

The Ghost

screenplay by

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00016

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Seen in wide shot: a man at a desk, his back to the camera, facing a panoramic view of the Manhattan skyline. He has an unbound manuscript on his desk and is reading. Slowly the camera zooms in from behind. We cannot see his face. He has a few dozen pages in his hand. He lays aside the first - a title page: THE GHOST - and starts reading the beginning of Chapter One:

GHOST

(V/O)

The moment I heard how McAra died
I should have walked away. I can
see that now. I should have said,
"Rick, I'm sorry, this isn't for
me..."

DISSOLVE TO

The morning after a storm. A long curve of wide beach, with the grey Atlantic surf rolling in. In the distance, a black shape - a body, face-down - gently washes up the sand.

A freezing January night. A fierce wind whips horizontal sheets of rain across a heaving sea. A big passenger ferry approaches the terminal at Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts, and lets out a piercing blast on its horn.

Below decks three lines of vehicles wait to disembark. The engines are starting up, producing a billow of exhaust fumes and a deafening cacophony in the confined metal space.

The ferry's bow opens and the vehicles begin driving off, directed by a CREWMAN. But the central line is blocked by a big, black, Ford Escape SUV. Behind it, the trapped drivers start hitting their horns and leaning out of their windows.

Two CREWMEN wheel the Ford down the ramp and on to the dock. Sleet flails across the car park, lit by the sodium lighting. Behind them, cars stream off the ferry.

The Ford is parked on the quayside. A police patrol car is next to it. A uniformed POLICEMAN with a flashlight is making a note of the licence plate. There is a jabber of unintelligible chatter over the police radio.

At a table by a window giving a panoramic view across London sit two men. NICK RICARDELLI, known as RICK, is an American literary agent in his 40s: a hustler in an expensive suit. The GHOST is an English writer, also in his 40s, who makes his living ghostwriting the memoirs of celebrities.

The GHOST is looking at RICK in disbelief.

GHOST

You realise I know nothing about politics?

RICK

You voted for him, didn't you?

GHOST

Adam Lang? Of course I did. Everybody voted for him. He wasn't a politician - he was a craze.

RICK

Well, there you go. It's a new ghostwriter he needs, not another fucking politico.

Nearby DINERS turn in irritation. RICK lowers his voice.

RICK (CONT'D)

Lang was paid ten million dollars for these memoirs, but rumour has it the manuscript's a crock of shit. Rhinehart lent him his vacation house on Martha's Vineyard, so they could fix it. I guess the pressure must have gotten to McAra. The pathologist reckoned his blood was three parts booze.

GHOST

So he drowned by accident?

RICK

Accident? Suicide? Who cares? It was the book that killed him.

GHOST

That's encouraging. Should I have heard of this guy McAra?

RICK

Yes - he was some kind of aide when Lang was prime minister. So don't admit you haven't. He was with him for years.

GHOST
(doubtfully)
I don't know, Rick...

RICK
Listen. It's a great opportunity
for you. And the money will be
good. The kids won't starve.

GHOST
I don't have any kids.

RICK
No, but I do.

8 EXT. RHINEHART PUBLISHING HQ - DAY 8

A hideous modern office block, in the drizzling rain, with
a large sign: 'RHINEHART INC.' The camera pans down to the
GHOST, walking in. A board by the door reads 'Current
Terrorism Alert: ORANGE/HIGH'.

9 INT. RHINEHART PUBLISHING. LOBBY - DAY 9

The GHOST, wearing a 'VISITOR' badge, is being frisked by a
SECURITY GUARD. Beyond the body scanner and automatic
barrier waits ROY QUIGLEY, a tweedy and depressed-looking
fifty-something, wearing a name badge: 'QUIGLEY, R.'

GHOST
(arms aloft)
Who're you expecting to bomb you?
Random House?

QUIGLEY
We're publishing Lang's memoirs.
That's enough to make us a
target, apparently.

10 INT. RHINEHART PUBLISHING. ELEVATOR LOBBY - DAY 10

GHOST
How many have you seen?

QUIGLEY
Five. You're the last.

They step inside the elevator.

11 INT. RHINEHART PUBLISHING HQ. ELEVATOR - DAY 11

QUIGLEY presses his security card to the elevator control
panel and presses the button for the top floor.

QUIGLEY
I must be honest. I don't think
you're the right man for this
assignment.

GHOST

Then it's a good job it's not
your decision, Roy.

12

INT. RHINEHART PUBLISHING HQ. BOARD ROOM - DAY

12

On the opposite side of the table sit JOHN MADDOX, a bald-headed, bull-like man in his fifties, and SIDNEY KROLL, a dapper and bespectacled lawyer of forty, excessively pleased with himself. On the nearside is RICK. QUIGLEY performs a perfunctory introduction.

QUIGLEY

John Maddox, chief executive of Rhinehart in New York. Sidney Kroll, Mr Lang's Washington attorney. And Nick Ricardelli I believe you know.

RICK winks. The GHOST sits beside him. QUIGLEY takes a seat next to MADDOX, who is studying the Ghost's resume.

MADDOX

I gather from Rick here you're aware of the situation. So perhaps you could tell us exactly what you'd bring to this project.

GHOST

Nothing.

The others exchange glances; RICK laughs supportively.

GHOST (CONT'D)

I'm not going to pretend to be someone I'm not. You have my CV.

QUIGLEY

His last effort was the autobiography of a magician: 'I Came, I Sawed, I Conquered.'

RICK

That's right, and it went straight to number one.

GHOST

After you'd turned it down, Roy.

QUIGLEY blanches.

GHOST (CONT'D)

I don't read political memoirs. Who does? Rumour has it you paid ten million dollars for this book. How much of that will you see back? Two? Three? Bad news for your shareholders.

(to KROLL)

(MORE)

GHOST (CONT'D)

And worse news for your client,
Mr Kroll: Adam Lang wants a place
in history, not the remainder
tables.

QUIGLEY

Oh, please!

GHOST

It's because I know nothing about
politics that I'll ask the
questions that go to the heart of
who Adam Lang is. And that's what
sells an autobiography: heart.

A pause.

RICK

Nicely done.

QUIGLEY

What utter balls.

MADDOX

You think so?

QUIGLEY

Oh, John, of course. Adam Lang is
a world historical figure. His
autobiography is going to be a
world publishing event.

MADDOX

I have warehouses full of 'world
publishing events' waiting to be
pulped. Sid?

KROLL

Adam is obviously still very
upset by what happened to Mike
McAra. He was irreplaceable.
Irreplaceable, and yet he has to
be replaced.

He smiles at his own joke. RICK smirks.

KROLL (CONT'D)

Adam can certainly appreciate the
benefits of trying someone
different. In the end, it's about
chemistry. Do you work out,
maybe?

GHOST

Not really.

KROLL

Pity. Adam likes to work out.

QUIGLEY

Actually, I know a good writer on
the Guardian who uses a gym.

An embarrassed silence. RICK turns to MADDOX.

RICK
Maybe you could run over the
publishing schedule?

MADDOX
We need it wrapped up in a month.

GHOST
A month? You want a book in a
month?

KROLL
We already have a first draft.

MADDOX
Yeah, but it needs a lot of work.
(to the GHOST)
What I like about your resume is
that you're fast. And you
deliver.

RICK
(squeezes the GHOST's
arm)
You name it, he ghosts it.

MADDOX
Plus you're a Brit. The ghost has
to be a Brit. To get the jolly
old tone right.

KROLL
Do you have any family
commitments?

GHOST
I have no family. Why?

KROLL
Adam's locked into a US lecture
tour, and a fund raising
programme for the Adam Lang
Foundation.

RICK
(to the GHOST)
A month in America. That's OK?

GHOST
Can't I bring the manuscript back
here to work on?

KROLL
I'm afraid not. It's in a secure
environment in Marty Rhinehart's
own house. Only a few people are
allowed to handle it.

1.

QUIGLEY

Sounds more like a bomb than a book!

QUIGLEY laughs nervously. Nobody joins in.

QUIGLEY (CONT'D)

I will need to see it myself at some point. I am supposed to be editing it.

MADDOX

In theory. Actually, we need to talk about that.

QUIGLEY sits motionless, stunned. MADDOX turns to the GHOST.

MADDOX (CONT'D)

How soon can you get over there?

GHOST

As soon as you want.

RICK

He can fly tonight.

The GHOST is on the point of objecting, but RICK gestures at him to keep quiet. MADDOX and KROLL exchange glances.

MADDOX

Okay. You're in.

MADDOX stands and shakes the GHOST's hand. There is a lot of back-slapping. Everyone is on their feet except QUIGLEY.

KROLL

I have something here you might care to look at.

He produces a yellow plastic bag with something bulky inside.

GHOST

It's not -- ?

KROLL

No, no. It's not Adam's book. It's by another client of mine. Perhaps you could tell me what you think?

GHOST

Sure.

MADDOX

Okay. If you're gonna get the evening flight we'd better talk contracts with Rick here. Show our friend out, would you, Roy?

RICK
I'll call you in an hour.

As the GHOST is leaving, MADDOX calls him back.

MADDOX
Hey! Remember!
(pounds his chest)
Heart!

13 INT. RHINEHART PUBLISHING HQ. ELEVATOR - DAY

13

The GHOST, with yellow bag, and QUIGLEY are descending.

QUIGLEY
Was it my imagination or did I
just get fired in there?

GHOST
They wouldn't let you go, Roy.
You're the only one left who can
remember what publishing used to
be like.

14 EXT. RHINEHART PUBLISHING HQ - DAY

14

QUIGLEY is lighting his pipe despite the drizzle. The GHOST
hoists the bag and hails a taxi.

QUIGLEY
There's something not quite right
about this project.

GHOST
Me, you mean?

QUIGLEY
Not just you. McAra. Suicide? He
didn't strike me as the suicidal
type.

The GHOST gets into the taxi.

QUIGLEY (CONT'D)
(wintry smile)
Good luck.

15 INT. LONDON TAXI - DAY

15

The GHOST takes out the contents of the plastic bag: a
typescript. We glimpse the title: 'One Out Of Many: Memoirs
of a Senator.' The GHOST leafs through it and sighs
heavily.

16

EXT. LONDON STREET. OUTSIDE THE GHOST'S HOUSE - DAY

16

The GHOST pays the taxi driver, crosses the pavement, and is about to mount the steps to his house when a hand touches his arm. He turns. A MUGGER in a motorcycle helmet and leathers punches him in the stomach. As the GHOST doubles up and falls, the MUGGER grabs the yellow plastic bag. Groaning, his head on the wet pavement, the GHOST sees the MUGGER jump onto the passenger seat of a waiting motorbike. The DRIVER guns the engine; the bike roars off.

17

INT. GHOST'S APARTMENT - DAY

17

The GHOST, his face streaked with dirt, opens his fridge. It contains nothing except a bottle of whiskey. He pours himself a large glass, then goes into his bare and functional sitting room, and collapses in an armchair, still wearing his wet overcoat. His cell phone rings. He fumbles in his pocket.

RICK

(V/O)

Congratulations!

GHOST

On what?

RICK

(V/O)

On having me as your agent.

GHOST

Yeah, I can hardly believe my luck.

RICK

(V/O)

Are you packed?

GHOST

I just got mugged.

RICK

(V/O)

Shit! Are you okay?

GHOST

The only thing they took was that manuscript Sidney Kroll gave me.

RICK

(V/O)

What? Why?

GHOST

You tell me.

RICK

(V/O)

Did you get hurt?

GHOST
No. I'm fine. I reckon they must
have followed me from
Rhinehart's.

RICK
(V/O)
You're kidding. Why?

GHOST
Maybe they thought I was carrying
Lang's book. I knew this whole
thing was a bad idea.

RICK
(V/O)
But you're still okay to fly
tonight?

GHOST
For God's sake, Rick! I'm in
shock.

RICK
(V/O)
Yeah, well here's another shock
for you. For one month's work on
a manuscript that's already
written, Rhinehart Inc. are
willing to pay you two hundred
and fifty thousand dollars, plus
expenses.

The GHOST is too stunned to speak.

RICK (CONT'D)
(V/O)
D'you want a window seat, or
aisle?

18 INT. HEATHROW. FIRST CLASS AIRLINE LOUNGE - NIGHT

18

Through the big glass window we see the lights of the
airport. The GHOST is at the espresso machine, getting a
cup of coffee. A television plays in the background.

TV NEWSREADER
Former British prime minister
Adam Lang is back in the news
tonight.

The GHOST turns towards the screen. The story is
illustrated with a still of the newspaper headline, a four-
way split screen of the suspects, and file footage of Lang.

TV NEWSREADER (CONT'D)

According to leaked documents, Mr Lang authorized the illegal use of British special forces to seize four suspected al-Qaeda terrorists in Pakistan and then hand them over for interrogation by the CIA. The men - Nasir Ashraf, Shakeel Qazi, Salim Khan and Faruk Ahmed - all British citizens, were seized in the Pakistani city of Peshawar five years ago. All four were allegedly transferred out of the country to a secret location and tortured. Mr Ashraf is reported to have died under interrogation...

The GHOST glances around, and then back at the screen. Everyone else is ignoring it. He takes out his phone and begins dialling a number.

TV NEWSREADER (CONT'D)

...Such an operation would have been illegal under both UK and international law. A spokeswoman for Mr Lang said today that he had no plans to issue a statement.

GHOST

(into his phone)

Where are you?

RICK

(V/O)

At Heathrow. Like you. Waiting for my flight to New York.

GHOST

Did you just see the news?

RICK

(V/O)

The Lang story? I'm watching it.

GHOST

What have you got me into?

RICK

(V/O)

I got you into a quarter of a million bucks, that's what I got you into. They're calling my flight. I gotta go --

GHOST
Listen, I just realised. Sid
Kroll could have given me that
manuscript deliberately, so it
would look like I was carrying
Lang's book.

RICK
(V/O)
Why the hell would he do that?

GHOST
I don't know. To use me as a
tethered goat?

RICK
(V/O)
Get some sleep on the plane.
You're sounding weird. I'll call
you next week. And don't worry.

19 INT. JUMBO JET - NIGHT 19

The GHOST, still looking troubled, in his first class seat,
reads the London Evening Standard, emblazoned with the
headline 'WORLD EXCLUSIVE: Lang ordered secret kidnap'.

20 EXT. WOODS HOLE FERRY TERMINAL. BUS STOP - DAY 20

The bus doors open. The GHOST, clutching a small, wheeled
suitcase, descends into a cold, blustery morning. The big
ferry is waiting. Cars are driving up into it.

21 EXT. PASSENGER FERRY. GANGWAY - DAY 21

The GHOST joins the stream of passengers and cars. A sign
announces 'CURRENT NATIONWIDE THREAT LEVEL IS ELEVATED'.

22 INT. PASSENGER FERRY. BAR - DAY 22

The GHOST sits at a table, with a cup of coffee. He sees a
notice posted on the board nearby: 'FATAL INCIDENT 11 PM
JANUARY 12th. Did you notice anything suspicious? CONTACT
THE POLICE.' The GHOST glances through the window at the
sea.

23 EXT. PASSENGER FERRY DECK - DAY 23

The GHOST crosses the ferry's upper deck. In the high wind
it is difficult to keep his balance. Cautiously he crosses
over to the low railing and looks over the side.

24 EXT. ROUGH SEA - DAY 24

Seen from the GHOST's POV: a heaving sea, the receding
mainland, a big channel buoy writhing against its moorings.

25 EXT. PASSENGER FERRY DECK - DAY 25

A hand touches the GHOST's shoulder. He jumps and turns to find a CREWMAN.

CREWMAN

Don't stand so close. We lost a
guy overboard the other day.

26 EXT. MARTHA'S VINEYARD. FOREST - DAY 26

A taxi carrying the GHOST drives along a highway bounded by forest, then turns off and bounces down a sandy track through the leafless, twisted scrub oak.

27 EXT. RHINEHART HOUSE. GATE - DAY 27

The taxi halts at a barrier laid across the road. From a sentry box, two cold and miserable-looking British PROTECTION OFFICERS emerge, wearing black overcoats and polished black shoes. One has a mirror on a pole, and goes round the taxi checking underneath it. The other carries a clipboard. He taps on the rear passenger window with a gloved hand.

