds too, blowing Oksana a kiss.

INT. RECEPTION/ CHARITY GALA/ MUSEUM/ LONDON - NIGHT.

The auction over, the guests are mingling, speaking a mixture of Russian and English. Alex and Rebecca chat to Boris who sounds a little drunk.

BORIS

I told him, he should stay at Goldman.

REBECCA

Lucky he didn't listen to you.
His fund's doing great.

Boris turns to his nephew now.

BORIS

Fund doing great, Alex?

Alex smiles, a little wary of his uncle's interest.

ALEX

Fund's doing fine.

BORIS

You know, my friends are still interested in investing.

Boris tries to make the suggestion sound casual. Alex smiles, deflecting his offer lightly.

ALEX

We're too small for your friends.

Boris grins, taking the rejection in his stride, then turns to Rebecca.

BORIS

You ever know what he's really thinking?

Rebecca shrugs.

REBECCA

Not often.

BORIS

He has that beautiful smile, but underneath maybe he's thinking, fuck you and your friends, Uncle Boris.

There's a little edge to Boris's good humor now.

BORIS

(Switching to Russian)
I'm not asking you for anything,
I'm trying to help you.

Alex answers in English.

ALEX

I know.

Boris stares at his nephew, still unable to read his eyes.

BORIS

He's like a wall. I should
practice tennis against him.

He claps his hand against Alex's chest, where his heart is, fond of him but also frustrated. Alex keeps smiling but says nothing. Rebecca starts to feel uncomfortable when Boris's cell phone rings, interrupting the tension.

BORIS

(Checking the number)
Excuse me.

Alex watches his uncle stride away.

REBECCA

What was that all about?

Alex looks back at her with a shrug.

ALEX

Family.

INT. ALCOVE/ CHARITY GALA/ MUSEUM/ LONDON - NIGHT.

Boris takes the call in a small alcove off the main hall.

BORIS

(In Russian)
Yes?

MALE VOICE ON PHONE

(In Russian)
Manevich is still alive.

Boris pauses, looking pale.

BORIS

(In Russian)
Will he survive?

A beat.

MALE VOICE ON PHONE

(In Russian)
I think so.

Boris stares out quietly now, his mind racing.

INT. TABLE/ CHARITY GALA/ MUSEUM/ LONDON - NIGHT.

Dmitri sits on his own at the table, downing more vodka as he watches the dance floor. His wife, OKSANA, is dancing with a handsome younger man while his daughter, EVA, laughs at her boyfriend FEMI's slick dance moves. Alex sits down next to his father, pouring himself a glass of sparkling water.

DMITRI

(In Russian)

Your mother thinks she's eighteen
and your sister's in love with
Michael fucking Jackson.

Alex can't help smiling at his father's bigotry.

ALEX

You're in England now. You can't
talk like that.

DMITRI

(In Russian)

Thank God when I go to sleep and
dream I'm back in Russia. Your
mother still cooks and the only
Africans I see are on TV.

Alex shakes his head in mild reproach, then squeezes his father's tattooed hand.

INT. DANCE FLOOR/ CHARITY GALA/ MUSEUM/ LONDON - NIGHT.

Pounding music and flashing lights. Alex makes his way through the dance floor, wild dancing going on all around him. His sister, EVA, grabs him by the hand, shouting in his ear.

EVA

You're bleeding!

Alex can't hear properly.

EVA

Your eye!

The cut above Alex's eye has opened up. Eva uses her Hermes scarf to wipe off the tiny trickle of blood.

ALEX

I bought you that for your
birthday!

Eva grins mischievously, high as a kite.

EVA

I love it!

Alex doesn't bother to protest, kissing her on the forehead like a naughty child then passing her back to Femi. He continues through the dance floor, towards his mother.

Oksana is still dancing with her younger man, flamboyant and uninhibited. Alex approaches his mother. She turns to him with a happy smile. He leans closer so she can hear him over the music.

ALEX

You should check on papa.

She pouts like a little girl.

OKSANA

One more dance, please.

ALEX

(Gently insistent)

Go sit with him.

OKSANA

Only if you dance with me.

Oksana holds out her hands, encouraging her son to dance with her until he finally relents. Oksana slips her arms around him, glancing at Rebecca who's dancing with Femi and Eva now.

OKSANA

You should buy Becky a new dress.

ALEX

Rebecca.

OKSANA

You should buy your girlfriend a new dress. Her Givenchy's two seasons out of date.

EXT. MUSEUM/ LONDON - NIGHT.

Limousines, CHAUFFEURS and BODYGUARDS are lined up along the street. The wealthy Russians stream out of the museum, the party over.

Alex watches them go by. Even though he's part of their tribe, he seems disdainful of their ostentatious display of wealth. His family are saying goodbye. His uncle Boris kisses his older brother, Dmitri, on both cheeks, then turns to him.

BORIS

Come and see me soon, Alexei.

Alex nods and hugs him back. Meanwhile Oksana gives Rebecca a distant air-kiss.

OKSANA

So nice to see you Becky.

Rebecca doesn't bother to protest.

REBECCA

Nice to see you too.

Dmitri gives Rebecca a much warmer hug.

DMITRI

We give you a lift home?

ALEX

(Answering for her)

No, we'll walk.

Oksana whispers in Alex's ear as she kisses him goodbye.

OKSANA

Buy her a dress.

EXT. FULHAM ROAD/ CHELSEA/ LONDON - DAY.

The elegant street is still buzzing at night -- cars and taxis streaming past, bars and restaurants open. Alex undoes his bow-tie and sticks it in his pocket, relieved to get away.

REBECCA

Well, that was relaxing.

Alex smiles, slipping his arm around her.

ALEX

Thanks.

REBECCA

I have a confession to make.

(Pulling a guilty face)

Your sister offered me a line of coke.

She giggles as Alex squeezes her tightly in mock reproach.

REBECCA

Two actually.

ALEX

No wonder you were so nice to my mom.

REBECCA

That's ecstasy. Coke's the one that makes you go all night.

She looks at him suggestively then laughs at herself, hugging him closer.

INT. BEDROOM/ APARTMENT/ CHEYNE WALK/ LONDON - NIGHT.

The lights of Albert Bridge glitter through the blinds as Alex and Rebecca lie in bed. She's fast asleep. He's wide awake. He watches her sleeping soundly, then gets out of bed and heads over to the window, gazing out at the brightly lit bridge. Even now it's hard to read his thoughts, the nasty cut on his eye showing above the plaster. He turns back when suddenly his cell phone rings on the bedside table, waking Rebecca. She rolls her eyes as he answers, guessing who it is.

ALEX

Hello?...Mama, it's two o
clock...

Alex trails off in surprise, looking concerned --

INT. DMITRI AND OKSANA'S APARTMENT/ KNIGHTSBRIDGE - NIGHT.

Alex rushes through his parents' apartment, Oksana following in tears.

ALEX

How did he get up there?

OKSANA

He must have climbed out of the
window. I was watching TV.

EXT. ROOFTOP/ APARTMENT BLOCK/ KNIGHTSBRIDGE - NIGHT.

Alex hauls himself onto the rooftop. The lights of Harrods blaze magnificently in the background. Dmitri stands by the ledge with a bottle of vodka, inches from the vertiginous drop. Alex greets him casually, as if nothing's wrong.

ALEX

Hi, papa.

DMITRI

(Just as casual as his
son)
You wanna drink?

ALEX

No thanks.

Dmitri looks away, gazing at the lights of Harrods.

DMITRI

(In Russian)
You ever been to the Diana and
Dodi memorial in Harrods?

ALEX

You took me once.

DMITRI
(In Russian)
You think the Royal Family killed
her?

ALEX
No.

DMITRI
(In Russian)
That's because you're British
now. If you were still Russian
you'd think they killed her.

ALEX
Mama's worried about you.

DMITRI
(In Russian)
She won't let me smoke inside. If
I wanted to kill someone I'd do
it with a car too. Side on. Like
they did to Diana.

ALEX
(In Russian)
Maybe I will have that drink.

Alex is hoping his father will come to him, but instead Dmitri beckons him over. Alex walks over, takes the bottle of vodka and has a swig.

DMITRI
(In Russian)
More! Like a man!

Alex takes a longer swig under his father's watchful gaze.

DMITRI
(In Russian)
You even speak Russian with an
English accent.

ALEX
(In Russian)
You sent me to school here.

DMITRI
(In Russian)
Your mother did.

He grabs the bottle back from Alex.

DMITRI
(In Russian)
My son, the English gentleman.
You looked depressed tonight?

Alex pauses, then shakes his head.

