

NEW ROSE HOTEL

by

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Based on New Rose Hotel by William Gibson

INT. BAR, SINGAPORE - NIGHT

A darkened bar. On the stage a beautiful girl is singing a torch song. Different colored lights play on her face and body. She enters and emerges from darkness as she moves about the stage. At the bar, Fox and Madame Rosa have interrupted their conversation to watch her. She finishes her song to the applause and catcalls of the motley audience. She walks off stage and is replaced by another attractive girl who starts to sing. At that moment, two long haired weird-looking men in bizarre clothes walk in; they look around the room and approach a Japanese executive type who is sitting with two Caucasian corporate suits. They say something to the Japanese executive. He is perspiring, he shakes his head negatively. They put a hand under each of his arms and lift him out of his seat. One of the suits gets up and starts to object only to be shoved back into his chair. They then escort the Japanese man out of the bar through the crowd that parts to let them pass.

FOX

I hope he paid his check.

MADAM ROSA

Why don't we just hope that doesn't happen to you, (beat) again.

FOX

You take evil pleasure in bringing up the past.

MADAM ROSA

They broke your back the last time.

FOX

Shall we dwell on that or shall we get down to business?

MADAM ROSA

This will make you happy. Dr. Hiroshi Yomiuri is going to leave the Hosaka corporate headquarters in Frankfurt to attend a genetics mutation conference in Vienna in two weeks.

FOX

(grinning from ear to ear)

No shit!

MADAM ROSA

At the conference one of our people will communicate your offer. Correct me if I'm wrong; he will receive one hundred million dollars if he will defect from Maas Biolabs GmbH Corp. and provide his research talent, which is considerable, to Hosaka Corporation. He will have the freedom to do the work of his choice, in a laboratory outfitted and staffed to his specifications. You, Fox, will arrange the details of his defection and will guarantee his safety.

FOX

Couldn't have said it better myself.

MADAM ROSA

You've worked all this out with Hosaka?

FOX

Hell no. Let's sign him up first. When we can deliver, Hosaka will pay that and more.

MADAM ROSA

Would it surprise you to learn that he turned down a similar offer made to him by Gamma Corp. six months ago? It's going to take more than money and his own lab to induce him to undertake the risk involved in leaving Maas.

FOX

Make the offer. I'll come up with something.

MADAM ROSA

Still the same old Fox, not a thought to the danger of taking on the big boys.

(Putting her hand on his)

Fox, we go back a few years. Didn't getting your back broken teach you anything?

FOX

I missed the chapter on the allegory of broken backs.

MADAM ROSA

This time, they will kill you.

FOX

(feigning surprise)

Moi? Of whom everyone is so fond?

MADAM ROSA

Fox.

FOX

Besides, you cured me after the Gamma caper.

MADAM ROSA

Did I ever say I didn't appreciate your help?

FOX

Did I ever say I was looking for appreciation?

MADAM ROSA

What are you looking for, Fox?

FOX

The perfect blowjob?

MADAM ROSA

I remember when you were looking for virtue. Didn't you tell me that in one of your all night discourses?

FOX

Ah, but that was years ago. Those were great times weren't they Johnnie? Now that you mention it, what did he mean? Was it KNOWLEDGE is virtue or, knowledge is VIRTUE. I could never get it straight. (Beat). And if I were to say to you, that to discourse daily about virtue is the greatest good, and that the unexamined life is not worth living, you would not believe me anyway.

MADAM ROSA

(laughing)

What do you believe?

FOX

I believe that to live, is to be sick, a long time.

MADAM ROSA

My dear Fox, you never disappoint. The brunette at the bar, she may not give the perfect blow job but she'll do it until it comes along.

FOX

You mean she's only sensational.

MADAM ROSA

(smiles)

I'll send her over later.

FOX

(jokingly)

Tell her it's a rental, not a purchase. I don't want her to get any ideas.

A well dressed man walks up to Fox.

WELL DRESSED MAN

Professor, (extending his hand, which Fox shakes half heartedly) how's business?

FOX

I'm begging the ref not to stop the fight. It was a lucky punch. I can take this guy.

WELL DRESSED MAN

Always the well turned phrase. Wouldn't you accomplish more with direct answers instead of parables.

FOX

(smiling)

Outside of the dance, everyone knows the tune.

WELL DRESSED MAN

(sighs and shrugs)

Well, here's a dance you might be interested in. A group somewhere in Indochina has been synthesizing certain banned viruses, choline inhibitors and the like. They're looking for a mainstream buyer.

FOX

That crap has been banned by international corporate law since the end of the corporate wars.

WELL DRESSED MAN

Right, and you'll never want to get laid again.

FOX

I thought you were opposed to parables.

WELL DRESSED MAN

Come on. You know it better than anyone that there is a full scale subterranean war being waged for every shred of information. The zaibatsu's are killing each other off by the thousands globally every year. It's like the holocaust in the Twentieth century. Everyone knows it's going on, no one talks about it. Governments are as culpable as corporations.

FOX

Corporations are government.

WELL DRESSED MAN

Exactly. You've got contacts. You may deny it but I know better. The brokerage fee would be substantial, very substantial.

FOX

I'll have my agent get back to you.

WELL DRESSED MAN

(resigned, squeezes Fox's arm with affection and smiles)

Fuck you too.

FOX

(watching him walk away)

Fuckin guy.

X walks up to Fox

FOX

Children of the darkness rejoice. Life IS a series of opportunities. Hiroshi is making preparations to attend a conference in Vienna. I've got the hotel where he will be staying. It's his wife's favorite, only she won't be there. She's going to a spa.

X

Did I miss the punch line?

FOX

This is the only chance we're going to get. He'll be away from the Hosaka arcology, we'll be able to get an offer to him.

X

How do you propose to do that? Our friends in Berlin no longer have anyone in place in Hosaka's genetics lab. It seems their man met an unpleasant end. The trades reported it as a lab accident, half of his face was torn off.

FOX

Madam Rosa still has contacts. She'll do it for me. For old times sake and a piece of the action. That's not the problem. The problem is we need a catalyst. We need something that will ignite Hiroshi's desire to jump ship.

X

They've got him tied tight as a crab's ass.

We've spent a year, a ton of money and all of our energy pursuing this guy. We know how many times a week he takes a shit for Christ's sake, but we're no closer to pulling this off than the first time you thought of it.

FOX

That was a year ago.

X

You're proving my argument. This is it. I'm finished with it. Let's move on to something else. There's plenty of work out there.

FOX

(calmly)

Before you and I hooked up, what was your great coup in corporate espionage?

X

(exasperated)

Here we go again.

FOX

(bemused)

No, please, allow me to remind you. You had a helicopter fly over a smoke stack to capture some smoke so it could be analyzed to determine what was in the alloy they were manufacturing. Cute, clever. The problem was that alloy was obsolete in six months. You might as well spend your time bartending in this joint, short changing drunks.

X

Are you finished?

FOX

I had to open your eyes to corporate defectors. Everything else is just waiting.

Fox turns his attention to two attractive Asian women sitting at the bar to his left.

FOX

(to the girls)

Drink alone die alone. (Beat). My name is Fox, meet a friend of mine. (Gestures to X drawing him into the conversation). We're here fighting everydayness. Everydayness is the enemy. You want to join the brawl.

ASIAN GIRL

(laughing she answers him in Japanese)

Your friend is unhappy.

FOX

(replies in Japanese)

He is sad he cannot tell you how beautiful you are.

The girl laughs. Fox and the girl exchange some more words that are not intelligible as X looks on.

X

What did she say?

FOX

(smiling)

She recited a Haiku. The sparrow flies but your friend sucks the cock of conformity. (Laughs at his own joke). You're in luck I think she's a conformist. (Continues to laugh).

Fade to:

INT. bar-later that night

Fox and X are still at the bar. The Asian girls have gone.

X

Do you enjoy listening to yourself. Because I'm not.

FOX

(smiles)

Not what? Not listening or not enjoying? Do you understand how we fit in? We're point men in the skull wars. Soldiers in the secret skirmishes of the zaibatsu's. We are the wolves of the steppes. Alone, isolated, singular of focus. Ah, what a perfect wolf you are. Eyes glazed, lips parched, ribs showing, (Beat) hungry.

X

And you? How hungry are you? As if I have to ask.

FOX

(stares into his drink)

We need the cherry on the cake.