28 INT. TAXI - DAY 28

The GHOST winds down the window, admitting a blast of cold air and the sound of heavy surf, rolling in the distance.

PROTECTION OFFICER

Passport?

The GHOST gives him his passport. The PROTECTION OFFICER studies it, then checks his name off on the clipboard.

29 EXT. RHINEHART HOUSE. GATE - DAY 29

The second PROTECTION OFFICER completes his inspection and raises the barrier. The taxi drives on.

30 EXT. RHINEHART HOUSE - DAY 30

The taxi passes outbuildings - a garage, staff accommodation - and pulls up outside a big, ultra-modern house: the sort that features in design magazines and wins architectural awards. As the car draws up, the front door opens and another PROTECTION OFFICER, BARRY, appears.

31 INT. TAXI - DAY 31

BARRY opens the car door. The GHOST thinks he's come to welcome him. But no.

BARRY
Your bag, sir, please.

32

INT. HOUSE. HALLWAY - DAY

32

The GHOST's suitcase is open on a table, being searched. The house is decorated with expensive abstract paintings and modern sculpture. From somewhere in the interior comes the sound of a woman shouting, in an English accent:

RUTH
(V/O)
This is absolutely bloody
ridiculous!

The GHOST looks quizzically at the PROTECTION OFFICER, but his expression gives nothing away.

An elegant blonde in a smart jacket and skirt comes clicking down the passage on her high heels. She is about 40, carrying a black and red notebook. This is AMELIA BLY.

AMELIA
(holds out her hand)
Amelia Bly. Welcome. I'm Adam's assistant. Adam's in New York unfortunately and won't be back until later this afternoon.

RUTH
(V/O)
Actually, forget I said that -
it's fucking ridiculous.

The sound of a door slamming. AMELIA's false smile widens.

AMELIA
Oh dear. I'm so sorry. I'm afraid
Ruth's having one of those days.

GHOST
If this is a bad time --

AMELIA
No, no. She's keen to meet you.
Right. Shall we make a start?

The GHOST retrieves his suitcase and follows her along the passage to the stairs. He depresses the handle. As they ascend, AMELIA glances over her shoulder.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Did you drop your luggage at the
hotel?

GHOST
No.

AMELIA
That's all of it?

GHOST
I travel light.

AMELIA
Light? I'd say gossamer.

33 INT. HOUSE. SITTING ROOM - DAY

33

They emerge into a vast open-plan sitting room with sofas, a huge plasma TV screen, and an open fireplace. The whole of the opposite wall is glass, giving a panoramic view of dunes, pond, ocean.

GHOST
Quite a place. Don't you get lonely at night?

AMELIA
(opening a door)
We're in here.

34 INT. HOUSE. STUDY - DAY

34

A large study. A pair of armchairs. Bookshelves. A filing cabinet. A big desk at one end of the room and a smaller desk at the other, where a secretary, ALICE, sits typing in front of a computer screen.

AMELIA
We're a small team. This is Alice. Lucy's travelling with Adam.

ALICE turns and smiles, then resumes typing. AMELIA unlocks the filing cabinet.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
We need another pair of hands, but Adam can't bring himself to replace Mike. They were together so long.

GHOST
How long have you been with him?

AMELIA
Eight years. I'm on attachment from Number Ten.

GHOST
Poor Number Ten.

AMELIA extracts a box file and puts it on the desk.

AMELIA
It's my husband I miss the most.

She closes the filing cabinet drawer.

GHOST
You're married? I noticed you're
not wearing a ring.

AMELIA
I can't, sadly. It's far too
large. It bleeps when I go
through airport security.

ALICE gives a barely suppressed snort of laughter.

GHOST
Ah.

AMELIA opens the file and takes out a 600 page-manuscript.
On top is a three-page legal document and a flash drive
device.

AMELIA
Before you read the manuscript I
need you to sign this
confidentiality agreement.
(giving him a pen)
Sign here. And here. And here.
(watching as he signs)
The manuscript is not to be
removed from this room. It's not
to be copied. You have six hours
before Adam gets in from New
York. Do you think you can finish
it?

GHOST
I'll try.

AMELIA
I'll ask Dep to bring you a
sandwich for lunch. Alice, let's
go downstairs. We don't want to
distract him, do we?

35 INT. HOUSE. STUDY - DAY

35

The GHOST sits at the desk, the manuscript in front of him.
He swivels experimentally in the big chair. He pulls the
manuscript towards him. We see the title page: 'MEMOIRS by
Adam Lang'. He turns to the next page: 'To Ruth, my kids,
and the people of Britain.' And the next: 'One. Early
years.'

GHOST
(reading)
'Langs are Scottish folk
originally and proud of it. Our
name is a derivation of "long",
the old English word for tall,
and it is from north of the
border that my forefathers
hail...'

The GHOST looks up, incredulous.

GHOST (CONT'D)

Fuck.

36 INT. HOUSE. STUDY - DAY 36

Through the window we see the Vietnamese gardener, DUC, sweeping up leaves and piling them in a wheelbarrow.

37 INT. HOUSE. STUDY - DAY 37

Seen in long shot, the GHOST turns the pages of the manuscript with an expression of mounting dismay.

GHOST

(reading)

'The American president was much taller than I had expected...'

38 INT. HOUSE. STUDY - DAY 38

DEP, the Vietnamese housekeeper enters. The GHOST is asleep. She puts a sandwich and coffee on the desk, waking him.

39 INT. HOUSE. STUDY - DAY 39

The GHOST chews his lunch, still reading. The sky has darkened. Through the window, DUC can be seen still sweeping. The ground is almost clear when a gust of wind lifts the leaves from the wheelbarrow. He begins sweeping them again.

40 INT. HOUSE. STUDY - LATE AFTERNOON 40

The GHOST turns over the last page.

GHOST

(reading)

'Ruth and I look forward to the future, whatever it may hold. The End.'

Very slowly he clasps his hands to his face and gives a silent scream, then becomes aware that he is being watched from the doorway by RUTH LANG.

RUTH

(arching an eyebrow)

As bad as that?

GHOST

(getting to his feet)

Oh, hello.

RUTH

Well? How bad is it?

GHOST
You haven't read it?

RUTH
Not all of it.

GHOST
Let's just say it needs some work.

RUTH
How much work?

GHOST
Well... The words are all there. They're just in the wrong order.

RUTH
Come on - you look as though you need a break.

41 EXT. BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON

41

The GHOST and RUTH walk along the beach, followed at a distance of about 50 yards by BARRY. The sea pounds against the shore; the sky is grey.

RUTH
You were my idea.

GHOST
(surprised)
I was?

RUTH
You wrote Christy Costello's memoirs, didn't you?

GHOST
(even more surprised)
You read them?

RUTH
We stayed with him in Mustique last winter. The book was by the bed.

GHOST
I'm embarrassed.

RUTH
No? Why? It was brilliant, in a horrible kind of way. How you'd turned his ramblings into something vaguely coherent - I said to Adam: "Here's the guy to write your book; not Mike."

RUTH stops and looks at the ocean. Behind them, as if playing grandmother's footsteps, BARRY also stops.

RUTH (CONT'D)

God, I miss home. It's like being married to Napoleon on St Helena.

GHOST

Why don't you go back to London?

RUTH

I don't feel I can leave him. There's something not quite right with him at the moment.

GHOST

Amelia told me he was still upset by Mike McAra's death.

RUTH

Oh she did, did she? Quite when Mrs Bly became such an expert on my husband's emotions I'm not sure.

They start walking back towards the house.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Losing Mike was a blow, of course, but it's not just that. It's having to sit down and relive everything year by year for that bloody book.

She slips her arm through the GHOST's.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Oh dear. You must be wondering what you've let yourself in for.

42

EXT. HOUSE - DUSK

42

A big Jaguar limousine is parked outside the house. The driver switches on the ignition as the GHOST and RUTH appear. The minivan is parked behind it. Its engine also starts up.

AMELIA emerges from the house in a hurry, zipping up an attache case, a phone wedged between shoulder and chin.

AMELIA

(into the phone)

Fine. That's fine. I'll tell him.

She nods to RUTH.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

They're just about to land.

(into the phone)

On Thursday he's in Chicago.

RUTH

Actually, I think I'll go to meet him.

(MORE)

RUTH (CONT'D)
Amelia can stay here and polish
her nails or something.
(turns to the GHOST)
Why don't you come? He's keen to
meet you.

AMELIA
Fine. I'll travel in the backup
car. I can do my nails in there.

43 EXT. MARTHA'S VINEYARD AIRPORT - DUSK 43

A big private jet - a Gulfstream Four - passes low
overhead.

44 INT. MARTHA'S VINEYARD AIRPORT. TERMINAL - DUSK 44

The GHOST, RUTH, AMELIA, BARRY and a uniformed American
POLICEMAN stand at the arrivals gate in the deserted
terminal. Through the large window they watch the jet land.

45 EXT. MARTHA'S VINEYARD AIRPORT. CONCOURSE - DUSK 45

The jet taxis to the terminal. It has a corporate logo on
the side: the earth, girdled by a golden ribbon emblazoned
with the word 'Hallington'. The engines are cut. The
silence is profound.

The door opens. The steps are lowered. Two more PROTECTION
OFFICERS emerge. One heads for the terminal while the other
waits at the foot of the steps.

A glimpse of ADAM LANG shaking hands with the PILOT and
STEWARD, and then he appears: mid-50s, still youthful-
looking and handsome, carrying a briefcase.

LANG hesitates, seemingly unsure what to do. Then he sees
the people waiting in the terminal building, points and
waves, and comes down the aircraft steps, crossing the
concourse as if there is a big official welcome. A
secretary, LUCY, follows, pulling a suitcase, and a last
PROTECTION OFFICER.

46 INT. MARTHA'S VINEYARD AIRPORT. TERMINAL - DUSK 46

LANG sweeps into the terminal and kisses RUTH.

LANG
Hi darling.

RUTH
How was New York?

LANG
Great. They gave me the
Gulfstream Four - the
transatlantic one, you know, with
the beds and the shower. Hi,
Barry. Hi, Amelia.

The PROTECTION OFFICERS are keen to move him on, and usher him towards the door. As he moves, he notices the GHOST.

LANG (CONT'D)
Hello. Who are you?

GHOST
I'm your ghost.

LANG
(taken aback)
Right...

RUTH
Don't worry. He isn't always such a jerk.

LANG is swept on by his security detail, leaving the GHOST behind, appalled by his botched greeting.

47 INT. TAXI - NIGHT

47

The GHOST is in the back seat. The headlights fall on the white clapboard Victorian whaling houses and picket fences of Edgartown. The streets are deserted.

GHOST
This place really comes alive at night.

The DRIVER ignores him.

48 EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

48

The taxi deposits the GHOST outside a hotel. The beam of a lighthouse flashes. A blistered sign - Lighthouse View Hotel - creaks in the strong wind. Nearby, the ocean pounds relentlessly against the shore. The GHOST climbs the steps to a wooden verandah.

49 INT. HOTEL. RECEPTION - NIGHT

49

The GHOST checks in, watched by a RECEPTIONIST, dressed as a Victorian maid. The place, decorated in 19th century style, is utterly deserted.

RECEPTIONIST
You'll be with us for four weeks, is that right?

GHOST
(signing register)
I'm afraid so.

RECEPTIONIST
And the bill goes directly to Rhinehart?

GHOST

Good.

RECEPTIONIST

That doesn't include the minibar.

50 INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

50

The intermittent beam of the lighthouse leaks through the curtains. The camera pans from the window to the GHOST, still in his overcoat, sprawled, asleep, on bed. His suitcase stands in the middle of the room.

51 EXT. WOODS - DAY

51

LANG, wearing a tracksuit, is jogging through the trees, flanked by two PROTECTION OFFICERS.

52 INT. TAXI - DAY

52

The GHOST, haggard from jet lag, watches LANG running.

53 INT. HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY

53

An ultra-modern, luxurious kitchen. A map of the island decorates the wall. DEP wraps food in foil and puts it away. The GHOST stands looking at the map, drinking coffee. AMELIA puts her head round the door.

AMELIA

All right. He's ready for you.

54 INT. HOUSE. STAIRS - DAY

54

The GHOST follows AMELIA up the stairs to the sitting room.

AMELIA

How's the hotel? Quiet?

GHOST

As the grave.

AMELIA opens the door, standing aside to let the GHOST enter.

55 INT. HOUSE. STUDY - DAY

55

LANG is sitting, relaxed, in one of the armchairs, wearing his tracksuit and trainers, with a towel round his neck, holding a mug of tea. He raises his hand as the GHOST enters.

LANG

Hi, man. Ready to start?

GHOST

Absolutely.

The GHOST unpacks the tools of his trade - laptop, mini disc recorder, notebook, pens - on to the desk. AMELIA unlocks the filing cabinet and takes out a box containing the manuscript and a flash drive. The GHOST picks up the flash drive.

GHOST (CONT'D)

Is the manuscript loaded on this?

AMELIA

It is.

GHOST

Could you make me a copy?

AMELIA

(taking it from him)

I'm sorry. That would be a security risk.

GHOST

(incredulous)

You mean I've got to retype the whole book?

LANG

Have you really got my entire manuscript on that little thing?

AMELIA

We could get a hundred manuscripts on it, Adam. And it can be copied in a flash. That's the trouble. It's a security nightmare.

She replaces the flashdrive in the box, and puts the box in the filing cabinet.

LANG

Amazing. You know the worst thing about my life? You get so out of touch. Everything's done for you. You don't drive. You don't carry money - if I need cash, I have to borrow it off one of the protection boys.

GHOST

This is the sort of detail we need in the memoirs.

LANG

I couldn't put that in! People would think I was a complete idiot.

GHOST

On the contrary. It shows what it's like being prime minister. That's what readers want to know. How does it feel to run a country? How does it feel to be so cut off? How does it feel to be hated?

LANG

Thanks a lot!

GHOST

(quickly)

And loved.

LANG

What do you think, Amelia?

AMELIA

(standing by the door)

I think I should leave you two alone.

AMELIA leaves. The GHOST switches on his mini recorder, and moves in to the chair opposite LANG, his laptop ready.

LANG

So - how do we go about this?

GHOST

I interview you. I turn your answers into prose. Here and there I'll add linking passages, imitating your voice.

LANG

Okay. You heard about Mike?

GHOST

Yes. I'm sorry.

LANG

We should put in something nice about him. His mother would like it.

GHOST

Of course. Well, the first thing that strikes me is that you became such a successful politician precisely because you didn't seem to be a politician.

LANG

It certainly wasn't something I wanted to do when I was younger. Most student politicians struck me as complete nerds.

GHOST

I'm with you there. So what turned you on to politics?

LANG

(laughs)

Turned on is right. Let's see. I was twenty-three, something like that, a couple of years out of Cambridge. And I remember it was a Sunday afternoon, raining. I was still in bed. And someone starts knocking at the door. And, you know, I'd had a bit to drink the night before and what have you, so I get the pillow over my head. But it starts up again: knock, knock, knock. And I'm swearing and I get up and open the door and there's this girl. She's soaking wet but she just launches into this speech about the local elections. And that's it. I'm in love.

GHOST

(typing rapidly)

And this is Ruth?

LANG

This is Ruth. And the only way to see her again is to join the party and start handing out leaflets.

GHOST

That's great.

LANG

You want to use this?

GHOST

Use it? I think we should open the whole book with it.

(reading from his laptop)

'I went into politics out of love - not love for a party or an ideology, but out of love for a woman...'

LANG

(laughs)

Hey, man, that's pretty good.

A small room, full of office clutter - files, newspapers, old copies of Hansard, computers, telephones. ALICE and LUCY are typing. AMELIA is reading. The GHOST enters, carrying a couple of mini discs

GHOST
Could you transcribe these as
quickly as possible?

AMELIA
Of course. How's it going?

GHOST
Pretty well, I think. He keeps
calling me 'man'.

AMELIA
Yes, he always does that when he
can't remember someone's name.
There are sandwiches in the
kitchen.

57 INT. HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY

57

The GHOST helps himself to a sandwich from a tray, and takes a can of beer from the refrigerator. Eating his sandwich, he watches DUC through the window, still sweeping leaves.