DMITRI
 (In Russian)
 You're worried about me, I'm
 worried about you. Talk to me.

Alex smiles at his father's drunken concern.

ALEX
 (In Russian)
 I'm fine.

DMITRI
 (In Russian)
Fine? Fine's the problem with
 this fucking country. Fine's dead
 inside.

He takes a long swig then hands the bottle to his son.

DMITRI
 (In Russian)
 I'm going to take you back with
 me to Moscow. When I make my
 peace with Putin I'm going to
 take you home.

Alex stares at his father fondly, sensing how drunk and homesick he is, then looks past him at the gleaming lights of Harrods.

ALEX
 You know the joke about Harrods?

Dmitri looks up at him curiously.

ALEX
 Why do Russian men want to be
 buried in Harrods?

DMITRI
 Why?

ALEX
 Because it's the only way their
 wives will visit their grave.

Dmitri pauses, then starts laughing, grabbing back his bottle.

INT. APARTMENT/ MOSCOW - NIGHT.

Through a picture window we see a beautiful view of the Kremlin at night, cathedral steeples and domes lit up like something from a fairy tale. Over the iconic image we hear a man's voice groaning. We pull back until we find him lying on the floor, his face beaten to a pulp.

He can barely move his neck or open his swollen eyes but he's desperately trying to locate the sobbing of a woman somewhere in the room.

A hand reaches down and helps him, gently moving his face to one side so he can see his wife...being raped on the sofa.

Tears well up in the tortured man's swollen eyes, and he whispers a name, his torturer leaning closer to hear.

INT. SYSTEMA MARTIAL ART CLASS/ SPORTS HALL - LONDON.

Alex breathes in and out, inhaling through his nose and exhaling through his mouth.

SYSTEMA INSTRUCTOR O/S
(With a Russian accent)
Breathe until you're relaxed,
breathe until you are formless...

We see the rest of the *Systema* class -- a few lean and fit YOUNG BRITS in boxing shorts but mostly OVERWEIGHT RUSSIANS in baggy tracksuits and jeans. The INSTRUCTOR himself has a huge beer gut, dressed in cheaply tailored clothes.

SYSTEMA INSTRUCTOR
Systema is one thousand years
old. Systema learn from Yoga,
learn from Chinese martial art,
but Systema is Russian spirit and
soul...

CUT TO:

The class are practicing flexibility training. Alex rolls on the hard floor, crawls on his elbows and fists, lifts himself up with his back against the wall. His movements are fluid and balletic, his concentration total.

CUT TO:

Full combat now. Two on one. Wearing a head-guard Alex moves with lightning speed as two FIGHTERS come at him with fists and clubs. Again his movements are fluid, sliding through kicks and punches like a dancer and striking back with short, sharp blows. He takes a punch in the face, but all it provokes is a determined smile, and he comes back twice as hard.

CUT TO:

The Russians in the class are socializing now, sitting in a small canteen covered in cheap posters of legendary Systema fighters as well as snowy Russian landscapes.

Even though the working class RUSSIANS come from a different background, and Alex barely contributes to the conversation, he looks more at home with them than the wealthy Russian exiles at the ball.

INT. OPEN PLAN OFFICE/ PRIVATE EQUITY FUND/ LONDON - DAY.

A sleek open-plan office, smartly dressed FUND MANAGERS busy at their desks. A handsome French woman in a blue suit, (SANDRINE), is talking to a client on the phone, sounding upset.

SANDRINE

Of course I understand but 12% is a fantastic return in this market. You won't find another fund that...

She trails off, listening to her client's excuses. Through a glass partition she sees Alex on the phone in his office, having a similar conversation. Unlike her, he seems calm, pacing back and forth thoughtfully before he sits down. Other than gently rubbing his temple he betrays no sign of tension.

SANDRINE

It's your money, you can do what you like, but to withdraw your money based on some unfounded rumor is frankly crazy...

Alex catches her eye from his office, still on the phone. He smiles reassuringly, as if to say everything will be alright.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM/ PRIVATE EQUITY FUND/ LONDON - DAY.

Alex sits with Sandrine and a Danish fund manager, KARIN, who reads aloud from the Financial Times.

KARIN

"It is believed the FIA will target several UK based private equity funds with investments in Russia. These include Drake Klevaman; Warchus Naylor; Godman Capital -

SANDRINE

That's bullshit! We have nothing to do with Russia.

KARIN

According to this we've been selling stakes in Volga Oil and Russian aluminium.

Alex takes it in quietly before he responds.

ALEX

(To Karin)

Call Kaleem at the FT. Tell him
we can prove it isn't true -

SANDRINE

It's too late. It's everywhere --
Bloomberg, Freebeacon, CNN --
I've lost six accounts today -

ALEX

(As if he hasn't heard)

Invite him here and tell him
we'll be as transparent as we
can.

SANDRINE

What do I tell my clients, Alex?!

ALEX

Tell them the FT are going to
publish a retraction.

He stares at her quietly until she calms down.

ALEX

I know you quit a good job to
come here. We'll be okay.

INT. DINING ROOM/ RITZ HOTEL/ LONDON - DAY.

The gilded dining room of the Ritz hotel. Alex sits with
Rebecca and her father, REED, a self-made Texas billionaire
with enough money not to worry about appearances.

REED

(Reading the menu)

Thirty five pounds for bread, jam
and coffee. Now that's a business
I'm interested in.

Alex forces a smile, catching Rebecca's eye.

ALEX

Honey?

REED

I'll have some of that too if
it's free.

Alex smiles again but we sense he doesn't want to be here.
He looks at Rebecca, a touch accusingly, as if she arranged
the meeting. Rebecca avoids his gaze and gets up from the
table so the men can talk alone.

REBECCA

I'll have the egg white omelette
and an orange juice, please.

Both men stand up as she heads off to the ladies room, then sit down again. Reed tucks his napkin into his shirt, old-school style, then looks at Alex with a beaming smile.

REED

You wanna talk shop before my daughter gets back?

ALEX

What about?

Reed grins.

REED

I'm not here to play poker with you, Alex, and I'm not going to withdraw my money from your fund.

(A beat)

But I would like to know if you're going to get hit by sanctions like the papers say?

Alex meet his gaze calmly.

ALEX

No, Reed.

His answer clearly isn't good enough for Reed.

REED

Look, my investment in you means jack shit to me, all I care about is my daughter.

He keeps the tone pleasant but his expression is firm.

REED

No offense but your former country is toxic when it comes to doing business. Doesn't matter how many billionaires you produce or sushi bars you open, it's still a gangster economy with all the risks that entails.

If Alex takes offense he doesn't show it.

ALEX

I've never traded with Russia or managed Russian funds. If I had I would have made a fortune.

REED

Then who's spreading false rumors about your fund?

ALEX

I'm looking into it.

Reed considers him quietly.

REED

Tell me something, do you love money?

Alex doesn't understand.

REED

I mean really love it. With all your heart? Because the best bankers I know, that's all they care about. Makes them fucking boring people but damn good at their jobs. You don't have it in your blood, go do something else.

Alex smiles, even though he'd like to punch Reed in the mouth.

ALEX

You're welcome to take your money out but as a friend I'd advise you to keep it where it is.

He holds Reeds's gaze, then looks away as Rebecca returns.

REBECCA

Have you ordered yet?

Reed's all good humor again.

REED

I think we need you to get the waiter's attention, honey...

Rebecca tries to catch Alex's eye to see if the conversation's gone okay, but he avoids her gaze, already thinking about his next move.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR/ MOSCOW - NIGHT.

A slightly built man with white hair, ILYA FEDEROV, walks along a corridor lined with huge RUSSIAN MOBSTERS and BODYGUARDS. Some wear leather jackets, others smart suits, but all of them have the same air of quiet menace.

As ILYA approaches one of the hospital rooms a thick-set BODYGUARD steps in his way.

BODYGUARD

(In Russian)

Can I help you?

ILYA calmly takes out his identification papers. He's a General in the FSB, Russia's Intelligence Service.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM/ MOSCOW - NIGHT.

The television is on, an English soccer match playing with Russian commentary. Vadim Manevich lies on his hospital bed, bandaged and attached to drips and monitors. He has a visitor who sits on a chair, a pale young man in his 20's with the gaunt looks and restless air of a junkie, FYODOR.

Ilya greets the boy with a smile then turns to Vadim. Apart from a few cuts on his face, the mob boss's striking good looks are intact. He reaches for a remote on his bed and switches off the TV. Without acknowledging Ilya, he beckons Fyodor over.