At that moment the spotlight falls on several sexy women singing karaoke on the stage.

X

(staring past Fox , absently taking in the scene of the girls singing.)

FOX

(following X's gaze)

Ah, the C minus blow jobs are displaying their many and varied talents. Madam Rosa is setting me up later. She's someone who could teach you about beating the odds.

X

Are you referring to the days when she ran the entertainment section for Gamma Corp. and things got a little sticky .

FOX

So she did some double dealing with the info her girls brought back. Not a bad idea.

X

If she hadn't been the girlfriend of the CEO of Gamma she'd be dead now.

FOX

But she's not and that's what counts. That's a chick that has more than just a smattering of Edge.

X

A smattering of Edge? I apologize. I missed "the different degrees of Edge" lecture.

FOX

Well, the good news is you're not flunking the course, (Beat) yet.

X has moved to the piano and leans on it. Sandii is singing another song. She sings directly to him. He is slightly nervous, but obviously loves every minute. Sandii is very seductive toward him. Fox returns to his drink. He is absentmindedly looking around the room. His glance falls on Sandii, singing. He continues to stare. He watches X and sees the look on his face, contemplating Sandii's attention. He continues to stare. A smile spreads over Fox's face.

FOX (cont'd)

Son of a bitch.

Fox walks over to Madam Rosa.

FOX (cont'd)

Who's the girl?

MADAM ROSA

You mean the brunette?

FOX

No. The girl singing.

MADAM ROSA

(looking over to the piano)

Sandii?

FOX

If that's who's singing, I mean Sandii.

MADAM ROSA

Ask your partner. He's been with her before.

FOX

He's a man of few words. You tell me.

MADAM ROSA

What's to tell. Everyone of these girls has a story. Hers is no less boring than the others.

FOX

(impatient)

All right! Bore me!

MADAM ROSA

She says she's from Berlin. Mixed parenthood. Brighter than some less bright than others. Says she went to college in California, Stanford, father worked with satellites, your typical Shinjuku girl looking for a break, or barring that, a place to roost. Why?

FOX

I just want to know who I'm getting into bed with.

MADAM ROSA

Really? Since when?

FOX

I told you I'm a changed man.

CUT TO:

INT. FOX'S HOTEL ROOM, SINGAPORE-A.M.

Fox is having breakfast. X walks in and joins him.

FOX

How is our little songbird?

X

(perplexed)

What are you talking about?

FOX

Sandii.

X

She's joining us for breakfast. (beat)

Since when is she ours?

FOX

What's her story?

X

I wasn't dwelling on her story.

FOX

So she didn't say anything?

X

Father's Japanese. A disgraced executive. And get this. He worked for Hosaka.

FOX

(surprised)

Get out.

X

Mother's Dutch.

FOX

What else?

X

She wears leather undergarments.

Sandii approaches them and takes a seat.

X

This is Fox.

SANDII

(smiles and nods her greeting)

Hello Fox.

FOX

He sez you wear leather panties.

X

(rolls his eyes)

Here we go again.

SANDII

Faux leather.

FOX

Faaux leather. I like that. Goes with the faux croc bag and the cheap shoes.

X

Hey!

SANDII

Let him finish.

FOX

How do you know I'm not done? The clothes (gesturing) Chinese knock-off of some Tokyo designer's original. They're OK but the accessories, the accessories, hmmm they don't do it. (To X) The accessories, attention to detail, that's our strong point. That's why we get paid the big bucks. (Beat) What do you think about big bucks, honey?

SANDII

What do you mean?

FOX

I mean how would you like to make a million dollars.

X

What the hell is on that twisted mind of yours?

FOX

You say they've got him tighter than a crab's ass? Well we've got the Vaseline. (Pats Sandii's hand).

X

Get to the point for once.

FOX

Don't be coy, it doesn't become you. It's simple. It's elegant in it's simplicity. The oldest cliché in the book. It's so corny it can't miss. Beautiful temptress, Sandii, seduces and induces, wild and crazy scientist to leave bullshit life and spend the rest of his days doing the two things he likes best; hot research and hot fucking.

X

(to Sandii)

What do you say to all this elegant simplicity?

SANDII

Are you serious, or just crazy?

X

You didn't answer my question.

FOX

The answer to your question is she may think we're nuts but she also doesn't meet guys who offer her one million dollars to do what she did with you for a couple of hundred . (to Sandii) You heard me, one million dollars.

X

How do you know it will work?

FOX

It will work. But in the end that's not what's important. What matters is that we came up with a plan. We're taking a shot. We're leaving the reservation. We're not "hang around the fort people". We're Chief Crazy Horse and we're taking on Custer. Crazy Horse had the Edge.

X

Right. So did Alexander the Great, Field Marshal Rommel and Jimmy Hendrix.

SANDII

Aren't you taking a great deal for granted?

FOX

Such as?

SANDII

That I would say yes. Two guys, one I barely know and one I just met, want to involve me in a scheme to make a third guy, who I haven't even met, leave his job.

FOX

Wait, let me get this right. I'm not too bright. You'll have to solicit more explicitly to my diminutive comprehension. You're telling me that you would prefer to turn tricks for small change rather than make

a million on one trick? Is that what you're saying? How old are you? Do you have anything to show for your life except the cheap clothes on your back? Honey, I've been jerked off by professionals. The real question is, can you afford to say no and continue to think your mother didn't raise you to be a fool?

SANDII

(to X)

How do you feel about this?

FOX

He feels great. Everything about him says win.

Sandii continues to stare at X. X remains silent.

SANDII

I'll have to think about it.

FOX

Fuck no. You're in or you're out, (beat) now. This is your ticket out of the graveyard. In case you didn't notice, you're dead. You just don't have the sense to lie down. You can fester in the beat bars of the world if you want. I'll go up to one of your sisters tonight and make her the same offer.

Sandii is silent.

FOX

Good. Congratulations you have been accepted to the Fox school of basic training. The course will cover the life and times of one Hiroshi Yomiuri.

X

When do you propose to start?

FOX

Now.

FADE TO:

INT. FOX'S HOTEL ROOM, SINGAPORE-A.M.

Fox is pacing. Sandii and X are seated. There are full ashtrays and empty coffee cups. On the wall and on an easel are candid photos of Hiroshi. A photo of the exterior of a building that looks like a private club. There are addresses handwritten on both photos. There is a photo of a townhouse also with an address on it. There is a photo of a German woman. On it is written "Ingrid, not bad eh?". Some with other attractive women in his presence. Some taken at conferences. On the computer monitor is a freeze frame of Hiroshi. The screen of the monitor is housed in a Louie XIV table.

FOX

Look, it's not so much a question of if he says this what do you say. You don't have to memorize one hundred handy dandy responses to induce him to leave everything and go with you. You just have to keep in mind who and what your dealing with. I studied this guy so much I could write his biography. This guy is arrogant, he's grandiose, and, he has every reason to be. It comes easy to him, work, women, everything. It's his arrogance which is causing him to chaff under the yolk of Hosaka's nerd researchers. Look (he flips on the computer. The freeze frame comes to life: Hiroshi is at a conference.) The look on his face says it all. He's among them, but he's not of them. Also you've got something big going for you, (pointing at the photos) he loves beautiful women. Here check this out. Your boyfriend had these clips taken on one of his trips to Frankfurt.

ON THE VIDEO MONITOR: EXT. STREET, IN FRONT OF TOWNHOUSE,  
FRANKFURT-DAY

X is walking across the street from the townhouse in the photo on the wall. He pauses as if referring to a street map in his hand and surveys the scene. There is a Mercedes limo in front of the townhouse. A driver sits at the wheel. Standing next to the car are two men. One is talking into a device with an earphone. Down by the corner X notes another man, also with a "secret service" device in his ear. At the other corner is another security agent. The door of the townhouse opens, Hiroshi and Ingrid preceded by two security men come out and enter

the limo. The limo pulls away from the curb followed by a chase car.

SANDII

Who took the pictures?

FOX

Who took the pictures? (Beat). Friends.

X

I couldn't do it with a micro camera because sensors in the townhouse pick up any recording device. The recordings were made from one hundred yards away.

Fox flips on another video of Hiroshi. In this one, Hiroshi is on foot in downtown Frankfurt appearing to have given his security guards the slip.