Then he sees LANG, grim-faced, pacing back and forth, his cell phone pressed to his ear. LANG says something and hangs up. In a fit of temper, he hurls the phone to the ground and stalks off. A PROTECTION OFFICER appears, retrieves the phone and follows him.

58 INT. HOUSE. STAIRCASE - DAY

58

The GHOST, thoughtful, eating his sandwich, goes upstairs.

59 INT. HOUSE. STUDY - DAY

59

The GHOST swivels in the chair, checks his watch, waiting. He notices that key is in the filing cabinet. He goes over, opens the drawer and takes out the box containing the flash drive. He weighs it in his hand, looks at his computer and then at the door. He returns to his desk and is about to insert it in his laptop when a siren starts to wail. Heavy metal shutters begin descending, cutting out the light.

The GHOST, panicking, replaces the flash drive in the filing cabinet and lunges for the door.

60 INT. HOUSE. SITTING ROOM - DAY

60

In the darkness, the GHOST falls down the first few steps of the staircase. The beam of a flashlight pierces the gloom beneath him. A PROTECTION OFFICER shines the torch on the cowering GHOST.

PROTECTION OFFICER
Sorry, sir. Didn't realise there
was anyone up here.

Shaken, the GHOST gets to his feet as the siren dies and the shutters begin to rise. AMELIA appears, holding some papers, and mounts the stairs.

GHOST
What on earth was that?

PROTECTION OFFICER
Just a security drill, sir. We have it once a week.

AMELIA
So there you are. I rather lost track of you.

GHOST
I'm a big boy. You can't keep an eye on me all the time.

AMELIA
Don't wander around on your own. The security boys don't like it.

GHOST
Gotcha.

LANG comes quickly up the stairs, a towel round his neck. He looks in a black mood. His face is flushed with sweat. He brushes past them and heads towards the study.

AMELIA
Did you win?

LANG
(over his shoulder)
Didn't play tennis in the end. Gym.

He disappears into the study, slamming the door.

GHOST
(to AMELIA)
Gym? What's he training for? The Olympics?

AMELIA
Here's the transcript.

She gives him the pages and the discs.

61 INT. HOUSE. STUDY - DAY

61

LANG is at the window. His formerly cooperative attitude has vanished.

GHOST
Cambridge. Let's talk about that.

LANG stares ahead, silent. Then he remembers where he is.

LANG

Sorry? Cambridge? It's so long ago, I can hardly remember it.

GHOST

I believe you did a lot of acting?

LANG

Some.

GHOST

It must have been a good training for politics?

LANG

It was a good way to meet girls. Don't put that in, by the way.

GHOST

(baffled))

Still, acting must have been important to you...

LANG

Okay, let's say I enjoyed it. You go out on stage and you pretend to be someone else - and people actually applaud you for doing it!

GHOST

Great. This is more like it. Let's put this in.

LANG

No.

GHOST

Why not?

LANG

Because these are the memoirs of a prime minister. And whenever my opponents were stuck for something to hit me with, they always said I was a fucking actor! You know what The Times said on the day I resigned? 'Kindly leave the stage.' So, no, if you don't mind, we won't dwell on my years as a student actor. Leave it exactly the way that Mike wrote it.

LANG stares out of the window. There is a silence.

GHOST

Would you like to break for a minute?

LANG

That would be good, actually. I
need to make a call.

62 INT. HOUSE. STAIRCASE - DAY

62

The GHOST, brooding, goes downstairs, watched by a
PROTECTION OFFICER.

63 INT. HOUSE. DOWNSTAIRS OFFICE - DAY

63

As the GHOST enters, AMELIA, LUCY and ALICE are gathered
around the computer screen.

AMELIA

What a bastard...

She tilts the screen for the GHOST to read.

GHOST

(reading)

'Former British Foreign Secretary
Richard Rycart has asked the
International Criminal Court in
the Hague to investigate
allegations that the former
British Prime Minister Adam Lang
ordered the illegal handover of
terrorist suspects for torture by
the CIA...'

One of the telephones on the desk starts ringing. ALICE
reaches to answer it.

AMELIA

Don't!

Other phones start ringing, including AMELIA's mobile. She
examines the incoming number.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

The pack is on the move.

She drums her fingers on the desk.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Unplug all the phones. Is Ruth
still out walking? Shit! She is,
isn't she?

She clatters out of the room. After a brief hesitation, the
GHOST follows.

64 INT. HOUSE. PASSAGE - DAY

64

AMELIA

Barry! Barry!

The SPECIAL BRANCH MAN appears in the corridor. His jacket is off, revealing his shoulder holster.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Please find Mrs Lang and get her back here as soon as you can.

AMELIA climbs the stairs, the GHOST following.

65

INT. HOUSE. STUDY - DAY

65

LANG is still staring out of the window, his mobile phone to his ear. As AMELIA and the GHOST appear he clicks it shut.

AMELIA

Rycart has --

LANG

I know. He called me.

AMELIA

It's unbelievable!

LANG

He wanted very much to let me know there was nothing personal. He wanted very, very much to tell me that it was only because of his well known stand on human rights that he felt he couldn't keep quiet any longer. His 'well known stand on human rights'... Dear God.

AMELIA

Why didn't you tell me?

LANG

Before I'd told Ruth? That wouldn't have been very tactful, would it?

They stare at one another. Then, through the window, they see RUTH, marching determinedly towards the house, with two PROTECTION OFFICERS in tow.

LANG (CONT'D)

(to the GHOST)

Sorry for losing my temper.

GHOST

Forget it.

AMELIA

And have you? Told her?

LANG

I just called her.

AMELIA

And how did she take it?

ALICE enters carrying a sheet of paper.

ALICE

Sorry, Adam. This just came over AP.

LANG

(reading)

According to sources in The Hague, the prosecutor's office of the ICC will be issuing a statement in the morning.

RUTH erupts into the room.

RUTH

Why weren't we given some warning of this? What about Downing Street?

AMELIA

The phones are disconnected. They're probably trying to get through now.

RUTH

Now? What fucking use is now? What are you people doing? You're not telling me the Cabinet Office didn't know this was coming?

LANG hands RUTH the AP report.

AMELIA

The war crimes court doesn't warn a suspect he's under investigation.

RUTH

So that's what Adam is now? A suspect?

(to LANG)

You need to talk to Sid Kroll.

LANG

I should talk to London first.

RUTH

(patiently)

Adam, if it suits them, they will hang you out to dry. You need a lawyer. Call Sid.

LANG

(to AMELIA)

Get Sid on the line.

AMELIA

What about the media?

RUTH
Issue a holding statement.
Something short.

LANG
This is when we need Mike.

AMELIA
I'll write something.

RUTH
(gestures at the GHOST)
Let him do it. He's supposed to
be the writer.

AMELIA
(put out)
Fine.

GHOST
Hang on a minute --

LANG
I should sound confident. Not
defensive - that'd be fatal. But
I shouldn't be cocky. No
bitterness. No anger. Don't say
I'm pleased at this opportunity
to clear my name or any balls
like that.

GHOST
So you're not defensive but
you're not cocky, you're not
angry but you're not pleased?

LANG
That's it.

GHOST
Then what exactly are you?

LANG laughs.

RUTH
I told you he was funny.

66 INT. HOUSE. DOWNSTAIRS OFFICE - DAY

66

The GHOST stands behind AMELIA, who is seated at her
computer. She looks at him impatiently.

GHOST
(uncertain)
I have always been a passionate -
no, scrub that. I've always been
a strong - no, committed -
supporter of the work of the
International Criminal Court. Has
he?

AMELIA
(typing)
You're the writer.

He pauses, seeking inspiration.

GHOST
The struggle against terror is
too important to be used for the
purposes of personal revenge.

AMELIA
Very good. You could be the new
Mike McAra.

She presses a key; the statement prints. The GHOST's phone
begins to ring.

GHOST
Hello?

MADDOX
(V/O)
John Maddox. This is gonna be
big. This can only be good for
us.

GHOST
Could be.

The GHOST glances at AMELIA and goes into the passage.

67

INT. HOUSE. PASSAGE - DAY

67

The GHOST walks towards the rear of the house.

MADDOX
(V/O)
Here's your first chapter, right
here.

GHOST
Right.

MADDOX
(V/O)
What've you covered so far?

GHOST
The early years - childhood,
university -

MADDOX
(V/O)
Forget that crap. Get him to
focus on his war crimes. And he
mustn't talk to anyone else. It
has to be our exclusive.

GHOST
Right...

MADDOX

(V/O)

Any chance of you finishing the manuscript sooner?

GHOST

Sooner?

MADDOX

(V/O)

Yeah, sooner.

GHOST

How much sooner?

MADDOX

(V/O)

I'm thinking two weeks.

GHOST

Jesus!

MADDOX

(V/O)

I know it's tough, but if anyone can do it, you can. I'm relying on you. We'll talk.

He rings off.

GHOST

The problem is getting Adam -
Hello? John?

68

EXT. HOUSE - DUSK

68

AMELIA, her jacket buttoned against the cold, stands in the January dusk, smoking a cigarette. The tip glows red as she inhales. From the beach comes the sound of the surf.

GHOST

(approaching her)

I'd never have guessed you smoked.

AMELIA

I only allow myself one. At times of great stress or contentment.

GHOST

And which is this?

AMELIA

Very funny.

GHOST

Maddox just called. He wants the book in two weeks instead of four.

AMELIA
Christ. Good luck.

GHOST
I wouldn't mind a lift back to my hotel. I could get on with some work there.

AMELIA
You're not planning to take that manuscript out of here, are you?

GHOST
Of course not.

AMELIA
Because you do realise how serious this is getting, don't you?

GHOST
You can search me if you want.

AMELIA
That won't be necessary.

She contemplates him, then crushes out her cigarette with the toe of her shoe.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
All right. Fetch your stuff. I'll get one of the boys to take you.

69 INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

69

A deserted bar decorated with old sea-fishing relics - nets, lobster pots, glass buoys, etc. The GHOST sits alone at the bar. Behind it, a news bulletin is playing on a TV.

TV REPORTER
...a committed supporter of the work of the International Criminal Court. Mr Lang added - quote - "The struggle against terror is too important to be used for the purposes of personal revenge..."

The BARMAN approaches.

BARMAN
What can I get you, sir?

GHOST
Whiskey, please. Large. No ice.
Could we change the channel?

BARMAN
Sure.

The BARMAN points the remote at the TV and the news is replaced by an ice hockey game. He pours the whiskey.

BARMAN (CONT'D)
Something to eat?

GHOST
What've you got?

BARMAN
Club sandwich. Clam chowder...

GHOST
Chowder would be fine.

In the corner, watching the GHOST, is a STRANGER, a man in his fifties, with close-cropped hair and double-breasted blazer. There is something frayed and disturbing about him.

STRANGER
You're English?

GHOST
(turning to look)
And so are you.

STRANGER
Indeed I am. You here on holiday?

GHOST
No. Working.

STRANGER
So what's your line?

GHOST
Just this and that. Excuse me.

The GHOST pretends to watch the game.

STRANGER
(nodding at the TV)
I hear Adam Lang's on the island.

GHOST
Is he?

STRANGER
So I hear. You don't happen to know his whereabouts, do you?

GHOST
No. I'm afraid not. If you don't mind...

The GHOST returns his attention to the game. The STRANGER sighs, stands and leaves, passing behind the GHOST.

STRANGER
(as he passes)
Cunt.

70

EXT. HOTEL PASSAGE - NIGHT

70

A couple of hours later. The GHOST, drunk, approaches his bedroom door. He leans against the wall, fumbles for his key, then tries to insert it in the lock. He misses. But as he presses it against the wood, the door opens.

GHOST
Is anyone there?

71

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

71

The room is lit by the intermittent red beam of the lighthouse, and by the screen of a laptop computer. Frowning, the GHOST steps cautiously over the threshold and turns on the desk lamp. The transcript of his interview with Lang is scattered over the desk and across the floor. He notices that his suitcase is open. He picks up the telephone and dials 9.

RECEPTIONIST
(V/O)
Reception.

GHOST
Did you see anyone come up to my room?

RECEPTIONIST
(V/O)
No, sir.

GHOST
What about that other guest - the Englishman?

RECEPTIONIST
(V/O)
You're the only guest in the hotel, sir.

The GHOST clumsily replaces the handset, and squints in confusion at his disturbed belongings.

72

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

72

The GHOST is asleep in bed. The early morning light filters through the curtains. The room telephone begins ringing, extremely loudly. The GHOST returns painfully to consciousness, and gingerly places the receiver to his ear.

AMELIA
(V/O)
You need to check out of the hotel immediately. Things have changed. A car's on its way.

GHOST
What? Hello?

But she's hung up. He fumbles the phone back on to its cradle. From outside comes the thump of a car door being slammed shut, and then another. The sound of voices.

The GHOST rolls off the bed, and makes his way to the window. He pulls back the curtain.

73 EXT. HOTEL - DAY

73

A convoy of cars and vans, some with satellite dishes, has drawn up outside the hotel and several dozen cameramen, reporters, technicians and photographers are milling around.

74 INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

74

The GHOST, fully dressed and pulling his suitcase, picks his way past piles of media equipment. The hotel teems with reporters, cameramen and technicians, chattering to each other in various languages, or talking on mobile phones.

75 INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - DAY

75

The GHOST stands at the buffet bar, downing a glass of orange juice. A cameraman, festooned with equipment, stands next to him reading the New York Times. The GHOST cranes his head to read the front page headline: 'War Crimes Court to Rule on British Ex-Premier'.

CAMERAMAN

(noticing him)

Hague press conference is ten o'clock eastern.

GHOST

Thanks.

CAMERAMAN

Who're you with?

GHOST

I'm on my own.

76 INT. MINIVAN - DAY

76

The GHOST, in the front passenger seat, his suitcase clasped in his lap, is being driven out of town by one of the PROTECTION OFFICERS. He dials a number on his mobile phone.

GHOST

Nick Ricardelli please.

ASSISTANT

(V/O)

He's out of the office right now.
May I connect you with his voice
mail?

GHOST

Why not?

PROTECTION OFFICER

Oh fuck, here we go again.

Ahead through the windscreen a demonstration is visible - placards, a bullhorn - police cars and media in attendance.

77 EXT. HIGHWAY JUNCTION - DAY

77

The minivan slows to turn off the highway on to the track to Rhinehart's house. The demonstrators surge forwards.

WOMAN WITH BULLHORN

Lang! Lang! Lang!

DEMONSTRATORS

Liar! Liar! Liar!

The chant repeats. A fusillade of blows rattles the van.

RICK

(V/O)

Nick Ricardelli. Leave a message.

78 INT. MINIVAN - DAY

78

Faces, contorted with rage, are pressed against the windows.

GHOST

Hi Rick. Now they want the book in two weeks. Thanks for getting me this job. Can't talk. Some peace protestors are trying to kill me.

Suddenly, jammed grotesquely close to the glass, looms the face of the STRANGER from the bar. He jabs his finger.

STRANGER

(muffled, through glass)

You're working for a murderer!

The minivan lurches forwards and their eye contact is broken.

79 EXT. FOREST TRACK - DAY

79

The minivan bounces down the track towards the house.

80 INT. HOUSE. HALLWAY - DAY

80

The GHOST's suitcase is being searched by a PROTECTION OFFICER. AMELIA waits, holding the manuscript.

AMELIA
You look terrible. Still jet-lagged?

GHOST
Yeah, I've aged ten years in two days. This place is Shangri-la in reverse.

AMELIA
I tried to call you several times last night. You didn't answer.

GHOST
I forgot to charge my mobile.

AMELIA
Really? And the phone in your room?

GHOST
I'm a heavy sleeper.

AMELIA
Well, you can do your heavy sleeping here from now on.

GHOST
Here?

AMELIA
We're under siege. You can't run the media gauntlet every day. Eventually they'll discover who you are. That'll be horrid for you.

81 INT. HOUSE. BEDROOM - DAY

81

AMELIA pulls open the curtains. Daylight shows a bedroom with en suite bathroom. The GHOST looks around with distaste.

GHOST
So this is where you put the granny?

AMELIA
No, this is where we put Mike McCara.

AMELIA slides back the door to the large closet to reveal a few shirts and jackets on hangars, a set of drawers, and a suitcase on the top shelf.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
I'm afraid we haven't had chance to clear it yet. The sheets have been changed, though.