Fyodor heads over to his bedside. Vadim reaches out and takes his hand, holding it a moment, then gestures to his bedside table.

VADIM
(In Russian)
In the drawer.

Ilya watches in silence as Fyodor opens the drawer and takes out Vadim's wallet, handing it to him. Vadim peels off a stack of notes and gives them to him. Fyodor looks relieved.

FYODOR
(In Russian)
Thank you, papa.

He leans over and kisses his father. Vadim hugs him tenderly, then finally lets him go.

VADIM
(In Russian)
Come see me tomorrow.

He watches his son fondly as he leaves the room, then finally turns to Ilya.

ILYA
(In Russian)
You think that's a good idea?

VADIM
(In Russian)
If I don't give him the money
he'll steal it from his mother.
How are you?

ILYA
(In Russian)
How are you?

VADIM
(In Russian)
Alive.

Vadim winces in discomfort as he reaches for his cigarettes. Ilya gets them for him. Vadim takes a cigarette then hands the packet to Ilya.

ILYA
(In Russian)
I don't smoke.

VADIM
(In Russian)
There's a name. I had nowhere
else to write it down.

And now Ilya sees the name written on the back of the cigarette packet, looking uneasy.

ILYA
(In Russian)
He's a British citizen now.

Vadim calmly lights his cigarette.

VADIM
(In Russian)
That's why I need your help.

EXT. WALLED GARDEN/ BORIS'S MANSION/ SURREY - DAY.

The walled garden is planted with beetroot, a large swathe of glistening red. Alex looks on as his Uncle Boris bends down in his Wellington boots and Barbour jacket and pulls out a handful of beets. He turns to Alex with a smile, his hands and his apron covered in red stains.

BORIS
I'm an English farmer now!

INT. DINING ROOM/ BORIS'S MANSION/ SURREY - DAY.

Boris pours a spoonful of cream into his Borscht. Alex watches his uncle in silence.

BORIS
Are you sure you don't want some?
It gives you stamina. Russian
Viagra.

Grinning, he tucks into his soup, then frowns:

BORIS
Geena!

A uniformed Philippino maid appears. Boris is patronising but polite.

BORIS

Geena, with this red soup you
bring sour cream not fresh cream.
Last time you got it right.

GEENA

Pardon, sir.

She takes away the jug of fresh cream.

BORIS

And bring me a clean bowl,
please.

He shoves aside his bowl of borscht and grabs some bread,
taking a large bite and speaking with his mouth full.

BORIS

Explain it to me one more time,
Alexei, so I understand what you
want.

Alex senses his uncle is enjoying his predicament, milking
it for all it's worth.

ALEX

I need new investors to restore
confidence until these rumors go
away.

BORIS

The Doronins are interested.

ALEX

They're Russian.

BORIS

They haven't been back for
fifteen years.

ALEX

I need an investor with no links
to Russia.

Boris shrugs, dipping his bread in the rejected bowl of
borscht but still doesn't like the taste.

BORIS

You ever meet my friend, Semiyon
Kleiman?

ALEX

I don't think so.

BORIS

He's made big money in Tel Aviv
nightclubs. He's looking to
invest it somewhere.

ALEX

What kind of nightclubs?

BORIS

The kind you dance in. *Discos*.
He's not Russian, he's Israeli,
and he's a member of the Knesset.
Is that good enough for you?

Geena interrupts, returning with a clean bowl and a new jug of cream.

BORIS

Thank you so much, Geena.

Alex watches his uncle serve himself a new bowl of borscht, pouring on the sour cream in a pattern.

BORIS

You remember when I used to visit you at boarding school -- how much I embarrassed you?

ALEX

You never embarrassed me.

BORIS

Yes, I did. I spoke Russian to you in front of your friends and kissed you on both cheeks. You kept answering me in English and tried to shake my hand.

Alex smiles.

ALEX

You got to drive back to London in your Bentley. I had to stay there for the rest of term and get called a yid.

BORIS

I know. You did what you did to survive. You always have.

He looks at his nephew fondly.

BORIS

I understand it's embarrassing to be Russian right now -- nouveau riche, big yachts, Nobu -- but don't be ashamed of who you are.

He holds Alex's gaze.

BORIS
 (In Russian)
 I love you like my own son. I'll
 do everything I can to help.

Alex holds his gaze, then replies in Russian.

ALEX
 (In Russian)
 I appreciate it.

BORIS
 (In English)
 You're welcome.

INT. BEDROOM/ APARTMENT/ CHEYNE WALK/ LONDON - NIGHT.

Alex makes love to Rebecca, the muscles on his back tensing, so focussed he's absent. Rebecca sees it in the emptiness behind his eyes.

REBECCA
 You're not even here.

Alex stops now, looking down at her.

REBECCA
 It's okay.

She seems more concerned than offended. Alex feels uncomfortable under her searching gaze, rolling off her and gazing up at the ceiling. She nestles closer.

REBECCA
 If you're worried about Boris's
 friend why don't you ask my dad.

ALEX
 Can we leave your dad out of the
 bedroom?

His tone is neutral but his words sting.

REBECCA
 I'm trying to help. You don't
 have to get personal -

ALEX
 I'm sorry, Rebecca, someone's
 spreading rumors trying to
 destroy my business!

REBECCA
 Well, it isn't me!

She stares at him angrily, not one to back down.

REBECCA

You're the one who keeps saying
you want nothing to do with your
uncle -

ALEX

He's my uncle! If I go to anyone
with a begging bowl it's going to
be my family not yours!

It's below the belt and he regrets it, but it's too late.

REBECCA

I never said anything about your
family.

She gets out of bed and storms towards the bathroom now.

REBECCA

You can be such a prick.

Alex stares after her guiltily as she slams the bathroom
door shut but right now he has more pressing problems.

INT. CABIN/ PRIVATE PLANE - DAY.

The roar of an airplane. Alex sits in a private jet,
wearing headphones, studying an App on his i-phone.
Relaxing nature sounds play over images of idyllic
landscapes -- wind rustling through cornfields; waves
lapping on a beach; birdsong in a forest --

Alex swipes through scene after scene, but can't find an
ambience to still his thoughts. He looks over at his uncle.
Boris downs his vodka, scoffs his caviar, and flirts with a
GORGEOUS AIR-HOSTESS. Alex can't hear him over the
headphones but his uncle's boisterous charm and carefree
good humor are an almost comic contrast to his own buttoned-
up reserve.

INT/ EXT. LIMO/ TEL AVIV/ ISRAEL - DAY.

From the serenity of the skies we cut to the roar of Tel
Aviv traffic. As car horns shrill and vehicles compete for
right of way, Alex absorbs the sights and sounds of the
city. He winds down his window, enjoying the balmy air and
the chaos. The LIMO DRIVER overtakes at speed and almost
crashes into an oncoming truck. Boris doesn't seem to care,
chatting to him happily in fluent Hebrew.

BORIS

(In Hebrew)

Why's the traffic so bad?

LIMO DRIVER

(In Hebrew)

In this country all we ever do is
demonstrate.

BORIS
 (In Hebrew)
 So what is it today?

LIMO DRIVER
 (In Hebrew)
 Gay pride. They shut down half
 the city.

Alex looks out of the window and sees pockets of GAY PRIDE MARCHERS waving rainbow flags and pink balloons.

INT. HOTEL ROOM/ TEL AVIV/ ISRAEL - DAY.

On the hotel room's plasma screen, a distinguished looking Israeli politician talks to a reporter, colorfully dressed gay pride marchers waving flags behind him.

ISRAELI POLITICIAN ON TV
 (In Hebrew)
 ...As a member of the Labour
 party I support gay rights
 unreservedly, and as a citizen of
 Tel Aviv I am proud of our record
 of tolerance -- gay rights are
 human rights...

Boris wears a colorful hotel robe, glued to the TV. Alex has half an eye on his phone, scanning incoming work texts. There's one from Sandrine -- *Lost two more accounts, Freiberg and Warren*. On TV, the crowd cheers as the reporter wraps up the interview.

TV REPORTER
 (In Hebrew)
 Thank you, sir. That was the
 Labour member of parliament,
 Semiyon Kleiman...

Alex looks up at the mention of Kleiman's name, catching his first glimpse of the benign looking Israeli politician.

On screen, Kleiman shakes hands with the protesters, modestly accepting their congratulations.

Boris looks away from the TV now, meeting Alex's gaze with a wry smile.

EXT. BEACH/ TEL AVIV - DAY.

Wearing their swimming trunks, Alex and Boris both look pale compared to the sun-tanned Tel Aviv beach beauties all around them. There the similarity ends. Boris's body has turned to fat and he's covered in fading Russian prison tattoos while Alex is toned and unblemished.