FOX

Hiroshi has the Edge, big time. He's a freak. He takes a whole field of science, shatters every accepted concept and brings on the violent revision of an entire body of knowledge. Radioactive nucleases, monoclonal antibodies, hot proteins, high speed links. You know what you get when one of your lab boys does that? (Beat). Basic patents. Basic patents is a synonym for tax free millions, (points at X) sometimes billions. (indicating the video monitor) Our boy doesn't like to play by the rules. He's always giving the suits heartburn.

FOX

The word on Hiroshi is that he's fed up with all the corporate politics. Maas's other genetic boys are keeping him down. He's a renegade. They're afraid of him. They won't let him go all out full tilt boogy with his research. Here, take a look at the beautiful Mrs. Ingrid. (He snaps on the monitor again.)

ON THE VIDEO MONITOR: INT. RESTAURANT, FRANKFURT-AFTERNOON

Hiroshi and Ingrid are having coffee while security agents linger nearby.

X

I took these shots from across the room. There are no sensors in the coffee shop.

FOX

Thank you for your illuminating statements. Hiroshi's a fish out of water, living in the West. German wife, fencing, not kendo. The way I read it, this guy could live anywhere. As long as he can do his research and have some good cous cous.

SANDII

(frustrated)

I understand that but what do I say to him. He's brilliant, he'll see right through me.

FOX

(amused)

There's an old Italian saying; "The hair on a pussy can tow a battleship." You have got to feed his grandiosity and play on his frustration.

SANDII

What if he doesn't believe me?

FOX

He'll believe you, if you mean it. That's the key to all this. You've got to fall in love with him. In your mind, you've got to believe that it's you and him forever. (Beat). Do you know how to make a man fall in love with you?

SANDII

Do you want to see my resume?

X

This banter is all well and good, but you're not telling her the most important aspect of all this, the danger.

FOX

Thank you, I was getting to that. Sandii, I didn't get my back broken in field hockey. You understand why you have to believe you love him? If you fail, if he doesn't believe even one part of this, you're dead. Maas security will erase you. If Hosaka has the most clout worldwide, Maas is the most ruthless of the zaibatsu's. You have to want this to succeed badly. If you can bring your intellect and emotions to that point, then you'll have some sense of the Edge.

SANDII

The Edge?

X

You had to ask.

FOX

The Edge is something only a few have. The guts to go the distance. No, beyond the distance. In the old days those guys would walk to the North Pole behind a dog sled. Today it's that essential fraction of sheer human talent, nontransferable, locked in the skulls of the world's hottest research scientists. You can't put Edge down on paper, you can't punch Edge into a diskette. The ancient Greeks said virtue is hitting the mark, and sin is missing the mark. Edge is virtue.

FOX (cont'd)

O.K. Play act time. I'm Hiroshi. "This is crazy, I can't just leave everything."

SANDII

"Everything? You call this everything? Look at the way you're treated. They need you. You made them. Without you they wouldn't be raking in billions. You deserve more. You're better than all of them. How can you tolerate their envy and disrespect?" (beat, looking up at Fox)  
How did I do?

FOX

You were beautiful.

FADE TO:

INT. BAR SINGAPORE-NIGHT

Sandii, Fox and X, the three conspirators are at the bar talking and drinking.

FOX

I don't want you guys to think I haven't covered every base.

Fox takes a small "watchman-like" device out of his pocket and turns it on. He hands it to X and Sandii.

FOX (cont'd)

(looking around)

Careful, don't let anyone see it.

The screen depicts Hiroshi making love to a beautiful woman.

FOX (cont'd)

Our boy has taste for dark haired beauties.

X

You son of a bitch. How did you get that?

FOX

A present from Madam Rosa. Seems there's some kind of whoremaster's fraternity. This took place in a cathouse in Frankfurt, that, get this, is owned by Maas for the sole entertainment of Hiroshi and a few of his colleagues.

X

Shit.

FOX

What's the matter? I think the lighting and camera work are pretty good considering.

They all start to laugh.

FOX

We have two weeks to prepare Sandii . New clothes, new identity, papers, background, the works. We want to do it in an out of the way place, yet close enough to our people in Berlin who will supply the paper work. (to X) Any suggestions?

X

(to Sandii)

Have you ever been to Barcelona?

FOX

Excellent choice, couldn't of thought of a better one myself. You can fly there after you lay down the groundwork in Vienna. Sandii will be in Barcelona when you arrive.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR, SINGAPORE-LATER THAT NIGHT

Sandii and several pretty girls are on stage doing Karaoke. Fox and Madam Rosa are watching them. X closer to the stage is also watching.

MADAM ROSA

Your partner is in love.

FOX

Nah, he's in like.

MADAM ROSA

It's not a complication you need.

FOX

Speaking of complications, is there a problem with your friends relaying the offer to Hiroshi in Vienna.

MADAM ROSA

It will be done just the way you wanted it.

FOX

Bless you. Our deal is between us, only, right?

MADAM ROSA

Of course. Just like old times.

X walks up to them.

FOX

We were admiring your girl.

X

Oh yeah? Which one is my girl?

FOX

(to Madam Rosa)

You see? The eternal ice man. (To X) Madam Rosa thinks you're too involved with Sandii to pull this off.

X

Is that what the good Madam thinks or is it what you think?

FOX

Me? Nah, I know better. I told her, my main man knows how much is riding on this. He'd never compromise it for some broccoli. (To Madam Rosa) Didn't I. (To X) I told her, (beat) she understood.

X

(to Fox)

You're some piece of work.

FOX

Just lookin out for my little corner of the world.

MADAM ROSA

There's more at stake here than money. They will hunt you down.

FOX

My boy here is cool. He's keeping his dick in his pants and his underwear on backwards.

MADAM ROSA

Well, then, there's no problem, is there?

FOX

No, no problem.

Fox and X walk over to the bar.

FOX

Is Madame Rosa picking up on something?

X

(irritated)

Are we referring to Madame Rosa the whoremistress, the double-dealing agent or the psychic?

FOX

Her ass is on the line too, just like yours and mine. (looks at him). There's no better time to pull this off and Sandii is our only shot. You need your head clear to prepare her. Teach her to fall in love without falling in love yourself.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH -NIGHT

X and Sandii are on the beach. They have become lovers. They walk to the room. On the way Sandii pauses.

SANDII

I forgot the key.

She turns abruptly and runs back to the beach. X continues to the room and finds the key in the door. He goes back to the beach to find Sandii standing in the surf shivering.

FADE TO:

INT. HOTEL LOBBY, VIENNA-EARLY EVENING

X strolls into the lobby, sits and orders a drink. A distinguished man enters and takes a seat at X's table.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

Where will the girl be staying?

X

Here.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

And our friend?

X

Here also. They will have adjoining rooms.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

(smiles)

You've still got it. His wife?

X

At a spa.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

Fox is very high on the girl. He says Hiroshi will eat a mile of her shit to get to her ass.

X

Well, Fox is known for his sensitive and poetic summations.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

Take a walk with me.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET, VIENNA- EVENING

X and the Distinguished Man walk down the street.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

(pointing to a manhole cover)

All he will have to do is stand on it. We will have removed the real cover the night before. Our replacement is the top of a hydraulic apparatus that will lower him into the sewer system. He will be escorted through the system and surface two blocks away. A van will take him directly to a private jet and on to the destination of your choice.

X

Why did you pick this location?

DISTINGUISHED MAN

This is two blocks from the hotel, in front of a tobacco shop. He should have no trouble getting here. His penchant for expensive cigars is well known.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

I'm going to need a timetable. Arranging for the disappearance of a guy who's guarded the way he is, is no small operation, even with his full cooperation. He will cooperate?

X

That's where the girl comes in. You know the "mile of shit" and all that.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

Of course, the girl. (beat) It's good to see there are still some guys around with balls, (stops, looks directly at X) as long as you don't get them cut off. You see that sanitation truck?

X

What about it?

DISTINGUISHED MAN

It's a Hosaka surveillance team, that can also double as an extermination squad.

X

How do you know?

DISTINGUISHED MAN

I didn't survive in this business this long without knowing those things. (Holds up a mangled hand covered with a glove). They still believe in torture methods from the Dark Ages. Ask Fox. You think Maas is going to let you guys walk away, or that Hosaka is going to welcome you into the corporate world?

X

It's the Edge.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

The what?

X

Ask Fox to explain. He's very good at it.

The two part at the corner.

FADE TO:

EXT. HOTEL, BARCELONA- DAY, ONE WEEK LATER

X is entering the hotel with his luggage. X walks up to the reception desk takes a slip of paper and reads the message.

