

THE SAINT
by
James Dearden

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1. EXT. PARIS CITYSCAPE. NIGHT

SILENCE. A full moon sits up in the black night sky, high above the darkened city, cold and remote.

We slowly PAN DOWN onto the dim silhouette of the city skyline. Just as we recognize the familiar outline of the Eiffel Tower, there's a sudden and deafening EXPLOSION of light!

A barrage of fireworks explodes across the sky in a dazzling pyrotechnic display.

2. EXT. PLACE DE LA CONCORDE. NIGHT

The crowds cheer wildly from the sidewalk. Many wave the tricolor national flag.

It's Bastille Day - the French Fourth of July.

A young couple embrace, oblivious to the celebrations around them, very much in love.

3. EXT. PARIS ROOFTOPS. NIGHT

The flat roofs of two modern hi-rise buildings almost touch, separated by a gap of no more than ten feet.

Not a large distance. Not, that is, unless it's your intention to jump it at a height of over two hundred feet.

We HOLD on a MAN, dressed from head to toe in black, as he sprints up to the raised parapet of one of the buildings and launches himself into space.

SCRUNCH! His trainer-clad feet land on the opposite side, barely inches from the edge!

He hits the ground running and continues across the flat roof, silhouetted against the flash of another brilliant illumination. He wears a lightweight pack strapped to his back. He's slim, average height, superb physical condition.

He reaches the opposite edge and takes off. And this time we'd better hope that backpack of his contains a parachute. Surely he's misjudged it? There's a gap of at least thirty feet between him and the next building!

3. Contd.

For a moment he seems to hang suspended in mid-air, as in the distance another cascade of light spurts across the pitch-black sky. Then he begins to fall.

THWACK! He slams against the plate glass window of the opposite building some thirty feet from the top and sticks there like a human fly, attached by hi-tech suction pads fixed to his hands and knees. Either this man's the greatest cat burglar the world has ever seen, or he's in training for Barnum and Bailey.

4. INT. AL RASHID'S OFFICE. NIGHT

We are inside looking out of one of the offices in the building, crammed with state of the art communications technology.

The MAN comes into view as he maneuvers himself across the glassy expanse of window. The only part of his face that's visible inside his woollen balaclava are his eyes, alert and piercing. Fiercely concentrated.

5. EXT. OFFICE BUILDING. NIGHT

We are above him, looking down. It's a vertiginous drop to the street below, the miniaturised cars scuttling along like luminous beetles.

He unfastens one of his wrists and reaches into his backpack. He pulls out a weird-looking futuristic gun. Holding it against the glass, he aims it into the room.

A tiny hole is burnt into the glass, glowing briefly a violent red. It's a laser gun, at least in part.

He pulls the second of two triggers and a fiber-optic cable half the diameter of a human hair fires through the hole.

6. INT. AL RASHID'S OFFICE. NIGHT

The cable hits the command panel of a sophisticated security system.

The MAN types a series of numbers into a hand-held computer.

All the lights on the panel go off.

7. INT. AL RASHID'S OFFICE. NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

A safe door opens, revealing stacked rows of thousand dollar bills. There must be at least a million dollars here.

The MAN scans the contents of the safe. But it's not the bundles of cash that catch his eye.

He reaches inside and retrieves a stack of files, each with a coded identification. This is no common criminal.

He sorts through the files and locates the one he's looking for. The rest he puts neatly back in place.

Only now, almost as an afterthought, does he reach for the cash, scooping the green bundles into his backpack.

The job done, he places a visiting card inside the safe. We glimpse it briefly before the safe door closes again.

There's no name or signature, just a drawing of a stick figure with a halo.

The Saint.

8. EXT. 'LE MONDE' BUILDING. NIGHT

A different MAN is standing in the shadows outside the headquarters of the 'Le Monde' newspaper, France's journal of record. He becomes alert as a cab pulls up.

A BEARDED MAN gets out of the cab and goes over to him. He's wearing a nondescript bomber jacket and a baseball cap pulled down over his eyes. He hands him a large plain manila envelope and gets back into the cab. Not a word is spoken.

The other man goes inside the building. The cab takes off into the night.

A last rocket explodes in the sky, leaving a dying trail of sparks.

9. EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE. NIGHT

The night train to the south - 'Le Train Bleu' - hurtles through the night.

10. INT. TRAIN BLEU. WASHROOM. NIGHT - TRAVELLING

Squashed into the tiny washroom, the bearded man peels off his moustache and beard, revealing the handsome, if irregular features of someone in his early thirties. There are little laughter lines in the corners of his eyes. This is the face of a man who has seen life and enjoyed it. A man who has experienced the darker side of human nature, but managed to retain a youthful exuberance. Worldly, but not cynical. Keenly intelligent.

Meet SIMON TEMPLAR, aka 'THE SAINT'. Righter of wrongs. Gentleman crook. Knight errant. Call him what you will.

He looks at his reflection in the mirror and smiles.

11. EXT. TUNNEL ENTRANCE. NIGHT

The train disappears into a long, dark tunnel.

12. EXT. TUNNEL EXIT. DAY

The train emerges from a different tunnel, into daylight.

13. INT. TRAIN BLEU. FIRST CLASS COMPARTMENT. DAY - TRAVELLING

The train proceeds along the coast against the backdrop of the sun-drenched Mediterranean, a billion sparkling diamonds of light.

Sitting on the edge of the bed in his first class sleeping compartment,

Simon doesn't notice the view. A chess fanatic, he's too engrossed in a tense game with his computer.

14. EXT. NICE STATION. PLATFORM. DAY

Simon descends from the train at Nice station. He's travelling light, a suit bag and briefcase, which on closer inspection turns out to be a backgammon board. He's wearing an immaculately tailored Saville Row linen suit.

This is the dapper, elegant Simon Templar known to the public through the social columns as a professional gambler and gentleman of leisure - the perfect front for his crime-busting activities.

14. Contd.

As he leaves the platform we see that ANOTHER PASSENGER is watching him from the train.

The man dials a number on his cell phone.

15. EXT. 'CORNICHE' DAY

Simon drives a rented Mercedes convertible along the winding coastal road to Monte Carlo, the famous Corniche.

He glances in his driver's mirror. A dark sedan appears to be following him at a discreet distance.

He puts his foot down and accelerates effortlessly away, leaving the other car far behind.

16. INT. HOTEL DE PARIS. LOBBY. DAY

Simon stands at the reception desk in the lobby of the sumptuous five star Hotel de Paris. There's a big placard announcing the forthcoming World Backgammon Tournament. He finishes signing the registration card in front of the silver-haired CONCIERGE.

CONCIERGE

It's a pleasure to have you back, Monsieur Templar. I hope you will tell me if there's anything I can do for you?

SIMON

Thank you, Pierre. You could start by wishing me luck for tonight.

His accent is English, tinged with American. Or is it the other way round? In fact his mother was American and his father English. Both tragically killed in a car crash when he was barely out of his teens.

CONCIERGE

(smiles)

I thought a man like you made his own luck?

SIMON

I can always use a little more. Would you send the bags right up?

CONCIERGE

Of course, Monsieur Templar.

17. EXT. HOTEL DE PARIS. DAY

A PORTER unloads his luggage from the trunk of the Mercedes.

The sedan which was following him pulls up on the other side of the street.

18. INT. HOTEL DE PARIS. SIMON'S SUITE. DAY

The TV is on in the corner of the room, tuned to CNN. Simon opens the backgammon board, which has the stolen money tightly packed inside. He starts to count it into ten neat piles.

On the TV there's a report about the exposure of an illegal arms deal involving a right wing terrorist group in Germany, following the disclosure of certain documents to a journalist at Le Monde. Noted arms dealer Ahmed Al Rashid, protesting his innocence, is led away for questioning from the building we saw the Saint break into the night before. The news report ends by speculating who the 'mole' in the Al Rashid organization might be.

Simon gives a wry smile as he packs one of the piles of thousand dollar bills into an envelope.

19. INT. HOTEL DE PARIS. MANAGER'S OFFICE. DAY

He sits in front of the HOTEL MANAGER, who counts the pile of bills.

HOTEL MANAGER

Ninety-eight, ninety-nine, one hundred thousand dollars...

20. INT. BANQUE DE MONACO. DAY

Simon waits as the bank TELLER counts the much larger sum that remains, watched by the BANK MANAGER.

TELLER

Eight hundred and ninety-eight, eight hundred and ninety-nine, nine hundred thousand dollars...

The BANK MANAGER looks up uncertainly.

BANK MANAGER

And you wish a banker's draft for this amount?

20. Contd.

SIMON

Payable to 'Save the Children'.

BANK MANAGER

(dubiously)

It is a very large sum.

SIMON

A charitable donation. Do you have a problem with that?

BANK MANAGER

Of course not, Monsieur. But.. such generosity! It's not every day...

He shrugs, laughs nervously.

SIMON

I insist on complete anonymity, do you understand? That's why I don't want to use a personal cheque. Je veux rester tout a fait anonyme.

BANK MANAGER

Oui, absolument. Whatever you wish.

SIMON

(smiles, to himself)

Virtue is its own reward.

Helped nicely by the ten per cent commission he takes to cover his not inconsiderable expenses, of course.

21. INT. MONTE CARLO CASINO. SALON. NIGHT

One of the larger rooms at the casino has been set aside for the backgammon tournament. There are over fifty contestants, heavy rollers from all over the world. These are men - and they are overwhelmingly men, there is barely a single female contestant - who think nothing of playing for \$1,000 dollars a point and dropping fifty thousand in an evening. But tonight the tournament's the thing, and a cash prize of \$250,000 for the eventual winner.

Simon sits at one of the tables opposite a KOREAN MAN in his late fifties. Both wear tuxedos. It's Simon to throw. His opponent has taken off some men, but now has two men stranded in Simon's home board, with an escape route only via the seven point. Simon needs a four and a three, a five and a three, or a five and a four to close it off.

21. Contd.

He offers the doubling dice. The Korean considers for a moment before accepting with a somewhat reluctant grunt.

Simon shakes the dice cup vigorously. He throws - a 4 and a 3!

The Korean throws up his hands and mutters darkly. Simon closes the seven point. It looks like a won game. The Korean throws again.

Simon looks up from the table, feeling someone's eyes upon him.

A VERY BEAUTIFUL WOMAN is looking at him. Tall, late twenties, with legs that never seem to end, long dark hair, her high cheekbones hint at Slavic ancestry. As soon as his eyes meet hers, she moves away.

22. INT. MONTE CARLO CASINO. SALON. NIGHT - LATER

It's the deciding game. Simon takes off his two remaining pieces. The Korean stands up, shakes his hand stiffly, acknowledging defeat.

Simon saunters away towards the tournament board over by the entrance.

A handsome Hispanic man is already by the board. PABLO CORTEZ is in his mid-forties, Colombian. But it's not the board he's studying, it's the girl who caught the eye of the Saint.

CLOSE ON HER WRIST

She is wearing a fabulous diamond and emerald bracelet, set in gold. Stupendous craftsmanship, clearly antique, it must be worth a small fortune.

ANGLE ON CORTEZ

The beauty of the bracelet seems to have caught his eye even more than that of its wearer.

SIMON (o.s.)

Studying the form?

Cortez snaps to, as Simon approaches with a friendly smile. Cortez looks at him quizzically, trying to place him.

22. Contd.

SIMON

Simon Templar.

Cortez returns his smile coldly as he recognizes the name.

CORTEZ

Ah. Glad to meet you, Simon Templar.
Pablo Cortez.

SIMON

Yes, I know.

CORTEZ

Should I be flattered?

SIMON

I always think it's important to know
the enemy, don't you? Find out his
weaknesses.

CORTEZ

If he has any.

SIMON

(affably)
Oh, everybody has at least one. Even
if he thinks he hasn't. That can be the
biggest weakness of them all.

Cortez holds his look for a beat.

CORTEZ

Not me.

SIMON

Well I guess that makes you the man to
beat. Nice meeting you, Mr Cortez.

He moves on. Cortez stares after him with obvious dislike.

23. INT. MONTE CARLO CASINO. GRAND SALON. NIGHT

Simon moves among the tables, baccarat, chemin de fer. This
is a high class crowd, the men in black tie, the ladies
(and the not so ladies) in evening dress, showing off their
jewels.

At the roulette table, a wizened Paul Getty lookalike
scoops his winnings off the table. Simon smiles as he drops
a \$5,000 dollar chip down the front of his curvaceous young
companion's dress.

23. Contd.

A HAND moves a pile of chips onto the number 28. We recognize the bracelet.

The young woman sits back and waits nervously as the wheel spins.

CROUPIER

Rien ne va plus!

Simon is watching her. The ball rattles around the grooves. She closes her eyes, as it finally drops.

CROUPIER

Douze, noir! Twelve, black...

Her whole body sags. She opens her eyes dully in time to see her chips being scooped unceremoniously off the table.

She rummages in her bag for more. It's clear there isn't any. She thinks for a moment, looks at her watch - and pulls it off. It's a gold, diamond studded Cartier. She tosses it onto the table in front of the croupier.

Simon watches, fascinated.

Moments later, a CASHIER, accompanied by the CASINO MANAGER, approaches with a fresh pile of chips. The young lady signs a receipt, the cashier takes the watch, the wheel spins again.

As the casino manager passes Simon, the latter touches him lightly on the arm.

CASINO MANAGER

(pleased to see him)
Monsieur Templar! Ca va bien?

SIMON

Tres bien, merci, Antoine.
(whispers)
Ecoute, la jeune fille la-bas, tu la connais?

CASINO MANAGER

(grins)
Ah, tu as du bon gout! You 'ave good taste!

SIMON

Yes, but who is she?

23. Contd.

CASINO MANAGER
La Princesse Natalia Romanov.

SIMON
The Romanovs?

CASINO MANAGER
(nods)
She is related to the Russian royal
family.
(dubiously)
So she claims.

CROUPIER
Rien ne va plus!

Simon watches as Natalia pushes all her chips back onto the table at the last minute. Back onto number twenty-eight again.

The ball comes to rest. The wheel slows. The small crowd gathered around Natalia crane their necks.

She is staring fixedly ahead, seemingly divorced from the proceedings. She catches Simon's eye, but appears to look straight through him.

There is a GASP! from the spectators.

CROUPIER
Vingt-neuf, rouge. Twenty-nine, red!

Natalia's head drops onto her chest. It's like the blade of a guillotine falling.

She fingers the bracelet on her wrist, prey to a new temptation. As if realising how near she is to succumbing, she abruptly gets up from the table - forgetting her purse in her distraction.

Simon moves swiftly through the crowd to grab the purse. He sets off after her, catching her near the exit.

SIMON
Excuse me! I think this is yours?

She keeps on walking. He has to plant himself in front of her just in front of the doorway. She finally registers him, as if waking from a trance.

SIMON
Your purse. You left it at the table.

23. Contd.

He stands there awkwardly.

NATALIA

(sensing a pick-up coming on)
I'm sorry, I don't mean to be rude.
This hasn't been a such a great night
for me. So, thank you and - goodnight.

She smiles glacially. Her accent is Americanized and she's very fluent, but still with a trace of her Russian origins. As she takes the purse, he holds on to it for a beat longer, hoping to detain her.