EXT. SEA/ BEACH/ TEL AVIV - DAY.

Alex and Boris stand waist deep in the water now, the huge pyramid shaped hotels of the Tel Aviv seafront visible behind them.

BORIS

How many times a week you go to the gym?

ALEX

Once or twice, when I get round to it.

BORIS

Fuck. I go every day. Look at me.

Alex can't help smiling at his uncle. Boris wades deeper into the water, admiring the Tel Aviv skyline.

BORIS

Don't you love this city? I should have moved here after Moscow.

ALEX

Why didn't you?

BORIS

I wanted to but your father decided on England. He's my big brother. I follow him everywhere.

Alex watches his uncle float on his back, gazing up at the cloudless sky.

BORIS

I worry about him, Alexei. The only place he's happy is Russia. Everywhere else his heart is sick.

ALEX

He'll go home soon.

BORIS

Bullshit. People lie to him. They tell him pay big money, apologise to Putin, then they let you go back. It's bullshit, you don't go home like a beggar, you go home like a King...

He looks at Alex now, the water glistening all around him. Alex holds his gaze but says nothing.

BORIS

You don't like asking questions.

ALEX
What questions?

BORIS
What the fuck I'm talking about
right now...

He stares at Alex pointedly, as if he wants to open up to him.

BORIS
I'm going to take your father
home. Like a King. You wanna know
how?

Alex considers him quietly, then shakes his head.

ALEX
That's your business. I'm just a
banker. That's bad enough.

He deflects Boris's urge to confide gently. His uncle looks disappointed for a moment, then recovers with a smile.

BORIS
You're right. What you don't know
can't hurt you.
(He grins)
I'm going for a swim. Save me if
I drown.

Alex smiles back at him fondly, watching him swim out to sea, the sunlight sparkling on the water.

INT/EXT. LIMO/ TEL AVIV - NIGHT.

The neon lights of Tel Aviv's nightclub district roll over the limo windows. Alex watches the lurid nightlife spilling out onto the streets - beautiful women, drag queens, buff men in sleeveless t-shirts, all partying together.

INT. NIGHTCLUB/ TEL AVIV - NIGHT.

Colorful laser shows criss-cross above the heaving crowd, the play of lights a homage to the city's history of air raids and missile shields. Tel Aviv's beautiful people are out in force, the neon lit bar, the pulsing dancefloor, and the private booths all packed.

Wearing a beautiful suit, Alex follows his uncle through the crush, bemused by the beautiful dancers and disco queens. Boris leads him towards the private booths. Up ahead, Alex recognises Semiyon Kleiman, sitting at a table with some chic women, flamboyant drag queens, and the city's gay glitterati.

Alex expects them to stop at Semiyon's table but Boris strides past the Israeli politician without a glance.

Alex follows his uncle past some burly looking bodyguards, towards another booth. A group of BEAUTIFUL GIRLS are waiting for them at a table. Boris greets them like long lost friends, kissing their hands chivalrously.

BORIS
(In Hebrew)
Ladies, this is my nephew, Alex.

INT. LATER/ BORIS'S TABLE/ NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT.

The Israeli trance rock is deafening. Alex has to crane his head to hear the girl sitting next to him.

NERENA
Are you here for business?

ALEX
I don't know why I'm here.

NERENA
Maybe you're here to meet me.

Alex smiles, hard to read. The girl takes his hand now as if it's the most natural thing in the world.

NERENA
You have soft hands. Let me guess...gangster?

Alex smiles.

ALEX
Close.

NERENA
Banker?

Alex concedes with a small nod.

NERENA
Married?

ALEX
Close again.

NERENA
English?

ALEX
American.

NERENA
American women are hard, no?

ALEX
Harder than Israeli women?

She laughs, then suddenly without warning leans over and kisses him full on the mouth. He pulls away after a moment, smiling his beautiful, impassive smile.

NERENA

My God, what does it take to melt your heart?

Alex grins. Out of the corner of his eye he sees Boris making out with another girl, eager as a teenager.

ALEX

Would you like a drink?

Before Nerena can answer an air raid siren suddenly starts to wail, shrieking over the pounding music. Alex sees the girls at their table react coolly, grabbing their handbags and cigarettes.

On the dance floor the reaction is just as calm, people beginning to evacuate but still dancing to the wail of the siren as if it was club music.

A group of BODYGUARDS appear, inviting Boris and Alex to follow them. Boris says goodbye to the girls, tipping them all generously. Nerena kisses Alex on both cheeks and follows the other girls into the crush. Looking curious, Alex follows the bodyguards in the opposite direction.

INT. AIR RAID SHELTER/ NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT.

The bodyguards lead Alex and Boris through a labyrinth of concrete corridors until they reach a bunker. The party continues down here too, a makeshift bar and music, guests mingling as if they're in a VIP room not an air-raid shelter.

Alex spots Semiyon Kleiman among them. The old man looks at him with a wry smile. Boris guides Alex towards him.

BORIS

Semiyon, this is my nephew, Alex.

The benign looking old man shakes hands with Alex, his pale blue eyes fixed on him the whole time.

SEMIYON

(In Hebrew)

How are you enjoying Tel Aviv?

ALEX

I'm afraid I don't speak Hebrew.

All around them the air raid siren wails but no-one seems to care.

SEMIYON

Your uncle says you're clever.

ALEX
He's my uncle.

SEMIYON
He says you can make me a lot of
money.

Alex holds the old man's gaze, but doesn't reply. Semiyon frowns at the noise of the siren.

SEMIYON
I don't hear so great. You
afraid?

Alex doesn't understand.

ALEX
Of what?

SEMIYON
Bombs.

ALEX
It feels pretty safe down here.

SEMIYON
Let's go up on the roof. We can
hear better.

He takes Alex by the arm, leaning on him like an elderly grandfather.

Boris stays behind deliberately, watching them head off to an exit at the back of the room.

EXT. ROOFTOP/ NIGHTCLUB/ TEL AVIV - NIGHT.

Search-lights criss-cross the sky like the laser shows in the nightclub, sirens wailing across the city.

SEMIYON
Don't worry, it's a practice
drill. My friends at the IDF
warned me.

He turns to Alex with another wry smile.

SEMIYON
So I wanna invest half a billion
in your fund but your uncle says
I need to convince you first?

Alex smiles at the gentle irony in his voice.

ALEX
I have to be able to tell the
financial authorities in London
where the money comes from.

SEMIYON

My understanding is that public equity funds like yours aren't subject to the same levels of scrutiny.

ALEX

Within the confines of the law.

Semiyon smiles, enjoying their verbal duel.

SEMIYON

He also tells me your business is in trouble and you need me more than I need you.

Alex holds his gaze but says nothing now.

SEMIYON

Let's assume I give you my money, do I have a say where you invest it?

ALEX

Of course.

SEMIYON

And if I suggest an interesting investment opportunity?

Alex senses where this is leading.

ALEX

For example?

SEMIYON

For example I have a friend in Mumbai with shipping interests. Huge potential but he's getting blocked by a bigger rival who's paying off the port authorities. With your funds to help him, my friend outbids his rival and triples his profit. How would you cash flow that?

ALEX

That not what we do.

SEMIYON

I'm just trying to get an idea of your expertise.

Even though he knows he's being played, Alex can't help rising to the challenge.

ALEX

We'd create a Special Purpose Vehicle in a low intervention jurisdiction like the BVI or Panama. The parent company buys your friend's company and pays him dividends out of your fund.

SEMIYON

Would his rival know the money's coming from me?

ALEX

We'd issue him bearer shares that are anonymous and impossible to trace.

Semiyon holds his gaze, liking what he's hearing. Alex knows he's already gone too far.

ALEX

But like I said, that's not what we do.

INT/ EXT. LIMO/ HIGHWAY TO TEL AVIV AIRPORT - DAY.

The highway rises above the city, the sea visible down below.

BORIS

He made you an offer. Go away and think about it. I don't see the problem.

Alex stares out of the limo window, quietly furious with his uncle.

ALEX

The problem is I'm not a money launderer.

BORIS

Then say no.

Boris looks away calmly. Alex stares out at the golden beaches and the sparkling sea, still seething inside.

EXT. ALBERT MEMORIAL/ HYDE PARK - DAY.

The sunlight glitters on the golden spires of the Albert Memorial. Alex accompanies his mother as she walks her two dogs, a black labrador and a poodle. Oksana wears a flashy sable coat, oblivious to what anyone thinks of her.

OKSANA

I'm like you. I compartmental everything. You say that in English?