GHOST

Actually, I make it a rule not to stay at a client's house.

AMELIA

(gives him the manuscript)

But now you can have constant access to the manuscript. Isn't that what you want? Besides, Sid Kroll will be arriving any minute.

(crosses to the door)

Why don't you settle in, then come up and join us? You're practically one of us now.

GHOST

I am?

AMELIA

(at the door)

You drafted the statement yesterday. That makes you an accomplice.

82

INT. HOUSE. BEDROOM - DAY

82

The GHOST perches uneasily on the mattress. He notices, protruding from beneath the bed, a pair of slippers. He takes them between finger and thumb and drops them in the closet.

Through the window, a helicopter hovers over the dunes.

83

INT. HOUSE. SITTING ROOM - DAY

83

SID KROLL sits on one of the long sofas, with a young paralegal on either side: ENCARNACION, a good-looking Mexican woman, and JOSH, who is black; both have laptops. LANG and RUTH are on the sofa opposite: their body language indicates their row is continuing: he has his jacket off; she has her back to him. AMELIA and the GHOST are in armchairs.

On the huge plasma screen, the WAR CRIMES PROSECUTOR, a Spanish woman, appears at a press conference in The Hague. In a halo of flashing camera lights, she stands at a podium bearing the logo of the ICC.

WAR CRIMES PROSECUTOR

I wish to make a short statement. I will not be taking questions. I have this morning been granted the power to investigate the former British Prime Minister, Mr Adam Peter Benet Lang, under Articles Seven and Eight of the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

(MORE)

WAR CRIMES PROSECUTOR (CONT'D)

I shall be contacting Mr Lang and the British government to ask for their full cooperation. Thank you.

The WAR CRIMES PROSECUTOR ignores the shouted questions and leaves the podium. The picture on the screen cuts to the live helicopter shot of the Rhinehart house.

AMELIA dips the sound. Phones have started ringing throughout the house. The helicopter sweeps in low, rattling the window.

KROLL

We should get you to Washington, Adam, right away. My plane's waiting at the airport. I can get you in to see the Speaker of the House at lunchtime, and you can have a photo op with the Secretary of State this afternoon.

LANG

Won't that look as if I'm panicking?

KROLL

No, they'll both say the meetings were fixed weeks ago.

LANG

But what're we supposed to be discussing?

KROLL

Aids? Poverty? Climate change? Who cares? The main thing is to show the world it's business as usual.

LANG

What do you think, Ruth?

RUTH

I think it's a terrible idea. You'll look as though you're America's whipping boy, running crying home to daddy.

LANG

So what would you do?

RUTH

Fly back to London. The government will have to support you.

AMELIA

The British government will cooperate fully with the investigation.

15.
RUTH
Really? What makes you think
that?

AMELIA
I'm not thinking it, Ruth: I'm
reading it.

At the bottom of the screen is the headline 'BREAKING NEWS:
BRITISH GOVT "WILL COOPERATE FULLY" WITH WAR CRIMES PROBE'.

NEWSCASTER
I believe we can now go live to
the UN in New York...

RICHARD RYCART passes through the lobby of the United
Nations, surrounded by scores of reporters and cameramen.

NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)
(V/O)
...where the former British
Foreign Secretary, Richard Rycart
is about to make a statement.

RYCART
I watched the announcement in The
Hague today with great shock and
sadness. Adam Lang was and is an
old friend of mine...

RUTH
You hypocritical bastard!

RYCART
...and I regret that he's chosen
to bring this down to a personal
level. This isn't personalities.
This is about justice. This is
about making sure that every
political and military leader
knows, when they make a decision,
that they'll be held to account
by international law. Thank you.

REPORTER
If you're called to testify, sir,
will you go?

RYCART
Certainly I'll go.

RUTH
I bet you will, you little shit.

The TV screen cuts back to helicopter views of the house.

LANG
That settles it. Washington it
is.

RUTH
I still say it will look bad.

LANG

Not as bad as being led away in
handcuffs from Heathrow.

RUTH

It would show you had some guts.

LANG

Then why the hell don't you just
fly back without me? If the
British government want to hand
me over to this kangaroo court,
fuck 'em! I'll go where people
want me. Amelia, tell the boys
we're leaving in five minutes.
Get one of the girls to pack me a
bag. And you'd better pack one
for yourself.

RUTH

(acidly)

Oh, but why don't you share a
suitcase? It will be so much more
convenient.

For a moment, no one moves. Then AMELIA slowly gets to her
feet and leaves. RUTH follows a few seconds later. A door
slams downstairs. LANG flinches, and gets wearily to his
feet. The others do the same, all preparing to leave. LANG
shrugs on his suit jacket and offers his hand to the GHOST.

LANG

I'll see you tomorrow. I'm sorry
to abandon you. At least all this
coverage should improve sales.

GHOST

Perhaps Rhinehart's PR department
arranged the whole thing.

LANG

(smiling weakly)

Well tell them to stop it will
you?

KROLL

Okay people - remember: happy,
happy faces.

84

EXT. RHINEHART HOUSE - DAY

84

As seen from the helicopter: the group leaves the house -
LANG, KROLL and one of the SPECIAL BRANCH MEN into the
Jaguar; AMELIA, LUCY AND ALICE, plus the other BODYGUARDS
into the minivan.

85

INT. HOUSE. SITTING ROOM - DAY

85

The GHOST watches the coverage on TV. A TV REPORTER stands in front of a line DEMONSTRATORS. One of them is the STRANGER. The GHOST sits forward in his chair.

REPORTER

Let's just talk to some of these protestors. You, sir - you're English, I believe.

STRANGER

I am.

REPORTER

What brings you so far from home?

STRANGER

My son was a soldier in the British Army. He was killed in one of Mr Lang's illegal wars. Mr Lang has never visited the men injured. He has never apologised.

REPORTER

(moving on)

Can I ask you the same question?

STRANGER

You're a murderer, Lang! You're a war criminal!

86

EXT. WOODS - DAY

86

The two cars travel through the woods, their headlights on, and swing on to the highway to be confronted by the demonstrators and the media. The two cars stop.

87

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

87

LANG emerges from the Jaguar, followed by KROLL and three SPECIAL BRANCH MEN. He strides over to the waiting media. We see the STRANGER among the crowd, straining at the cordon now being maintained by a greatly increased number of Massachusetts POLICEMEN.

DEMONSTRATORS

Lang! Lang! Lang! Liar! Liar!
Liar!

LANG halts in front of the TV cameras. The chant is maintained throughout the scene.

LANG

I apologise for keeping you
waiting so long in the cold...

The GHOST watches LANG's statement live on television.

LANG

...I just wanted to say a few words in response to the news from The Hague...

LANG

...These are strange times when those who have always stood for freedom and justice are accused of being criminals, while those who openly incite hatred and seek the destruction of democracy are treated as victims. Let me make one thing perfectly clear. As long as I have breath in my body, I shall fight terrorism wherever it has to be fought, whether on the battlefield, or - if necessary - in the courts. Thank you.

LANG turns on his heel and heads back to his car, ignoring the shouted questions.

The GHOST turns off the television. Suddenly, the silence in the house is profound.

The GHOST passes Ruth's bedroom door. Very faintly comes the sound of her crying. He pauses briefly to listen, then goes quietly into his own room, which is next door.

The GHOST opens the door to the closet. There is a big, old fashioned red suitcase on the top shelf. He pulls it down.

He presses the catches and opens the lid. Then he starts pulling McAra's shirts, jackets and trousers from their hangars and piling them into the case.

He pulls out the drawers, emptying the socks and underclothes into the case. As he upends the last of the drawers he sees something taped to the underside. He tears it free: a large envelope, addressed to Michael McAra, PO Box 2727, Vineyard Haven. On the back is 'Adam Lang Archive Centre, Cambridge.'

Puzzled, the GHOST cautiously takes out the contents: photographs and photocopies. Two pages are clipped together: a photocopy of Lang's party membership card, dated 1975, and a report on the London local elections, showing Lang canvassing in 1977; the two dates are circled in red biro. The GHOST flips back and forth between them in dismay.

GHOST
(under his breath)
Shit!

He turns his attention to the photographs, scanning each one quickly, dropping it on to the floor as he finishes with it. We see black and white stills of Lang's time at Cambridge in the early 1970s: studio photographs of University Footlights productions, snapshots of students by a sunlit river bank, Lang in evening dress at a May Ball.

There is a gentle knock on the door. The GHOST looks round.

GHOST (CONT'D)
One minute!

He hastily gathers the scattered photographs together and turns them over.

GHOST (CONT'D)
Yes?

The door opens and DEP comes in. She peers at the clothes on the floor.

DEP
(suspicious)
Sir? You want lunch?

GHOST
That would be nice, thanks. Give
me five minutes.

DEP leaves. He is about to put the photographs back in the envelope when he notices, on the reverse of one, a typed list of names. 'P. Emmett, St Johns' is circled in red biro, with a telephone number scrawled underneath. He looks at the picture again. We see Lang, aged 21, on stage with fellow members of the Footlights Revue - eight young men and women, all grouped together under a spotlight, arms outstretched, as if they have just finished a song and dance routine.

The GHOST inspects the phone number, hesitates, then takes out his mobile phone and calls it. We hear the long purr of an American ring tone. It repeats several times, and the GHOST is about to hang up, when it is answered.

RYCART
(V/O)
Richard Rycart.

The GHOST is too amazed to speak.

(V/O)

Who is this?

The GHOST shuts his mobile and drops it on the floor in alarm. He stuffs all the photocopies and photographs back in the envelope, looks around, then hides it under the mattress.

Just as he finishes, his telephone starts vibrating, moving crab-like along the polished wooden floor. He looks at it, mesmerized.

93

INT. HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY

93

The GHOST sits, eating a sandwich and drinking a beer, contemplating the map of the island. DEP watches him.

GHOST

Is Mrs Lang around?

DEP

No, sir. She go Vineyard Haven.
Shopping.

He gets up and goes to the map, still munching his sandwich.

GHOST

Dep?

DEP

Sir?

GHOST

Mr McAra's body. Where was it
found?

DEP

Lambert's Cove, sir.

He starts searching the map. His telephone buzzes again. He quickly turns it off and smiles at DEP.

94

INT. GARAGE - DAY

94

The gardener, DUC, slides back the garage door to reveal first a rack of a dozen bicycles and then the black Ford Escape SUV. The GHOST pulls one of the bikes from the rack.

DUC

Rain soon. Take car.

GHOST

No. A bike's fine.

DUC

Keys in car. For guests. Take
car. Mr McAra like very much.

GHOST

I'll take a bike. It'll do me good.

95 EXT. RHINEHART HOUSE - DAY

95

The GHOST wobbles away on the bike, watched by DUC, leaning on his broom. As he passes the sentry post a PROTECTION OFFICER comes out to see what he's doing.

96 EXT. WOODS - DAY

96

The GHOST cycles along the track. The sky is overcast. He stops at the junction with the highway and sees that...

97 EXT. HIGHWAY TURNING - DAY

97

...the demonstrators have gone, apart from the STRANGER. He sits in a makeshift hut made of polythene on the other side of the road, with placards showing a young man in British army uniform and the caption 'MURDERED BY ADAM LANG'.

As the GHOST slows at the junction to turn left, the STRANGER gets to his feet and calls to him.

STRANGER

Just one moment!

The GHOST is so anxious to get away, he pedals out into the road and is almost killed by an approaching car, which swerves and passes, its horn sounding furiously.

The GHOST looks over his shoulder and sees THE STRANGER standing watching him.

98 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

98

The GHOST pedals along the road. At the signpost to Lambert's Cove he turns off the main highway. It starts to rain.

99 EXT. WOODS - DAY

99

The rain is thundering down as the GHOST freewheels down a track towards the beach. He sees a derelict-looking house with a verandah. He jumps off his bike, tries to prop it against the low picket fence, and runs for shelter.

100 EXT. VERANDAH - DAY

100

The GHOST, drenched, bends down and shakes his hair. A dog starts yapping. He straightens and is startled to see an OLD MAN's face through the screen.

GHOST

Oh my God, you frightened me.

The OLD MAN opens the door, releasing a small terrier, which jumps up at the GHOST. Its owner is extremely ancient, with two flesh-coloured hearing aids.

OLD MAN
You're British.

GHOST
I am.

OLD MAN
That's okay. You can shelter.
Sheltering's free. Rosie!

He calls the dog to heel and guides it back into the house with his foot. He closes the door.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
British, eh? You anything to do
with this feller, Lang?

GHOST
In a way.

OLD MAN
Seems intelligent. Why'd he go
getting himself mixed up with
that damned fool in the White
House?

GHOST
That's what everyone wants to
know.

OLD MAN
So what brings you to this part
of the island?

GHOST
Sight-seeing.

OLD MAN
Well, you sure picked a heck of a
day for it.

GHOST
(hesitates)
Someone I knew was washed up on
the beach down there.

OLD MAN
You mean the British guy, from
the ferry?

GHOST
That's right.

OLD MAN
Now that was a funny business.

GHOST
What do you mean?

OLD MAN
No way should that current have
carried him this far west.

GHOST
No?

OLD MAN
No way!

GHOST
Are you sure?

OLD MAN
I've lived here fifty-four years!

GHOST
Did you mention this to the
police?

OLD MAN
The police? At my age, I've
better things to do, young man.
Annabeth's dealing with the
police.

GHOST
Your wife?

OLD MAN
(irritably)
Annabeth Wurmbrand. Mars
Wurmbrand's widow. She's the one
who told them about the lights.

GHOST
The lights?

OLD MAN
The flashlights on the beach.

GHOST
When?

OLD MAN
The night the body was washed up.

A pause. The GHOST stares at him.

GHOST
Could you point me in the
direction of Mrs Wurmbrand's
house?

OLD MAN
Sure. Carry on down the track.
House nearest the ocean.

The GHOST turns to leave.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
But she won't talk to you.

GHOST
Why not?

OLD MAN
She fell downstairs a week ago.
Been in a coma ever since.
Another one gone!

101 EXT. WOODS. DAY - DAY 101

Ignoring the rain, the GHOST pedals down to the dunes, past a big, deserted house. He leans the bike against a tree and climbs up on the dunes.

102 EXT. BEACH. DUNES - DAY 102

The scene from the dunes is awesome: a seamless grey hemisphere of scudding clouds and heaving ocean, the waves hurtling in and smashing against the shore in a continuous, furious detonation.

The GHOST staggers backwards in the wind, wiping rain from his eyes. When he looks again, two sinister figures, bundled up against the weather, are heading towards him. He steps back in alarm. Then one of the figures waves to him. It takes him a moment to realise that one is RUTH, the other BARRY.

The GHOST reluctantly goes on to the beach to meet them.

103 EXT. BEACH - DAY 103

RUTH tries to say something to the GHOST, but the wind whips away her words. She beckons him closer, and pulls him down slightly, so she can shout in his ear.

RUTH
I said, Dep told me you were here. We came to get you, before the storm started. What are you doing?

GHOST
Just taking the air.

RUTH
No - really.

GHOST
I wanted to see where Mike McAra was found.

RUTH
Why?

GHOST

Adam wants me to put something
about him in the book.

RUTH

Where's your bike?

GHOST

(indicates the dunes)
Up there.

RUTH

Barry, bring the car round, will
you, and meet us on the road?

BARRY

Can't do that, Mrs Lang, I'm
afraid. Have to stay with you at
all times.

RUTH

Oh, for God's sake! Do you
seriously think there are
terrorists lurking out here? Go
and get the car before you catch
pneumonia.

BARRY

(unhappily)
All right. But please don't leave
the path or speak to anyone.

RUTH

(mocking)
We won't speak to a soul,
Officer. I promise.

104 EXT. BEACH. DUNES - DAY

104

The GHOST and RUTH come down the slope from the dunes. When
they reach the bike she picks it up and pedals away, then
stops and stares into the distance. He catches her up.

RUTH

(brooding)
Poor Mike. I can't bear to think
of him ending up so far from
home. I wonder if we'll ever know
if it was an accident or suicide.

GHOST

I can't help you. I never met
him.

RUTH

I suppose it doesn't matter. He
was drunk. He drowned. End of
story.