SIMON

Maybe I can change your luck? Would you
let me try?

She looks at him a moment, intrigued, attracted, but on her guard. He releases his grip on the purse.

NATALIA

I think you must have got the wrong
idea about me.

SIMON

I don't think so.

NATALIA

Just because I'm on my own, I'm not one
of these women who hang around the
casino waiting for some rich man to - -

He smiles disarmingly.

SIMON

Somehow I can't imagine you having to
wait for anything. Least of all a man.

NATALIA

(amused)
Quite a charmer, aren't you?

SIMON

When I have to be.

24. INT. MONTE CARLO CASINO. GRAND SALON. NIGHT

Simon comes away from the cashier with a fistful of chips and guides Natalia back to her seat at the roulette table. She seems more relaxed, going with the flow of the situation - prepared to allow herself to be charmed.

24. Contd.

SIMON

Rule one, the Casino always wins.

NATALIA

This is news?

SIMON

(smiles)

So long as you remember that, you can minimize your losses. Maybe even make some gains.

He pulls out her chair.

SIMON

Rule number two - learn to recognize patterns. Winning patterns and losing patterns. Know when to bet high and when to bet low.

NATALIA

If I knew that I'd still be able to tell the time.

SIMON

Which is exactly what they don't want, by the way. Notice how there aren't any clocks in here? They're figuring even if you win, you won't go home till you lose.

He places the chips on the table in front of her. She looks up at him uncertainly.

NATALIA

Are you sure? With my track record?

SIMON

It can only get better. I can feel a winning pattern coming on.

ANGLE ON TABLE

Her hand pushes a stack of chips towards the 28 spot - again. He's not too keen, but let's it go.

SIMON

Rule three - spread your risk.

He leans forward and guides her hand so that the chips end up covering four numbers around 28. For a moment they are both aware of their hands touching.

24. Contd.

SIMON

And rule four... take out insurance.

He plonks an equal amount of chips on the colour red.

ANGLE ON WHEEL

The ball bobs wildly around the perimeter of the wheel.

CROUPIER

Rien ne va plus!

The ball lands on the number 14 - black. The croupier scoops up all her chips on 28 and then those on red, in one swooping movement.

CROUPIER

Quatorze, noir! Fourteen, black!

NATALIA

I'm impressed.

SIMON

Minor setback. Bound to be a few.

He smiles confidently. She shrugs and pushes more chips from her pile towards the 28 spot.

NATALIA

It's your money.

SIMON

I admire loyalty as much as the next man - but what's twenty-eight ever done for you?

NATALIA

(hesitates)

If you really want to know, it's my age.

CROUPIER

Place your bets!

SIMON

So lie a little.

He shifts the pile over to the four numbers around 26. He hurriedly places a further pile of chips on the black.

CROUPIER

Rien ne va plus...

24. Contd.

They watch the wheel, transfixed.

SIMON

(nervously)

Of course, for this to work you do need one vital element.

The ball drops into its hole.

CROUPIER

Vingt-six! Noir!

Natalia claps her hands delightedly. The croupier pushes a big pile of chips towards her. Simon grins.

SIMON

Voila! The system's vindicated.

NATALIA

What do you mean, system? It was luck!

SIMON

Of course. That's the vital element.

She laughs. She's transformed. In this mood, she's utterly irresistible.

NATALIA

OK, what next, genius?

SIMON

You know the old song about the man who broke the bank at Monte Carlo? You're going to be the first woman.

25. INT. MONTE CARLO CASINO. LOBBY. CASHIER'S OFFICE. NIGHT

Simon stands at the grille, waiting for their cash, while Natalia puts on her reclaimed watch.

SIMON

Which brings us to rule number five, six, seven and eight... Quit while you're ahead.

CASHIER

A hundred and thirty-two thousand francs, Monsieur.

SIMON

Thank you so much.

25. Contd.

He peels off a hundred 500 franc notes and hands the rest to her.

SIMON

I staked you fifty. The rest's yours.

NATALIA

Are you crazy?

SIMON

Please.

NATALIA

No! I'm just happy to get my watch back.

SIMON

(not wanting to offend her)
OK, fifty-fifty..? I insist.

NATALIA

Alright. Fifty-fifty.
(she smiles)
You're very kind, Simon.

They move towards the exit. They just miss Cortez, coming out of the Grand Salon. But he sees them. He stands there watching them leave together, evidently intrigued.

26. EXT. MONTE CARLO CASINO. NIGHT

As they come out of the Casino, Simon helps her on with her coat.

A PAPPARAZZO steps out of the shadows and takes a flash. PAPPARAZZO#2 hurries over, camera at the ready. There are others where he came from, in a tight little knot by the cab rank.

PAPPARAZZO#2

Princesse Natalia! Regardez-moi!

SIMON

Let's get out of here. Where are you staying?

NATALIA

L'Hotel de Paris.

He smiles. This is too good to be true.

26. Contd.

SIMON

That's a coincidence. Share a cab?

He takes her by the arm and leads her to the first cab. He ushers her in the back as more papparazzi move in.

27. INT. HOTEL DE PARIS. SIMON'S SUITE. NIGHT

Simon opens the door. A WAITER comes in with a bottle of champagne on ice. Cristal, naturally. Simon has taken off his tuxedo and loosened his tie.

Natalia sits demurely on the couch.

SIMON

Just leave it. I'll do it.

The waiter leaves the tray on the coffee table, Simon gives him a generous tip. The waiter beats a tactful retreat, with a knowing look in Natalia's direction.

WAITER

Merci, Monsieur.

Simon pops the cork. Natalia raises her glass to receive the foaming discharge. Her bracelet catches the light, shattering into a thousand gleaming shards.

Simon finds himself unable to stop himself from staring at it. She covers it reflexively with her other hand, as if embarrassed by its opulence.

SIMON

It's beautiful. But I'd feel a lot happier if you left it in the hotel safe. The Riviera's notorious for jewel thieves.

NATALIA

(sheepishly)

It's not even insured.

SIMON

(aghast)

Stop it!

NATALIA

I couldn't possibly afford to.

27. Contd.

SIMON

Then you shouldn't be wearing it.
(checking himself)
Look, it's none of my business.

NATALIA

(smiles)
No, you're right. I probably shouldn't.
It was left to me by my mother. She
died when I was very young. It's the
only thing I have of hers.

SIMON

I'm sorry. Now I really feel bad.

NATALIA

I have some kind of superstition. I
never let it out of my sight. So what
would be the point of insuring, even
if I could afford to? No money could
make up for losing it.
(she undoes the clasp)
Do you want to see?

SIMON

Sure, if you don't mind.

NATALIA

I think I trust you. As long as you
don't leave the room...
(anxiously)
That was a joke.

SIMON

Yes, I thought so.

NATALIA

You know how it is, no one thinks we
Russians have a sense of humor.

SIMON

(dryly)
I'd have thought you'd have to have a
sense of humor.

She doesn't laugh. Maybe she doesn't have a sense of humor
after all. She hands him the bracelet. He examines it with
an expert's eye.

SIMON

(impressed)
Faberge.

27. Contd.

NATALIA

(surprised)
How did you know?

SIMON

I recognize his mark. Jeweller to the Tsars. No pun intended.

NATALIA

You are a collector?

SIMON

Not exactly. I never seem to hang onto anything long enough to call myself a collector... I guess you'd have to say I was more of a 'circulator'.

He smiles self-deprecatingly. She doesn't get this veiled allusion to his - how shall we put it? - more shady activities.

He comes over to her with the bracelet.

SIMON

This is making me nervous. You'd better have it back.

He sits next to her on the couch and starts to put it back on her wrist. As he leans across her to fix the clasp, their faces end up almost touching.

NATALIA

(in a different sense entirely)
Not half as nervous as it's making me.

He raises his head and their eyes find themselves looking directly into each other. It seems the most natural thing in the world when he kisses her gently on the mouth.

NATALIA

Maybe I should go now...? What was that rule about quitting while you're ahead?

SIMON

Rules are made to be broken.

He kisses her again, more passionately. She responds, tentative and shy at first, then with increasing urgency.

28. INT. HOTEL DE PARIS. SIMON'S SUITE. BATHROOM. NIGHT

Natalia stands in front of the sink. She's wearing nothing but a man's T-shirt - much too big for her. She brushes her teeth and swills her mouth out. As she straightens up she sees herself in the mirror. She can't repress a little smile at the surprise of finding herself there.

As she goes to switch off the light, something catches her eye in the waste-bin. She reaches down and picks it out.

HER POV

It's a copy of the London Daily Mail, folded back at the society page - 'Dempster's Diary'. There's a picture of Simon Templar, with a rather beautiful blonde in the Grace Kelly mould. Next to it another picture of the same girl with another man in full polo-playing gear, under the heading 'Patricia bound for gaucho land?'.

Natalia starts to read the copy softly to herself.

NATALIA

'Close friends of photographer Patricia Holme anticipate an early engagement to polo-playing Argentinian playboy Diego de La Rosa. Only six months ago I was still predicting that the blonde beauty would tie the knot with long term escort Simon Templar, recently voted London's most eligible bachelor in a poll of...

She trails off pensively, makes a little face to herself and replaces the newspaper carefully in the waste-bin the way she found it. She exits the bathroom and switches off the light.

29. INT. HOTEL DE PARIS. SIMON'S SUITE. BEDROOM. NIGHT

Natalia sleeps next to Simon. The SHADOW of a MAN falls across the bed, cast by a silvery moon.

30. EXT. HOTEL DE PARIS. BALCONY. NIGHT

Someone is on the balcony outside, dressed entirely in black - like the Saint in the opening sequence.

He slips a sliver of plastic between the doors of the French window and gently raises the latch.

31. INT. HOTEL DE PARIS. SIMON'S SUITE. BEDROOM. DAY

It's early next day. The sun is streaming through the window. The net curtains flap gently in the breeze from the slightly opened doors.

The Saint's eyes open. He is lying with his face opposite Natalia's. It takes him a moment to take in his good fortune. He studies her beauty for a moment, before she too opens her eyes. She smiles dreamily, half-stifling a yawn, brings her arms from under the sheets and wraps them around his neck.

NATALIA

Good morning, Mister Charm.

SIMON

Good morning, Miss - -

But before he can complete the sentence, Natalia lets out a little SCREAM!

NATALIA

My bracelet!

She starts to scramble around under the sheets.

SIMON

It must have come off during the night.

NATALIA

(panicking)
It doesn't just 'come off'!

SIMON

Relax, it must be here somewhere.

At that moment the flapping curtain catches his eye, and the half-open window.

SIMON

Bastards!

32. INT. HOTEL DE PARIS. SIMON'S SUITE. SITTING ROOM. DAY

They are dressed and being interviewed by a thickly-accented DETECTIVE from the local police, chain-smoking evil-smelling Gitanes.

The hotel manager sits to one side, looking suitably concerned. In the BACKGROUND, crime lab technicians give the bedroom a thorough dusting.

32. Contd.

Natalia wipes a tear and blows her nose. She seems shell-shocked by her loss, leaving Simon to do the talking.

DETECTIVE

It seems unreasonable they were looking for ze bracelet, non? 'Ow did they know Mademoiselle la Princesse could be in ze room with Monsieur?

SIMON

They were probably after my cash. I had a large sum, fortunately in the hotel safe.

DETECTIVE

Instead, they got a more big prize. Lucky for them.

(glancing at Natalia)

Unlucky for you.

(he shrugs sympathetically)

I am very sorry. We will do everything to recover your bracelet. But I regret I cannot offer much hope.

33. INT. HOTEL DE PARIS. SIMON'S SUITE. LOBBY. DAY

The cops are already on their way down the corridor. Simon detains the hotel manager in the doorway for a brief word, palming him a large bank note.

SIMON

I ask for your discretion. We'd like to keep this out of the newspapers.

HOTEL MANAGER

Evidamment. It would not be good for any of us.

SIMON

Thank you.

(smiles)

We don't want to frighten the tourists, do we?

34. INT. HOTEL DE PARIS. SIMON'S SUITE. SITTING ROOM. DAY

Simon comes back into the room. Natalia is staring out of the window at the surreally blue Mediterranean, seemingly lost in thought. She turns at the sound of his footfall.

34. Contd.

NATALIA

What makes you so sure it was your money they were after?

SIMON

We left the casino with over a hundred thousand francs last night.

NATALIA

So why didn't they turn the room upside down? They didn't even look for it! They wanted one thing - and they knew exactly where to find it!

She is staring at him angrily.

SIMON

(colouring)

What are you saying? I set you up?

She holds his look for a moment, as if weighing him up, her mouth quivering slightly.

NATALIA

No. I'm sorry, I'm very upset. Please forgive me.

SIMON

It's okay.

He puts his arm around her, pulling her against his chest.

SIMON

I feel bad. If you hadn't been in my room...

NATALIA

Listen to me. Six months ago, in New York, I was approached by a dealer. He wanted to buy the bracelet for a client a big collector of Faberge. He made a very generous offer.

SIMON

And?

NATALIA

I refused, naturally. A week later he came back. He offered me double. He said his client absolutely had to have the bracelet. I said no. He told me to name my price. Still I said no.

34. Contd.

She looks up at him. He stands there, waiting for her to get to the point.

NATALIA

Do you know who his client was...? Pablo Cortez - the drug baron. He's here, in Monte Carlo.

SIMON

(thoughtfully)
I know. I saw him at the casino last night. He's playing in the tournament.

35. INT. MONTE CARLO CASINO. SALON. NIGHT

We are CLOSE on an OVERHEAD SHOT of a backgammon board. The dice tumble across the baize surface, with it's distinctive elongated triangles.

Double five.

Cortez stares grimly, as Simon scuttles his counters around the board. Natalia is visible, sitting nearby. A couple of Cortez's MINDERS, never far away, hover at a discreet distance.

As we CUT WIDER, it's noticeable that there are fewer players than the night before, and more spectators. In fact there are only two tables in play. We're at the semi-final stage of the tournament.

It's down to the last couple of throws. Simon is ahead, but Cortez throws a double six! Now all he needs is a 3 and a 2 to bear his last man off the board and win the match. The tension is palpable.

Simon throws a serviceable 5 and 2. He needs at least a 4 and a 3 to finish. But it's Cortez to throw. He pauses, taking in a deep breath, steeling himself. He suddenly has a thought. He looks at Simon.

CORTEZ

Let's make this interesting. What do you say? Forget the Tournament, just you and me.

SIMON

How interesting?

CORTEZ

Fifty thousand dollars. US.

35. Contd.

There's a murmured gasp from those spectators near enough to overhear. If Simon is in any way overawed, he doesn't show it. His face is imperturbable.

SIMON

Odds?

CORTEZ

Work it out.

Simon makes a quick mental calculation.

SIMON

You have fifteen winning combinations out of a possible twenty-one throws. That's fifteen to six - five to two.

CORTEZ

Do you accept?

SIMON

At five to two...? Yes, I accept.

Cortez smiles, thin-lipped, rattling his cup. He throws.

The dice bounce off the side of the board and lie still.

Five and one!

Cortez can't believe it. Dazed, he takes the man off the three point and moves the other from the two point to the one point.

Simon rattles his dice, staring at Cortez all the while. Psyching him. Remember, he needs at least a 4 and a 3.

The dice race across the baize. Six and four!