ALEX

Not really.

She smiles.

OKSANA

When I met your father I was a market girl. He made me a princess. I had everything I wanted. I had you. I had your sister. I had Chanel and Dior.

ALEX

It didn't matter what he did?

OKSANA

He was a businessman. And in his business there was a lot of money so it was dangerous.

Oksana shouts at her dogs as they start fighting.

OKSANA

Rustam! Rustam, stop! Naughty boy!

She links arms with her son.

OKSANA

Is your business in trouble?

ALEX

It will be soon unless I do something.

OKSANA

Say yes to the Israeli.

ALEX

It's illegal.

OKSANA

How illegal?

ALEX

Mama...

She smiles, cuddling closer to him.

OKSANA

Then say no. Becky won't care if you're poor. How much does a Zara dress cost?

Alex can't help smiling. Up ahead, Dmitri is sitting on a park bench, staring out at the ducks and swans in the round pond.

OKSANA

Look at him. He's like a lion
who's lost his hair.

ALEX

His mane.

They both stare at him fondly and with a touch of concern. Dmitri's face lights up as he sees his son, the apple of his eye.

DMITRI

(In Russian)

Alexei! Your mother didn't tell
me you were coming!

Alex hugs and kisses his father affectionately.

ALEX

What were you looking at?

Dmitri points back at the squawking ducks in the pond.

DMITRI

(In Russian)

Those big grey ones are scared of
the small brown ones. I don't
understand why?

OKSANA

(In Russian)

And you think Harrods is boring?

DMITRI

(In Russian)

What else am I going to do in
this stupid park?!

Alex smiles at his parents' banter, his own troubles forgotten for a moment.

INT. GASTRO PUB/ FULHAM - NIGHT.

A chubby man in a striped shirt, MILO, is recounting a story at a pub table.

MILO

...He was our class bully --
Piggy Leach. He had a brother
called *Eggy* but he was in the
year above...

There's laughter around the table, half a dozen old school FRIENDS of Alex and their various GIRLFRIENDS and SPOUSES gathered at the pub for a drink.

MILO

Anyway, Alex was his pet
victim...

Alex shrugs modestly. Rebecca watches him from across the table. He's clearly outgrown these friends but does a good job of hiding it.

MILO

Piggy would follow him around and call him names -- *Ruski, Comrade Stalin, Yiddo* -- I think he even called you a wog once.

ALEX

Probably.

Rebecca catches Alex's eye, still a little distance between them.

MILO

Now Piggy weighed ten tonnes and Alex was two foot tall at the time...

More laughter, Alex joining in.

ALEX

You're really milking this, Milo -

MILO

Alright, so he's following Alex after games, whispering, *Commie cunt, Jew boy, Rasputin* and suddenly Alex turns around and decks him with one punch.

There are gasps of amused disbelief.

MILO

That's not all -- Alex walks over, cool as a cucumber, and stamps on his hand, with his studs, twice. Piggy's literally squealing...

Rebecca is still watching Alex. He smiles along but she senses the story makes him uncomfortable.

MILO

Two foot assassin Alex standing over him like the Russian Clint Eastwood --

ALEX

(Protesting lightly)
Enough already --

MILO

That's the only reason I became
friends with him. Protection...

There's more laughter when Alex's mobile phone starts to vibrate. He checks the name on the display -- *Karin* -- then gets up from the table to answer it.

Rebecca watches him curiously as he walks away, Milo's plummy voice still rising over the din of the pub.

MILO

Beware the quiet ones!

Alex takes the call in a corner of the bar.

ALEX

Hey, Karin?...

INT. OFFICE/ PRIVATE EQUITY FUND/ LONDON - NIGHT.

Karin sits at her desk.

KARIN

I spoke to Kaleem again. I think
I know who started the rumors...

INT. GASTRO PUB/ FULHAM - NIGHT.

Rebecca watches Alex across the crowded pub. He's still on the phone but his back is turned to her and she can't see his expression.

Alex listens in silence, then switches off his phone. He stands there, frozen for a moment, as if he's gathering his thoughts.

Rebecca watches him curiously as he finally turns around. Even from far away she can see how upset he is. Their eyes meet across the pub and Alex smiles, trying to hide whatever he's feeling inside.

Rebecca smiles back, also pretending nothing's wrong.

INT. ALEX'S CAR/ MOTORWAY - DAY.

Rain hammers on the windscreen of the car. Alex overtakes the vehicles in front of him, his eyes fixed ahead.

INT/ EXT. ALEX'S CAR/ GATES OF MANSION/ SURREY - DAY.

The high walls of a country mansion appear up ahead -- rows of spikes and barbed wire to keep intruders out.

Another car is already at the gates, the underside of the vehicle and the three MALE PASSENGERS being searched by bodyguards.

The men climb back in their car and drive on towards the main house. Alex stops at the gate too, winding down his window.

ALEX
Is he here?

BODYGUARD AT THE GATE
Yes, sir.

ALEX
Who were those men?

BODYGUARD AT THE GATE
Friends visiting from Russia.

Alex drives on through the gates without being searched.

INT. LIVING ROOM/ COUNTRY MANSION - DAY.

The Phillipino maid, Geena, leads Alex to the living room. He arrives to see Boris's guests presenting him with a large tin of caviar. His uncle thanks the three men profusely then turns and sees Alex. He's surprised but grins happily.

BORIS
Alexei?!
(Striding over)
What are you doing here?

Alex holds his gaze coolly.

ALEX
I need to talk to you.

Boris senses something's wrong but keeps grinning.

BORIS
Sit down then we'll talk -

ALEX
You spread the rumors about my fund.

Boris stares at him in surprise now.

ALEX
Why, so I'd be forced to take Kleiman's money? -

BORIS
I can explain -

ALEX
Don't bother -

Boris suddenly laughs and grabs him in a bear hug, clapping him on the back as if he's cracked a funny joke.

BORIS
(Whispering in his ear)
Please don't embarrass me in
front of these people.

Alex tries to pull away but his uncle holds him tightly.

BORIS
(In Russian)
I beg you...

Alex is still furious, but stops resisting.

Boris fakes another laugh, slips his arm around Alex and leads him over to his three guests.

BORIS
(In Russian)
Karim, Salman, Uvays, this is my
nephew, Alex.

The modest looking men greet Alex deferentially. From their dark looks and Muslim names Alex guesses they're Chechens. One of them, Salman, a gentle giant, stands almost seven feet tall.

BORIS
Geena, you remember how to do the
caviar? Put half of this on a bed
of ice then serve with the vodka,
okay?

GEENA
Yes, sir.

Geena disappears with the caviar while Boris invites his guests to sit.

Alex hesitates, still furious with his uncle, then finally sits down.

INT. LATER/ LIVING ROOM/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

Alex stares out absently as Boris and his Chechen guests converse in Russian.

KARIM
(In Russian)
...Manevich may be alive but his
reputation has been damaged by
the attempt on his life. Some say
the Kremlin no longer supports
him.

BORIS
 (In Russian)
 He's ex-KGB like the rest of
 them. I'm sure he still has
 friends.

Alex's eyes drift over to a framed photograph of his father
 and his uncle in their younger days, wearing swimming
 trunks, their weightlifter's bodies covered in tattoos.

UVAYS
 (In Russian)
 His friends will wait to see who
 comes out on top. It's the first
 time we feel confident to make a
 move against him.

BORIS
 (In Russian)
 How can I help?

Alex looks up in surprise. His Russian may not be fluent
 but he understands enough to know that Boris is playing
 with fire.

UVAYS
 (In Russian)
 We still receive funds from our
 Muslim brothers but not enough to
 start a war against him.

BORIS
 (In Russian)
 How much more would you need?

Alex stares at Boris disapprovingly but his uncle doesn't
 meet his gaze.

UVAYS
 (In Russian)
 Twenty million dollars.

Boris nods, then finally looks at Alex, sensing how
 uncomfortable he is with the conversation.

BORIS
 What's Geena doing with that
 caviar? Alex can you help her.

Alex hesitates, then starts to rise when Karim gets up.

KARIM
 (In poor English)
 I go, sir.

The young Chechen heads off, leaving his companions with
 Alex and Boris.

BORIS
(In Russian)
Forgive me for the poor
hospitality. We're in England.

He chuckles and grabs a bowl of chocolates from the table, offering them to his guests.