FOX

(Voice over)

Sandii delayed, will arrive Barcelona tomorrow.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL BAR-NIGHT

X walks up to the bar and orders a drink. As he looks in the mirror behind the bar he notices the reflection of an attractive brunette seated at a table staring at him. He goes back to his drink, looks up again, same thing. He turns around. She continues to stare. He looks up and down the bar, and walks over to her. He sits.

X

Can I buy you a drink?

BRUNETTE

I already have a drink.

X

Well, then what can I do for you?

BRUNETTE

What do you have in mind?

X

I noticed you looking at me.

BRUNETTE

Sounds to me like wishful thinking.

X

(appears perplexed and uncomfortable, looks around the bar for the answer)

Do you want me to leave?

BRUNETTE

Is that what you want to do?

X

No.

BRUNETTE

Why don't you tell me what you want to do.

FADE TO:

INT. BRUNETTE'S HOTEL ROOM, BARCELONA-NIGHT

X and the brunette enter the room. She turns and kisses him passionately, grabbing his crotch at the same time. He jerks his head backward with the shock of recognition that it is Sandii in disguise.

X

Sandii!

SANDII

(jubilant)

Fox said you would be fooled. And boy were you ever. (mimicking) "I noticed you were looking at me. Do you want me to leave?" (laughs).

Laughing they tussle playfully and end up on the bed. They begin to make love.

FADE TO:

EXT. STREET, BARCELONA-DAY

Sandii and X going into shops on a fashionable street. Buying her outfits, accessories, perfume. Walking hand in hand. Laughing. Sitting at a sidewalk cafe. Strolling down the Ramblas to the Phoenician harbor.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET, BARCELONA-NIGHT

They walk hand in hand.

CUT TO:

INT. PRIVATE ROOM IN A SEX CLUB, BARCELONA-NIGHT

They attend a private sex show. They watch a man and two women. Sandii joins in at the silent invitation of one of the women. X watches with mixed feelings, yet titillated and excited.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE BEDROOM, BARCELONA-NIGHT

Sandii and X making love.

SANDII

(leaning over X in bed)

Did it excite you when I did that to that girl?

X

Everything you do excites me.

SANDII

(whispering in his ear)

If we had more time we could have invited the tall girl to the room and had some fun.

X

What kind of fun?

SANDII

Well, first, we'd kiss each other all over and then we could wrestle naked.

X

(getting turned on again)

What would the ground rules be?

SANDII

I don't think we need any ground rules.

X

No holds barred?

SANDII

That's the way you like it, isn't it?

X rolls over on top of her and enters her.

FADE TO:

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM-EARLY MORNING

X gets up and lights a cigarette. He produces a package.

X

Here is your I.D. badge for the conference. You represent a small company in Amsterdam that produces monoclonal antibodies. You're in the public relations department so you will not be expected to be too detail oriented on the technical end. Does it bother you that we are going to deliver Hiroshi to Hosaka?

SANDII

What do you mean?

X

Well, you know, what with your father working for Hosaka and all his problems.

SANDII

He didn't actually work for him. It was a company that did business with Hosaka Corporation.

X

(looking at her)

He didn't work for Hosaka. That's what you're telling me?

SANDII

He might have, for a while. I'm not sure.

X

You're not sure?

SANDII

Is it a big deal who he worked for?

X

(staring into space)

No, it's no big deal.

SANDII

While we're at it I don't know anything about you.

X

My past went down years ago, lost with all hands, no trace. (Pause) Fox has this late-night habit of emptying his wallet, shuffling through his identification. He lays the pieces out in different patterns, then rearranges them, waiting for a picture to form. I know what he's looking for.

SANDII

What? What is he looking for?

X

You do the same thing with your childhoods.

SANDII

Really? And what picture am I looking for?

X

You must have been searching a long time, looking for a way out, all those nights down Shinjuku. Nights you carefully cut from the scattered deck of your past.

SANDII

(walks to the window and looks out)

That's not a pretty picture.

X walks up behind her, puts his arms around her and kisses her neck.

X

Actually it's a beautiful picture. When I'm inside you I imagine all that neon, the crowds surging around Shinjuku Station, wired electric night. You move that way, with the rhythm of a new age, dreamy and far from any nation's soil.

She turns and passionately returns the kiss.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE, BARCELONA-MORNING

X is having coffee from room service and reading his paper. Sandii is dressing.

X

How do you feel?

SANDII

Great.

X

Are you ready?

SANDII

For what?

X

Vienna.

SANDII

The question is are you ready?

X

What's that supposed to mean?

SANDII

Why don't you tell me?

X

Tell you what?

SANDII

Do you have anything you want to say to me?

X

I want you to be careful. These are dangerous people.

SANDII

Thank you for your concern. I'll be careful. Is that it?

X

Have you got any questions?

SANDII

What time is the flight?

FADE TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE HOTEL ENTRANCE, VIENNA-DAY

A black four door car pulls up to the entrance. Sandii emerges from the back seat. The bell hop takes her expensive bags. At the last moment she pauses. She enters.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LOBBY, VIENNA-DAY

Sandii registers at the desk.

DESK CLERK

Enjoy your stay, Ms. Heimboldt.

SANDII

Thank you.

Sandii follows the bell hop to the elevator. It takes her to the sixth floor. Some time later six Maas security agents enter the hotel. They look about. Two of them approach the registration desk. Two leave and two remain in the lobby. The two at the registration desk take the elevator to the sixth floor.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LOBBY, VIENNA-ONE HOUR LATER.

Hiroshi enters the lobby with two agents. He moves directly to the elevator. The agents follow with his bags in tow. The other two guards continue their vigil in the lobby.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL BAR, VIENNA-THAT NIGHT.

FOX

(V.O.)

She's ectoplasm, a ghost called up by the extremes of economics. A ghost of the new century, congealing on a thousand beds in the Hiltons and Hyatt's of the world.

Hiroshi walks into the bar and orders a drink. As he looks in the mirror behind the bar he notices the reflection of an attractive brunette seated at a table staring at him. He goes back to his drink, looks up again, same thing. He turns around. She continues to stare. He looks up and down the bar, and walks over to her. He sits.

HIROSHI

Can I buy you a drink?

SANDII

I already have a drink.

HIROSHI

Well, then what can I do for you?

SANDII

What do you have in mind?

HIROSHI

I noticed you looking at me.

SANDII

Sounds to me like wishful thinking.

HIROSHI

(appears perplexed and uncomfortable, looks around the bar for the answer)

Do you want me to leave?

SANDII

Is that what you want to do?

HIROSHI

No.

SANDII

Why don't you tell me what you want to do.

X

(VOICE OVER)

Aren't we being a little premature? Shouldn't we wait to see if this is going to work?

FADE TO:

EXT. TUNNEL TO CENTURY CITY HILTON-TWO DAYS LATER.

FOX

It's going to work because it has to. It's not a question of will he

go down, it's he MUST go down. When you realize that, you're on your way to having the Edge. Besides I want to make the deal first. I want to know what those pricks are willing to pay ahead of time.

CUT TO:

INT. FOX'S HILTON HOTEL SUITE, L.A.-DAY

The room is outfitted with a large table of food, wine, liquor and champagne.

Fox and X are sitting across from three Hosaka contacts. The Hosaka people barely hide their distrust and suspiciousness.

FOX

That's it. We're prepared to deliver Hiroshi Yomiuri to the destination of your choice. The price, ten million dollars, U.S. (beat) not five. (Smiles, about to become mischievous). For five million we would be talking to Gamma Corp., (beat) your major competitor in the genetics game. (Sits back self satisfied).

Dead silence from the Hosaka guys. They continue to stare at Fox and X without a blink or a nod.

HOSAKA EXEC

We have to think about it.

FOX

Take your time. You have three days. (gesturing to the banquet table) Are you sure you don't want to have something on your way out?

CUT TO:

INT. SKYVIEW RESTAURANT-LATER THAT AFTERNOON

FOX

Did you see their faces when I broke their bullshit protocol and mentioned the competition by name. They didn't know whether to shit

or go blind, so they closed one eye and farted. (Laughs at his own joke).

X

(smiles)

I'm surprised you didn't give them the Edge lecture.

FOX

You can't make chicken salad out of chicken shit. Did you see the way they looked at us?