She gets off the bike. He wheels it along the track. She
walks beside him.

GHOST
Why was he on the ferry?

RUTH
I've no idea. The funeral's on Monday, in London. I'm thinking of going. One of us should put in an appearance, and it doesn't seem likely to be my husband.

GHOST
I thought you didn't want to leave him?

RUTH
It rather looks as though he's left me, wouldn't you say?

She walks on ahead, obviously upset.

105 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY 105

The minivan is parked beside the road. RUTH gets in. Irritably, BARRY puts aside his Harry Potter novel and gets out to open up the back. He and the GHOST heave in the bike.

106 INT. MINIVAN - DUSK 106

The GHOST and RUTH sit side by side, behind BARRY, as he drives. The GHOST glances at her. She is staring out of the window, her face turned away, and seems to be crying. Her hand moves across the seat and grasps his. He gives it a comforting squeeze.

107 EXT. HIGHWAY TURNING - NIGHT 107

The lights of the minivan travel across the STRANGER's posters as the van swings into the track that leads to Rhinehart's house. There is no sign of the STRANGER.

108 INT. HOUSE. BATHROOM - NIGHT 108

The GHOST runs himself a steaming hot bath. He picks up a bottle of organic bath oil and sniffs it suspiciously, then empties it into the bath.

109 INT. HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT 109

The GHOST gingerly peels off his drenched clothes and leaves them piled in the middle of the floor.

The GHOST sinks into the bath with a groan of pleasure and submerges himself. The door is slightly ajar. Suddenly, he sees RUTH in the bedroom. He pulls himself up.

GHOST

Hello?

RUTH

(from the bedroom)

Sorry. I did knock. It's just me.
I was bringing you some dry
clothes.

GHOST

That's all right. I can manage.

RUTH

Dinner's in an hour? Okay?

GHOST

That's fine. Thanks.

He waits until the door closes, then rises from the bath.

On the bed is a pile of Adam Lang's clothes. The GHOST, wearing a bathrobe, examines the monogram on the shirt: APBL. He lifts the mattress and checks the package is still there.

He goes over to the manuscript of the memoirs, sits, turns on the anglepoise lamp. We see the words as he reads.

GHOST

(reading)

'It was at the time of the London elections that I first got to know Ruth... She had gained a First at Oxford and then done a year's postgraduate research as a Fulbright Scholar...'

He underlines her name and turns the page. There is no more about her.

The GHOST, wearing Lang's clothes, comes up the stairs into the sitting room. The dining table has been set for two, with candles. There are candles dotted all around the room. A log fire is burning. The television is on, with the volume muted. Beyond the big plate glass window, the grounds of the house are illuminated. Rain lashes against the glass.

RUTH sits on the sofa, with her legs drawn up under her, reading the New York Review of Books and sipping a glass of white wine. She looks up at the GHOST appears.

RUTH
(approvingly)
A perfect fit. All you need now
is a drink.

GHOST
What are we having?

RUTH
(pouring him a glass)
Biodynamic white wine, from the
Rhinehart Vinery in Napa Valley.

The GHOST drinks it quickly.

GHOST
He doesn't own a distillery, I
suppose?

RUTH
(looking at the TV)
It's the evening news. Christ,
we're the lead story. Pour us
some more wine, will you? I may
have to get drunk for a change.

On the screen, the NEWSCASTER sits in front of a headline
reading 'LANG: WAR CRIMES'.

NEWSCASTER
Former British premier Adam Lang
was in Washington today, seeking
US political support ahead of a
possible indictment for war
crimes. Our political editor has
more.

A montage of shots: LANG leaving the Rhinehart house, LANG
speaking to the media at the end of the woodland track,
LANG with senior administration officials in Washington...
In most of the shots, AMELIA is visible behind him.

POLITICAL EDITOR
(V/O)
Adam Lang left the home of
billionaire publisher Marty
Rhinehart this morning, knowing
that he was moving into uncharted
territory. In Washington, Mr Lang
received firm promises of
support, both from congressional
leaders and the Secretary of
State, before going on to a
private dinner tonight with the
Vice President.

SECRETARY OF STATE
(shaking LANG's hand)
Adam Lang has stood by America's
side in the War against Terror,
and I am proud to stand by his
side this afternoon. Adam - good
to see you.

RUTH
(through clenched teeth)
Don't grin!

LANG
(grinning)
Thank you. Thanks very much. It's
good to see you.

RUTH
Oh, for fuck's sake!

NEWSCASTER
In Iraq, a suicide bomber --

RUTH turns off the television. Her mobile phone begins to
ring. She glances at it.

RUTH
It's Adam, calling to ask how I
think it went.
(turning it off)
Let him sweat.

GHOST
Does he always ask your advice?

RUTH
Always. And he used to take it.
Until just lately.

The GHOST pours them both more wine.

RUTH (CONT'D)
Are you married?

GHOST
Certainly not.

RUTH
Gay?

GHOST
No! I had a --

RUTH
What? Girlfriend?

GHOST
She was a bit more than that.

RUTH
Partner?

GHOST

But a bit less than that. Forty thousand years of human language and no word to describe our relationship. It was doomed.

RUTH

(laughing)

Come on. Let's eat.

113

INT. HOUSE. SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

113

The GHOST and RUTH sit opposite one another. DEP serves them each a bowl of clear soup. They start eating. They also keep drinking, and start to seem very slightly drunk.

RUTH

How's it going?

GHOST

The book? It's not, to be honest. Can I talk frankly?

RUTH

Of course.

GHOST

I find it hard to understand certain things.

RUTH

What things?

GHOST

Well, I can't understand why this good-looking lad who goes to Cambridge without the slightest interest in politics and who spends his time acting and chasing girls, suddenly ends up --

RUTH

Married to me?

GHOST

No, no. Not that. Not that at all. I don't understand why, by the time he's twenty-two, he's an active member of a political party. Where's that coming from?

RUTH

Didn't you ask him?

GHOST

He told me he joined because of you. A great story, about you turning up in the rain. I was going to start the whole book with it.

RUTH
And now you're not?

GHOST
No. I can't. It's not true.

RUTH
Isn't it?

GHOST
You know it isn't. He joined two years before he met you.

RUTH
How do you know that?

GHOST
(hesitates slightly)
I've got a copy of his original party membership card. Mike McAra found it in the archives.

RUTH
Typical Mike - to ruin a good story by too much research! Did he find anything else?

GHOST
Not much. Cambridge stuff mostly.

DEP arrives to clear the soup plates, and serve the next course - steamed fish and vegetables with rice. RUTH frowns and studies her cutlery, obviously troubled.

GHOST (CONT'D)
You were much more political than he was.

RUTH
I was certainly a change from his Cambridge girlfriends - all those Jocastas and Pandoras

GHOST
Marrying you must have been vital for him - your knowledge, your contacts in the party.

RUTH
And I thought he wanted me for my body!

GHOST
Didn't you ever want to be a proper politician in your own right?

RUTH
Of course. Didn't you ever want to be a proper writer?

GHOST
(puts down his cutlery)
Ouch.

RUTH
(places her hand on his)
I'm so sorry. I've hurt your
feelings. I suppose even ghosts
must have feelings?

GHOST
Oh, we do, we do!

RUTH
Have you finished? Why don't I
get you a proper drink?

114 INT. HOUSE. SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

114

The GHOST and RUTH sit on the sofa. He pours himself a
glass of whiskey.

GHOST
White wine - I've never seen the
point of it.

He drinks, savouring the taste.

RUTH
That's the sort of thing Mike
used to say.

GHOST
At last - something in common.

RUTH
Do you know, the coroner reckoned
he must have drunk at least half
a bottle?

GHOST
How convenient.

RUTH
What do you mean?

GHOST
(into his glass)
Nothing.

RUTH
You think his death was
suspicious?

GHOST
Don't you?

RUTH
(quietly)
Yes. Yes I do.

GHOST

(impulsively)

Today, at the beach, I met a man -
an old timer - familiar with the
currents. He said there was no
way a body from the ferry would
wash ashore at Lambert's Cove.

RUTH

(shocked)

You're kidding!

GHOST

He also says a woman saw
flashlights on the beach that
night. She fell downstairs. She's
in a coma. That's all I know.

RUTH

(slowly)

That's all you know? Jesus.

She starts feeling around on the sofa.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Jesus. Shit. Give me your phone.

GHOST

(giving it to her)

Why?

RUTH

(entering the number)

I need to call Adam.

She stops.

GHOST

What?

RUTH

Nothing.

She puts the phone back on the table.

GHOST

You're not going to call him?

RUTH

(standing)

Later. I'm going for a walk
first.

GHOST

It's pitch black. It's pouring
with rain!

RUTH

It'll clear my head.

GHOST

I'll come with you.

RUTH
No. Thanks, but I need to work
this through on my own. You stay
here. Have another drink. Don't
wait up.

115 INT. HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

115

The GHOST pulls back the curtain in his room, to see RUTH,
trailed by BARRY, heading off into the night.

116 INT. HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

116

The GHOST, asleep in bed, suddenly opens his eyes, jerked
out of his sleep. The door is slightly ajar, letting in a
crack of light. A figure stands in the corridor.

RUTH
Are you awake?

GHOST
I am now.

RUTH
I'm sorry.

GHOST
It doesn't matter. Hold on.

The GHOST throws back the covers. Naked, he grabs his robe
from beside the bed and turns on the light. RUTH wears a
similar bath robe. Her hair is soaking wet. She has been
crying again.

GHOST (CONT'D)
What time is it?

RUTH
I don't know. I called Adam.

GHOST
And?

RUTH
Can I come in?

She enters, closing the door behind her.

RUTH (CONT'D)
The day before Mike died, he and
Adam had a terrible row. I
haven't told anyone this before,
not even the police.

GHOST
What was it about?

RUTH
I don't know, but it was furious.
They never spoke again.
(MORE)

RUTH (CONT'D)

When I asked Adam about it, he refused to discuss it. After what you just said I felt I should ask him again.

GHOST

What did he say?

RUTH

He was having dinner with the Vice President. That bloody woman wouldn't even give him the phone.

She sits on the edge of the bed, her face in her hands. After a moment's hesitation, the GHOST sits next to her.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Dear God help us - what has he got himself mixed up in?

She collapses into his arms. Again, the GHOST hesitates, unsure what to do. He strokes her hair.

GHOST

It's all right. It'll be all right.

RUTH

I'm scared. I've never been scared in my life before. But I am now.

GHOST

Your hair's wet. You're drenched. Let me get you a towel.

He gently extricates himself.

117 INT. HOUSE. BATHROOM - NIGHT

117

The GHOST picks up a towel. He glances in the mirror.

GHOST

Bad idea.

118 INT. HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

118

RUTH has taken off her robe and is in bed.

RUTH

Do you mind?

GHOST

Of course not.

He turns off the light, slips off the robe and gets in beside her. She presses her mouth against his, urgently.

The camera pans from the pale grey light of the window to find the GHOST lying on his back, staring at the ceiling. RUTH, her back to him, is also awake. The GHOST reaches for his robe, slips out of bed, and stealthily covers himself.

RUTH

The modesty of the morning after.

GHOST

Sorry. I thought you were asleep.

RUTH

You mean you thought I'd be gone?

GHOST

Isn't that the usual protocol?
The business of the night
transacted, the visiting party
retreats to their quarters...

RUTH

Like a vampire afraid of the
dawn?

The GHOST in the shower, amid clouds of steam, vigorously soaping himself.

The GHOST goes back into the bedroom, wearing his robe. RUTH, similarly dressed, is at the desk, studying the manuscript.

RUTH

You've taken out his family tree.
He's very proud of the Langs.

GHOST

You want a family tree, go to a
garden centre.

RUTH

Why have you underlined my name
every time?

GHOST

I was surprised there wasn't more
about you.

He pulls on a pair of boxer shorts beneath his robe.

RUTH

(watching him)
I'm just the wife.

GHOST

Even so, you ought not to be written out of history.

RUTH

Why not? Most women are.

The GHOST opens the door to the closet.

GHOST

Well, I shall reinstate you. Put in all the occasions he's forgotten.

RUTH

How kind. Like the boss's secretary, who remembers his wife's birthdays for him?

GHOST

Something like that. But then, as you say, I'm not a proper writer.

He takes off the robe and carries on dressing.

RUTH

What are you planning to do?

GHOST

Leave.

RUTH

That's not necessary as far as I'm concerned.

GHOST

I'm afraid it is as far as I am.

RUTH

Are you going to tell Adam about this?

GHOST

Oh, for God's sake!

RUTH

Where will you go?

GHOST

Back to the hotel. I'm sorry. I should never have stayed in a client's house. It always ends -

RUTH

With you fucking the client's wife?

GHOST

No. Not always. But it makes it hard to keep a professional distance.

RUTH unfastens her robe, but only to draw it more tightly about her, and double-knot it.

RUTH
And the things we discussed last night? What do you propose to do about them?

GHOST
Nothing.

RUTH
You can't just ignore them.

GHOST
I'm his ghostwriter, not an investigative reporter. What are you going to do about it?

RUTH
Perhaps I'll write my own book: 'Ex-Prime Minister's Wife Tells All'.

The GHOST gets out his suitcase and starts packing.

GHOST
If ever you decide to do that, give me a call.

RUTH
You think I need someone like you to produce my book?
(crossing to the door)
I don't want to be in his bloody book. He's on his own now. I'll get a divorce. And then she can do the prison visits.

She leaves, slamming the door. The GHOST continues packing. He picks up the manuscript, and hesitates - obviously remembering his instruction not to remove it - but then stuffs it in the suitcase, along with McAra's envelope.

122 INT. HOUSE. HALLWAY - DAY

122

BARRY is sitting by the front door, reading his Harry Potter novel, as the GHOST approaches, wheeling his suitcase.

BARRY
(smirking)
Morning, sir. Finished for the night, have we?

GHOST
Why don't you just fuck off?

123 EXT. HOUSE - DAY 123
The GHOST emerges into the pouring rain, walks a few paces, then ducks into the lee of the house for shelter. He takes off his jacket and holds it over his head, then runs towards the garage.

124 INT. GARAGE - DAY 124
The GHOST comes into the garage and opens the door wide.

125 INT. FORD - DAY 125
The GHOST runs his hands over the unfamiliar controls. He turns the ignition key. The engine comes on, and so does a satellite navigation device beside the steering wheel.

FEMALE VOICE
Join the road as soon as possible.

The GHOST puts the car into reverse and backs out.

126 EXT. WOODS - DAY 126
The Ford heads through the rain up the track.

127 INT. FORD - DAY 127
Up ahead, through the windscreen, we see the main highway.

FEMALE VOICE
In two hundred yards, turn right.

The GHOST, irritated, tries to switch off the navigation system.

FEMALE VOICE (CONT'D)
In fifty yards, turn right.

128 EXT. HIGHWAY TURNING - DAY 128
The Ford slows to a halt. There is no sign of the STRANGER. His one-man exhibition looks to have been abandoned.

129 INT. FORD - DAY 129
FEMALE VOICE
Turn right.

The GHOST swings the wheel, and accelerates away.

130 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY 130

The Ford drives along the rainswept highway, and approaches a fork in the road.

131 INT. FORD - DAY 131

FEMALE VOICE

In two hundred yards, turn left.

The GHOST starts thumping the side of the SatNav system

FEMALE VOICE (CONT'D)

In fifty yards, turn left.

GHOST

Sorry sweetheart, the hotel is right.

FEMALE VOICE

Turn left.

132 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY 132

The Ford turns right.

133 INT. FORD - DAY 133

FEMALE VOICE

Turn around when possible.

GHOST

This is getting ridiculous.

He pulls over and turns the engine off. The screen goes blank. He turns it back on again; the screen lights up. Cautiously, he puts the car in gear and pulls away.

FEMALE VOICE

Turn around when possible.

GHOST

(sighing)

All right. You win.

134 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY 134

The Ford does a quick U-turn and heads back the way it came.

135 INT. FORD - DAY 135

FEMALE VOICE

In two hundred yards, turn right.