Simon's lips betray not the slightest quiver of satisfaction as he bears off his last two men to win the game, and with it the match. Not to mention 125 big ones.

Cortez is ashen-faced. He can't believe what just happened to him. Simon, magnanimous in victory, leans across the board with outstretched hand.

SIMON

Thank you. That was about as close as it gets.

35. Contd.

Cortez is staring at him, a weird look on his face. He seems to go to reach across the table with his own hand, but suddenly his face contorts with pain, and instead the proffered hand retreats to clasp his chest.

SIMON

Are you okay?

CORTEZ

Nothing. A slight tremor.

With what appears to be a supreme effort of will, he gets up and starts to walk away from the table towards the exit. The spectators part to make way for him. His two goons file in behind him with an anxious look.

He passes right past Natalia and appears to look straight through her.

Simon comes up and joins her.

NATALIA

What happened?

SIMON

I think he must've had a mild heart attack.

NATALIA

You mean, there is a God?

SIMON

Now, now. You can't be sure it was him.

NATALIA

I'll put my shirt on it.

SIMON

Don't you start.

He looks over to the exit.

SIMON

Maybe I should go and see how he is?

NATALIA

Ask him for your hundred and twenty-five grand. That should finish him off.

36. INT. MONTE CARLO CASINO. LOBBY. NIGHT

As Cortez exits the Grand Salon, he staggers ever so slightly. His goons race forward to take his weight. He accepts their assistance angrily.

CORTEZ

(in Spanish)

Get me to the boat! And get that sonof-a bitch doctor out of bed!

He flips a couple of pills from a little bottle into his mouth and swallows them with a drink grabbed from the tray of a passing waiter.

37. EXT. MONTE CARLO CASINO. NIGHT

Cortez sinks into the back of an old Mercedes Pullman limousine with a deep groan. His goons ride shotgun in the front.

Simon and Natalia exit the Casino in time to see the Mercedes take off in the direction of the port.

A young man, DIDIER, calls out of the window of a parked car nearby.

DIDIER

Simon!

SIMON

Didier!

He goes over to the car, with Natalia in tow.

NATALIA

Who's Didier?

SIMON

Friend of mine. I asked him to make some inquiries.

Didier get out of the car. They shake hands warmly.

DIDIER

I spoke to my guy. He says he may have something. But he's going to Geneva in the morning.

SIMON

Where is he now?

37. Contd.

DIDIER

Marseilles. He agrees to meet you. But it must be tonight.

38. EXT/INT. MERCEDES ROADSTER. AUTOROUTE: NIGHT - TRAVELLING

Simon guns the open-top Mercedes down the autoroute towards Marseilles. Natalia is beside him, enjoying the sensation of her hair streaming in the wind. Classical music plays loudly on the stereo, an aria from a Mozart opera.

They shoot past a strangely lifelike automated dummy waving a 'slow down' flag. There's not another car on the road.

The dummy goes on waving forlornly as they zoom into the distance.

39. EXT. MARSEILLES PORT. NIGHT

The Mercedes nudges through the narrow streets in the area of the port. Obvious looking prostitutes strut their stuff, parading their wares for the many-nationed sailors on shore leave. Shady looking Algerians hang around in doorways plying heroin, hashish, whatever your fancy.

Simon parks the car outside a cheap-looking bar. There's a tremendous din coming from within. As they get out, three French sailors in their matelot suits come crashing out of the bar and go sprawling on the sidewalk in a drunken brawl.

Natalia takes his arm as they enter the bar.

NATALIA

(dryly)

You know how to spoil a girl, don't you?

SIMON

They know me here. Always get the best table.

NATALIA

Is that the one with the sawdust?

SIMON

No, it's the one with the chair.

NATALIA

I think I'd rather stand.

40. INT. MARSEILLES BAR. NIGHT

The bar is actually a happening place, filled with beautiful women - the kind of place where the rich and fashionable like to come and rub shoulders with the low life.

Natalia and Simon are sitting in a corner booth opposite a distinguished-looking sixty year old in an elegant Yves Saint Laurent suit. The pseudonymous 'MONSIEUR CARLTON', the Riviera's top-end-of-the market fence.

MONSIEUR CARLTON

Naturally, I was interested. A piece of such quality. Faberge!

SIMON

You saw the bracelet?

MONSIEUR CARLTON

Mais, bien sur. I would not bid, how you say? - 'sight unseen'. C'etait magnifique! But of course, with a so well known piece, it would have to be broken.

(he smiles)

And that would break my heart.

SIMON

Is that why you didn't buy it?

MONSIEUR CARLTON

(smiles)

No, of course. I am a businessman. I did not buy, because it was too late. Someone made a first offer, enorme, impossible to pay more.

SIMON

(quietly insistent)

Do you know who, Monsieur Carlton?

MONSIEUR CARLTON

Ah, you understand, in my business, people like better not to give names. Certainly not their real ones.

Natalia and Simon exchange a look. Disappointed.

SIMON

We are very anxious to recover the bracelet. It belonged to my friend here. A family heirloom.

40. Contd.

MONSIEUR CARLTON

My condolences.

NATALIA

Please, Monsieur. If you know anything. The bracelet was my mother's... She gave it to me on her deathbed.

She looks at him, her eyes tearing up. 'What man could resist an entreaty from so beautiful a woman? Least of all a Frenchman.

NATALIA

I don't believe you don't know who bought it.

MONSIEUR CARLTON

(reluctantly)

I only know that he represents a big collector of Faberge. Maybe the biggest.

NATALIA

Who?

MONSIEUR CARLTON

A man it is better to have no dealings with, Mademoiselle, laissez-moi vous assurer.

NATALIA

Pablo Cortez! That's who, isn't it? He has the biggest Faberge collection in the world, outside of Russia!

She gives Simon a triumphant look.

MONSIEUR CARLTON

Excuse me, I must go now. My plane is very early.

He gets abruptly to his feet.

SIMON

Monsieur Carlton!

But the suave fence is already on his way, beating a hasty exit through the crowded bar.

As he passes the length of the bar, we recognize the man who was following the Saint on the train from Paris.

41. EXT. HOTEL DE PARIS. NIGHT

The Merc pulls up outside. A parking valet steps forward. They get out and walk towards the entrance. She holds onto his arm and leans into him romantically.

42. INT. HOTEL DE PARIS. LOBBY. NIGHT

They come in through the doors. One of Cortez's goons is sitting watching the entrance. He gets up as they approach the reception and moves to intercept them. Simon hasn't seen him, but is talking under his breath.

SIMON

I don't know where you go from here.
Knowing Cortez has it is one thing.
Getting it back...

GOON

Senor Templar, por favor.

They pull up in surprise as the goon comes closer. His hand reaches into his inside pocket. Reflexively, Simon pushes Natalia aside.

All that comes out is a manila envelope. The goon grins from ear to ear when he realises the misunderstanding.

GOON

Perdona me. I did not wish to frighten you. Senor Cortez asked me to give you this.

SIMON

Quite alright.

He tries to recover his dignity. He takes the envelope and opens it. It's stuffed with hundred dollar bills. One thousand two hundred and fifty of them to be precise.

GOON

The Senor also asks that you join him for lunch tomorrow on his yacht. He will send someone to bring you.

SIMON

Tell Senor Cortez we'd be delighted.

The goon nods and moves away. Simon and Natalia exchange a look.

NATALIA

We?

42. Contd.

SIMON

Why not? I think it's time we showed our hand.

43. EXT. BAY OF MONTE CARLO. DAY

A sleek Riva launch speeds across the bay towards a huge motorized yacht anchored at some distance from the shore. Over a hundred and twenty feet long, its superstructure bristling with radar and communications equipment, it looks capable of circumnavigating the globe without ever having to put in at port.

Natalia sits in the open at the back with Simon. She is wearing dark glasses. She looks beautiful, mysterious - and more than a little tense. Simon gives her an encouraging smile and squeezes her hand.

44. EXT. 'THE SNOW QUEEN'. DAY

They walk up the gangway to the deck, where Cortez waits to greet them. He's in a swimsuit under a short silk bathrobe. The ship's name, 'The Snow Queen', is embroidered over the breast pocket.

A goon stands duty nearby, visibly armed.

CORTEZ

Buenos dias, Senor Templar. I see you brought your beautiful friend.

SIMON

Yes, I hope you don't mind. Princess Natalia Romanov, this is Pablo Cortez.

CORTEZ

Mind? I am enchanted, Princess.

He kisses Natalia's hand with exaggerated Latin galantry. The hand that would have been wearing the bracelet.

CORTEZ

Welcome to the 'Snow Queen'.
(he sniggers)
A little private joke of mine.

He holds onto her hand a little longer than is necessary.

44. Contd.

CORTEZ

(sounding disappointed)

Ah, you are not wearing your beautiful Faberge today. I couldn't help noticing it the other night at the casino.

NATALIA

(coldly)

No. I don't seem to be able to find it.

She holds his look. He doesn't bat an eyelid.

CORTEZ

It will turn up, surely? You know I have one like it, in my collection. One would almost say a pair. I hope you will let me know if ever you wish to sell. You could name your price.

Natalia looks across at Simon, barely able to contain her indignation at the man's brazen provocation.

NATALIA

That bracelet was left to me by my mother. Its value to me is beyond price.

CORTEZ

I'm sorry, I did not mean to offend you.

(turning to Simon)

You talked the other night of weakness. I have a weakness for beauty. So let me take you on a tour of my beautiful mistress.

Gesturing towards the boat, he leads them off, taking Natalia by the arm. She submits reluctantly.

SIMON

She's a stunner. She reminds me of Kashoggi's boat, the 'Soraya'.

CORTEZ

Mine is bigger. Do you realize she is nuclear-powered?

45. EXT. 'THE SNOW QUEEN'. DAY

They sit on the upper deck taking lunch under a canvas awning that provides shade from the overhead midday sun.

45. Contd.

Cortez holds forth as they are served by a black BUTLER, resplendent in white.

CORTEZ

I apologize for leaving you so suddenly last night. Please do not think I am a bad sport.

(gravely)

You see, I have a heart problem.

NATALIA

(deadpan)

You don't have one?

He laughs uneasily, not sure how to take her remark.

CORTEZ

I have one. Unfortunately, it doesn't work.

SIMON

(politely)

You seem much better today.

He shoots Natalia a glance as if to say: 'Cool it'.

CORTEZ

It passes. My doctors are always telling me I must quit gambling. But when your whole life is a gamble... Which reminds me, congratulations, I hear you beat Dreck in the final.

SIMON

Thank you.

CORTEZ

Quite a profitable evening for you.

SIMON

I've had worse.

CORTEZ

Winning is the greatest feeling, don't you agree? Better even than sex.

(aside, to Natalia)

Forgive me, but it's true. The adrenalin! You want to punch the air with your fist! I have to say I am addicted.

SIMON

For me it's just a way to make a living.

45. Contd.

CORTEZ

Ah, but that's the difference between us. You are a professional, I am an amateur. I do it for the love of it.

SIMON

I make love for love. I gamble for money.

A look of collusion passes between him and Natalia, a look that is not lost on their host.

CORTEZ

Then I have a proposal which will surely interest you. You see, I have a theory. The man who is motivated by love will always triumph in the end.

SIMON

Very romantic. I'm not sure that it's true.

CORTEZ

I would like to put it to the test. I invite you to my house in Colombia for a return match. A chance to even the score. I think you owe me that.

SIMON

(taken aback)
Colombia? For a game of backgammon?

CORTEZ

More than a game. A war. And to make it really interesting for you, I will give you odds of ten to one. Ten thousand dollars a point for you, a thousand for me.

SIMON

That's interesting.

CORTEZ

My G4 is at your disposal. It will collect you and deliver you back anywhere in the world. What do you say?
(glancing at Natalia with a wry smile)

I would ask your friend to come, but I don't think she likes me.

She looks at him coolly. Resisting the urge to retort.

46. INT. NICE AIRPORT. AIR FRANCE CHECK-IN. EVENING

Natalia and Simon stand at the check-in line for an Air France Flight to New York. Natalia hands over her ticket as Simon humps her cases onto the conveyor.

SIMON

I don't trust Cortez's phones. I'll call you once I'm out of there.

NATALIA

You really don't have to do this for me, Simon.

SIMON

(smiles)

I'm going to have a ball. Private plane, champagne all the way. And I can't help feeling there's more to this than meets the eye.

NATALIA

What do you mean?

Before he can elaborate, the AIRLINE CLERK clerk hands over her ticket and boarding pass.

CLERK

You must go to the gate. The flight is boarding.

47. INT. NICE AIRPORT. DEPARTURE LOUNGE. EVENING

Simon and Natalia embrace. She looks sad at the impending separation. He tries to cheer her up.

SIMON

Don't worry, if he's got it, I'll get it back.

NATALIA

He's got it. I'll stake my life on it.

SIMON

Then I'll just have to get it back, won't I?

They kiss, hurriedly. She suddenly whispers in his ear.

NATALIA

I really like you.

She turns and goes quickly through the passport control.

47. EXT. NICE AIRPORT. NIGHT

The Air France 747 takes off into the blood red sky, bound for New York.

48. INT/EXT. MERCEDES. NIGHT - TRAVELLING

Simon glances up, imagining her in her seat, on the plane.

49. INT. HOTEL DE PARIS. SIMON'S SUITE. BEDROOM. NIGHT

Simon is packing his things. The bed is still rumpled and unmade. He glances at it a moment, reminded of Natalia again. Damn it, if he doesn't miss her already. He snaps his case shut decisively, as if to banish such nonsense.

The phone rings. He reaches for it after the third or fourth ring.

SIMON

Hello?

PATRICIA (o.s.)

Saint?

His face immediately creases into a smile.

SIMON

Homegirl!

50. INT. PATRICIA'S APARTMENT. LIVING ROOM. DAY

PATRICIA HOLME is a lustrous, Grace Kelly-like blonde in her late twenties, abundantly self-confident, with an easy laugh and a self-mocking sense of humour that is her saving grace (no pun intended). She has a freedom phone tucked under her chin leaving both hands free for other activities. At present this involves opening up a copy of the Daily Mail and folding it back to 'Dempster's Diary'.

PATRICIA

How's the Princess?

BACK to SIMON (etc):

SIMON

Straight for the jugular.

PATRICIA

You know a better place to draw blood?

50. Contd.

We glimpse the newspaper - it's a shot of Simon leaving the Casino with Natalia.

SIMON

Who told you?

PATRICIA

I read the newspapers. You should be more discreet.

SIMON

You can talk.

(defensively)

It's nothing earth-shattering.

PATRICIA

Did I say it was? You still haven't answered my question.

Patricia gets up and walks towards the kitchen, where the kettle has just boiled.

SIMON

She's fine. Well, she's not fine, as it happens, but that's another story. Do you know her?

51. INT. PATRICIA'S APARTMENT. KITCHEN. NIGHT

She pours herself a cup of instant coffee. We get the feeling that this is a girl who never does less than two things at a time, and often more.

PATRICIA

She's a bitch. I photographed her for Vanity Fair.

SIMON

Actually she's a sweet girl.

PATRICIA

Pull-ease! She's as tough as old boots.

SIMON

(tellingly)

At least we haven't set a wedding date.