Uvays takes one, popping it in his mouth. The gentle giant, Salman, gets up respectfully as Boris approaches. He reaches out for a chocolate then suddenly knocks the bowl out of Boris's hand --

Before Boris can recover from his surprise, Salman gives him a massive forearm blow to the throat, crushing his larynx --

Boris collapses to the floor, clutching his throat --

Alex springs up in shock but Uvays is already on him, grabbing him in a chokehold before he can cry for help --

INT. KITCHEN/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

In the kitchen, Karim is scooping out the caviar with a small pearl handled blade while Geena and a BODYGUARD look on, unaware of what's going on in the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

Alex tries to use his elbows and feet to break free of Uvays's grip but it's no use. As he struggles for breath, he sees the giant Salman bend over his uncle with a small knife he's retrieved from the fruit bowl...

Boris is still conscious but suffocating slowly from his shattered larynx...

Alex watches helplessly as Salman cuts his uncle's wrists, then his throat...

The horror of it gives Alex a jolt and he finally breaks free of Uvays's grip, yelling for help --

INT. KITCHEN/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

In the kitchen, the bodyguard hears Alex call out, but before he can react, Karim plunges the pearl handed blade into his throat --

Geena cries out and starts to run, but Karim is on her in an instant, slamming her headfirst into a wall and crushing her skull --

INT. LIVING ROOM/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

As he struggles with Uvays, Alex sees Salman bearing down on him.

He swings his elbow - a systema pressure point strike - and catches Uvays in the gut, winding him. Pulling free now, he turns and runs --

INT. CORRIDOR/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

Alex runs down the corridor as Karim emerges from the kitchen. Karim tries to block his path but Alex's momentum carries him crashing past the Chechen --

INT. STAIRS/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

Alex hurtles down the stairs to the basement, Karim calling out to the other Chechens as he chases after him --

KARIM O/S
(In Russian)
Over here!

INT. CINEMA ROOM/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

Alex squeezes through the seats of Boris's state of the art cinema room, heading for a door at the other end --

INT. GYM/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

The door leads to a small gym with lots of weight-lifting equipment. Alex grabs a kettlebell and swings it at Karim as he bursts through the door after him --

The heavy weight catches Karim full in the face, poleaxing him --

Alex runs for the wine cellar door now as the other Chechens arrive --

INT. WINE CELLAR/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

Alex slams the reinforced door shut and turns the lock. He takes out his cell-phone but the signal is weak. He moves around the cellar like a caged animal, trying to get a signal.

INT. DMITRI AND OKSANA'S APARTMENT/ KNIGHTSBRIDGE - DAY.

The front doorbell rings in Alex's parents apartment. Oksana emerges from her bedroom to answer it.

INT. GYM/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

Uvays stems Karim's blood while the giant Salman uses a barbell to hammer at the wine cellar door.

INT. WINE CELLAR/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

Alex finally gets a signal, dialling his parents' number.

INT. DMITRI AND OKSANA'S APARTMENT/ KNIGHTSBRIDGE - DAY.

Oksana's cell-phone rings, Alex's name showing on the display. She answers it as she heads through the living room to answer the door.

OKSANA

Darling, there's someone at the door -

ALEX O/S

Don't answer it!

INT. WINE CELLAR/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

Alex ignores the heavy pounding on the wine-cellar door, giving his mother instructions over the phone.

ALEX

Get away from the door. Go to the panic button in the bedroom...

INT. DMITRI AND OKSANA'S APARTMENT/ KNIGHTSBRIDGE - DAY.

Oksana stares at the front door in confusion as the bell rings again.

ALEX O/S

Mama?! Mama, can you hear me?!

His voice brings her round and she retreats to the bedroom, still staring at the door in terror.

INT. WINE CELLAR/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

Salman continues pounding on the wine cellar door but Alex's only concern is for his parents.

ALEX

Have you found it?

INT. BEDROOM/ DMITRI AND OKSANA'S APARTMENT - DAY.

Oksana looks dazed, searching behind the bed for the panic button. Dmitri has woken from his nap, no idea what his wife is doing.

Oksana finally finds the panic button and presses it but the alarm doesn't ring.

OKSANA

(To Alex on the phone)
It's not working.

ALEX O/S

Press both buttons.

OKSANA
It's not working!

Dmitri hears the front door ringing insistently, looking even more confused.

INT. WINE CELLAR/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

Alex stands among the crates of Chateau Lafite and Haut Brion.

ALEX
Go to the alarm panel by the front door.

OKSANA O/S
They're still there.

ALEX
Don't worry...

INT. LIVING ROOM/ DMITRI AND OKSANA'S APARTMENT - DAY.

Dmitri follows Oksana into the living room. The doorbell is no longer ringing but whoever is on the other side is trying to pick the lock.

Realizing what's happening, Dmitri goes to a desk drawer and grabs a gun, ready to defend himself and his wife.

Oksana looks terrified as she approaches the alarm pad by the door.

ALEX O/S
Now press any number.

The constant clicking on the other side of the door panics Oksana, confusing her.

OKSANA
What number?

INT. WINE CELLAR/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

The hammering continues outside.

ALEX
Any number...The year I was born.

INT. LIVING ROOM/ DMITRI AND OKSANA'S APARTMENT - DAY.

Her hand trembling, Oksana taps in the numbers 1983.

There's silence.

OKSANA
Nothing's happening.

The clicking continues outside, then a splintering sound, someone trying to jimmy the door open.

ALEX O/S
Now press zero.

Dmitri stands behind Oksana, ready with his gun. She reaches out and presses zero --

INT. WINE CELLAR/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

And to Alex's relief, he hears the alarm start to shrill over the phone --

INT. LIVING ROOM/ DMITRI AND OKSANA'S APARTMENT - DAY.

Oksana retreats from the door now, the deafening alarm ringing all around the apartment. The splintering sound behind the door finally stops and footsteps move away --

INT. GYM/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

Realizing the lock won't give, Salman finally stops hammering at the cellar door, exhausted. Together with Uvays, he helps the bloody Karim to his feet and they make their retreat.

INT. WINE CELLAR/ BORIS'S MANSION - DAY.

Alex hears the Chechens leaving, his emotions overwhelming him as he speaks into his cell phone.

ALEX
Mama, are you okay? Is Papa okay?

His mother sobs back over the phone.

OKSANA O/S
We're fine. What's going on?

ALEX
Call the police.
(In Russian now)
Call the police...

His voice trembles, tears welling in his eyes.

INT. MORGUE/ LONDON - NIGHT.

Boris's corpse is laid out on a mortuary slab, the huge gash in his throat stitched up. Dmitri sits by his younger brother's side, keeping watch over him.

Alex observes them through the cold room window. His father's head is bowed but he appears to be talking to his murdered brother. He stifles a sob, kisses Boris's icy forehead, then continues whispering to him.

EXT. CEMETERY/ LONDON - DAY.

A gentle breeze blows through the trees. A large crowd of MOURNERS have gathered for Boris's funeral. There are lots of BODYGUARDS too, keeping a discreet distance.

Alex holds Dmitri by the arm, supporting his father as they approach the open grave, his mother and sister looking on in tears. Dmitri hesitates, as if he can't bear to look inside the grave.

DMITRI
(In Russian)
The soil, is it here?

Alex nods gently.

DMITRI
(In Russian)
From Pulkovo? He has to be buried
in Russian soil...

Alex nods again, reassuring him. With tears in his eyes, Dmitri continues towards his brother's grave, Alex walking by his side.

EXT. CEMETERY/ LONDON - DAY.

The funeral over, the mourners have formed a Shura, two long lines facing each other. The family members walk between them, receiving condolences.

OLD LADY
May you be comforted among all
the mourners of Zion and
Jerusalem.

Oksana accompanies Dmitri. Alex walks with Eva.

OLD MAN
(In Russian)
May you be comforted among all
the mourners of Zion and
Jerusalem.

Dmitri takes his old friend's hand gratefully, thanks him, then moves on.

YOUNG WOMAN
May you be comforted among all
the mourners of Zion and
Jerusalem.

Alex looks at the primly dressed woman in surprise. It's Nerena, the beautiful escort he met in Tel Aviv.

NERENA

(Quietly)

Mr. Kleiman is sorry he can't be here.

Alex pauses, still gazing at her. Watching from the crowd, Rebecca sees the brief exchange, looking curious.

INT. LIVING ROOM/ DMITRI AND OKSANA'S APARTMENT - DAY.

The mirrors in the room have been covered for the Shiva, smartly dressed WAITERS serving eggs and bagels to the guests while bodyguards hover in the background.

Alex watches his father walk among his guests, greeting them politely and accepting their condolences. Femi, his sister Eva's Nigerian boyfriend, gives Dmitri a warm hug. Dmitri hugs him back, grief overcoming his prejudice.

As Alex watches, Rebecca takes his hand.