136 EXT. SEASIDE TOWN - DAY 136
The Ford turns right off the highway into a shuttered-up
seaside town.

137 INT. FORD - DAY 137
FEMALE VOICE
In two hundred yards, turn left.

138 EXT. FERRY TERMINAL - DAY 138
The Ford drives into a car park, and joins a line of cars
queuing to board the ferry.

139 INT. FORD - DAY 139
The GHOST eyes the yawning, rusting mouth of the ferry.
GHOST
You've got to be kidding.

140 INT. FERRY TICKET OFFICE - DAY 140
A SALESWOMAN sits, bored, behind the counter, as the GHOST
approaches.
SALESWOMAN
Single or return?
GHOST
Return. I hope.

141 INT. FERRY. BELOW DECKS - DAY 141
The GHOST parks the Ford.

142 INT. FORD - DAY 142
A CREWMAN taps on the window and indicates that the GHOST
should turn off the ignition. The GHOST does so. The screen
goes blank. He continues to stare at it.

143 INT. FERRY. CAFE - DAY 143
At the counter, the GHOST waits to pay for his coffee and
doughnut. He checks the faces around him. It is early
morning: there are only men. The CUSTOMER in front of him
reads USA Today. It has a picture of Lang, grinning with
the Secretary of State, and the headline 'LANG TO FACE WAR
CRIMES TRIAL, WASHINGTON SHOWS SUPPORT'.

144 EXT. FERRY - DAY 144
The ferry passes a flat, grey coastline.

145 EXT. FERRY - DAY 145
The ferry docks.

146 INT. FORD - DAY 146
The GHOST starts the engine. The screen comes alive.

FEMALE VOICE
Join the road when possible.

147 EXT. WOODS HOLE FERRY TERMINAL - DAY 147
The Ford comes off the ferry and heads through the town.

FEMALE VOICE
At the roundabout take the second
exit.

148 EXT. MASSACHUSETTS FREEWAY - DAY 148
The Ford heads north towards Boston.

FEMALE VOICE
In two hundred yards take the
next exit.

149 EXT. CORNCORD TURNPIKE EXIT - DAY 149
The Ford leaves the freeway. A sign says 'Belmont Center'.

150 INT. FORD - DAY 150
The ghost drives cautiously along a country lane.

FEMALE VOICE
In two hundred yards you will
have reached your destination.

Through the windows nothing is visible except woodland.

FEMALE VOICE (CONT'D)
You have reached your
destination.

151 EXT. COUNTRY LANE - DAY 151
The Ford pulls up on to the verge. The GHOST switches off
the engine and gets out of the car.

The only living creature is a red squirrel, watching him from a nearby fence post. He claps his hands to scare it away, and then walks along the lane for about fifty yards, until he comes to...

152 EXT. CONCEALED DRIVE - DAY

152

...an electric gate with keypad and video camera, that blocks the entrance to a drive, which curves away behind the trees. There is a sign - 'THESE PREMISES ARE PROTECTED BY CYCLOPS SECURITY' - and a mailbox, crammed to overflowing.

The GHOST checks the camera, then opens the mailbox, and sorts through the letters, variously addressed to Mr and Mrs Paul Emmett, Professor and Mrs Paul Emmett, Nancy Emmett, and Professor P. Emmett, President Emeritus, Arcadia Institution.

153 INT. FORD - DAY

153

Back in the parked car, the GHOST opens his suitcase.

GHOST
(muttering to himself)
Paul Emmett...

He takes out the envelope, and searches among the photographs for the picture of the group of eight students on stage. He turns it over. There is Rycart's phone number and the typed slip identifying the eight members of the cast - among them, circled in red biro, "P Emmett (St John's)".

The GHOST inspects the group again. The camera picks out Emmett: older, squarer, shorter-haired than the others.

The GHOST sits back in his seat, thinking. He looks absently out of the window. The squirrel is back on its fence post, studying him.

GHOST (CONT'D)
(to the squirrel)
Emmett. Does that ring a bell
with you? Professor Paul Emmett?

He suddenly reaches into his case, pulls out Lang's memoirs, and flicks to the last chapter. We see the words at the beginning of chapter eleven:

GHOST (CONT'D)
(reads)
'Professor Paul Emmett of Harvard University has written of the unique importance of the English-speaking peoples in the spread of democracy around the world: "As long as these nations stand together, freedom is safe;
(MORE)

GHOST (CONT'D)
whenever they have faltered,
tyranny has gathered strength." I
profoundly agree with this
sentiment.'

There is the sound of a car approaching.

The GHOST turns to see a small Japanese car passing - a middle-aged, dark-haired woman at the wheel, and a man, 60-ish, in sports jacket and tie next to her. They both stare at the GHOST. They are NANCY and PAUL EMMETT.

Through the windscreen, the GHOST sees the car pull up at the gate, and EMMETT get out and empty the mailbox. EMMETT stares back at the Ford, suspicious, but then resumes his seat next to his wife. Their car turns into the drive and disappears.

The GHOST puts the page from the manuscript and the photographs into his shoulder bag and turns on the engine.

154 EXT. CONCEALED DRIVE - DAY

154

The GHOST gets out of the Ford and presses the intercom. He feels himself coming under scrutiny from the video camera.

 NANCY
 (V/O intercom,
 distorted)
Hello?

 GHOST
Is that Mrs Emmett?

 NANCY
 (V/O)
Who is this?

 GHOST
I wondered if I could have a word
with Professor Emmett.

 NANCY
 (V/O)
Do you have an appointment?

 GHOST
It's about Adam Lang. I'm
assisting him with his memoirs.

 NANCY
 (V/O)
Just a moment, please.

There is a pause.

 EMMETT
 (V/O)
This is Paul Emmett. I think you
must have made a mistake.

GHOST

You were at Cambridge with Mr
Lang?

EMMETT

(V/O)

We were contemporaries, yes. But
I can't claim to know him.

GHOST

I have a picture of you together.

A longer pause.

EMMETT

(V/O)

Come on up to the house.

With a whine, the electric gate opens.

155 INT. FORD - DAY

155

Through the windscreen, the Emmetts' house appears - big,
neo-colonial, shuttered, made of stone and white-painted
wood.

156 EXT. EMMETT HOUSE - DAY

156

The GHOST gets out of his car, carrying his shoulder bag,
and approaches the house. EMMETT waits at the top of the
front steps. He is preppily and precisely dressed in sports
jacket, duck-egg blue shirt, red tie and matching
handkerchief. His spectacles have tortoiseshell frames.

EMMETT

I make it a rule never to see
anyone without an appointment.
But your mention of a photograph
did rather tickle my curiosity.

He eyes the shoulder bag, and realises, reluctantly that he
will have to invite the GHOST in. He opens the door.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

Please, do come in.

157 INT. EMMETT HOUSE. HALL - DAY

157

A cold, neat house, of wax floors and dried flowers, with a
colonial staircase. A grandfather clock ticks loudly on the
landing. The GHOST follows EMMETT. Through an open door,
NANCY can just be glimpsed in the kitchen, on the
telephone.

NANCY

Yes, he's here now.

She notices the GHOST and closes the door.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

That's decent of him. His instincts as prime minister were good. But that doesn't mean I know him.

The GHOST gestures to the photograph of Emmett and Lang.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

Oh, that. That was taken at a reception in London, to mark the tenth anniversary of the Arcadia Institution.

GHOST

The Arcadia Institution?

EMMETT

It's a little organisation I used to run. Very select. No reason why you should have heard of it. The prime minister graced us with his presence.

GHOST

(pulling out his notebook)

Can you remember much about him at Cambridge? I'm sorry - do you mind?

EMMETT

Not at all. Go ahead. I'm just rather bewildered. No one's ever mentioned the Cambridge connection between us in all these years.

GHOST

But you performed together?

EMMETT

In one production. The summer revue. I can't even remember now what it was called.

He ostentatiously consults his watch.

GHOST

Can I show you something else?

EMMETT

If you must.

The GHOST gives him the other photographs, including one in which LANG smokes a joint, while the youthful EMMETT gives a victory sign behind his back. EMMETT studies them, obviously alarmed, though he tries to make light of it.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

Oh my. Is that what I think it is? Let's hope he didn't inhale.

GHOST

But that is you standing behind him, isn't it?

EMMETT

I do believe it is. And I do believe I'm on the point of issuing a stern warning to him on the perils of drug abuse.

He gives the pictures back to the GHOST and leans back in his chair, scrutinising him.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

Does Mr Lang really want these published in his memoirs? If so, I would prefer it if I weren't identified. My children would be mortified. They're so much more puritanical than we were.

GHOST

Do you remember any of the others? The girls perhaps?

EMMETT

I'm sorry. That summer is just a blur - a happy blur. Now, you were going to tell me where you got those pictures.

GHOST

(slowly, looking at him)
From Michael McCara.

EMMETT

And he is whom, exactly?

GHOST

My predecessor on the Lang memoirs.

EMMETT

He resigned?

GHOST

He died.

EMMETT

I'm sorry to hear that.

GHOST

He drove up here to see you a couple of weeks ago, and died a few hours afterwards.

EMMETT

Drove up to see me? I'm afraid you're mistaken. How did he die?

GHOST

He drowned.

EMMETT

Poor fellow. I've never believed the myth that death by drowning is painless, have you? I'm sure it must be agonising.

GHOST

The police never said anything to you about this?

EMMETT

No. I've had no contact with the police.

GHOST

Were you here that weekend? This would have been January the eleventh and twelfth.

EMMETT

A less equable man than I would start to find your questions impertinent.

He crosses to the door and opens it.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

(calling)

Nancy! Our visitor wishes to know where we were on the weekend of the eleventh and twelfth of January. Do we possess that information?

NANCY appears carrying a desk diary. She shows it to EMMETT.

NANCY

That was the Colorado weekend.

EMMETT

Of course. We were at the Aspen Institute. 'Bi-polar relationships in a multi-polar world.'

GHOST

Sounds fun.

EMMETT

(shutting the diary)

It was. I was the main speaker.

GHOST

Just to return to Cambridge --

EMMETT

No. If you don't mind, let's not return to Cambridge. I've said all I have to say on the matter.

He ushers the GHOST out of the study.

159 INT. EMMETT HOUSE. HALL - DAY

159

EMMETT shakes the GHOST's hand by the open front door.

EMMETT

I'm an avid reader of political memoirs. I'll be sure to get hold of Mr Lang's book when it appears.

GHOST

Perhaps he'll send you a copy, for old time's sake.

EMMETT

I doubt it very much. The gate will open automatically. Be sure to make a right at the bottom of the drive. If you turn left, the road will take you deeper into the woods and you'll never be seen again.

160 EXT. EMMETT HOUSE - DAY

160

The front door closes. The GHOST gets into the car.

161 INT. FORD - DAY

161

The GHOST looks in the mirror and sees EMMETT staring at him. He starts the car.

162 EXT. CONCEALED DRIVE - DAY

162

The Ford turns right, back on to the country lane. To the left, further up the lane, a large saloon car is parked.

163 INT. FORD - DAY

163

The GHOST drives.

FEMALE VOICE

Turn around where possible.

The GHOST brakes, seizes the SatNav in both hands and wrenches it free. It comes away in a tangle of wires.

He glances in the mirror and sees the large saloon pulled up some distance behind him. As he watches, the car slowly pulls away. It accelerates, overtakes him at speed, and disappears.

The GHOST hesitates, then puts the Ford in drive and begins heading towards the local town.

The GHOST parks the Ford just beyond an internet cafe.

The GHOST takes a tray with a cup of coffee and a bagel and sits at the table furthest from the window. There are a few other CUSTOMERS: an OLD TIMER with his paper, two NANNIES gossiping as three TODDLERS play at their feet.

The door opens. Two YOUNG LOVERS, a man and a woman, enter, holding hands. They take a table near to the GHOST.

The GHOST logs on to an internet search engine and enters 'Arcadia Institution'. From the list of results, he clicks on www.arcadiainstitution.org.

We see the famous photograph of Churchill and Roosevelt shaking hands at Placentia Bay in August 1941, and 'Statement of Aims: To Further Anglo-American Relations and Foster the Timeless Ideals of Democracy and Free Speech...'

The GHOST clicks on to the list of Trustees, headed by a picture of Paul S. Emmett, captioned 'President Emeritus', with a brief biography beneath it. We see 'lecturer in International Affairs, Harvard University, 1975-9'.

The GHOST scrolls down the Trustees, until he reaches 'Arthur Prussia, President and CEO of The Hallington Group'. We see the same logo that we saw earlier, on the company jet that brought Adam Lang to Martha's Vineyard.

The GHOST frowns, and goes back to the search engine. He enters "Adam Lang" and "Hallington". A press release appears.

GHOST

(reads)

'The Hallington Group is pleased to announce that Adam Lang, the former Prime Minister of Great Britain, will be joining the company as a strategic consultant...'

The cafe door opens. The GHOST looks up. Two fit-looking YOUNG MEN with crew cuts enter and take seats at the counter.

The GHOST clicks on a link to a corporate video. The screen fills with footage of missiles, cluster bombs, bombers, tanks, aircraft carriers, nuclear centrifuges, surveillance cameras, security guards. The film ends with an animation of the Hallington logo: the ribbon encircling the globe.

HALLINGTON VOICEOVER

With thirty-five billion dollars of funds at its disposal, the Hallington Group brings together a family of companies devoted to defence and security. And with unrivalled expertise in the Mid-East - including the services of two former presidents, three prime ministers, and two directors of the CIA - Hallington is proud to stand at the forefront of the struggle against terror. Hallington: Protecting the World.

At the mention of the CIA, the GHOST reacts. In the search engine he enters 'Hallington + CIA' and gets the result: 'Hallington jet linked to CIA "torture flights"'. He clicks on the blue hyperlink for water boarding and the screen fills with illustrations of victims being tortured.

The GHOST enters '"Paul Emmett" + CIA' in the search engine and gets a link entitled 'The CIA in Academia'. He clicks on it and is taken to a website called 'Spooks on Campus', showing a picture of Senator Frank Church's 1976 Congressional hearings on the CIA, and beneath it a list of names. One is Paul Emmett.

The GHOST looks around, then reads from the screen:

GHOST

(reading)

'Yale graduate Paul Emmett was reported by CIA whistleblower Frank Molinari to have joined the Agency as an officer in either 1969 or 1970, where he was assigned to the Foreign Resources Division of the Directorate of Operations.'

A deafening crash makes the GHOST jump. The children playing under the nearby table have pulled it over, smashing crockery. One of the YOUNG MEN at the counter is studying the GHOST intently; the other is talking into a mobile phone.

The GHOST stands and hastily starts packing up his possessions. He throws a \$20 bill on the table and heads for the door. On his way out, he knocks into the YOUNG LOVERS.

166 EXT. BELMONT STREET - DAY

166

The GHOST hurries over to his car, unlocks it and gets in.

167 INT. FORD - DAY

167

The GHOST locks the doors and sits behind the wheel.

168

EXT. BELMONT STREET - DAY

168

The two YOUNG MEN come out of the cafe and walk in the opposite direction, up the street.

169

INT. FORD - DAY

169

The GHOST fumbles for the photograph of Lang and Emmett together at Cambridge. He turns it over to get the number scrawled on the back, and enters it into his mobile phone. He looks in the mirror.

170

EXT. BELMONT STREET - DAY

170

The GHOST's POV: the YOUNG LOVERS leave the cafe and stroll a few yards up the street to a jewellers, where they study rings in the window.

171

INT. FORD - DAY

171

The GHOST, the phone to his ear, watches the YOUNG LOVERS.

RYCART

(V/O)

So you rang back. Are you going to stay on the line this time?

GHOST

Yes.

RYCART

(V/O)

I tried to call you back a couple of times.

GHOST

I know. I'm sorry. It didn't seem right to be talking to you.

RYCART

(V/O)

Why's that?

GHOST

I'm Adam Lang's ghost writer. I --

RYCART

(V/O, interrupting)

No names! Don't use any names. How'd you get this number?

172

EXT. BELMONT STREET - DAY

172

The GHOST's POV: the LOVERS turn from the shop window and walk past the car, ignoring it.

173 INT. FORD - DAY

173

GHOST
It's on the back of a photograph.

RYCART
(V/O)
Is it, by God? And where are you
now? Without being specific.

GHOST
New England.

RYCART
(V/O)
Can you get to the city where I
am, right now? You know where I
work?

GHOST
I suppose so. I have a car.