PATRICIA

Do you believe everything you read in the papers? They called you 'eligible' didn't they?

51. Contd.

SIMON

Diego's a creep. You always did have lousy taste in men.

PATRICIA

That I admit.

He has to smile at that one.

SIMON

So you're not getting engaged?

There's just the slightest hint of concern in his voice, despite his best efforts.

PATRICIA

Don't be ridiculous. Marriage is not my favourite institution. You of all people should know that.

She takes her coffee and sets off down the hall.

SIMON

You think it's mine?

52. INT. PATRICIA'S APARTMENT. DARK ROOM. NIGHT

Patricia enters her dark room and closes the door, before switching on the light, which glows red. There are negatives hanging to dry, which she examines with a magnifying glass as she continues to talk.

PATRICIA

Which is why we were so well unsuited.

SIMON

So what else is new?

PATRICIA

I was hoping you could tell me.

SIMON

I'm on my way to Colombia, courtesy of Pablo Cortes.

PATRICIA

(animated)

Pablo Cortes! Are you serious? I've been trying to photograph that man for as long as I can remember.

52. Contd.

SIMON
Why?

PATRICIA
He interests me.

SIMON
Still why? He's a sleazy drug dealer.

PATRICIA
He's the Napoleon of crime. You've got to take me!

SIMON
No. Definitely not.

PATRICIA
Do you want me to beg?

SIMON
Yes.

PATRICIA
Okay. I'll beg. But you'll have to teach me how.

SIMON
I'm serious, Patricia. The answer's no.

53. EXT. COLOMBIAN JUNGLE. AIRSTRIP. DAY

A Gulfstream jet lands on a narrow strip deep in the Colombian jungle. The control tower is a camouflaged shed, covered in foliage. Every effort has been made to hide this place away.

54. INT. GULFSTREAM JET. DAY

The interior is the height of luxury. Every conceivable luxury and gadget is on hand for the diversion of the passengers.

Simon sits in a padded leather chair, seatbelt fastened - and eyes blindfolded.

As the plane taxis to a halt, a CREWMEMBER comes up to remove the blindfold.

54. Contd.

CREWMEMBER

My apologies, Mister Templar. Security precaution. Senor Cortez asks that you understand.

SIMON

Of course.

PATRICIA (o.s.)

Whatever happened to ladies first?

Patricia is sitting opposite, still blindfolded. She evidently got her way. One suspects not for the first time.

CREWMEMBER

I am coming, Miss Holme.

PATRICIA

You don't have to go that far.

SIMON

(under his breath)

Whatever happened to ladies?

The crewmember starts to unfasten her blindfold.

PATRICIA

I heard that.

SIMON

You always did have remarkable hearing.

As the blindfold comes off, her eyes meet his in a moment of complicity - in which we glimpse the essence of their bantering, bickering relationship. She grins, creasing the little laughter lines around her pale blue eyes.

PATRICIA

Who wants to be a lady, anyway?

SIMON

Exactly, Patricia. Tramps have much more fun.

PATRICIA

They do. Ask Natalia Romanov.

55. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. DAY

A black Range Rover hits up the dust as it tears down a jungle track towards Cortez's hillside fortress.

56. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' GATEHOUSE. DAY

The Range Rover passes through the heavily guarded checkpoint. The complex is surrounded by a tall, electrified chain link fence.

57. INT/EXT. RANGE ROVER. DAY - TRAVELLING

As they enter the compound, Simon and Patricia exchange a wary look - into the lion's den.

It is truly an extraordinary place that unfolds before them. Part armed camp, part Xanadu. Wild animals from Cortez's personal zoo roam in specially recreated natural habitats.

An open jeep passes them in the other direction, a half-dozen evil-looking, Uzi-toting hombres leaning out the side, cartridge belts slung criss-cross around their necks.

58. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' ENTRANCE HALL. DAY

They enter through enormous high doors into a Moorish, beautifully tiled hall that would not disgrace the Alhambra. A fountain splashes refreshingly in the centre of the airy space. There's a domed ceiling high above, with a glass cupola.

The effect is only slightly spoiled by an incongruous metal detector through which the guests must pass. Their bags are fed through an X-ray machine, just like at the airport.

The BAGGAGE EXAMINER frowns. His screen shows a bag full of camera equipment. He confiscates the bag officiously.

BAGGAGE EXAMINER

I am sorry. No fotografia.

PATRICIA

(miffed)

Ridiculous!

CORTEZ (o.s.)

Ridiculous, yes. Necessary, also.

They look round as Cortez emerges to greet them, a welcoming smile strapped to his face.

CORTEZ

Forgive the elaborate precautions. No doubt they appear melodramatic. I assure you they are not.

59. EXT. TROPICAL GARDEN. DAY

Cortez leads the way through an incredible tropical garden, filled with every conceivable species of plant and flower. Birds of Paradise jockey for position next to the rarest orchid.

CORTEZ

(cheerfully)

You cannot imagine how many men would like to see me dead. Starting with the President of the 'Most Powerful Nation on Earth'! All because of a plant that has been used as a medicine in my country for centuries! Is it my fault if they make a crazy law? No, of course not. But don't get me wrong, I am extremely grateful to them. And you know what? They prove nada. Absolutamente nada!

(gesturing around him)

I love plants.

Patricia and Simon follow dutifully in his wake. She glances across at Simon and rolls her eyes. 'What a bore!'

60. EXT. STABLE YARD. DAY

A STABLE BOY puts the most beautiful white Arab stallion through his paces on the end of a long lead. There are at least twenty more where he came from, peeking out from behind their stable doors.

CORTEZ

(is there no stopping this man?)

There are many forms of Beauty. Can anyone say for sure that he does not represent the highest form? Look at him! Sculpture in motion!

Patricia stands there admiring the horse. He is indeed a magnificent beast.

PATRICIA

(meaning it)

He's wonderful.

CORTEZ

Do you ride?

PATRICIA

Yes.

60. Contd.

CORTEZ
Think you can handle him?

PATRICIA
Yes.

And we can be sure that she means it.

61. EXT. RACE TRACK. DAY

Simon, Patricia and Cortez are all three mounted on superb stallions, galloping at breakneck speed around a race track that would do justice to the Derby.

ANGLE ON FINISHING LINE

Patricia crosses the line just ahead of Cortez, followed by Simon less than a length behind.

The camera flashes to record the finish.

62. EXT. WORKERS' COMPOUND. DAY

Cortez drives them back to his residence in an open Mini-Moke via the working area of the compound. There are huge hangars in which we glimpse thick bushels of coca leaves.

63. INT/EXT. MINI-MOKE. DAY - TRAVELLING

Simon is taking in the sights, making a mental note of the lay-out.

A fork-lift truck emerges from a chemical processing plant, burdened with large transparent sacks of a gleaming white powder - cocaine in its purest uncut form, with a street value one can only guess at.

Meanwhile Patricia studies the photo-finish of the race, showing her the clear winner. She goes to give it back to Cortez.

CORTEZ
Keep it. A memento.
(to Simon)
Your girlfriend is a fine horsewoman.
Of course, if she had been properly
weighted...

63. Contd.

SIMON

Actually, she's not my girlfriend.

CORTEZ

(surprised)

You mean - you are not... an item?

PATRICIA

(laconically)

We're an ex-item.

CORTEZ

I'm sorry. I was under the wrong impression. I have put you in the same room. Would you prefer..?

PATRICIA

Separate rooms? Yes, I think so - don't you, Simon?

She shoots him a humorous glance.

SIMON

Yes, we don't want to tempt providence, do we?

Cortez grins. The news doesn't seem to displease him. He picks up the phone and starts to speak quickly in Spanish. As he puts the phone back, he gives Patricia a little grin of complicity.

CORTEZ

It is arranged. I am sorry for the misunderstanding.

64. EXT. 'RED LIGHT DISTRICT'. DAY

They flash past a row of low bungalows, grouped around a functioning bar. GIRLS of uncertain virtue lounge round languorously.

Cortez keeps up the running commentary.

CORTEZ

Everything is available for the men. Otherwise I could not keep them here.

(he grins)

Of course, they pay no taxes.

(struck by a sudden thought)

The girls are very clean. If you need a companion, Templar?

64. Contd.

SIMON

Thank you, but I prefer to make my own arrangements.

CORTEZ

(disappointed)

As you wish. Some of them are real honeys. From Beverly Hills.

SIMON

I don't doubt it.

THEIR POV - AHEAD

An officious looking and heavily armed FOREMAN waves them down.

Cortez slows to a halt. There is a rapid fire conversation in Spanish. Cortez sighs.

CORTEZ

There is something I must attend to. If you don't mind waiting? Or you can come with me? Maybe you find it interesting?

65. EXT. WORKERS' COMPOUND. DAY

A helicopter descends out of the sky, landing in the middle of the compound.

Cortez steps forward as the doors open. A MAN is led out by two OTHERS, his hands bound behind his back. His face is heavily bruised and there is blood on his shirt. He looks like he's been given a thorough going over.

Simon and Patricia watch at some distance, already uneasy at what they may be about to witness.

THEIR POV

The prisoner drops to his knees in front of Cortez, trying to kiss his feet in his effort to prostrate himself. The two escorts yank him back into an upright kneeling position. The man keeps talking, addressing himself to Cortez - evidently pleading for forgiveness.

With shocking suddenness, Cortez takes a revolver from one of his minions and shoots the man in the head.

Patricia looks away, sickened.

65. Contd.

PATRICIA

Do you believe that?!?

SIMON

(grimly)

I thought he was fascinating? What was it - the 'Napoleon of Crime'?

PATRICIA

I should have said the 'Adolf Hitler of Crime'.

SIMON

Not a nice man.

PATRICIA

I agree. He's a monster. And a crashing bore to boot. Does he ever stop talking?

SIMON

But let's... be cool. Yes? Play your part?

PATRICIA

Whatever you say.

They recompose themselves as Cortez rejoins them. He attempts a disarming smile.

CORTEZ

I regret you have to witness this disagreeable event. Unfortunately the man was stealing from me. I have to make an example.

SIMON

To encourage the others. I'll remember that next time I talk to my broker.

CORTEZ

I put a high price on loyalty.

SIMON

Don't we all?

They get back into the Moke.

66. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. DINING HALL. NIGHT

A MARIACHI BAND plays from a minstrels' gallery up above the fifty foot long dining hall.

66. Contd.

Cortez, Simon and Patricia are grouped at one end of the oak dining table. A pair of tall, multi-armed candelabras cast the flickering light of twenty-four candles.

A uniformed BUTLER goes from Simon to Cortez with a humidor. Simon lights up. Cortez runs his under his nose, inhaling the fragrance.

CORTEZ

Superb. Superb!

The butler lights it for him and makes for the door.

PATRICIA

(archly)

May I?

CORTEZ

(delighted)

Please! Forgive me!

He clicks his finger at the butler, who returns to proffer the humidor. She selects a slimmer cigar for herself. Cortez gets up and brings one of the candelabras over so she can take a light. For a moment she is bathed in its glow. She looks up at him and smiles graciously - almost flirtatiously.

PATRICIA

Thank you.

CORTEZ

The pleasure is mine.

He returns to his seat. Patricia exhales luxuriantly.

CORTEZ

There is something sexy about a woman smoking a cigar. Do you know, these are still rolled in the traditional way? By the peasants. They use their own saliva.

Patricia is seized by a sudden coughing fit. Simon can't help smiling.

CORTEZ

(musingly)

How long can such customs survive in these health-conscious times?

(wryly)

Of course I shouldn't really be smoking this at all.

66. Contd.

He taps his heart lightly a couple of times as if to emphasise his point.

Patricia exchanges a quick look with Simon, raising her eyes to the ceiling. 'What a bore!'

Suddenly Cortez's face contorts with pain, as he pitches head first onto the table!

Patricia and Simon are initially too stunned to react.

SIMON

Pablo...? Are you alright?

He goes to shake him. Cortez suddenly rises up with a big shit-eating grin on his face.

CORTEZ

Joke!

(briskly)

Let's play. That's what we're here for.

(chuckles)

You don't get off that easy.

67. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

Cortez and Simon face each other in absolute concentration across the backgammon board. There is the unbroken click-click of counters being shuffled around the board, accompanied by the rattle of dice.

Patricia is left to peruse her surroundings. The room is open at one end, glass doors drawn back so that the nocturnal sounds of the jungle, the almost deafening shrieking of cicada, penetrate inside. The view across the valley to the next mountain is breathtaking.

She turns away and goes to look at the art on the walls - an extraordinary collection, if a trifle eclectic.

HER POV

Picasso, Cezanne, Modigliani, Matisse. The greatest art of the century is represented here.

It doesn't stop there. There's a Rubens, a Rembrandt, a Vermeer. She stops in front of the last. There's something familiar about it. She can't quite put her finger on it. Then it hits her.

67. Contd.

PATRICIA

(blurting it out)

Wasn't this Vermeer stolen from the Tate last year?

Cortez looks up briefly from the game, a wry smile on his lips.

Patricia goes back to stand in front of the Rembrandt. Simon calls to her over his shoulder, as he throws the dice.

SIMON

The Rembrandt used to be in the Prado.

He takes off a man, moves another closer to the one point.

CORTEZ

Correct. Paintings should have a history, I think. It's boring if they stay always in the same place. The Manet over there, above the fireplace - that was stolen from a museum in Boston in 1990.

Cortez throws - a double six. He bears off the last of his men for an emphatic win. He laughs.

CORTEZ

Didn't you ever wonder what happened to all the stolen art that is too famous to sell? Well, now you know.

PATRICIA

Amazing.

She looks around. And it is, amazing. A cornucopia of the world's stolen treasures.

CORTEZ

That is the advantage of a situation like mine. When you are so far outside the law. I do not buy with a view to resell, I buy for the pleasure of ownership. I am the ultimate collector.

68. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' RESIDENCE. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

It's late. Patricia is stretched out on the couch, reading a magazine. Cortez swigs his brandy and watches her with evident interest.

68. Contd.

Simon finishes doing a calculation on a piece of paper.

SIMON

(frowns)

That's \$178,000 I owe you. Do you mind if we call it a night? I've got a bit of a migraine coming on.

CORTEZ

(languid)

No problem. We'll continue tomorrow. How long can you stay?

SIMON

(smiles easily)

I have no immediate plans. As long as it takes.

CORTEZ

(putting his arm around his shoulder)

I like you, Simon. We have much in common. We are both men who create our own rules. You for pleasure, I for power. Power can be pleasure, of course. They say it is a great aphrodisiac.

He glances tellingly at Patricia, who is caught in the middle of a wide yawn. She raises her hand in a vain effort to stifle it.

PATRICIA

(brightly)

Excuse moi.

CORTEZ

Are we boring you?

PATRICIA

Not at all. Call me superficial, but it never really worked for me. I always seem to go for the pretty boys.

She gives Simon a sarcastic sideways glance.

CORTEZ

(fishing)

I guess that puts me out of the running?

68. Contd.

PATRICIA

(teasingly)

Ooh, I don't know. My tastes are fairly Catholic.

(archly)

Mine is a broad church, Senor Cortez.

She gives him a generous smile, full of promise.

SIMON

Darling, it's a cathedral.

CORTEZ

(gallantly)

It would need to be, for the many who must worship you.