REBECCA

It's a good turn-out.

ALEX

Lots of people stayed away.

He sounds bitter. Rebecca changes the subject, trying to lighten his mood.

REBECCA

Masha's dressed for the occasion.

She looks over to where Alex's ex-girlfriend, MASHA, is chatting to Oksana in an inappropriately skin-tight dress. Alex smiles absently, watching Nerena across the room.

REBECCA

Is she an ex too?

The beautiful Israeli escort is talking to a tall man in a dark suit.

ALEX

She's a friend of a friend.

REBECCA

Which friend?

ALEX

You don't know him.

Rebecca senses his evasiveness but doesn't press. Catching Alex's eye, Nerena heads over now with her male companion.

NERENA

Alex, you remember my husband, Allon.

Alex doesn't have a clue who he is but nods.

ALEX
Of course. This is my fiancée,
Rebecca.

REBECCA
Hi.

NERENA
It's so nice to meet you at last.
Congratulations on your
engagement...

Nerena steps between Rebecca and the men now, maneuvering her away from them without her even realizing.

NERENA
Alex and I have known each other
since we were children.

REBECCA
Really?

NERENA
My father was good friends with
his uncle but we haven't seen
each other in ages...

Turning his back on the women, Allon looks at Alex.

ALLON
I'm sorry for your loss.

ALEX
Thank you.

Alex stares back at him, still wondering who he is.

ALLON
How have you been?

ALEX
Okay.

ALLON
Still running the equity fund?

Alex holds his gaze, even more curious now.

ALEX
Trying to.

ALLON
I'd be interested to talk to you
about it.

He glances around the room then takes out his business card, offering it to Alex.

ALLON
Call me if you like.

As Alex takes the card, he realizes Allon's slipped him a sim-card too. He pauses, then looks back at him.

ALEX
When?

ALLON
Tomorrow. Around five.

Nerena is still busy charming Rebecca.

NERENA
We live in Eilat by the beach.
It's so beautiful. You must come
and visit...

INT. BEDROOM/ DMITRI AND OKSANA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT.

Dmitri lies in bed with a thermometer in his mouth. Eva takes it out and has a look.

EVA
Thirty seven point three. You're
fine. I'll make you some hot
lemon and honey.

Dmitri turns to Alex.

DMITRI
(In Russian)
Get me some vodka. I don't want
any of her herbal shit.

EVA
I understand Russian, Papa.

DMITRI
(In Russian)
Good. So fetch me a vodka. No
lemon. No honey.

Eva kisses her father affectionately, then catches Alex's eye in shared concern as she leaves the room. Dmitri looks at his father.

DMITRI
(In Russian)
She stinks of Marijuana.

ALEX
No, she doesn't -

DMITRI

(In Russian)

Yes she does. She comes to the Shiva stoned. Her and her boyfriend.

ALEX

Femi doesn't smoke. He has Asthma.

DMITRI

(In Russian)

Promise me you'll look after her.

The old man's eyes well up with tears now, his grief never far away. Alex takes his hand, holding it gently.

DMITRI

(In Russian)

I swore to my mother I'd look after Boris.

ALEX

(In Russian)

You looked after him your whole life.

DMITRI

(In Russian)

They cut his throat like a dog. While I was cowering in this room.

Tears of guilt shine in his eyes.

DMITRI

(In Russian)

And there's nothing I can do about it. Nothing...

He looks down, ashamed of his impotence. Alex sits down on the bed and takes him in his arms, cradling his father like a child.

INT. SYSTEMA MARTIAL ART CLASS/ SPORTS HALL - DAY.

In front of the gym mirror, Alex performs his Systema drills. Rolls and falls. Rotations. Kicks and blows. He is completely focussed, determined, fighting his own reflection.

INT. CHANGING ROOM/ SPORTS HALL - DAY.

The changing rooms are deserted. Wearing a towel around his waist, Alex slides open the back of his cell phone and replaces his Sim card with the new Sim card Allon gave him. He dials Allon's number and waits. It rings a few times before Allon answers.

ALLON O/S
 Someone will meet you outside
 Baron's Court station in an hour.

He hangs up before Alex can ask him any more.

INT. CARRIAGE/ UNDERGROUND TRAIN - NIGHT.

The carriage is packed with people. Alex looks from one passenger to the next, wondering if any of them are observing him.

EXT. BARON'S COURT UNDERGROUND STATION - NIGHT.

Crowds stream out of Baron's Court tube station. As Alex looks around, a beaming Pakistani mini-cab driver approaches him.

PAKISTANI MINI-CAB DRIVER
 Mr. Alex?

ALEX
 Yes.

PAKISTANI MINI-CAB DRIVER
 This way, sir.

INT. MINI CAB/ STREETS OF LONDON - NIGHT.

Alex sits in the back of the cab, watching the driver quietly. The driver catches his eye, smiles pleasantly, then checks his rear view mirror to make sure no-one's following them.

EXT. MINI CAB/ MOTORWAY/ LONDON - NIGHT

The cab speeds along the motorway now, overtaking the cars in front.

INT. MINI CAB/ SERVICE STATION/ MOTORWAY/ LONDON - NIGHT.

Alex stares out in silence, the lights playing on his face. The driver pulls into a service station and parks opposite a brightly lit rest-stop cafe. He sits there a moment, making sure no-one's tailing them, then turns to Alex with another pleasant smile.

PAKISTANI MINI-CAB DRIVER
 Follow me, please.

Alex gets out and follows him to another parked car. The lights are off in the vehicle but Alex sees Allon sitting at the wheel. He climbs into the passenger seat next to him. Allon starts the car and reverses without a word.

INT. ALLON'S CAR/ FARM TRACK - NIGHT.

The car grinds over a dirt track, approaching the lights of a distant farm house. As Alex glances out of the window he sees the silhouette of a helicopter sitting on a field.

Allon's car continues down the dusty track, approaching the farmhouse. His headlights shine on a frail figure standing by the door. It's Semiyon Kleiman.

INT. LIVING ROOM/ FARM HOUSE - NIGHT.

A fire crackles in the hearth. Semiyon pours himself and Alex a drink.

SEMIYON

Forgive me for my absence at the funeral. Your uncle was a good friend.

Alex watches him quietly.

ALEX

I'm sure you had your reasons.

SEMIYON

The natural caution of an old man.

He turns to Alex, offering him the scotch. Alex takes it, holding his gaze.

SEMIYON

Have you thought about my offer?

ALEX

I need to know more.

SEMIYON

Where the money comes from?

ALEX

What you and my uncle were planning to do with it?

Semiyon pauses, considering.

SEMIYON

When you went to business school, what model did they teach you for creating a franchise?

ALEX

MacDonald's.

Semiyon smiles.

SEMIYON
Why is MacDonald's more
successful than Burger King?

ALEX
Lots of reasons.

SEMIYON
One reason. There are more of
them.

Alex stares at him curiously.

SEMIYON
I want to expand my franchise. In
Europe, Asia, South America. Your
uncle was helping me.

ALEX
By crippling my business so you
could launder your dirty cash?

SEMIYON
He told me I could use your fund
to move my money around. He
didn't tell me how he'd get you
to agree.

He looks at Alex, the fire crackling behind them.

ALEX
So you want to open a
MacDonald's?

SEMIYON
No, somebody else owns
MacDonald's. I want to build a
new franchise that puts them out
of business.

He smiles again.

SEMIYON
Are you interested?

ALEX
It depends who runs Macdonalds?

SEMIYON
The man who had your uncle
killed.

Alex considers him quietly.

ALEX
I have to think about my father's
safety.

SEMIYON

Vadim Manevich thinks your father tried to kill him. He didn't get his revenge this time but he'll try again. Your father isn't safe either way.

Alex takes a sip of scotch.

ALEX

So, you're the only one who can save us?

SEMIYON

Not yet. Macdonalds is still bigger than Burger King.

The wily old man shrugs.

ALEX

Then what do you suggest I do in the meantime?

SEMIYON

Go to Vadim Manevich, kiss his hand and beg for your father's life. It may buy you some breathing space.

ALEX

Until?

SEMIYON

My daughter serves in the Mossad, Mr. Godman. You know what their motto is? 'Be-tahaboulot ta'aseh lekha nilkhama.' By way of deception, you will do war.

He raises his glass, his pale blue eyes fixed on Alex.

SEMIYON

L'chaim.

EXT. FIELD/ FARM HOUSE - NIGHT.

The wind from the helicopter's rotor blades blows dust and dirt at Alex but he doesn't look away.

He watches the helicopter rise up, its red lights blinking in the night. Semiyon gives him a brief wave from the cabin, then his chopper roars off into the sky.