RYCART
(V/O)
No. Don't drive. Flying's safer
than the roads.

GHOST
That's what the airlines say.

RYCART
(V/O)
Listen, my friend, if I was in
your position, I wouldn't joke.
Catch the first available flight.
Text me the flight number -
nothing else. You understand?

GHOST
Yes.

174 EXT. MASSACHUSETTS FREEWAY - DAY

174

The Ford heads through the traffic towards Boston airport.

175 EXT. BOSTON AIRPORT CAR PARK - DAY

175

The GHOST is parking the car when his mobile phone rings.

176 INT. FORD - DAY

176

The GHOST answers. A big jet passes low overhead.

GHOST
Hello?

RUTH

(V/O)

What on earth are you doing?

GHOST

Working.

RUTH

(V/O)

Really? You're not at your hotel.

GHOST

Aren't I?

RUTH

(V/O)

Well, are you? They told me you hadn't even checked in.

GHOST

(thinking fast)

I decided to go to New York.

RUTH

(V/O)

Why?

GHOST

I wanted to see John Maddox.

RUTH

(V/O)

I was worried about you. All day I've been walking up and down this fucking beach, thinking about what we discussed last night --

GHOST

(interrupting)

I wouldn't say anything about that on the phone.

RUTH

(V/O)

It's all right - I'm not a total fool. It's just - the more I go over things, the more scared I get. When will you be back?

GHOST

I'm not sure.

RUTH

(V/O)

Tonight?

GHOST

I'll try.

RUTH

(V/O)

Do, if you can. It's Dep's night off. I'll cook.

GHOST

Is that supposed to be an incentive?

RUTH

(V/O, laughing)

You rude man!

She rings off.

177 EXT. BOSTON AIRPORT CAR PARK - DAY 177

The GHOST hides the manuscript under the Ford's front seat and locks the door.

178 INT. BOSTON-NEW YORK SHUTTLE - DUSK 178

The GHOST sits nervously on the plane. Next to him, a BUSINESSMAN is reading the 'Financial Times'. The GHOST studies the headline: 'LANG WINS US SUPPORT'.

179 INT. LA GUARDIA AIRPORT. ARRIVALS HALL - NIGHT 179

The GHOST comes through the barrier into a pandemonium of passengers. A line-up of DRIVERS waits, each man holding the name of his pick-up. The GHOST passes along them, wondering what he is supposed to do. Then he sees a man with 'McAra' written on a piece of paper: wan, dark-haired, early fifties, surly, chewing gum. This is FRANK.

FRANK

(nodding to suitcase)

You okay with that.

It's a statement not a question. He turns and walks away quickly. After a brief hesitation, the GHOST follows.

180 INT. FRANK'S CAR - NIGHT 180

The GHOST clutches his suitcase on the back seat, uncomfortably aware of the silence, as FRANK drives very quickly out of the airport.

181 EXT. AIRPORT HOTEL - NIGHT 181

FRANK's car pulls up outside a big glass-fronted hotel and conference centre overlooking Grand Central Parkway. The noise of the jets dropping to the nearby runway is deafening.

FRANK twists round in his seat and gives the GHOST a cell phone and a piece of paper.

FRANK

If you need to make contact, use this. Don't use your old phone. That's the new number to call. Pay for you room in advance, cash. It's three hundred bucks. You got that?

The GHOST nods. FRANK gives him a credit card.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You're staying one night. The room's guaranteed on this card. Register using the name on the card and give a false address in the UK.

GHOST

You used to be a cop.

FRANK

Don't use the internet. Turn off your old phone. And don't speak to strangers - especially any women who try to come on to you.

GHOST

You sound like my mother.

FRANK

Well? What're you waiting for? That's it.

The GHOST gets out of the car and steps into the hotel's revolving door.

The lobby is huge and modernistic, swarming with delegates to a religious investors' convention, all wearing lapel badges. The GHOST checks the name on the card and approaches the CLERK at the desk.

GHOST

I have a reservation.

CLERK

Certainly, sir. What name?

GHOST

Clive Dixon.

The CLERK types the name into his computer.

CLERK

You'll be staying with us for one night, is that correct?

GHOST

That's right.

CLERK

And how would you like to pay?

GHOST

(takes out wallet)

Cash.

CLERK

(surprised)

Cash?

185 INT. AIRPORT HOTEL. BEDROOM - NIGHT

185

A functional room, softly lit by table lamps, with a double bed, and two comfortable chairs with a low table between them. The GHOST sits in one of the chairs. He has raided the mini-bar. Two or three empty miniatures are on the table.

Someone knocks softly on the door. The GHOST, still clutching a whiskey miniature, goes over to it and checks the spy hole.

186 EXT. AIRPORT HOTEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

186

The GHOST'S POV: grotesquely distorted through the spy hole, RICHARD RYCART stands in the corridor, with FRANK.

187 INT. AIRPORT HOTEL. BEDROOM - NIGHT

187

The GHOST unchains and unlocks the door, and opens it. RYCART is a handsome man of about 60, in an expensive overcoat.

RYCART

Okay Frank. I'll take it from here.

He comes into the room. The GHOST closes the door. He nods at the miniature in the GHOST's hand.

RYCART (CONT'D)

Tough day?

GHOST

You could say that.

RYCART crosses the room and draws the curtains.

GHOST (CONT'D)

Can I get you something to drink?

RYCART

Just water.

While the GHOST pours him a glass of water, RYCART prowls around, checking the bathroom and the closet.

GHOST

You think this is a trap?

RYCART

It crossed my mind. You do work for Lang.

GHOST

Yeah, for two days. I hardly know him.

RYCART

Who does? I worked with him for fifteen years, until he fired me, and I still can't fathom him.

GHOST

(handing him the water)

His wife said more or less the same.

RYCART

Well, if someone as sharp as Ruth doesn't get him, what hope do we have? Cheers.

GHOST

The man's a mystery.

RYCART

Mysteries are there to be unravelled.

GHOST

I feel as though I'm the one unravelling, quite frankly.

RYCART

(patting his shoulder)

I'm here to help. Let's sit and talk. You got my number off a photograph. What photograph?

They sit. The GHOST has his suitcase on his lap. He starts to unzip it, then stops.

GHOST

I'd like you to tell me something first.

RYCART

Go ahead.

GHOST

Why would Mike McAra have your number?

RYCART

He was helping me.

GHOST

McAra? How?

RYCART

He got me the documents tying Lang to the rendition flight. He found them in the archive.

GHOST

And you gave them to the war crimes court?

RYCART

Courtesy of McAra - the loyalest of the loyal!

GHOST

But why would he do that?

RYCART

Disillusion. Anger. Imagine devoting your life to a leader, then discovering he was implicated in kidnap and torture.

GHOST

But why is your number on this photograph?

RYCART

About three weeks after he sent the documents he called me. He said he'd discovered something bigger - something that made sense of everything that had gone wrong while we were in power.

GHOST

What was it?

RYCART

He wouldn't tell me over the phone. He wanted to meet somewhere safe. All he'd say was that the truth was in Lang's memoirs.

GHOST

There's nothing in the memoirs.

RYCART

Well, that's what he said: "it's all in the beginning of the memoirs." I hadn't a clue what he meant.

GHOST
"The beginning?" He meant what
happened to Lang at Cambridge.

He gives the photograph to RYCART, who studies it intently.

RYCART
This is it? A bunch of privileged
kids doing a song and dance act?

GHOST
The one on the left is Lang.

RYCART
I can see that.

GHOST
The one next to him is Paul
Emmett.

RYCART
Paul Emmett. The Arcadia
Institution. Okay. So what?

GHOST
He may have been an officer in
the CIA.

RYCART
He may have been what?

GHOST
In the Foreign Resources Division
of the CIA.

RYCART
What's your source for that?

GHOST
Some CIA whistleblower, quoted on
the internet.

RYCART
(still studying the
photo)
That could be interesting.

GHOST
No, that could be paranoia.
What's interesting is that a
couple of hours after he drove up
to Boston to see Emmett, McAra
was dead.

RYCART stares at the GHOST in astonishment.

There is a knock at the door. RYCART holds up a warning
hand to the GHOST, then quietly crosses the room and checks
through the spy hole. He opens the door to reveal a MAID.

MAID
Can I turn down the bed?

RYCART

Later.

He closes the door. The GHOST exhales with relief. RYCART laughs and begins pacing excitedly.

RYCART (CONT'D)

My God, this is it, isn't it?
This explains why Lang went into politics! Everyone knows he didn't have a political thought in his pretty little head. This is why he was able to rise so quickly - with a little help from his friends.

GHOST

Wasn't that the point of him?
That he didn't have an ideology?

RYCART

He may not have had an ideology but he sure as hell had an agenda.

(stops pacing)

Okay, here's a quiz for you. Name me one decision he took in ten years as prime minister that wasn't in the interests of the USA.

The GHOST is silent.

RYCART (CONT'D)

Come on, it's not a trick question.

(counts on his fingers)

Iraq. Middle East policy. Star wars defence. Buying American nuclear missiles. Support for terrorist rendition. The sacking of any minister Washington didn't like. McAra was right: it makes sense of everything. The question is: what are we going to do about it?

GHOST

Ah, well, now, this puts me in a tricky position. I've signed a confidentiality agreement -

RYCART

It's a bit late for that!

GHOST

But we don't have any proof. It's just a theory -

RYCART

You'll have to get the proof.

GHOST

Me?

RYCART

You're his ghost writer.
Presumably you tape him?

GHOST

I use discs, actually.

RYCART

Discs, tapes. You've got to
confront him with this - get it
all recorded. Even if we just
have denials, it'll be something.

GHOST

But the discs are his property.

RYCART

The court has power of subpoena.

GHOST

What if I don't record any discs?

RYCART

Then I'll make sure you're
subpoenaed and forced to repeat
this whole story.

GHOST

I'll deny it.

RYCART

Then I'll give them this.

He opens his jacket to reveal a small microphone.

RYCART (CONT'D)

Frank is recording every word,
aren't you, Frank? Oh, come on!
Don't look so shocked! What did
you expect? That I'd come to a
meeting with a man who's working
for Lang without taking any
precautions? Except you're not
working for Lang any more. You're
working for us.

The GHOST's mobile phone starts to ring.

RYCART (CONT'D)

Don't answer!

GHOST

(studying the number)
It's Amelia Bly.

RYCART

If you answer, they can fix your
position to within ten yards.

GHOST

Fuck you.

(answers the phone)

Hi, Amelia.

AMELIA

(V/O)

Good evening. I have Adam for you.

The GHOST mouths at RYCART: 'It's Adam Lang.'

LANG

(V/O)

Hi, we're in the car. I was just speaking to Ruth. She tells me you're in New York.

GHOST

That's right.

LANG

(V/O)

So am I. We're flying back to the Vineyard. D'you want a lift?

GHOST

Hold on a second, Adam.

He presses the mute button.

RYCART

You are a fucking idiot.

GHOST

He's flying back to the Vineyard.
He's offering me a lift.

RYCART

(thinking it over)

You should go.

GHOST

What if it's a trap?

RYCART

If you refuse he'll get suspicious. Tell him yes. And hang up.

GHOST

(speaking into phone)

Hi Adam, that's great. Thanks.
Where do I meet you?

LANG

(V/O)

Hold on, here's Amelia.

AMELIA
(V/O)
La Guardia, Special Handling. Be
there in thirty minutes.

She hangs up.

GHOST
They want me to go to La Guardia.

RYCART
(putting on his coat)
Get your stuff together. We'll
meet you in the car park.

188 INT. AIRPORT HOTEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT 188

RYCART emerges from the hotel bedroom and checks the
corridor. He sees FRANK and hurries towards him.

189 INT. AIRPORT HOTEL. BEDROOM - NIGHT 189

The GHOST packs hurriedly.

190 INT. AIRPORT HOTEL. ELEVATOR - NIGHT 190

The elevator is crammed with delegates from the religious
convention. The GHOST stares straight ahead.

191 INT. AIRPORT HOTEL. LOBBY - NIGHT 191

The elevator doors open and the passengers pour out. The
GHOST follows and joins the queue waiting to get into the
revolving door - it is the large type, that takes a group
of people in each compartment. As he enters it and shuffles
forwards, he sees EMMETT and the two crewcut YOUNG MEN
coming in together in the opposite compartment. They don't
see him: their faces are set; they are in a hurry.

192 EXT. AIRPORT HOTEL - NIGHT 192

The GHOST, in a panic, drags his suitcase across the hotel
forecourt, through a flower bed and into the car park. A
pair of headlights comes on, and a car drives straight at
him, swerves at the last minute, and the passenger door is
flung open. RYCART is in the back seat, FRANK driving.

RYCART
Get in!

The GHOST throws his suitcase in, then follows, and the car
pulls away in a squeal of tyres, slamming the door shut.

193

INT. FRANK'S CAR - NIGHT

193

FRANK is driving very fast, checking the mirror. The GHOST and RYCART are being thrown about in the back.

GHOST

I just saw Emmett.

RYCART

Are you sure?

GHOST

No.

RYCART

Did he see you?

GHOST

I don't think so.

RYCART

I told you not to use that phone!

FRANK

They must've followed us from the airport.

GHOST

Where are we going?

RYCART

La Guardia.

GHOST

I really don't think this is a good idea.

RYCART

You have no choice.

GHOST

But Emmett must have told Lang I'd been to see him!

RYCART

So what's he going to do about it? Throw you out of his plane?

GHOST

Yes!

RYCART

Oh, come on! He's already lost one ghost in suspicious circumstances. He can't afford to lose another.

GHOST

You do know all this is pointless, don't you?
(MORE)

GHOST (CONT'D)

In the end he'll just retire over
here on his CIA pension and tell
you and your bloody war crimes
court to go fuck yourselves?

194 EXT. ENTRANCE TO LA GUARDIA - NIGHT

194

The car pulls up at the airport terminal. The GHOST gets
out. RYCART passes him his suitcase.

RYCART

If you're really worried, let's
have a fail safe system. Call me
every two hours. If you miss,
I'll call Lang and say I hold him
responsible for your safety.

GHOST

It isn't Lang I'm worried about.

195 EXT. LA GUARDIA. AIRCRAFT STAND - NIGHT

195

A Gulfstream Four stands on the tarmac. AMELIA waits at the
foot of the steps. A PROTECTION OFFICER is nearby. The
Hallington corporate logo is very visible on the fuselage.
The GHOST approaches, pulling his suitcase.

GHOST

My first time on a private jet.

AMELIA

Let's hope it's not your last.

196 INT. GULFSTREAM FOUR. PASSENGER CABIN - NIGHT

196

The GHOST enters the aircraft, followed by AMELIA. A
STEWARD stands at the door.

STEWARD

Good evening, sir. Hallington
welcomes you aboard.

GHOST

Thank you.

There are six large armchairs arranged in pairs, facing one
another, and two sofas along the sides of the fuselage.
LANG, jacket off and tie loosened, is at the back, facing
forwards, holding a drink. A PROTECTION OFFICER sits on a
sofa nearby. Spread around the cabin are three other
PROTECTION OFFICERS, LUCY and ALICE.

LANG raises his hand when he sees the GHOST. The GHOST
responds and takes the front seat, facing towards the tail.
The engines start up.

AMELIA

(in passing)

I'll fetch you if he wants to
talk.

AMELIA walks on and takes the seat opposite LANG.

The GHOST watches anxiously as the STEWARD closes the door and locks it.

197 INT. GULFSTREAM FOUR. PASSENGER CABIN - NIGHT

197

The plane is in the air. The STEWARD approaches the GHOST.

STEWARD

Drink, sir?

GHOST

I'll have what Mr Lang's having.

STEWARD

Brandy, sir. Coming right up.

At the rear of the plane, AMELIA stands, and comes swaying down the aisle.

AMELIA

He wants to talk. But you don't have long. We'll be landing soon.

The GHOST collects his bag.

198 INT. GULFSTREAM FOUR. PASSENGER CABIN - NIGHT

198

LANG is sprawled back in his seat as the GHOST approaches.

LANG

(gestures with his
drink)

Hi man. Take a seat.

The GHOST sits opposite him and puts the tape recorder on the small table between them.

GHOST

(indicating recorder)
Do you mind?