PATRICIA

Why, thank you. What a charming compliment. It's so rare to meet a real gentleman these days.

She shoots Simon a little barbed glance, then redirects her attention to their host.

PATRICIA

(casually)

Simon tells me you have the most wonderful collection of Faberge.

69. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' RESIDENCE. PASSAGE. NIGHT

Cortez is standing at a huge, reinforced steel door, painted to resemble the other doors in the house, with only an elaborate combination lock to betray its true purpose. He fiddles with the dial.

CORTEZ

Would you mind turning aside for a moment?

SIMON

Of course not.

They turn their backs to Cortez, as he twists the dial. Surreptitiously Simon activates a switch inside his jacket.

We go in VERY CLOSE on his cuff. One of the buttons is in fact a tiny, directional microphone. He turns his arm towards the combination lock, so it can pick up the sound of the dial's rotation.

70. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' RESIDENCE. STRONG ROOM. NIGHT

The huge door yawns open and Cortez leads the way inside.

They find themselves in a cavernous Aladdin's cave of a room, with shelves positively crammed with booty, statuary, gold coins, icons, each meticulously labelled; a bewildering array of objects with a combined value that would be virtually unquantifiable.

Simon's eyes go to a glass display case in the centre of the room with jewelry inside. There's an alabaster bust of a woman, with naked torso, a gorgeous necklace around her neck and on her wrist a stunning... bracelet.

CORTEZ

Yes. Pride of place.

He is watching Simon with a sly smile. He reaches inside his pocket for a tiny key. Simon cannot believe the brazen effrontery of the man.

ANGLE ON DISPLAY CASE

Cortez removes the bracelet from the bust. It sparkles dazzlingly as the stones catch the light.

Simon has a hard time controlling himself as Cortez offers it for his inspection.

CORTEZ

I acquired it some years ago, from a Nazi general living in Bolivia. It is remarkably similar to the one worn by your friend, the Princess, no?

SIMON

Yes. Remarkably.

He looks at him coldly, not believing a word of it.

71. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. SLEEPING QUARTERS. CORRIDOR. NIGHT

The trio pause outside the door to one of the guest rooms.

CORTEZ

(to Simon)

You are in here. I hope you find it comfortable.

SIMON

Goodnight, Pablo. Thank you, you're an excellent host. We resume tomorrow.

71. Contd.

CORTEZ
Buenas noches, amigo.

Simon closes the door. Cortez and Patricia proceed up the passage, the former guiding her with a light pressure on the small of her back, moving sneakily to her (very shapely) posterior.

CORTEZ
Is there nothing I can do to persuade you to stay up a little longer?

PATRICIA
(stepping ahead of him to escape his wandering hand)
Well, yes, actually, there is one thing.

72. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. BULLRING. NIGHT

Cue Corrida MUSIC! (those poor Mariaichi guys dragged out of bed?)

Hit the FLOODLIGHTS!

Patricia finds herself standing in the middle of Cortez's private bullring.

A door opens, and a young BULL charges out, snorting and pawing the ground! Patricia runs for her life towards the bleachers.

She grabs her camera in time to witness a magnificent entrance.

Pablo Cortez, in full matador regalia to rival El Cordobes, strides into the ring, trailing a magnificent crimson-lined cape.

Ole!

He executes a perfect swirl, sidestepping the charging bull.

Click! Whirr! Patricia captures the image for posterity. She grins delightedly. A world exclusive.

PATRICIA
That's great! Fantastic!

72. Contd.

Cortez needs no encouragement. He puffs out his chest like the magnificent peacock that he is and holds up his cape in front of the panting beast.

73. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' RESIDENCE. CORRIDOR. NIGHT

Simon is outside the strong room. He has an earpiece in one ear with a wire trailing into a tiny tape recorder held in his hand. With the other hand he twiddles the dial in response to what he is hearing on the recording.

74. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' RESIDENCE. STRONG ROOM. NIGHT

Simon takes out what looks like an electric toothbrush. But instead of a brush, it is fitted with a tiny drill. He inserts the bit in the lock of the display cabinet and presses the button, producing a high-pitched whine.

75. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' RESIDENCE. CORRIDOR. NIGHT

One of the many armed goons, omnipresent throughout the compound, patrols the corridor. As he nears the junction with the corridor leading to the strong room, we see that a light is shining under the strong room door, spilling out onto the corridor floor.

76. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' RESIDENCE. STRONG ROOM. NIGHT

Simon reaches into the case, unclasping the bracelet. Around the base of the bust, arranged in a neat little row, are three of the most beautiful Faberge eggs you have ever seen, solid gold and encrusted with diamonds and rubies.

77. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' RESIDENCE. CORRIDOR. NIGHT

The goon is about to turn into the strong room corridor, when the silence is interrupted by a piercing SHRIEK!

ANOTHER ANGLE

Patricia comes round the corner, flushed and laughing, hotly pursued by an extremely amorous Cortez, still in his matador outfit.

CORTEZ

Just one kiss! Solamente uno!

77. Contd.

PATRICIA

No!

CORTEZ

(grins)

Maybe you prefer a little spanking?

He playfully slaps her bottom.

PATRICIA

Ow! I think not!

CORTEZ

My little heifer!

As he lunges for her, they almost bump into the embarrassed goon. He hurries past, trying to appear invisible.

GOON

(mumbles)

Buenas noches, Senor.

Cortez pulls up, recovers his composure, grunts an acknowledgement. Patricia seizes her chance to run ahead of him, putting enough distance between them to enable her to make it in one piece to her room.

78. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' RESIDENCE. GUEST ROOM. NIGHT

She bursts into her room and shuts the door behind her, turning the key in the lock. Moments later there is a frantic hammering on the door.

CORTEZ

Patricia! Por Favor! Open, just one minute... I implore you!

PATRICIA

Go away!

79. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' RESIDENCE. CORRIDOR. NIGHT

It's gone quiet. Cortez slopes off disconsolately down the corridor.

He passes across the junction with the corridor leading to the strong room, just as Simon opens the door a crack to check whether the coast is clear.

Simon waits a beat before exiting the strong room.

80. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ' RESIDENCE. GUEST ROOM. NIGHT

A chair has been propped under the door handle - a further line of defence against their amorous host. The handle turns slowly...

Patricia is watching the door with grim resolve. In her raised hand she clutches a murderous looking piece of primitive African sculpture, a warrior clutching a spear and shield.

SIMON (o.s.)

(whispers)
Homegirl...? Open the door..!

Patricia heaves a sigh of relief and opens up with a broad smile. Simon slips inside.

PATRICIA

Thank God. I thought it was 'Shiva'.

SIMON

Who's Shiva?

PATRICIA

You know - the one with all the hands.

She mimicks the outstretched multiple hands of the Indian goddess Shiva.

81. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. GAME RESERVE. NIGHT

Two figures run away from the house across the landscaped garden and into the outer area given over to the safari park.

ANGLE ON SIMON AND PATRICIA

Running in tandem. Simon has a backpack strapped to his shoulders.

They cross an invisible lazer beam between two posts some fifty yards distant.

82. INT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. SECURITY LODGE. NIGHT

A GUARD slumbers in front of a bank of screens, with views over various aspects of the compound. A red light flashes over one depicting Simon and Patricia crossing the invisible barrier. Seconds later, an ear-splitting siren jolts the guard awake.

83. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. GAME RESERVE. NIGHT

As the siren begins to wail, Simon curses.

SIMON

Damn! Skates on, homegirl.

They redouble their efforts.

84. EXT. ANIMAL CAGES. NIGHT

Two magnificent black panthers pace backwards and forwards in their compound.

The barred gate to their cage slowly glides upwards.

85. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. PERIMETER FENCE. NIGHT

Simultaneously, floodlights light up all along the length of the perimeter fence.

86. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. GAME RESERVE. NIGHT

The two panthers lope along in tandem at a frightening pace.

87. ANGLE ON SIMON AND PATRICIA

However fast they run, we get the impression we're gaining on them. Patricia is having a hard time keeping up with Simon.

PATRICIA

Wait! I can't...!

SIMON

You wanted to come!

PATRICIA

Bastard!

SIMON

You'll thank me in the morning.

88. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. RED LIGHT DISTRICT. NIGHT

As the sirens wail, Cortez emerges from one of his private whorehouses, pulling on his pants, sensing trouble. A BEAUTIFUL GIRL, no more than sixteen, comes out beside him.

89. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. PERIMETER FENCE. NIGHT

Simon and Patricia approach the fence. It's a daunting height. On top of which, it's electrified. Patricia gasps and wheezes for breath. She stares disbelievingly at the obstacle in front of her.

SIMON

Put these on!

He tosses her a pair of heavy, industrial-strength rubber gloves from his back pack. He dons a similar pair himself, snapping them on like a surgeon in the operating theater.

PATRICIA

Then what?

Before she can reply, there's a terrifying ROAR as the leading panther bounds towards them out of the darkness!

PATRICIA

Yikes!

Raw instinct takes over. She leaps for the chain-link fence like a circus acrobat. Simon follows suit. They cling to the wire like lizards, protected from the current by their gloves.

The irate panther lunges at them, removing a chunk of cloth from the seat of Simon's pants. They both clamber higher, inches from the beast's flashing claws.

SIMON

(disapprovingly)

Yikes??

PATRICIA

(nods mutely)

Yikes.

They scale the remaining feet to the top of the fence and drop down the other side. The panther gnashes impotently as they make their escape.

90. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. SECURITY LODGE. NIGHT

An open jeep screeches out from the security lodge parking lot and tears alongside the perimeter fence in hot pursuit.

91. EXT. PERIMETER FENCE. NIGHT

The jeep approaches at speed. No sign of Simon and Patricia.

As it flashes past between the fence and a row of trees, the heavily armed DRIVER and PASSENGER are whisked out of their seats as if by magic. They land on the ground unceremoniously, with a hideous bump, as the jeep crashes into the fence.

Simon slides a stick across the piano wire stretched between the fence and a tree, producing a note of surprising musicality. He grins.

SIMON

Eat your heart out, Nigel.

They head for the jeep, its engine still running despite some damage sustained to its front end.

92. EXT. COLUMBIAN JUNGLE. AIRSTRIP. NIGHT

The airstrip is in darkness. Two points of light emerge from the forest.

The jeep crashes out of the undergrowth and lurches onto the runway, heading for the parked G4.

93. EXT. G4. NIGHT

Patricia jumps out of the jeep and scrambles up the steps into the G4. Simon grabs a couple of five gallon fuel cans from the back of the jeep and follows her inside.

94. EXT. COLOMBIAN JUNGLE. NIGHT

Three more jeeps come crashing out of the forest, stuffed with GUARDS, armed to the teeth.

95. INT. G4. COCKPIT. NIGHT

Simon bursts into the cockpit.

SIMON

Is the key there?

Patricia is looking frantically at the aircraft's control panel. The ignition is empty of key.

95. Contd.

PATRICIA

No. Is that a problem?

Simon glances out of the window. The jeeps are approaching fast, less than five hundred yards away.

SIMON

(softly)

Yikes.

He gets out a special tool, which he uses to wrench the ignition out of its socket. He pulls out the wiring and connects two of the wires by hand. The engine fires up.

PATRICIA

You have flown a G4 before?

SIMON

No.

Her face falls.

96. EXT. AIR STRIP. NIGHT

The G4 taxis down the runway, hotly pursued by the three jeeps. One of them manages to overtake the plane, swerving in front to block its path.

97. INT. G4. COCKPIT. NIGHT

Simon pulls violently on the joystick. Patricia is ashen-faced.

SIMON

Trust me.

98. EXT. COLOMBIAN JUNGLE. AIRSTRIP. NIGHT

The G4 lifts off, clearing the top of the jeep by a matter of inches.

The occupants of the jeep loose off their automatic weapons in the direction of the departing plane.

99. INT. G4. COCKPIT. NIGHT

Simon banks the plane sharply.

99. Contd.

SIMON
Get the fuel cans.

PATRICIA
Why?

SIMON
Thank you present.

100. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. COMPOUND. NIGHT

Cortez rushes towards the vast hangars where they store the coca leaves. He is struggling with a SAM missile launcher. Several MINIONS run alongside him.

CORTEZ
Bastardo!

MINION#1
Senor, be careful. Your condition.

CORTEZ
Fuck my condition! Who does he think
he is dealing with?

The G4 is approaching overhead on a low run.

101. INT. G4. CABIN. NIGHT

Simon is struggling to open the fuselage door. He is caught by a great rush of wind. Down below the inhabitants of Castilio Cortez scurry around like frantic ants.

102. INT. G4. COCKPIT. NIGHT

Patricia's at the controls. Panicking.

PATRICIA
We're nearly there! What do I do?

103. INT. G4. CABIN. NIGHT

Simon lights a rag stuffed into the spout of one of the gas cans. It's a giant Molotov cocktail.

SIMON
Nothing. Just hold her steady!

104. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. COMPOUND. NIGHT

The G4 swoops low over the hangar, releasing the bomb. There's a second's delay, then a great whoosh of flames followed by a deafening explosion. Cortez pulls up in horror.

CORTEZ

Crazy sonofabitch! Talk about a sore loser! It was only a game, you shit-head!

He shakes his fist impotently, as the plane turns and comes back on a second run. Wiser this time, they run for cover.

The plane swoops low, sending Cortez diving flat onto his stomach. He watches in disbelief as the plane discharges a second bomb onto the processing plant, detonating a whole sequence of explosions that light up the night sky.

105. INT. G4. COCKPIT. NIGHT

They're heading straight for the side of the mountain!

PATRICIA

Saint! I need you in here!

Simon runs through from the cabin. He jumps into the co-pilot's seat and grabs the joystick.

106. EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE. NIGHT

The G4 ascends vertiginously, missing the side of the mountain and executing a loop the loop in the process.

107. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. COMPOUND. NIGHT

Cortez gets to his feet, still clutching his SAM missile launcher. He stares ahead of him incredulously.

HIS POV - the G4 is heading back towards the compound!

CORTEZ

No lo creo! The sonofabitch is coming again!

This time, no messing. He draws a bead on the approaching G4. Another of his minions taps him anxiously on the arm.

MINION#2

Jefe?

107. Contd.

CORTEZ
(impatiently)
Can't you see I'm busy?

MINION#2
The plane... is your plane.

CORTEZ
I know it's my plane. You're even more
stupid than you look.

MINION#2
(persevering)
Is not insured.

CORTEZ
(mimicking him)
'Is not insured. Is not...'
(it dawns on him)
INSURED?!? Why it's not insured?

MINION#2
You say true rich insure themselves.
So I cancel insurance.

CORTEZ
Estas loco?!?

He grabs him by the collar with his free hand, throttling him.

MINION#2
(a plaintive wheeze)
I save you forty thousand dollars a
year!

The plane is fast approaching. Cortez is caught in two
minds. He reaches a decision.

CORTEZ
I don't care. It's worth it.

He drops the minion and raises the rocket launcher. The
plane soars overhead.

MINION#2
Look, jefe!

THEIR POV

A piece of paper is fluttering down towards them from the
sky.

107. Contd.

It sashays past Cortez, almost brushing the end of his nose. It lands at his feet. He stoops to pick it up.

It's a cheque - for \$ 178,000.