X

To them we're mutants. Dubious agents adrift on the dark side of the intercorporate sea.

FOX

Yeah, well to me they look like "suicide is redundant". "Dubious agents" I like that. Do you mind if I use it?

X

What's next?

FOX

They play their bullshit corporate game and in three days they tell us it's a deal.

X

(almost to himself)

Just like that, ten million dollars.

FOX

It's a bargain. Our friend Hiroshi can come up with one breakthrough after another. He's working on mutating a virus that cures the common cold. How many billions, billions do you think that's worth? Ten million, shit we're giving the fucking guy away. Did I say that was plus expenses? Remind me to call those pricks and tell them it's plus expenses.

CUT TO:

INT. FOX'S HILTON HOTEL ROOM-THREE DAYS LATER

The three execs sit exactly the same way as at the first meeting, facing Fox and X.

HOSAKA EXEC

We agree to the price and the terms of payment. However we will require, at our expense of course, that you procure the work space, lab equipment and living arrangements for the gentleman. We assume that is within the capacity of your (beat) organization?

FOX

(sarcasm barely evident, feigned modesty)

We'll do our best. Do you have a preference as to location?

HOSAKA EXEC

Marrakech has many defunct heroin labs now converted for other research and production. Find a suitable one and purchase it. Outfit it according to the subject's specifications and requirements. You are in contact with the subject?

FOX

(smiling))

Every day (beat) and twice on Sundays.

Deadpan silence from the other side of the table.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR-DAY

Fox and X are walking out of the suite and down the corridor. They pause waiting for the elevator.

FOX

Hosaka wants Hiroshi bad, but his Edge is radical enough to worry them. They want him to work in isolation.

CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY-DAY

Fox and X exit the elevator and walk through the lobby.

FOX

(with a slight smile)

Sandii and Hiroshi were seen having dinner in the hotel dining room two nights ago.

X

(unable to hide his surprise)

You didn't tell me that.

FOX

You didn't ask. They were laughing. Telling each other jokes. Lots of chit chat. Very cozy is the description I got. Her room was not slept in that night according to the cleaning lady. Looks like you're not the only one susceptible to our girl's many and varied charms. If I sound like the cat who swallowed the canary, forgive me, modesty is one of the virtues I have yet to attain.

X

I wasn't aware you were trying.

FOX

Assiduously my dear boy.

X

You sure had me fooled.

They enter a cab.

CUT TO:

INT. TAXI-DAY

Fox and X are sitting in the back seat. X is looking out the window.

X

Just because he's fucking her doesn't mean he's going to throw her on the back of his horse and ride out of town.

FOX

We're betting ten million dollars big guy, that our whore, I mean horse, comes in first. There's no place or show in this race. And you know something? That's the way I like it. "Also rans" make me puke.

X

So, if this happens, will that do it for you? Will you find redemption? Will you have the Edge or whatever you call that pie-shaped wedge that's missing from your psyche that doesn't allow you to feel complete.

FOX

(feigning incredulousness)

Excuse me? Is this what the prospect of whacking up ten mil does to you? (Laughing). Thank God I didn't ask for twenty. Psyches. Those things are for idlers and dreamers. You surprise me. Introspection? Where did that come from? It does not befit a gentleman to be introspective.

X

Sorry, It was a weak moment.

FOX

I'm glad you brought that up.

X

What?

FOX

Weak moments. Let me bore you with repetition, you can't afford to fall for this girl. You can't distract her or yourself.

X

You're right I heard this before and my response is the same, chill out.

FOX

She can't fail. We have a window of opportunity now. This is our only shot. We miss this one and we miss the big time. I can't bear the thought that the suits will win.

X

They're going to come after us, you know that.

FOX

I wouldn't have it any other way. I feel like I've been pursued relentlessly all my life. If not by others, by my own devils. I don't know anything else. Me against them, from the beginning of time. That's how it must be for anyone who has the Edge. That's how Hiroshi must feel. He only looks different, down deep, he's just like us.

X

I'm on your side.

FOX

Good. Now that the theological discussion is out of the way can we talk about business? I want you fly to Marrakech. There's no point in wasting time. I want our boy to know he has a lab to go to. Not just some vague idea presented by our tits and ass emissary.

CUT TO:

INT. LABORATORY, MARRAKECH-DAY

X and the businessman, a Sidney Greenstreet type, are walking through the lab.

FADE TO:

EXT. MARKETPLACE, DJEMAA-EL-FNA-DAY

X and the businessman are walking past bales of raw wool and plastic tubs of Chinese microchips. Beyond the city wall, the high Atlas. Djemaa-el-fna thick with jugglers, dancers, storytellers, small boys turning lathes with their feet, legless beggars with wooden bowls under animated holograms advertising French software.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL, MARRAKECH-LATER THAT DAY

X walks into the lobby, shirt soaked with sweat, jacket hooked by his thumb over his shoulder. Walks up to the concierge

X

Is there a message for Masterpool?

CLERK

(looking and withdrawing an envelope)

Yes Mr. Masterpool. This fax arrived today.

X takes the envelope, walks away and reads. To Masterpool from Fox:

FADE TO:

SANDII

(voice over)

I'm in all the way. Hiroshi will leave his wife. I have convinced him he can pursue his work to greater heights with me at his side. We are awaiting details. S.

X stares at the fax for a long moment. He tears it up and throws it in a waste basket. He walks over to a phone.

X

Berlin, please. 555-6772. Herr Kruger. I have your timetable. I will arrive in Berlin tomorrow. Thank you. (He hangs up).

FADE TO:

EXT. STREET, BERLIN, IN FRONT OF COFFEE SHOP-NIGHT.

X stands outside the coffee shop, looking around for a moment and then enters.

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP.

X walks in and sees the Distinguished Man sitting in the back of the shop. The man gets up and goes behind a curtain. X follows him through a door and down a flight of stairs into a room filled with high tech

equipment. People are working at computer stations.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

(pointing to a computer mock up of the street and manhole)

It will be a complicated business, intricate as the brass gears and sliding mirrors of Victorian stage magic, but the desired effect will be simple enough, Dr. Hiroshi Yomiuri will vanish. The Maas security apparatus will harden around his point of departure like epoxy.

X

About the girl, I want you to arrange to have her stop overnight in Berlin on her way to Marrakech.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

Fox didn't mention that was to be part of the plan.

X

Fox doesn't know about it.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

I see. How much has Hiroshi eaten?

X

What do you mean?

DISTINGUISHED MAN

Has he gotten to her ass yet?

X

Ask Fox. He keeps score on those things.

FADE TO:

EXT. AUTOBAHN-NIGHT.

A car is driving through the rain on the autobahn. It is passing castles as it speeds down the highway.

CUT TO:

INT. AUTO-NIGHT.

X is driving through the rain on the autobahn. They are heading for a small inn somewhere outside of Berlin. Sandii is resting her head on his shoulder.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM, INN, OUTSIDE BERLIN-NIGHT.

X and Sandii are in bed. X is sitting up smoking a cigarette. Sandii has her head on his chest.

SANDII

I missed you.

X

Well, I heard you were very busy.

SANDII

What does that mean?

X

(ignoring the question)

I've booked your flight to Marrakech for tomorrow, under your newest name. You'll be on your way when I pull the final string and drop Hiroshi out of sight. (Beat) So how was it?

SANDII

How was what?

X

Sucking his cock.

SANDII

(angry)

It was great. You know, long, stiff, fat. Just the way I like them. Is there anything else you want to know?

X

No.

SANDII

Listen, it was an assignment. Just like yours, no more no less.

X

Well, you did a bang up job. The guy's leaving his wife, his career, going off to live on a fucking desert. I checked it out. Not a sushi roll in the whole country. Not bad.

SANDII

He wasn't happy with his wife or his job. Anyway isn't that what you and Fox wanted so desperately, to pull this off, and show corporate suits the world over that you guys are more than two malcontents who can't fit in anywhere?

X

Malcontents?

SANDII

You're not the only one who can toss out cliched dime store analysis. You don't like it when you're wearing the catchers mitt.

X

Yeah, well I wasn't the one blowing my way to success.

SANDII

No, you were the guy who couldn't get the job done without me. And you and Fox will take all the credit. Does anyone know about me?

X

That's for your protection.

SANDII

Right. (Takes his head in her hands). Listen, what is your problem? You're on the verge of getting everything you wanted and instead of being happy your cutting me a new ass. What is it?