LANG

Leave it off for now. Ruth said
you were in New York to see
Maddox.

GHOST

That's right.

LANG

How was he?

GHOST

He was fine.

LANG

Full of energy?

GHOST
You know John.

 LANG
I do know John. As a matter of
fact, I was just with him.
 (pause, quietly:)
You never saw him today, did you?

 GHOST
No.

LANG studies the GHOST.

 LANG
Do you have anything to say?

 GHOST
I went to see Emmett.

 LANG
That windbag! Why?

 GHOST
I know about you and Emmett.

 LANG
Me and Emmett?

 GHOST
I know that he was your --

 LANG
My -- ?

 GHOST
Your handler -- is that what
they're called?

 LANG
 (splutters his drink
 with laughter)
My handler?

 GHOST
Your handler for the CIA.

Now LANG laughs so loudly some of the other PASSENGERS turn
to see what's going on. Gradually, he controls himself.

 LANG
My God, you're serious, aren't
you?

The GHOST takes out the photograph and passes it over.

 GHOST
When McAra discovered this he
drove up to Boston to show it to
Emmett. He died on the way back.
I think he may have been
murdered.

As LANG examines the photograph, the STEWARD appears and gives the GHOST his drink. LANG looks up.

LANG

Are you sure you haven't had a few too many of those already?

The GHOST takes a gulp of brandy. It steadies his nerve.

GHOST

McAra believed it was Emmett who encouraged you to go into politics in the first place.

LANG

(disbelief)

Emmett? I barely know the man.

GHOST

The story you told about why you joined the party - Ruth canvassing - the dates don't fit.

LANG

So what? Is it that important?

GHOST

Then when McAra found that photograph, and picked up the stories that Emmett was in the CIA -

LANG

What stories?

GHOST

It's on the internet -

LANG

(losing his temper)

I have never heard such complete and utter balls in my entire life. Mike would never have believed such crap. He was too clever. Too loyal.

GHOST

It was Mike who betrayed you to Rycart.

The revelation halts LANG in his tracks.

LANG

I don't believe it! How do you know that?

GHOST

I went to see him.

LANG

Rycart?

The GHOST nods.

LANG (CONT'D)

He's lying.

GHOST

The phone number on the back of
that photograph is Rycart's.
Isn't that McAra's handwriting?

LANG glances at it, then slowly sits back, stunned, his
mind obviously working furiously.

LANG

(muttering to himself)

Mike, Mike, Mike...

GHOST

Surely you knew he'd become
disillusioned? Didn't you have a
huge row just before he died?

LANG

Yes, that's true. But he never
mentioned anything about this.
This is just - it's grotesque.
I'd never take orders from
anyone. Everything I did as prime
minister - everything - I did out
of conviction, and because I
believed it was right.

GHOST

Including support for illegal
kidnapping? For torture?

LANG

Oh, for God's sake, spare me that
bullshit!

Again, PASSENGERS turn round. AMELIA half rises out of her
seat to see what's going on.

LANG (CONT'D)

D'you know what I'd do if I was
in power again? I'd have two
queues at the airports. One for
flights where we'd done no
background checks, used no
intelligence gained under
torture, infringed no one's
precious bloody civil liberties.
The other for flights where we'd
done everything possible to make
passengers safe. Then we'd see
which plane the Rycarts of this
world would put their bloody kids
on. And you can put that in the
book!

AMELIA appears and taps the GHOST on the shoulder.

AMELIA

That's enough. Get back to your seat. We're landing.

The GHOST rises.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Adam? Are you all right?

199 EXT. MARTHA'S VINEYARD AIRPORT - NIGHT 199

The Gulfstream Four comes in to land.

200 INT. GULFSTREAM FOUR. PASSENGER CABIN - NIGHT 200

The GHOST, back in his own seat, stares through the window as the jet taxis towards the passenger terminal.

201 EXT. MARTHA'S VINEYARD AIRPORT. TERMINAL - NIGHT 201

The GHOST's POV: behind the brightly-lit, floor-to-ceiling window of the terminal building, RUTH waits for her husband.

202 INT. GULFSTREAM FOUR. PASSENGER CABIN - NIGHT 202

The aircraft engines are switched off. The passengers gather their belongings. The GHOST rises, as AMELIA makes her way forward from the rear of the aircraft. She gives him a look of mingled anger and puzzlement. LANG follows her, grim-faced. He, too, stares at the GHOST, and has half-passed him, before he turns back.

LANG

When we get back to the house, we need to have a meeting.

LANG moves on, followed by his PROTECTION OFFICERS. The GHOST retrieves his case and joins the party exiting the plane.

203 EXT. MARTHA'S VINEYARD AIRPORT. CONCOURSE - NIGHT 203

The GHOST emerges into the freezing air at the top of the aircraft steps, and follows LANG, AMELIA, the SECRETARIES and the PROTECTION OFFICERS towards the terminal building. RUTH stands at the window.

204 INT. MARTHA'S VINEYARD AIRPORT TERMINAL - NIGHT 204

LANG and his entourage sweep into the passenger hall, with the GHOST bringing up the rear. There is a UNIFORMED POLICEMAN, a couple of AIRPORT EMPLOYEES, two PHOTOGRAPHERS, a REPORTER, a CAMERA CREW and a pair of curious BYSTANDERS.

REPORTER

Mr Lang! Will you live in
America?

RUTH moves forward to greet her approaching husband, and LANG is only a few yards away, when one of the BYSTANDERS shouts 'Adam!' LANG slows and turns, and suddenly we see the barrel of a pistol, held by the STRANGER. His face is impassive as he fires twice, in rapid succession. LANG doubles up and staggers, as one of his PROTECTION OFFICERS flings himself across the ex-prime minister's body, pressing him to the floor, shielding him. Suddenly, it is pandemonium: shouts, screams, people crouching - the GHOST among them - the PROTECTION OFFICERS drawing their guns, firing. Bullets smack into the STRANGER from various directions, and he is flung around like a marionette before collapsing, dead.

When the GHOST straightens, he sees AMELIA with her face pressed to her hands in horror, and RUTH, screaming, cradling the limp body of her husband.

205 EXT. MARTHA'S VINEYARD AIRPORT. CONCOURSE - NIGHT 205

The airport concourse is alive with activity, light, noise - ambulances, patrol cars, helicopters, policemen, medics. One chopper lifts off.

A HELICOPTER CREWMAN escorts the GHOST - still pulling his suitcase - along with AMELIA, the SECRETARIES, and one of the SPECIAL BRANCH MEN towards the second chopper. They duck to avoid the rotors.

206 INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT 206

The GHOST stares straight ahead, in shock. None of the passengers speaks.

207 INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS, BOSTON. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT 207

The interview has been going on some time. FBI AGENT #1 sits at the table opposite the GHOST, making notes on a laptop. The second AGENT stands behind the GHOST.

FBI AGENT #1

How long had you known Mr Lang?

GHOST

A couple of days.

FBI AGENT #1

In what capacity?

GHOST

I was his ghost - ghostwriter.

FBI AGENT #1

(turning the laptop)

Do you recognise this man?

The screen shows a blown-up passport photograph of the STRANGER.

GHOST

He's the man who shot - He was
one of the protestors -

FBI AGENT #2

Did you ever speak with him?

GHOST

(turning round)
He was in the bar one night, at
the hotel where I was staying.

FBI AGENT #2

Did you ever speak with him?

GHOST

He asked if I knew where Adam
Lang was staying on the island. I
said I didn't.

FBI AGENT #1

Did you report this conversation?

GHOST

Sorry?

FBI AGENT #1

Did you report this conversation
to Mr Lang's protection team?

GHOST

No.

FBI AGENT #1

What was Mr Lang's demeanour on
the flight back from New York?

GHOST

He seemed fine. He was - fine -

FBI AGENT #1

One witness said you two seemed
to be having an argument.

GHOST

No.

The two FBI AGENTS leave the room. The GHOST is left
waiting. After a few seconds they return.

FBI AGENT #1

We'd like your passport.

GHOST

Why?

FBI AGENT #2
A serious crime has been
committed on US territory. You're
a material witness.

FBI AGENT #1
(smiling)
We need to keep you close.

208 INT. BOSTON HOTEL ROOM - DAY

208

An anonymous room: double bed, armchairs, table, a TV. The GHOST lies on the bed, drinking whiskey from a miniature. The curtains are drawn. The remains of a meal are on the table.

On the TV is a Fox report of the return of Lang's body to the UK. Soldiers carry a flag-draped coffin off a transport plane, as RUTH - dressed in black - stands on the tarmac.

TV REPORTER
(V/O)
Like a fallen soldier, Adam Lang
went home today - home to a
shocked and grieving nation.

The GHOST presses the remote. The channel changes to CNN. And there is RICHARD RYCART, wearing a black tie.

RYCART
- a great colleague and a true
patriot. We had our
disagreements, but we always
stayed friends. My heart goes out
to Ruth and the family -

A knock at the door. The GHOST turns off the TV. The knock comes again, more loudly. The GHOST crosses to the door.

GHOST
Who is it?

RICK
(V/O, muffled)
Congratulations.

The GHOST opens the door to reveal RICK.

GHOST
Now what?

RICK
On still having me as your agent.

He flourishes the GHOST's passport.

RICK (CONT'D)
They don't need you any more.
You're free to go.

RICK crosses the room and pulls back the curtains.

RICK (CONT'D)

Ready to get back to work?

GHOST

I don't think I can, Rick. I'm sorry. Not after all this.

RICK

Don't be a jerk. This is a hot book now. This is Adam Lang's voice from the grave. The guy's a hero.

GHOST

I just want to go home.

RICK

You can. Go home. You can finish the book in London.

GHOST

I don't know, Rick...

209 EXT. BOSTON AIRPORT CAR PARK - DAY

209

Watched by RICK, the GHOST opens the Ford and retrieves the manuscript from beneath the seat. He closes the car and gives the keys to RICK. A big jet passes overhead.

210 EXT. LONDON BOOKSHOP - EVENING

210

A summer's night, four months later. The window of a huge bookstore in central London is filled with a massive display of 1,000 copies of Adam Lang's memoirs. Inside the shop, a party is being held. People are queuing to pass through security. The GHOST stands apart, looking gaunt, glancing around furtively. He holds a parcel wrapped in gift paper and tied with a ribbon. He consults his watch.

AMELIA pushes through the crowd.

AMELIA

(brightly)

Well, here we are.

GHOST

Here we are.

Suddenly, AMELIA's face crumples. The GHOST puts his arms round her. They embrace, then she pulls away, takes a powder compact from her handbag and carries out some swift repairs.

AMELIA

Sorry. I keep thinking I'm over it, then I realise I'm not.

GHOST

Are you sure this is all right?

AMELIA

Of course. My invitation says
plus one.

GHOST

Only I thought you might have
wanted to bring your husband.

AMELIA

That didn't work out. I hadn't
realised quite how bored he was
with being my plus one.

She shuts the powder compact with a click.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Shall we go in?

211

INT. LONDON BOOKSTORE - EVENING

211

The GHOST and AMELIA squeeze their way through the crowded
reception. It is noisy. There are several hundred guests.
Waiters are circulating with champagne and canapes.
Photographers' flashes light up the far end of the room
where RUTH, elegantly dressed in black, is signing copies.
MADDOX and KROLL are in attendance.

The GHOST grabs two glasses of champagne from a passing
WAITER and hands one to AMELIA.

GHOST

That was a bit of a turn-up, you
calling me.

AMELIA

I heard you weren't invited. I
thought you should be here.

GHOST

Ghosts don't get invited to
launch parties, as a rule. We're
an embarrassment. Like a mistress
at a wedding.

(realises his faux pas)

Sorry. I brought you a present.

He gives her the parcel and holds her glass as she unwraps
it. It's McAra's original manuscript, covered in crossings-
out and scribbled comments.

AMELIA

(laughing)

Oh, that's very funny. Thank you.

GHOST

Seeing how keen you were to keep
hold of it, I thought you might
like it as a souvenir.

AMELIA

(glances around)

Between you and me, that wasn't us. It was the Americans. They thought the book was a potential threat to national security.

GHOST

But there's nothing in it!

AMELIA

Something about the beginnings? I think that's what I heard.

GHOST

The beginning.

AMELIA

No, beginnings. The beginnings.

The GHOST frowns. AMELIA looks at him, puzzled. Suddenly, over her shoulder, he sees PAUL EMMETT, chatting to RUTH. The GHOST sways back in alarm.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Are you all right?

GHOST

Do you know that man? The one with Ruth.

AMELIA

(looking at EMMETT)

Paul Emmett?

GHOST

What's he doing here?

AMELIA

He was Ruth's tutor at Harvard, when she was a Fulbright Scholar. Why shouldn't he be here?

For a moment, the GHOST doesn't speak.

GHOST

(nods at manuscript)

Do you mind if I have that back for a moment? There's something I want to check.

The GHOST moves cautiously to the doors at the far end of the party, then slips away.

A stock room - a copying machine, piles of books in and out of crates, publicity material. The GHOST sweeps clear a space on a table and sets out the manuscript.

GHOST
(talking to himself)
'The truth is in the
beginnings...' The beginnings...

We see the opening chapter as he reads:

GHOST (CONT'D)
(reading)
'One. Langs are Scottish folk
originally...'

He skims through the pages, and pulls out the other openings.

GHOST (CONT'D)
(reads)
'Two. Wife and child in tow, I
decided to settle in a small
town... Three. Ruth saw the
possibility...'

He compares the three chapter openings. He grabs a nearby sheet of paper and takes out a pen.

GHOST (CONT'D)
(writing)
Langs... wife... Ruth...

With growing comprehension and alarm, he takes out the first page of each chapter and writes down the opening word. We see the finished result as he reads it:

GHOST (CONT'D)
Langs... Wife... Ruth... Was...
Recruited... As... A... CIA...
Agent... By... Professor Paul
Emmett of Harvard University...

There is a burst of applause from the party. He looks round.

The GHOST re-enters the party, carrying the manuscript. RUTH is on a small platform, holding a microphone. Behind her is a huge photograph of her husband.

RUTH
I miss Adam all the time. But
never more than tonight.
(MORE)

RUTH (CONT'D)

Not just because we're meeting to launch his wonderful book, and he should be hear to share the joy of his life story with us, but because he was so brilliant at making speeches and I'm so terrible.

There is a release of laughter. The GHOST folds up the sheet of paper containing the hidden message and writes 'Ruth Lang' on it. He gives it to the GUEST in front of him.

As RUTH speaks, the message makes its way towards her.

RUTH (CONT'D)

So you'll be relieved to hear, I'm not going to make a speech. I'm just going to thank our wonderful publishers, Marty Rhinehart and John Maddox, our attorney and friend Sid Kroll, and finally - but especially - Mike McAra. Mike: you are in our thoughts.

A rumble of 'hear hears'.

RUTH (CONT'D)

And now - a toast.

(raising her glass)

To the memory of a great man, a great patriot, a wonderful husband and a devoted father: to Adam!

A chorus of 'to Adam', followed by loud applause.

The note is handed to RUTH. She shakes it open with her free hand and reads. Alarmed, she quickly closes it and searches the smiling faces. She sees the GHOST. He raises a glass of champagne to her. She freezes, then glances around to check if anyone else has noticed. When she looks for him again, the GHOST has disappeared.

215 INT. MANHATTAN OFFICE - NIGHT

215

As in the opening scene: the same man, reading at his desk, framed against a view of the Manhattan skyline - only now it is night. His desk light casts a pool of illumination. The skyscrapers are lit. The camera slowly zooms in on him.

GHOST

(V/O)

And so, finally, am I supposed to be pleased that you are reading this, or not? Pleased, of course, to speak at last in my own voice. Disappointed, obviously, that it probably means I'm dead.

The reverse angle: the man reading, his face obscured by the page.

GHOST (CONT'D)

(V/O)

But then, I'm afraid, in this life, you just can't have everything.

The man puts down the last page, and we see he is RICK. He squares off the typescript, and thinks for a few moments. Then he reaches for his telephone, and punches in a number.

RICK

David? It's Nick Ricardelli.

He tilts back in his chair, his feet on the desk.

RICK (CONT'D)

Congratulations.

(smiles in anticipation)

Have I got a book for you...

THE END

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