108. INT. G4. COCKPIT. NIGHT

Simon stares down at the diminutive figure below.

PATRICIA

What did you do that for?

He flashes her a knowing smile.

SIMON

A gentleman always pays his debts.

109. EXT. 'CASTILIO CORTEZ'. COMPOUND. NIGHT

Upon which the processing plant goes up in one final, almighty explosion!

To add insult to injury, the blast tears Simon's cheque out of Cortez's outstretched hand.

CORTEZ

Hijo de puta...! HIJO DE PUTA!!!

110. EXT. BRIDGETOWN AIRPORT, BARBADOS. DAWN

The G4 comes in over the bay and touches down on the tarmac.

111. INT. BRIDGETOWN AIRPORT. DAY

Simon and Patricia stand at the British Airways check-in. She smiles wistfully, as the London flight is announced.

PATRICIA

Well, that was fun.

SIMON

It was, wasn't it?

PATRICIA

I'd better get going.

111. Contd.

She kisses him lightly on the cheek. He holds her a beat. We feel the moment could develop for both of them, as memories are stirred.

SIMON

Call me.

PATRICIA

You call me.

She turns away towards the departure gate. He calls after her, a low blow, but he can't resist it.

SIMON

Say hi to Diego.

She keeps on walking. What she's thinking, we'll never know.

112. EXT. CARLYLE HOTEL, NEW YORK. DAY

A cab pulls up outside. Simon gets out. A PORTER gets his luggage from the trunk.

113. INT. CARLYLE HOTEL. SIMON'S SUITE. SITTING ROOM. DAY

The Faberge bracelet is laid out on the glass coffee table. Simon has a Polaroid camera with a close-up attachment. He takes several photos in quick succession.

114. INT. ELIO'S RESTAURANT. BAR. NIGHT

A fashionable uptown hang-out. Verging on the Euro-trashy. Natalia, looking like a million dollars, is sitting at the bar on her own, sipping a Martini, seeming a tad on edge. Her face lights up as Simon comes in from the street. He kisses her slightly formally on the cheek. There's the awkwardness of re-united lovers - and the pent-up sexual tension.

SIMON

Hi. Sorry am I late?

NATALIA

No, I was early.

SIMON

(smiles)
You're looking good.

114. Contd.

NATALIA

Thanks. You don't look so bad yourself.

He nods to the BARMAN and orders himself a Screwdriver.

BARMAN

Coming up, Mr Templar. Nice to have you back.

SIMON

Good to be back, Jack.

Natalia is looking at him with amusement.

NATALIA

Is there anywhere they don't know you?

SIMON

(shrugs)
I'm in the people business.

NATALIA

'People, who need people...'

She does a passable imitation of Streisand. He laughs.

SIMON

Not bad. But don't give up the day job.

She looks at him closely, suddenly serious. Maybe wanting something more from him, wanting to break through that English exterior of his.

NATALIA

Do you need people, Simon? Or are you really as cool as you make out?

(mockingly)
Cool, calm, collected... Unconnected.

SIMON

(somewhat uncomfortable)
I'm not sure where this is getting us.

NATALIA

Probably nowhere.
(abruptly)
Did you bring the bracelet?

SIMON

It's in a safety deposit box. I can let you have it tomorrow. I didn't want to take any chances.

114. Contd.

NATALIA

Very sensible of you.

There's even an edge to that remark. As if what she's really accusing him of is excessive caution in their relationship.

SIMON

You're in a strange mood.

NATALIA

I am, aren't I. I'm sorry. What I should be saying is thank you. Thank you for getting me back my bracelet. I'm incredibly grateful.

(intently)

And I am. You must know that.

(she looks away)

I missed you, Simon. I missed you very much.

115. INT. ELIO'S RESTAURANT. THEIR TABLE. NIGHT

The meal is over. They are holding hands across the intimate table for two. She looks closely into his eyes.

NATALIA

I don't do this very often, you know.

SIMON

What?

NATALIA

(simply)

Fall in love.

SIMON

There's something I should tell you, Natalia. I like you very much. But there's someone in my life. She's a friend and... maybe that's all she'll ever be now. She used to be more. I think what I'm saying is - it's hard for me to move on.

NATALIA

(undeterred)

Maybe I can help you?

115. Contd.

SIMON

(smiles)
Maybe you can.

Her face brightens.

NATALIA

Would you like to meet my father? He's in New York. I know he'd want to thank you for everything you've done for us.

116. INT. PRINCE SERGEI'S APARTMENT. DRAWING ROOM. NIGHT

A BUTLER, resplendent in Cossack uniform, opens the door into a magnificently elegant Park Avenue drawing room. It's like stepping back into Imperial Russia. There are priceless icons on the walls, original hand-woven silk curtains, a silver samovar on a round table. A portrait of the last Tsar, Nicolas II, hangs above the marble fireplace.

BUTLER

Princess Natalia and Mr Simon Templar!

A handsome, gray-haired man in his sixties gets up from an armchair. He's wearing a velvet smoking jacket. Natalia's father, PRINCE SERGEI ROMANOV. He kisses her on both cheeks.

PRINCE SERGEI

Darling. This is an unexpected pleasure.

His English is faultless and almost without accent.

NATALIA

Papa, I'd like you to meet Simon Templar. He's the man we have to thank for getting back the bracelet.

The Prince extends a warm handshake to Simon. His manner is formal, almost courtly in his oldworldliness. But he's full of charm.

PRINCE SERGEI

I'm honored to meet you Templar. My daughter has told me a great deal about you.

(with a twinkle)
She speaks very highly of you, as a matter of fact.

117. INT. PRINCE SERGEI'S DRAWING ROOM. NIGHT - LATER

Simon and Natalia sit on the couch opposite the Prince. They sip chilled vodka and nibble at blinis and caviar and other traditional Russian delicacies laid out on a silver tray.

We PAN across an arrangement of silver-framed photographs of the Prince's ancestors on a grand piano, posed in happier times before the Russian Revolution brought the whole edifice of their privileged world tumbling down. Their images lend poignancy to the Prince's words. We end on a portrait of Tsar Nicholas II himself, with his wife Alexandra.

PRINCE SERGEI

Tsar Nicholas had a younger brother, George. He died of tuberculosis in the summer of 1899, in the Caucasus. He'd gone there in search of a cure. Instead he found love, with the daughter of a local landowner. There were rumors of a child. It caused quite a scandal, as you can imagine. The Tsar was furious. But an affair was one thing. Imagine his fury had he known that his brother had secretly married the girl on his deathbed.

(he pauses for dramatic effect)
That child was my grandfather. If Lenin and his assassins had realised he was George's legitimate heir, I doubt if he would have been spared. As it is, on that terrible day in Ekaterinburg when they massacred the Tsar and all his family, my grandfather became heir to the Romanov dynasty.

(he laughs bitterly)
Not that that was something to shout about in those days.

Simon voices the unspoken question.

SIMON

But now?

PRINCE SERGEI

Who knows? If my country asks me to serve, who am I to refuse?

He smiles urbanely, with self-deprecating modesty.

118. EXT. NATALIA'S APARTMENT BUILDING. LOWER WEST SIDE. NIGHT

We are in the shadow of the World Trade Center. A cab pulls up outside a hi-rise apartment building. Natalia gets out. Simon pays the driver and follows her into the building.

119. INT. NATALIA'S APARTMENT. HALLWAY. NIGHT

They enter her apartment. No sooner has she closed the door than she plants a passionate kiss on Simon's mouth. She starts to undo his shirt, loosening his tie, all the while leading him to a room at the end of the corridor.

120. INT. NATALIA'S APARTMENT. BEDROOM. NIGHT

By the time she gets him into her room, she's tearing at his clothes in a frenzy of desire. She manages to remove his shirt from underneath his tie in one continuous movement, as they stagger backwards onto the bed.

This is rape, but who's complaining?

ANOTHER ANGLE - HIS POV

She looks down on him from above. She's riding him like a tigress, naked save for her bra, which somehow got overlooked in all the rush. It's black silk.

She holds onto his tie, still attached to his neck, pulling it tighter, tighter...

He explodes in an orgasm of volcanic proportions, that just seems to go on and on.

NATALIA

Yes, yes...!

She covers him with kisses. Her eyes are wet with tears.

121. INT. NATALIA'S APARTMENT. BEDROOM. MORNING

Natalia is sprawled across the bed, naked, dead to the world.

Simon is dressed. He tiptoes up to the bed and leaves a note on the pillow.

122. EXT. CHRISTIE'S AUCTION HOUSE. DAY

Simon enters the building. He's carrying a metal briefcase, attached to his wrist by a thin chain - one of those silver ones they advertise as indestructible.

123. INT. CHRISTIE'S AUCTION HOUSE. VALUATION DESK. DAY

Simon stands in front of a thirty year old Englishman, sporting a natty bow tie. HENRY PRINGLE is an old school acquaintance of his from his days at Eton. At present he is perusing three Faberge eggs, which, come to think of it, look more than a little familiar.

PRINGLE

They're certainly genuine. Three of the finest Faberge eggs it's been my privilege to handle. And I've handled a few in my time.

(he lowers his voice)

I won't ask where you got them.

SIMON

No, better not.

PRINGLE

In view of their, er, how shall we put it? - dubious provenance, I'm not sure I'd advise you to offer them for auction. Not in one of the more reputable houses, among which I'd like to think we number ourselves.

SIMON

(smiles)

I just wanted to be sure they were real.

PRINGLE

They are. Eminently. Must be worth a million a piece. Dollars, that is.

Simon gathers them up and replaces them in the briefcase. We glimpse the bracelet, before the case is safely snapped shut again.

SIMON

And the bracelet?

PRINGLE

Ah. The bracelet. I had my suspicions when you showed me the polaroids. I'm afraid they've been confirmed.

123. Contd.

He reaches into his inside pocket and comes out with a folded fax, which he hands over to Simon.

PRINGLE

I received this from the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg. I faxed them the pictures after I saw you yesterday.

(a beat)

The bracelet was stolen from them a year ago.

Simon studies the fax. There's a photo of the bracelet, black and white and indistinct, but recognizably the same.

PRINGLE

That's their one. Compare it to yours.

(he hands him one of the polaroids)

It's the same - the 'Bracelet of Sincerity', it's called.

SIMON

It certainly looks the same.

PRINGLE

You don't have it with you, do you? I wouldn't mind taking a proper look at it.

SIMON

No, I'm sorry. It belongs to a friend. At least, I thought it belonged to a friend.

(as it strikes him)

I don't remember hearing anything about a theft from the Hermitage.

PRINGLE

They hushed it up. They're still very sensitive about these things, even post-Glasnost. We were circulated, along with all the major dealers. In strict confidence. Which I'd ask you to respect, by the way.

SIMON

Of course.

PRINGLE

The bracelet's hot. No doubt about it. There's a substantial reward for its recovery.

123. Contd.

SIMON

Thanks, Henry. Appreciate it.

Pringle looks at him with a wry smile.

PRINGLE

Sometimes I worry about you, Simon.

SIMON

No need.

124. INT. PLAZA HOTEL. TEA ROOM. DAY

Natalia sits rigid in the tea room, as if she's been struck by lightning.

NATALIA

What do you mean, you won't give it to me?

Simon sits opposite her, eyeing her watchfully.

SIMON

Not until you give me a satisfactory explanation.

NATALIA

How dare you ask me for an explanation! Isn't my word good enough?

SIMON

I'm afraid not.

NATALIA

And last night? Everything that's happened between us? Doesn't that count for anything?

He doesn't answer.

NATALIA

The bracelet is mine, Simon. It belongs to my family. I don't know why the Hermitage say it was stolen from them. Maybe theirs is a copy? It's not impossible. Faberge often made copies of his important pieces.

He considers for a moment. Shakes his head slowly.

124. Contd.

SIMON

In the case of a royal commission, he wouldn't have made a copy. Definitely not.

NATALIA

How do you know?

SIMON

Instinct.

NATALIA

(scornfully)

Instinct?!?

SIMON

The same instinct that tells me to finish my tea and get the hell out of here. Thank you, Natalia. This one's on you.

(he smiles tightly)

No doubt we'll talk at some point. You can get me at my London number.

He drains his cup and gets up from the table. She watches him leave, dumbfounded.

NATALIA

Simon, wait! Have you gone crazy?

But he goes on walking. She reaches for her mobile phone.

125. EXT. PLAZA HOTEL. NIGHT

Simon comes out of the hotel and sets off towards Fifth Avenue. His mind is racing, debating his next move. This development has taken him completely off guard for once. He's been thinking with the wrong part of his anatomy.

There's a BEGGAR in a wheelchair parked outside the hotel, with a sign on his chest proclaiming him a Gulf War vet. Simon drops a five dollar bill in his cup.

BEGGAR

Thank you, sir.

Simon reaches the corner of Fifth. He has a sudden flash:

ANGLE ON BEGGAR - FLASHBACK

125. Contd.

Looking down onto his lap and beyond, to his shoes, resting on the footplate of the wheelchair. The soles are heavily worn! Not exactly what you'd expect with a cripple.

Simon turns. The beggar is following him in his motorized wheelchair. He quickens his pace.

The beggar accelerates, nearly mowing down several PEDESTRIANS in his haste.

Simon hails a passing cab. As it starts to pull up, a second cab swerves in front of it. There's a brief altercation between the two DRIVERS as to whose fare it is.

SIMON

Guys, I don't have time for this.

He gets into the second cab. The Sikh driver of the first cab drives off, shouting curses in Hindi.

126. INT. SIMON'S CAB. DAY - TRAVELLING

Simon looks back to see the beggar rise miraculously to his feet and run towards another cab!

DRIVER

Where to?

SIMON

Make a left on fifty-ninth. And step on it, will you?

127. EXT. 59th STREET. DAY

Simon's cab makes a sharp left onto 59th Street, heading for the river.

Six cars behind, the beggar's cab follows at speed.

128. INT/EXT. SIMON'S CAB. DAY - TRAVELLING

Simon glances back anxiously:

129. EXT. 59th STREET. DAY - HIS POV

The beggar's cab overtakes a car, lurching in front with a scream of its horn. It's only five cars behind now. Weirdly, the beggar is sitting up front next to the driver.

130. EXT. 59th STREET BRIDGE. DAY

The traffic is all snarled up at the approach to the bridge.

Simon's cab gets bogged down like everybody else. He turns round to see what's happening behind him.

The beggar- NIKOLAI - is already getting out of the cab. His driver - BORIS - follows suit. We recognize the man who was following Simon in the South of France. They advance menacingly on foot, guns drawn.

Simon takes one look at the situation and bolts out of the cab.

DRIVER

Hey! That's five bucks you owe me!

131. EXT. 59th STREET. ENTRANCE TO CABLE CAR STATION. DAY

Simon heads up the steps to the Roosevelt Island cable car station, as a bullet crashes into the masonry behind him.

132. EXT. CABLE CAR STATION. TICKET BOOTH. DAY

Simon leaps over the ticket barrier and heads for the car - which is about to leave the dock. He jumps on board as the doors close. The car lurches away on its cable. He's made a clean getaway.

Or has he? The first of his pursuers - Nikolai, the former beggar, rendered astonishingly agile - takes a running leap from the end of the platform and hurls himself through the air like a flying monkey.

Miraculously, he grabs hold of the car's infrastructure.