X

I don't know.

SANDII

Let's get married.

X

Married?

SANDII

Yes. Married, like normal people. Live in one place, use real names,

have friends, go to parties, celebrate holidays, raise children.  
(Beat) Have dignity. (Kneeling before him, tears in her eyes). We have nothing. If you and I were struck and killed crossing a street, no one would know who we were. There is no one to come and claim us. We would be buried in a pauper's graveyard without a marker.

X

We can talk about it when you return from Marrakech, next month.

SANDII

No. I'm talking about now. We could leave here in the morning and begin a life together instead of continuing this sham.

X

We can't turn our backs on Fox.

SANDII

You can't save Fox. Fox is lost. We can save each other.

X

You're being melodramatic.

SANDII

Am I? Have you ever asked yourself why you're with Fox and why you can't give him up?

X

You're way off base.

SANDII

Where is Fox?

X

He's in Marrakech. He wants to savor the moment when Hiroshi arrives, witness the resurrection with his own eyes, put his finger in the wound.

SANDII

Does he know we're spending this night together?

X

No.

SANDII

Why not?

X

He wouldn't approve.

SANDII

I rest my case. Well, what do you say? What's it going to be?

X

We'll deal with it when you return.

SANDII

(saluting)

Ay, ay, captain.

FADE TO:

INT. SUITE-LATER THE SAME NIGHT

Sandii is sleeping soundly. X is standing by the dresser. He has her new passport and bank chip on the dresser. He is removing any trace of her old identity from her handbag. He withdraws her Chinese .22 automatic and puts it in his pocket. He finds a diskette in the bag. He holds it in his hand, Sandii naked under the sheets stirs, he looks over at her taking in the raw sexuality. He returns the disk to the bag and gets into bed. She rolls against him, waking. They make love.

DISSOLVE:

EXT. ENTRANCE OF HOTEL, BERLIN-THE NEXT MORNING

Sandii is leaving the hotel. Before entering the taxi she looks back at X standing on the steps. He stares at her. She turns away and gets in the cab. He watches it disappear.

FADE TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM, BERLIN-DAY.

X is pacing the room. The phone rings he walks to it and picks up the receiver.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

(voice over)

This is Kruger. It is done. In a quiet street off Singerstrasse, two blocks from his wife's favorite hotel, on a clear afternoon, in the presence of a dozen witnesses, Dr. Hiroshi Yomiuri vanished.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET, VIENNA-EARLIER THAT DAY

Hiroshi escorted by security, exits a tobacco shop and steps out into the street behind the Mercedes, ignoring the security agent who is holding the back door open. He appears to be walking to the back door on the street side when all of a sudden he literally drops out of sight. The guards swarm around an open manhole.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

(voice over)

He stepped through a looking glass. Somewhere offstage, the oiled play of Victorian clockwork. He is down the rabbit hole and headed for Marrakech.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL, PARIS-DAY.

X is on the phone.

X

Thank you. (He hangs up).

X picks up the phone again.

X

Put me through to Morocco please. 555-0112 (pause) room 502 (pause) Fox. The drum beaters have done their work , our deer is heading your way. He should be there in a few hours.

FOX

(voice over)

How sweet it is. We will meet in Tokyo and finish the transaction with Hosaka. Can you be there Thursday?

X

I could be there Wednesday.

FOX

No good. I want to make sure our boy gets settled in.

X

Why don't you get up a delegation and meet him at the airport?

FOX

You think?

X

I'll meet you Thursday.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR, TOKYO-NIGHT

X is seated at a table when Fox walks in, triumphant and exhausted.

FOX

(sitting down)

He loves it there. Loves her. Happy as a pig in shit.

X

You look like you haven't slept in three days.

FOX

There's plenty of time to rest in the cemetery. My life is not about trying to get some sleep. It's about finding out that our account has been credited to the tune of ten million.

X

What if they fuck us?

FOX

They'd love to fuck us, but, they know that what Fox giveth, Fox can taketh away. With Sandii in place I'm the boss man.

X

She's going to meet me in one month in Shinjuku.

FOX

(with mock surprise)

Wait a minute! You mean they're not going to live happily ever after?

X

No, she's going to live with me.

FOX

Really, where?

X

Anywhere. No more rootless existence.

FOX

Was this your idea or hers? Do us both a favor, forget about any romance. Her nick- name should be "the slot machine". She's a hooker, man. Fuck 'em and forget 'em. You're breaking the rules, buddy. Anyway, if she had any plan to come back, do you think she would have gone in the first place?

X is silent.

FOX

Well, good luck to you.

X

What are you going to do?

FOX

Exactly what I'm doing now. It's not about the money. It's about being in the game. The Edge is not about doing something and then calling it a day. There isn't a beginning, a middle and an end to this. The Edge is always being in the process of becoming. That process is only terminated by death. The eternal present, that's me. I don't look ahead and I don't look back.

X

(holds up his glass of sake)

Ride'em cowboy.

FOX

Now business. Where are we staying?

X

We have adjoining rooms at the Hyatt.

FOX

How romantic. By our agreement with the suits, they pay when Hiroshi starts working. That will be on Saturday. He and Sandii are settling into their villa. Our Portuguese friend has been very helpful in providing the equipment Hiroshi requested. He is going to keep an eye on things for me.

X

What for?

FOX

When I graduated college, I taught literature to freshman. Did I ever tell you that? One week for five nights I gave Kafka readings at midnight in the student center lounge. The first night a hundred students came, the second night fifty, the third night less than twenty, the fourth, five or six, the last night no one showed up. I read anyway, I thought it was good form. To answer your question, it's good form.

FADE TO:

INT. BAR, TOKYO-THAT NIGHT

Fox is celebrating their coup. He is the impresario of a party for everyone in the bar. X stands at the bar having a drink. Music blares, girls are rocking. Fox walks up to X with a girl on one arm and a bottle of champagne in his other hand.

FOX

(laughing to X)

Our shit is good! Don't listen to anyone. Our shit is real good! Say hello to Colette.

X

Hello Colette.

FOX

She has a girlfriend. Maybe you'll get lucky. Make gigie-gigie.

X

How does it feel to never have gotten past the fraternity house stage in your life?

FOX

Fraternity house? Shit, try the sandbox. (Laughs). Not for to worry, I'm going to dedicate my life tonight to getting you laid, relayed and parlayed. (Laughs).

(to the girl)

This is only an act he puts on. He's having a great time. (Squeezes X's shoulder affectionately and moves on). Hey, Ed didn't get his beer.

X stares at a girl singing at the mike, but he sees Sandii. He finishes his drink and walks out of the bar.

FADE TO:

INT. HYATT HOTEL ROOM, TOKYO-THE NEXT DAY

X is on the phone. He hangs up and turns to Fox sitting in a chair with a drink in his hand watching T.V.

X

The money's in, our account has been credited.

FOX

(without looking up)

Did our Portuguese friend call?

X

I spoke to him yesterday.

FOX

Right. That was yesterday. What's going on today? Tell him to call everyday.

CUT TO:

EXT. DJEMAA-EL-FNA, MARRAKECH-DAY

The Portuguese businessman is on the phone in a stall in the marketplace. Behind him you can hear wailing vendors and panpipes.

PORTUGUESE BUSINESSMAN

No, I'm sure it was him. This morning, Hosaka's leading gene man, Moenner, flew in. He was preceded by dozens of security agents. They are encamped in and around Hiroshi's lab. It looks more like a military base than a lab.

CUT TO:

INT. HYATT SUITE, TOKYO-DAY

X hangs up and turns to Fox.

X

Moenner has shown up with an army of Hosaka's footsoldiers.

FOX

Our Portuguese friend was right yesterday. I didn't believe it, but that was Chedanne, the head of Hosaka's protein team that he saw. Moenner and Chedanne, neither of those guys have been seen outside the corporate archeology in over two years. Trust me, there are more to come. Hosaka's bringing in the top researcher's in their bio-section. (Staring out the window). Why? All that Edge in one place. One bomb, one grenade in the right place at the right time.

X

Can I remind you of the saturation techniques Hosaka security is employing? They have an army protecting those guys. They wouldn't be doing it without the cooperation of the Moroccan government.

FOX

(brightening up)

I know what it is. I know. I saw it once before. There's a certain wild factor in lab work. The edge of Edge. When a researcher develops a breakthrough, others sometimes find it impossible to duplicate the first researcher's results. This is even more likely with Hiroshi, whose work goes against the conceptual grain of his field.