INT. BEDROOM/ ALEX'S APARTMENT/ CHEYNE WALK/ LONDON - DAY.

Alex kneels on the floor, packing his suitcase. Rebecca watches him in concern as she gets dressed by the bed.

REBECCA

Can't you postpone the trip?

ALEX

I've already got a job on my hands convincing them to invest.

REBECCA

Your uncle just passed away.

ALEX

They don't care. It's business. If I don't show up they'll take their money somewhere else.

He keeps his back to her, focussing on folding his clothes so he doesn't have to think about the lies.

REBECCA

What about your Israeli investor?

ALEX

He turned me down.

EXT. BEACH/ TEL AVIV/ ISRAEL - DAY.

Semiyon Kleiman walks along the beach with his shoes off and his trouser legs rolled up, the sun setting over the Tel Aviv skyline. He takes out his phone and dials a number.

EXT. INDIAN GOLD MARKET/ MUMBAI/ INDIA - DAY.

Gold glitters everywhere we look -- necklaces, rings, bracelets, coins. DAWOOD KHAN, a wiry man in a prayer cap, walks through the busy market with a state of the art cell phone in his hand and a troupe of skinny BODYGUARDS following him.

DAWOOD KHAN

You want to know how I am? Last night that snake Benny Shakeel stole a consignment of gold from me. This morning I wake up and there's nothing I can do about it. That's how I am...

EXT. BEACH/ TEL AVIV/ ISRAEL - DAY.

Semiyon Kleiman walks slowly through the sand.

SEMIYON

I'd like to help you, Dawood.

Seagulls screech and waves crash in the background.

SEMIYON

How many legitimate businesses do
you own?

INT. SWEAT SHOP/ ZAGREB/ CROATIA - DAY.

And now we find ourselves in a busy sweat shop, dozens of
IMMIGRANT WORKERS manufacturing replica football shirts.
BEDA REZNIK, a lanky Croat mob boss, strides through his
warehouse, answering Semiyon's question on the phone.

BEDA REZNIK

Half a dozen, why?

SEMIYON'S VOICE ON PHONE

And how many of those businesses
can't be traced BACK to you?

Beda hesitates, curious.

BEDA REZNICK

A telecom business in Zagreb and
a cable installation company in
Split.

EXT. BEACH/ TEL AVIV/ ISRAEL - DAY.

The hissing sea foam washes over Semiyon's feet.

SEMIYON

I'd like to invest twenty million
in your telecom business. You can
claim whatever dividends you want
whenever you want...

EXT. CAR/ SOUTH BEACH/ MIAMI/ USA - DAY.

JORGE LEON, a Colombian cartel lawyer, speeds along the
oceanfront highway in his jaguar, listening to Semiyon's
proposal on the phone.

JORGE LEON

What if my clients' investment
can be traced back to you?

SEMIYON'S VOICE ON PHONE

It won't be. I have someone to
take care of that.

Jorge considers, passing huge billboards advertising
everything from Dunkin Donuts to a Taylor Swift concert.

JORGE LEON

And what do you want in return?

EXT. BEACH/ TEL AVIV/ ISRAEL - DAY.

The sparkling sea glitters behind Semiyon, bathing him in its golden glow.

SEMIYON

I want you to be stronger than
your enemies.

INT. EUROSTAR TRAIN/ LONDON TO PARIS - DAY.

The roar of a train. Blinding sunlight glitters on the carriage windows, the green fields blurring past.

Alex stares ahead, oblivious to the view. Darkness hides him from us as the train enters a tunnel.

INT/ EXT. LIMO/ DRIVEWAY/ PALACE OF VERSAILLES - NIGHT.

The approaching palace of Versailles is lit up like something from a fairy tale.

EXT. PALACE OF VERSAILLES - NIGHT.

Looking impeccable in his tuxedo, Alex walks towards the palace as if he's in a dream. Tents have been pitched outside and expensively dressed GUESTS mill about, chatting, their flamboyant suits and sequined couture dresses adding to the dreamlike atmosphere.

Alex walks past them with a quiet sense of purpose, fireworks sparkling behind him as he approaches the palace.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL/ PALACE OF VERSAILLES - NIGHT.

There's an explosion of noise and colour as Alex enters the palace. WAITERS and WAITRESSES dressed in Louis XIV costumes serve champagne and canapes while discreetly dressed bodyguards hover in the background.

Glancing around, Alex picks out faces -- Indian, Asian, European, African. Most of the men wear tuxedos but that doesn't hide the hardness in their eyes or the toughness in their physique. These are men from the streets who have made their fortunes in crime and dress like princes now.

INT. HALL OF MIRRORS/ PALACE OF VERSAILLES - NIGHT.

Rows of tables run all the way down the hall of mirrors, crystal glasses and silver candelabras reflected all around the opulent dining room. The guests who are already seated for dinner are deep in conversation, the men talking business, turning their backs on their wives and girlfriends.

As Alex walks on, we glimpse BENNY SHAKEEL, the Indian drug-lord we met in Dubai.

He's dressed as an oriental potentate, welcoming his fellow mobsters and seating them at his table.

Alex casts his eyes around but can't find the person he's looking for. Reflected in a dozen mirrors, he walks on --

INT. SALLE DE VENUS/ PALACE OF VERSAILLES - NIGHT.

A painting of prowling lions hangs over the entrance to the next hall. Up ahead, a buffet table has been laid with bowls full of caviar and magnums of Cristal. GUESTS crowd around, serving themselves.

As Alex approaches he sees a strikingly handsome man in a white tuxedo. Vadim Manevich looks like the Sun King himself, surrounded by his fawning associates and bodyguards.

Alex keeps walking towards him, getting closer and closer.

Vadim turns and sees him now, staring curiously, then slowly realizes who he is.

His bodyguards start towards Alex, but Vadim stops them with a gentle shake of his head, letting Alex come to him.

Their eyes are locked, as if no-one else in the room exists. Alex looks like he wants to kill Vadim but instead he holds out his hand.

ALEX

Mr. Manevich, I'm Alex Godman.

Vadim returns his smile, shaking his hand, gracious and polite.

VADIM

It's a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Godman. I'm sorry for your loss.

(Switching to Russian)

Do you speak Russian?

Alex notices a small scar on his cheek, the only sign of the failed assassination attempt in Dubai.

ALEX

I've spent most my life in England and America, so unfortunately not much.

The other guests move away discreetly, leaving them alone.

VADIM

It's good for me to practice my English. Do you like caviar?

ALEX

Very much.

VADIM

This is Iranian Beluga. Much better than the caviar from our country. Less pollution on their side of the Caspian.

He takes a pearl-handled knife from the buffet table, just like the one the Chechen assassin used to stab Boris's bodyguard, and offers it to Alex.

Alex takes it and spreads some caviar on a blini, aware that Vadim is studying him the whole time.

VADIM

Have you ever been back to Russia?

ALEX

No, my father isn't welcome there.

VADIM

You're not your father. I'm sure you won't have any problems. It's a beautiful country.

ALEX

So I've heard.

Alex looks back at him now, a strong undercurrent running beneath their friendly conversation.

VADIM

I'm glad you came to see me.

ALEX

I'm here on behalf of my father.

VADIM

How is he?

ALEX

Grieving for his brother.

VADIM

They were very close I remember. Were you close to your uncle too?

Alex pauses, sensing he's being questioned and provoked at the same time.

ALEX

I loved him very much.

VADIM

Then I imagine this must be hard for you. Does your father know you're here?

ALEX

If he did he'd never forgive me.

VADIM

Then why have you come?

ALEX

To convince you he's a harmless
old man.

He looks Vadim in the eye now, as if he has nothing to
hide.

VADIM

What about you, Mr. Godman?

ALEX

I was born with a silver spoon in
my mouth. I went to private
school in England, business
school in America and I work in
the City. I'm engaged to a
beautiful woman with a very
wealthy father and I'm perfectly
happy with my life the way it is.

Vadim holds his gaze quietly, still studying him.

VADIM

Have you visited Versailles
before?

ALEX

Never.

VADIM

This is where the Sun King
greeted his foreign guests. On
the left is the hall of war. On
the right is the hall of peace.

He smiles softly.

VADIM

Which one would you like to see?

Alex pauses, containing every emotion inside, then smiles
back.

ALEX

The one on the right.

Vadim nods, magnanimous for now.

VADIM

Good...

He takes Alex by the arm and leads him away from the other guests.

We stay where we are as they head off together, just the two of them, disappearing into the hall of peace.

CUT TO BLACK.