133. INT/EXT. CABLE CAR. DAY - TRAVELLING

The car lurches under the impact. A woman SCREAMS as she almost loses her balance.

Simon goes to the window to see where the guy has ended up.

134. EXT. CABLE CAR STATION. DAY

Boris is standing at the dock, watching the cable car draw away. As soon as he sees Simon at the window, he lets off a burst of automatic fire.

135. INT/EXT. CABLE CAR. DAY - TRAVELLING

Simon ducks, as the glass shatters into a zillion fragments. More panic from his fellow passengers.

136. EXT. CABLE CAR STATION. DAY

Boris turns and runs back down the steps to 59th Street.

137. EXT. CABLE CAR TRACK. DAY

The car makes its stately progress high above the river towards Roosevelt Island.

138. EXT. 59th STREET. DAY

Boris reaches street level. The traffic is worse than ever, the situation not improved by his own abandoned cab, which is already attracting the attention of a TRAFFIC COP. He swears angrily - in Russian.

He looks towards the bridge, which passes over Roosevelt Island, then back towards 1st Avenue. A MOTORCYCLE MESSENGER is approaching, weaving in and out of the cars on his bike.

Boris unceremoniously whacks him across the face with his gun and commandeers the bike.

139. INT/EXT. CABLE CAR. DAY - TRAVELLING

Nikolai is attempting to force the doors of the car open and clamber on board. Simon advances to push him away. Nikolai fires repeatedly through the crack, as the other passengers cower in the far corner of the cab.

Simon parries the bullets with his briefcase, holding it in front of him like a shield. The impact knocks him off his feet.

Nikolai seizes his chance to squeeze himself through the doors. He's half in, half out when Simon launches himself at him, wielding the case like a battering ram.

Nikolai feints to the side, catching the briefcase and swinging Simon through 180 degrees. He ends up sliding through the open doors, dangling over the side of the car, his legs treading on thin air! Only Nikolai holding onto the case prevents him falling three hundred feet into the river below.

139. Contd.

But Nikolai isn't about to let go of that case. He's clinging on to it like grim death.

He tries to sever the chain by shooting out the links. He keeps missing and soon runs out of bullets. In frustration, he clubs at the chain with the butt of the gun.

Meanwhile, the chain cuts deeper into Simon's wrist, drawing blood. His face screws up in agony.

With an almost superhuman effort, he swings backwards and forwards, destabilising his assailant and at the same time achieving sufficient momentum of his own to swing a leg high enough to get a precarious toehold on the car's infrastructure.

He heaves himself onto the bar and simultaneously yanks at the chain with all his strength.

Nikolai is dragged across the floor towards the open doors. He lets go at the very last moment, just as we think he's going over the edge.

Liberated, Simon clambers up the outside of the car and onto the roof.

Seconds later, Nikolai emerges from the cab and starts to manoeuvre himself around to the far side.

140. EXT. EAST RIVER. DAY

The cable car has reached the half way point of its journey, high above the river.

141. EXT. CABLE CAR ROOF. DAY - TRAVELLING

Simon peers cautiously over the edge, looking for Nikolai. There's no sign of him. He straightens up.

A SHADOW appears by his feet! He stands there, pretending not to have seen it.

Behind him, on the other side of the cab, Nikolai peeks over the edge. He raises his revolver, drawing a bead on Simon's back.

Simon sees the unmistakable shadow of the gun. With lightning speed, he whips round, crouching low and swinging the briefcase like a medieval mace.

141. Contd

Nikolai fires and misses, a split second before the case catches him a sickening blow to the temple. He falls back, plunging into the river below. The splash is delayed by several seconds.

Simon undoes the cuff and winds a handkerchief around his wrist. We CUT BACK to:

ANOTHER ANGLE

We are approaching from the POV of a cable car coming from the other direction.

The gap narrows to less than ten feet, and still Simon hasn't seen.

REVERSE ANGLE

Too late. Boris reaches across from the other car's roof and snatches the briefcase! Before Simon even realises what's happened, the other car is drawing away out of reach.

He watches impotently, as Boris disappears with the case. He's lost the bracelet, not to mention his precious Faberge eggs!

142. INT. JFK AIRPORT. AEROFLOT DESK. NIGHT

Prince Nikolai lifts his bags onto the weighing machine at the first class check-in for the Moscow flight.

Natalia is with him. She seems tense.

Across in economy, Boris and a still bedraggled Nikolai stand in line, studiously avoiding eye contact with Natalia and the Prince. Can we be sure they are even associated?

ANGLE ON KARLA

There's a third man, KARLA, checking in at the head of the business line. We haven't seen him before, but we're going to be seeing a good deal of him in the future. In his fifties, short and slighty built, he has a face that would be handsome if it weren't for the unmistakable cruelty of the mouth. He's a sharp dresser, if a little on the conservative side, and it's probably a safe bet to say he's wearing lifts inside those Oxford brogues of his.

Natalia glances across at him. For a moment their eyes meet.

143. EXT. CHELSEA HARBOUR, LONDON. NIGHT

The gleaming tower of the Chelsea Harbour development rises high above the marina, right next to the River Thames.

144. INT. SIMON TEMPLAR'S APARTMENT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

Simon has the penthouse apartment, with commanding views along the river all the way to the City of London.

He's on the phone, pacing tensely, like a caged tiger. Still angry with himself at how easily he was duped.

SIMON

You were right about the Princess, much as I hate to admit it. The bracelet wasn't even hers. It was stolen, from the Hermitage Museum.

145. INT. PATRICIA HOLME'S APARTMENT. BATHROOM. NIGHT

Patricia's luxuriating in the bath. Her ears prick up at the mention of the Hermitage.

PATRICIA

The Hermitage? You know I told you I photographed her for Vanity Fair? Guess where we did the session?

BACK to Simon (etc):

SIMON

Don't tell me. The Hermitage.

PATRICIA

We put her in period costume and borrowed some jewelry from the Royal Collection.

(as it dawns on her)

You know, I think she was wearing it.

SIMON

Have you got the photos?

PATRICIA

It'll take me a while to dig them out.

SIMON

Could you? It's important.

PATRICIA

Sure.

145. Contd.

SIMON
Tonight?

PATRICIA
I've got a date.

SIMON
Break it.

146. INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT. HALLWAY. NIGHT

Simon opens the front door. Patricia enters, somewhat miffed, but she's here. She sweeps past him without a word, clutching a large manila envelope. He follows with a wry smile.

SIMON
Thank you, dearest. I knew I could count on you.

147. INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

The photos are spread out on the floor. Simon crouches to examine. He picks one up.

Natalia poses in tiara and ballgown, her left hand resting on her shoulder, the 'Bracelet of Sincerity' clearly visible.

SIMON
You're right. It's a pity you didn't get a closer sh - -

She plonks a much enlarged blow-up of the bracelet on top of the other photo. He looks up sheepishly.

PATRICIA
Happy? I blew it up from the same neg. Quality's not great, but I think it tells you all you need to know.

Simon seizes it hungrily. He gets up and goes to retrieve his own polaroid of the bracelet. He compares them side by side. They do look remarkably similar.

Similar... but not the same. Simon frowns.

147. Contd.

SIMON

Wait a minute. The one she's wearing has a ruby instead of an emerald... And look, the setting's different.

She peers over his elbow.

PATRICIA

You're right. It's a not the same bracelet.

SIMON

(mystified)

But if she knew there were two, why didn't she just say so - instead of acting like she had something to hide? She never even mentioned your session at the Hermitage.

PATRICIA

Obviously she didn't want you to know there were two.

SIMON

Why not?

PATRICIA

I don't know, you're the genius. But it doesn't take a genius to figure out there's more than a bit of old jewelry at stake here.

SIMON

Hardly a 'bit of old jewelry'.

PATRICIA

She sent in the heavy brigade. Almost got you killed! She's a bitch, but she's not that much of a bitch... She'd kill for a husband, maybe - but a bracelet?

SIMON

How about a pair of bracelets..?

He holds up the photos, one in each hand.

SIMON

Bracelet 'A', stolen from the Hermitage last year. Fact... Bracelet 'B', stolen from our Colombian friend last week. Fact.

147. Contd.

PATRICIA

(raising an eyebrow)
'Stolen'? That's an ugly word, Saint.

SIMON

Slip of the tongue. Let's just say he was relieved of its possession. The question is, how and when did it get into his possession...? Either she's telling the truth and it was the one that was supposedly taken from her in Monte Carlo, or - -

PATRICIA

Or he had it all along and you were set up. She stole the bracelet from the Hermitage. She wanted the other, one, owned by Cortez. So she faked the robbery and made it look like he was behind it - in your room, knowing you'd feel obliged to get it back for her. Her knight in shining armor!

She looks at him mockingly. He smiles sheepishly.

SIMON

Yes I did rather fall for it, didn't I?

PATRICIA

(merciless)
Beyond her wildest dreams.

148. INT/EXT. SIMON'S CAR. NIGHT - TRAVELLING

Simon guns his beloved old AC Cobra along the freeway towards Heathrow Airport, Patricia by his side. Black on black, open top, it's the sleekest thing on wheels - with acceleration to put a Targa Porsche to shame. He works the gears with gusto.

PATRICIA

I don't know why you don't let it go.
It's not as if you need the money.

SIMON

I don't like to be made a fool of.

PATRICIA

Ah, foolish pride. Sure we're not just the teensiest bit obsessed?

148. Contd.

SIMON

With Natalia? You must be joking. I'm not saying she's not attractive... No, my curiosity's piqued. I want to find out what's behind all this.

She looks at him askance, not buying a word of it. There's a trill from her mobile phone, tucked inside her purse.

PATRICIA

Hello...? Oh, hi...

Simon glances across, his curiosity 'piqued' once more. This seems to be a conversation she'd rather not be having in front of him.

PATRICIA

No, I won't be back for another hour. We haven't even got to the airport...

(she listens intently)

Well I think you're being rather childish, if you want my honest opinion... Careful, Diego, I might just call your bluff...

(another onslaught of Latin jealousy at the other end)

Fine, I have no problem with that!

She hangs up emphatically, fuming. Simon raises an eyebrow, still looking to get a reaction.

SIMON

A little domestic difficulty?

PATRICIA

Why don't you concentrate on the road, darling?

He smiles, content at last.

149. EXT. TERMINAL 4, HEATHROW AIRPORT. NIGHT

The Cobra pulls up. Simon gets out. We notice that a taxi has been following them with his suitcase - too large to fit in the Cobra's tiny and impractical trunk. The CABBIE deposits it on the kerb next to the Cobra, as Simon hands him a twenty pound note.

Meanwhile Patricia gets out her side and comes round to the driver's seat. She gets in. Simon comes back from paying the cabbie and picks up his case.

149. Contd.

SIMON

Thanks for the ride.

She looks up.

PATRICIA

Aren't you forgetting something?

SIMON

What...? Oh, right.

He leans forward to kiss her goodbye.

PATRICIA

(patiently)

No, darling - the keys.

SIMON

Oh. Sorry.

He fumbles in his pocket and locates them. He tosses them to her. She catches them, one-handed.

SIMON

(one last dig)

Don't let Diego drive her.

She looks at him levelly.

PATRICIA

I can't stand men who call their cars 'her'. It's almost as bad as wearing socks with sandals.

She roars the engine into life and takes off like a bat out of hell, burning rubber all the way. He smiles ruefully and turns towards the terminal...

150. EXT. HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG. DAY

To establish: the magnificent classical structure of the Hermitage, one of the great museums of the world.

BMW's and Mercedes Benz's swish past, along with the odd clapped out Lada. This is the former Soviet Union, post-Glasnost; a black market spiv on every corner.

151. INT. HERMITAGE MUSEUM. CURATOR'S OFFICE. DAY

RODZENSKO, the museum curator, has the broad, flat features of a Russian peasant - and the sharp, round eyes too. He's in his mid-forties and looks like he's spent his professional life fighting a losing battle against underfunding. His office is shabby and the equipment in it outdated. He's studying a fax and at the same time examining the surprisingly youthful man on the chair in front of him.

RODZENSKO

Our good friend at Christies in New York has very high opinion of you. He says you may know way to recover the stolen bracelet?

Simon smiles with pleasing modesty.

SIMON

I would like to help, if I can. But for me to able to do that, I need you to put all your cards on the table.

The Russian looks at him blankly, not understanding the figure of speech.

SIMON

I need you to tell me everything you know about the Bracelet of Sincerity. For a start, how were you able to keep its theft a secret? Surely so well-known a piece was missed?

RODZENSKO

That is easy. It was not on exhibition. You see, it had been buried in the vaults ever since it was recovered by partisans during the last war.

SIMON

Why wasn't it put on show?

RODZENSKO

It was too closely associated with the old regime. It is only now, after perestroika - you must realise, it belonged to the Tsaritsa Alexandria. It was not 'politically correct', as you say in America.

SIMON

You do know it's one of a pair?

151. Contd.

Rodzensko looks at him a moment in surprise, as if he's been caught completely off-guard. And then he smiles.

RODZENSKO

You are surprisingly well-informed.

SIMON

I make it my business.

152. INT. HERMITAGE MUSEUM. CURATOR'S OFFICE. DAY - LATER

They are studying a video recording of the robbery, taken by the museum's security cameras.

There are four men, all wearing balaclavas over their heads. They are well equipped, with explosives, blast shields and breathing apparatus.

They are at work in what appears to be a basement corridor, with service pipes trailing along the walls. They pack their explosives around a heavy steel door set in the wall.

Over the images of the above, Rodzensko tells Simon the history of the bracelets.

RODZENSKO

There is a legend surrounding these bracelets. The Tsaritsa is supposed to have been wearing them on the day she was murdered. They were locked onto her wrists - its is said they had to hack off her hands to get them free. The Bracelet of Sincerity and the Bracelet of Wisdom. They were missing for over twenty years, until one was acquired by a Nazi general during the seige of Leningrad - now St Petersburg. The other was recovered by partisans after the Germans were driven back. As I say, it has been here ever since. Until last year, that is.

Something on the video has caught Simon's attention. One of the robbers walks up to the camera and sprays it with black aerosol paint, blocking out the image.

SIMON

Can you rewind?

Rodzensko obliges.

152. Contd.

SIMON

There! Look!

The image stabilises again.

SIMON

The wall at the end of the corridor -
there's a mirror!

153. INT. HERMITAGE MUSEUM. BASEMENT CORRIDOR. DAY

Simon and Rodzensko walk towards the strong room door, as seen in the security video. Sure enough, there's a magnificent old eighteenth century mirror on the wall at the end of the corridor, some twenty feet from the door.

Simon approaches it eagerly.

SIMON

Can we get it off the wall?

RODZENSKO

(horrified)

Are you serious? That mirror dates from
Catharine the Great.

154. INT. HERMITAGE MUSEUM. WORKSHOP. DAY

An ancient RESTORER gently prises the mirror glass out of its gilded frame, watched by Simon and an increasingly nervous Rodzensko.

RODZENSKO

(in Russian)

Be very, very careful.

RESTORER

(grumbles)

I've done this before, you know.

SIMON

Now, would you ask him to cut the
mirror into four pieces?

Rodzensko just looks at him as if he's gone completely mad.