X

Hang it up. It's over. You've sold them Hiroshi. Now forget him.

FOX

(ignoring the comment)

But they're taking a chance. The pricks told us they wanted to isolate Hiroshi, keep him away from their central research thrust. Balls. Bet your ass there's some kind of power struggle going on in Hosaka's research. Somebody big is flying his favorites in and rubbing them all over Hiroshi for luck. When Hiroshi shoots the legs out from under genetic engineering, the Medina crowd's going to be ready.

X

Am I talking to myself? It's finished. What happened to the "never look back" philosopher. Chapter closed, next case.

FOX

You're right, it's over. (Finishes his scotch). Go to bed.

SMASH CUT:

INT. HYATT HOTEL SUITE-NIGHT

X is sleeping. The phone wakes him. He answers it. Voice over, muffled, mixed Portuguese and English. X listens.

X

What happened to the girl?

He hangs up. Stares into space for a second and then jumps out of bed and goes into the adjoining suite, waking Fox.

X

Marrakech is a disaster. The lab's been wiped out.

FOX

Sweet Jesus. I should've seen it.

X

No, Sandii.....

FOX

Forget about her. Check our credit.

X is on the phone. He watches as Fox cuts open his suitcase with a penknife.

X

We don't have any. They deny we had an account.

Fox is slashing open the inside of his suitcase to reveal three small gold bars. He unsticks them and shoves them in his pocket. The room is in disorder. He is knocking things over as he grabs his jacket and puts on his shoes. X is trying to pack a bag.

FOX

(shouting)

Fuck the bag! Haul ass! They're gonna be coming after us. Come on let's move it.

CUT TO:

EXT. HYATT HOTEL, REAR ENTRANCE-NIGHT

A cleaning van pulls up. A Hosaka hit squad dressed as professional cleaning personnel jump out. They head into the rear of the hotel.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR

The elevator opens. The hit squad pours out. Automatic weapons with silencers withdrawn from the cleaning cart. Fox and X exit the room and see the squad. They race to the service door under a hail of bullets. They careen down the stairs, flight after flight.

FOX

(breathless)

Shit, are they behind us?

X

(running down the stairs behind him)

How the fuck should I know!

They enter one of the floors. Fox heading for the elevator bank.

X

They'll be waiting in the lobby.

FOX

You wanna run down another forty-five flights?

They get on the elevator with two couples.

FOX

That fucking bitch! Shit! She sold out to Maas. They didn't give a fuck about Hiroshi, he was too wild for those pea brained cocksuckers. They traded him for the opportunity to wipe out Hosaka's brain trust.

CUT TO:

INT. HYATT LOBBY

They exit standing close to the couples. There are two hit men in suits who see them and start to approach. Fox and X break into a run as they hit the street and fall in with the crowds in Shinjuku. The hit men

do not pursue, instead they speak into their satellite telephones.

CUT TO:

INT. HYATT HOTEL SUITE

Several members of the hit squad are going through X and Fox's personal possessions. They pass a pheromone machine over a shirt. A profile of X's body scent appears on the screen of the computer attached to the machine. It looks like a chromatograph. They pocket the machine and walk out of the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. NARROW STREET, TOKYO-NIGHT

Fox and X breathing hard walking down the street.

FOX

There's a guy on this street who can hide us for a couple of days until we can make arrangements to get out of the country.

They come to an antique shop. Fox rings the bell repeatedly. A light goes on and a man comes to the door and peers through the glass.

FOX

Mori, open up I need your help.

When he recognizes Fox he shuts the light and goes to the back of the shop and picks up telephone.

FOX

You fuck!

X

Come on!

CUT TO:

INT. BAR, TOKYO-NIGHT

They sit at the bar which is deserted except for several hookers and a couple of suits.

FOX

We're in the shit. They're going to close every door. I've seen it happen. We're fucked big time.

X

Where are we going?

FOX

New York. I've got friends there. We can get to South America from there.

X

About the diskette.

FOX

(raising his hand to stop him)

It's alright. I mean it's not alright. It's my fault I should have seen it. For that alone I should hang it up.

X

Do we have a choice?

FOX

A choice?

X

We've been hung up. We're finished.

FOX

Yeah, well they haven't got us yet. I have some money in a bank on the strip. We'll get it in the morning. We can still buy our way out of town.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK LOBBY, TOKYO-A.M.

Fox and X approach an ATM machine. Fox inserts a card. An alarm sounds. Bank security guards appear with guns drawn. Fox and X race out of the lobby with the guards in pursuit. They manage to elude them in the Ginza. They enter a department store.

FOX

We'll split up and buy what we need to travel. Get some clothes that make you look like a tourist. You know, cap, sunglasses, backpack, sundries. We'll get out of this country if we have to fucking walk out.

X

It's an island.

FOX

Walk, swim, what's the fucking difference? Add a pair of flippers to that list. (Over his shoulder). Watch your ass, big guy.

X wanders through the department store. Two Hosaka security, that look like sumo wrestlers in suits, walk in. They look up. On a higher tier they see Fox walking.

CUT TO:

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE-FOURTH TIER

Fox at the counter is bullshiting with a salesgirl.

FOX

(pointing to a Hawaiian shirt)

And I'll take that. Very spiffy, don't you think?

SALESGIRL

Oh, yes sir.

FOX

Do you know what spiffy means?

SALESGIRL

Cool?

FOX

Something like that.

CUT TO:

Fox, from X's POV on the ground is hurtling toward the floor. A woman screams from above. The body falls directly in front of him and crashes onto the marble floor with a loud thud. Blood pools around the head. He stares, dumbfounded. Fox is dead. He looks up. The two "sumo wrestlers" are peering down at him. He looks down at Fox, the screaming of shoppers is heard everywhere around him. He leans down and touches Fox's hair, he straightens up and runs out of the department store.

X

(V.O.)

They missed me somehow, and I just kept running. Fox took the gold with him, but I had a few hundred yen in my pocket. I ran. All the

way to the New Rose Hotel.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW ROSE HOTEL-NIGHT

Establishing shot of the strip of road and the New Rose Hotel taken from above the helicopter as it traverses a grid, flying closer and closer to the New Rose. It is flying without lights, only infrared signals registering on a screen in the copter. The screen depicts the chromatograph the hit squad had made from the scent of X's shirt in the Hyatt on that fateful night. Two faceless men occupy the copter.

DISSOLVE:

INT. NEW ROSE HOTEL-NIGHT

X is lying in one of the cubicles staring at the TV above his head. A Godzilla movie is on. He takes Sandii's .22 cal pistol out of his pocket, looks at it and runs his finger over the metal. Next to him is her old handbag, computer and sundries.

X

(V.O.)

Seven rented nights in this coffin, Sandii. New Rose Hotel. How I want you now. Sometimes I hit you. Replay it so slow and sweet and mean, I can almost feel it.

DISSOLVE:

INT. HOTEL ROOM, TOKYO-NIGHT: FLASHBACK

Sandii is standing in front of X who is seated on the bed. She starts to strip revealing leather-like bra, panties and garter belt. X gets up and slaps her hard across the face, again and again. The scene is repeated in slow motion. He throws money on her as she lays cowering on the bed.

X

(V.O.)

Sometimes I take your little automatic out of my bag, run my thumb down smooth, cheap chrome. Chinese .22, its bore no wider than the dilated pupils of your vanished eyes. Fox is dead now, Sandii. Fox

told me to forget you.

DISSOLVE:

INT. SINGAPORE BAR: FLASHBACK

FOX

I knew you'd met that chick before.

X

Did Sandii tell you that?

FOX

Maybe, or maybe it was Madame Rosa, or maybe it was written all over your face.

FADE TO:

INT. NEW ROSE HOTEL-NIGHT

X is in the same position. He is going through her handheld microcomputer.

The computer monitor depicts a Japanese game show. We then see it is on the TV screen above X's head. It becomes a blur. It is replaced by an image of Fox laughing with Sandii from X's POV in the Tokyo bar. The image is of Fox in close up.

FOX

If Edge is the Holy Grail, then the keepers of the Grail are the zaibatsu's, the multinational corporations that control entire economies. Hosaka, Maas, Gamma. Where Hosaka is big and powerful, Maas is all Edge, small, fast, ruthless. They, not humans are the dominant form of intelligence on Earth. The zaibatsu's. The blood of the zaibatsu's is information. Corporation as a life form. When you understand that, you've arrived at enlightenment. (laughs) How's that you rat bastard, you!

X

(V.O.)

I remember Fox leaning against the padded bar in the dark lounge of some Singapore hotel, Bencoolen Street, his hands describing different spheres of influence. I see Fox grinning, talking fast, dismissing my ventures into intercorporate espionage. The Edge, he said, have to find that Edge. He made you here the capital E. I guess I went with him because he said he was after that Edge. And somewhere out there, on our way to find the Edge, I found you, Sandii.

FADE TO:

EXT. NEW ROSE HOTEL-NIGHT

X

(V.O.)

The New Rose Hotel is a coffin rack on the ragged fringes of the Narita International. Plastic capsules a meter high and three long, stacked like surplus Godzilla teeth in a concrete lot off the main road to the airport.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW ROSE HOTEL-NIGHT

X is staring at the T.V., a Japanese game show is on.

DISSOLVE:

INT. NEW ROSE HOTEL-NIGHT

X

All day, today, I watched a small helicopter cut a tight grid above this tiny country of mine, the land of my exile, the New Rose Hotel. And tonight, I choose from your deck of pasts. I choose the original version, the famous \_\_\_\_\_ hotel room text, recited to me that

first night in bed. I choose the disgraced father, Hosaka executive. How perfect. You walked into a bar in \_\_\_\_\_ the first time I saw you. Dark European eyes, Asian cheekbones.

DISSOLVE:

INT. BAR YOKAHAMA-NIGHT: FLASHBACK.

X is alone at the bar Sandii walks in. X is immediately captivated by her. He walks up to her. They immediately hit it off. X is laughing at something she said and she bursts into laughter. Time passes. They walk out together.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-LATER THAT NIGHT

Sandii is standing in front of X who is seated on the bed. She starts to strip revealing leather-like bra, panties and garter belt. She lurches at him and they tumble back onto the bed. What follows is intense lovemaking with Sandii laying all the right moves on him.

DISSOLVE:

INT. HOTEL ROOM-AN HOUR LATER

X is standing with a drink in his hand, his back to Sandii who is sitting up in bed

SANDII

You hardly said a word. What do you do?

X

Not very much.

SANDII

(laughs)

What do you do when you're not doing very much?

X

(turns around)

I steal people.

SANDII

You mean you're an alien? You bring the unsuspecting up to your spaceship and stick probes up their asses.

X

Something like that.

SANDII

And your friend who was with you, does he steal people also?

X

Yeah, he steals people also. Where are you from?

SANDII

My father is Japanese. My mother is Dutch. I grew up in Amsterdam.

X

You're a singer?

SANDII

Something like that.

X smiles and puts some money on the bed in front of Sandii.

X

(V.O.)

I never asked you what your father might have done to earn his disgrace. I watched you dress; watched the swing of your straight hair, how it cut the air. Now Hosaka hunts me.

DISSOLVE:

BEACH SCENE-NIGHT: FLASHBACK.

X and Sandii are on the beach. They get up and walk hand in hand to return to their room, when she turns and runs back toward the surf. X catches up to her standing in the surf.

X

What's wrong?

SANDII

I'm thinking of my father. He would be so pleased to see me finally happy. I wish he was alive.

X

(perplexed)

Your father's dead? I thought he was in Amsterdam.

SANDII

No, that's my stepfather.

X

Your stepfather. I didn't know you had a stepfather.

SANDII

I don't usually talk about him.

X stares at her and then puts his arms around her again. In the flashback X imagines two Maas agents searching his room at the beach for any pertinent information.

X

(V.O.)

Fox was quick to see how we could use you, but not sharp enough to credit you with ambition. But then he never lay all night with you, never listened to your nightmares, never heard an entire imagined childhood shift under the stars, shift and roll over, your child's mouth opening to reveal some fresh past, and always the one, you swore that was really and finally the truth. I didn't care. Once you left me, ran back to that beach saying you'd forgotten our key. I found it in the door. Is that when it started? Is that when you first had the idea to betray me, or had that been your plan from the beginning? We thought we'd found you, Sandii, but really you'd found us. Now I know you were looking for us, or for someone like us. I went after you, to find you ankle deep in surf, your smooth back rigid, trembling; your eyes far away. You couldn't talk. Shivering. Gone. Shaking for different futures and better pasts.

DISSOLVE:

INT. NEW ROSE HOTEL-NIGHT

X is going through the datebook in Sandii's microcomputer. He sees "diskette".

DISSOLVE:

INT. LAB, MARRAKECH: DREAM.

Everywhere in the room is the grisly scene of men in white lab coats dying. One is holding his head, slumped over, another is pounding on the door screaming, a third is dead on the floor. Broken equipment is everywhere. Sandii is sitting in front of a computer inputting data, in a very business-like, matter-of-fact manner. X wandering through this scene comes up to her.

SANDII

(looking up at him)

Hi. Isn't this great? I reprogrammed the DNA synthesizer. The thing was there for overnight construction of just the right macromolecule. You know, with it's built-in computer and its custom software. Expensive. I got a really good price from Maas. That last night in Germany you had the diskette in your hand. You knew, but you couldn't face it. You put the code for that meningeal virus back into my purse and lay down beside me. Not too much Edge there. (laughing) Don't worry I won't tell Fox. Hiroshi is dead. So is Moenner. Chedanne suffered permanent brain damage. You see, Hiroshi hadn't worried about contamination. The proteins he punched for were harmless. So the synthesizer hummed to itself all night long, building a virus to the specifications of Maas Biolabs GmbH. Maas. Small, fast, ruthless. All Edge.

Sandii disappears. X stands there with his head in his hands.

(V.O.)

Sandii, you left me here. You left me all your things. And the funny thing, Sandii, is how sometimes you just don't seem real to me.

DISSOLVE:

INT. INN, OUTSIDE BERLIN: FLASHBACK.

X sees Sandii in the Berlin hotel room that last night.

SANDII

Does anyone know about me?

X

It's for your own protection

FADE TO:

X in cubicle in New Rose. Staring at TV but not seeing or hearing.

DISSOLVE:

INT. BEACH HOTEL

X and Sandii in bed making love.

X

(V.O.)

You must have been searching a long time looking for a way out, all those nights down Shinjuku. Nights you carefully cut from the scattered deck of your past.

DISSOLVE:

INT. NEW ROSE HOTEL-NIGHT

X picks up the microcomputer searching the datebook. He comes to the date of their rendezvous and sees "Shinjuku Station".

DISSOLVE:

EXT. NEW ROSE HOTEL-NIGHT: DREAM

X follows the catwalk past the rows of plastic capsules racked in recycled scaffolding, steel pipes under bright enamel, and climbs down the ladder. Overhead the sound of jets arriving and departing Narita airport. X looks up at one of the planes flying off to a distant land. He gets to the ground and begins to make his way, keeping to the shadows.

CUT TO:

INT. SHINJUKU STATION-NIGHT: DREAM CONTINUED

The press of crowds, neon lights, noise. We see X, unshaven and worn standing off to the side looking. X gets up and runs out of the coffee bar. He looks up and down for her. Into one street and then another. Looking in cars as he goes. He sees the back of her head in the passenger seat of a car. He runs up and tries to pull open the driver's side door. It is locked. He runs around to the passenger side and pulls the door open.

X

Sandii.

Her head rolls out of the car and into the street, rolling away.

X

Oh God!

He opens his eyes as he screams. He is in the cubicle in the New Rose. The TV is showing a horror flick.

CUT TO:

INT. CUBICLE, NEW ROSE HOTEL -NIGHT

X is dialing his satellite phone.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE-BERLIN

The distinguished gentleman who arranged for Hiroshi's disappearance answers the phone.

X

Herr Kruger?

DISTINGUISHED MAN

I'm sorry there is no one here by that name.

X

Please, Hosaka's people are playing with me like a laboratory rat. I have nowhere to go. Every door is closed. I need your help. It is over for me.

DISTINGUISHED MAN

I'm very sorry. There is no one here that can help you. (He hangs up).

X puts down the phone. He pulls a few bills out of his pocket, he stares at the pathetic amount of money.

INT. NEW ROSE HOTEL-NIGHT

X is clutching Sandii's bag.

X

Now it's time. Come with me, Sandii

It's all right baby. Only please come here. Hold my hand.

THE END