SIMON

Do you want to get the bracelet back
or not? It's your decision, Mr
Rodzensko.

155. EXT. ST PETERSBURG. SIDE STREET. DAY

A cab pulls up and Simon gets out. He's carrying a square-ish package, wrapped in brown paper.

He stands in front of an old photographic shop. There's an antiquated, mahogany cased full-plate camera in the window with brass mounted lens.

He goes inside.

156. INT. PHOTOGRAPHIC SHOP. DAY

Simon stands at the counter in the musty old store. The PROPRIETOR - early thirties, wears a yarmulka - carefully undoes the package.

PROPRIETOR

You are lucky to catch me. Next week
I shut up shop and emigrate to Israel.

SIMON

The situation is bad here?

PROPRIETOR

Bad, and will only get worse. How much
worse, I have no intention of finding
out!

He pulls back the paper to reveal four neatly cut pieces of mirror, each one not much larger than a full-plate negative. He looks up at Simon, an amused expression on his face.

PROPRIETOR

This I am supposed to develop?

SIMON

What did they use in old black and
white negatives to create an image?

PROPRIETOR

Silver nitrate, of course.

SIMON

This mirror is backed with silver
nitrate. It was exposed to a flash of
intense white light, caused by a
halogen-based explosive.

PROPRIETOR

(skeptically)
And you think there's an image?

156. Contd.

SIMON

There's only one way to find out.

PROPRIETOR

(shakes his head)

I think you are asking the impossible.

Simon starts to wrap up the pieces.

SIMON

They told me you were the best.

PROPRIETOR

I am.

SIMON

Then tell me. Does impossible mean impossible? Or just very, very difficult?

PROPRIETOR

(smiles)

Hard currency is always welcome.

157. INT. PHOTOGRAPHIC SHOP. DARKROOM. DAY

The room is bathed in red light. The proprietor pins up four 15" by 12" prints to form a composite whole. He clicks the switch to turn the light from red to white.

SIMON

You're a genius.

PROPRIETOR

Sometimes I surprise even myself.

Simon leans forward. The image is grainy, very thin, but nevertheless discernible. The museum gang is captured in the act, just as the explosive charge attached to the steel door goes off. Sheltering behind their blast shields, breathing apparatus attached to their faces, they are unrecognizable.

SIMON

(disappointed)

Pity, they're wearing breathing masks.

PROPRIETOR

Not all of them.

157. Contd.

Simon leans closer. Sure enough, the fourth man has turned his back on the blast and is still in the act of putting on his breathing mask at the moment of the 'photograph'.

As we home in on his face, we recognize the other man at the airport.

Karla.

158. EXT. LIBYAN DESERT. ARMAMENTS DEPOT. DAY

A helicopter lowers itself out of the sky, like an ominous flying bug.

It lands in front of a huge, heavily guarded hangar. A man gets out and runs from the whirlwind of the rotor blades.

Karla. Boris and Nikolai follow, not far behind their master.

A man moves forward to greet them - none other than our old friend Ahmed Al Rashid, arms dealer extraordinaire.

159. INT. AIRCRAFT HANGAR. DAY

The hangar is in fact an enormous bazaar. Aside from fighter planes, there are tanks, missiles, choppers, assault craft - you name it. An armaments mega-market.

Al Rashid leads them along an alleyway of tanks. Karla is armed with a calculator.

AL RASHID

German Leopards. The finest I have. If you take a dozen I make very good price.

KARLA

Parts could be a problem. I prefer Russian.

AL RASHID

Russian? My friend, why come to me if you want Russian? Your country is full of tanks nobody wants! I have twenty-four T47s coming next week.

KARLA

I'll take them.

159. Contd.

AL RASHID

All of them?

KARLA

From you I am guaranteed discretion. If I buy them in Moscow, all the world would know. Now, guided missiles?

AL RASHID

(hopefully)

I have Scuds.

KARLA

(contemptuously)

Flying dustbins. I want Exocets.

AL RASHID

Exocets are expensive. I cannot give a discount. The manufacturers do not allow it.

KARLA

Money is not a problem. This is only the beginning. I am going to make you a very rich man indeed.

AL RASHID

I am already rich.

KARLA

Richer. Much, much richer.

They reach the doors at the end of the hangar.

KARLA

I would like to see your nuclear range.

AL RASHID

(brightening)

Nuclear? But of course, Mister Karla.

He hurries to open the doors for him.

160. INT. HERMITAGE MUSEUM. ARCHIVE GALLERY. NIGHT

Simon walks along the rows of open filing accompanied by an attractive girl in her twenties, TATIANA, in charge of the museum archives.

A large clock reveals that it is past midnight.

160. Contd.

SIMON

Sorry to drag you out at this ungodly hour. I'm sure you have better things to do. Like sleep.

TATIANA

(laughs)

That is OK. Mr Rodzensko says I am to extend you every assistance.

SIMON

I appreciate it, Miss Arkanovich.

TATIANA

You may call me Tatiana.

She pauses, examining the racks.

SIMON

Tatiana. Pretty name.

TATIANA

Thank you. Now let me see... It is Faberge you are interested in, yes?

SIMON

Correct.

She unfolds a built-in step ladder and starts up towards the higher level.

Simon does his best not to take unfair advantage of the opportunity to view her shapely legs.

TATIANA

Are you strong?

SIMON

Moderately.

She smiles, pulling a large metal trunk off the shelf inch by inch until its weight threatens to topple it over the edge. There are several others visible behind it.

Simon rushes forward to take its weight.

161. INT. HERMITAGE MUSEUM. READING ROOM. NIGHT

Tatiana opens the door to a little glass fronted reading room off the main archive hall.

161. Contd.

Simon staggers in and plonks the trunk on the table in a cloud of dust.

TATIANA

There is much more.

SIMON

(not so sure)

Great.

TATIANA

My boss says you understand Russian?

SIMON

Not as well as I'd like, I'm afraid.

TATIANA

Why should you? We lost. Everyone has to speak American now.

(smiles)

Let me know if you need any help.

She goes out.

162. INT. HERMITAGE MUSEUM. ARCHIVE GALERY. DAWN

The early morning light sends a gray shaft through the high overhead windows.

Tatiana is dozing in a leather chair.

SIMON (o.s.)

Tatiana! Can you come here a moment?

163. INT. HERMITAGE MUSEUM. READING ROOM. DAWN

There are several of those metal trunks stacked on top of each other now.

As Tatiana enters, Simon waves a piece of paper excitedly.

SIMON

I think I found what I'm looking for.

She scans the paper.

TATIANA

Yes, it is a list of all their workers at the time of the Revolution.

164. EXT. RUSSIAN COUNTRYSIDE. OLD PEOPLES' HOME. DAY

A Zil automobile winds along the driveway towards a forbidding nineteenth century structure, once the home of a landowning nobleman, now converted to a state run institution for the elderly.

165. INT. OLD PEOPLES' HOME. DAY

Simon and Tatiana are led along a seemingly endless corridor by a uniformed NURSE. Kindly and amply proportioned, she takes a motherly interest in all her charges.

NURSE

You must not upset him. Comrade Popov is our oldest resident.

SIMON

(smiles)

Comrade? Old habits die hard.

NURSE

(she laughs)

No, I mean Comrade. He insists on it. Call him 'Mister' and he will ignore you.

They arrive at a door. She knocks.

NURSE

(loudly, in Russian)

Comrade Popov? Your visitors are here!

No reply.

NURSE

I also advise you to shout... COMRADE POPOV!

166. INT. OLD PEOPLES' HOME. POPOV'S ROOM. DAY

POPOV sits in an armchair by the window. He's in his eighties, almost blind, and as we have already noted, hard of hearing. He's also cantankerous and irascible. In short he's a character, but much loved by the nursing staff.

POPOV

Do you have a cigar for me? Preferably Cuban.

166. Contd.

TATIANA

He asks if you have a cigar. He likes the Cuban kind.

She's perched on the end of the bed. Simon is over by the door, examining some framed photographs on the wall. One of them shows a much younger Popov peeking out of the top of a WW2 tank.

SIMON

I'm afraid not. I didn't realise the Comrade was partial. Tell him we have the fruit.

Tatiana relays the bad news. She gets out the contents of a plastic bag and starts to arrange the contents in a glass bowl on the table.

POPOV

(grumbles)

I hate fruit. I tell the nurses I want cigars. Nobody listens any more!

This time we see what he says in subtitles. Tatiana goes to translate.

TATIANA

He says he hates - -

SIMON

(smiles)

It's OK. I think I got the gist of it.

POPOV

We don't seem to get the Cuban ones any more. The country's gone to shit! Ever since that cretin Gorbachov! As for Yeltsin - he's worse than the lot of them!

SIMON

I see he was a tank commander in the War.

Tatiana translates. The old boy's face lights up with pride.

POPOV

I fought in the Battle of Leningrad. I was awarded the Order of Lenin.

166. Contd.

SIMON

My father was in the D-day landings. He was a Paratrooper. Special Services.

POPOV

Ah. We were allies then. Against the Fascists!

SIMON

Let's hope we can be allies again, Tovarish.

167. INT. OLD PEOPLES' HOME. POPOV'S ROOM. EVENING

The old boy's tongue has loosened. He's deep in reminiscence - recalling a past that happened three quarters of a century ago.

POPOV

My father was a brilliant goldsmith. The best. After the Revolution, he started his own business. I became his apprentice... Those were hard times. No one wanted beauty in those days...

TATIANA

(gently bringing him back to the point)

Comrade Popov, you were telling us about the bracelets.

His face brightens with pride.

POPOV

Ah, yes. The bracelets. My father considered them his masterpiece. Mister Faberge took all the credit, of course. People should remember the men who did the work... They were especially commissioned for the Tsarina. My father had to take an oath of secrecy...

168. EXT. ST PETERSBURG. WINTER PALACE. NIGHT - FLASHBACK

It is 1917. A black horse-drawn cab approaches the Palace gates. COSSACK SOLDIERS, their breath billowing in the freezing air, hold back an ANGRY MOB. We are on the threshold of one of the great seismic changes in human history.

168. Contd.

The huge iron gates are briefly pulled back to allow the carriage to pass, then immediately clanged shut again.

POPOV (v.o.)

I remember the night we delivered them to the Palace. I was a mere boy... I don't know why my father took me. I think he knew it was the end, he wanted me to witness the great events...

CLOSE ON CARRIAGE

We see a small face pressed against the window, the face of a boy, no more than seven years old, staring wide-eyed at the scenes outside the Palace. The young Popov.

169. INT. PALACE VAULTS. NIGHT

Vault after vault packed with gold bars and coin, trays of diamonds and necklaces, huge safes yawning with currency.

PALACE SERVANTS - dressed like surgeons - work fast, packing the treasures meticulously into steel chests.

A distinguished man supervises the operation - COUNT BECKENDORFF, head of the Royal Household.

There is a commotion at the door. TSAR NICHOLAS II, Emperor of All Russia, enters, grim-faced. BECKENDORFF bows deeply.

TSAR NICHOLAS

You have everything - the Orb, the Scepter, the Crown Jewels?

BECKENDORFF

Everything save the Cap of Monamakh.

TSAR NICHOLAS

Why not?

BECKENDORFF

You know the legend, Sire. Only the Tsar may touch the Crown of Russia.

TSAR NICHOLAS

(wryly)

So you think we still have time for legends, my dear Count?

The Count motions to two GUARDS. They unlock a massive steel door.

169. Contd.

A velvet-lined vault. Sitting in it, glittering, all alone - the Imperial Crown.

Slowly the Tsar takes it out. As he turns with it in his hands, a hush falls over the room.

From outside, there's a sudden volley of gunfire.

The Tsar stiffens. His fingers lose their grip on the Crown. It falls from his hands, clattering to the floor.

There's a collective gasp. One of the palace servants - a grey-haired old man - crosses himself.

Calmly, the Tsar picks up the crown and places it in the strongbox.

170. EXT. WINTER PALACE. COURTYARD. NIGHT

A motor-driven ambulance has drawn up in one of the rear courtyards. Liveried FOOTMEN load the steel trunks into the back, slipping on the icy ground in their haste.

Count Beckendorff yells at the men, as another salvo breaks at the front of the palace.

BECKENDORFF

Hurry, men. Hurry!

He suddenly notices the man and boy standing in front of him. POPOV SR doffs his cap respectfully.

POPOV SR

(nervously)

Count Beckendorff?

BECKENDORFF

(distractedly)

Yes, what is it?

POPOV SR

Mr Faberge sent me. He did not want to attract attention by coming in person.

The Count's face lights up as he understands.

BECKENDORFF

The bracelets?!?

Eagerly he notices for the first time the small casket the man is clutching under his arm.

171. INT. WINTER PALACE. TSARINA ALEXANDRA'S SUITE. NIGHT

In the Tsarina's suite, the same frenzy of packing, as her MAIDS hurry to and fro with the royal wardrobe.

As she nears fifty, Tsarina Alexandra is still a beautiful woman. There is a steely quality, an inner strength, that contrasts with her somewhat diffident husband.

Beckendorff and the Tsar watch as Popov Sr kneels before her in order to fit the bracelets to her wrists.

No one seems to notice the small boy, half hidden by a chair, soaking it all in through big, saucer eyes.

POPOV SR

Is that too tight, Your Highness? I can adjust the links, if you wish?

ALEXANDRA

It's fine.

Popov glances over anxiously to the Tsar.

TSAR NICHOLAS

He must lock them, my dear.

ALEXANDRA

Of course.

His hand shaking, Popov inserts a tiny key in the lock of each bracelet and turns.

He hands the key, on a thin gold chain, to the Tsarina. She takes it and puts it around her neck, tucking it safely inside her dress.

172. EXT. WINTER PALACE. QUAY. NIGHT

The Palace backs onto the Nevsky River, presently frozen over. A pair of sleek covered sleighs wait by the quayside, each one drawn by half a dozen magnificent reindeer.

Nicholas and his family proceed towards the sleighs along an alley of Cossacks. The four pretty Grand Duchesses, OLGA, TATIANA, MARIE and ANASTASIA, swathed, like their mother, in sable.

And the sickly twelve year old Tsarevich, ALEX, carried by his personal BODYGUARD, a uniformed sailor.

173. EXT. WINTER PALACE. SIDE ENTRANCE. NIGHT

A massive wooden door swings open, and the ambulance is pushed silently into the street by several of the footmen.

As the door closes behind it, the driver starts his engine. The motor fires into life and the ambulance lurches forward down the narrow street.

CLOSE on a banner attached to the vehicle, as it unfurls in the slipstream. The red flag of revolution, a golden star at its centre.

The ambulance passes two lone figures. A boy and his father. We hold on the boy, as he stares after it.

174. INT. OLD PEOPLES' HOME. POPOV'S ROOM. NIGHT

The face of the boy becomes that of an old man. We are back with Comrade Popov in his room. He smiles ruefully.

POPOV

If it hadn't been for the Revolution,
my father would probably have been shot
to preserve his silence. All the
original designs for the bracelet were
burnt.

SIMON

What is so special about the bracelets?
Why have men risked so much to get hold
of them?

The old man stares at him as Tatiana translates.

POPOV

Ah, if I knew the answer - I'd be a rich
man.

SIMON

And the Crown Jewels? The Royal Treas-
ure?

TATIANA

I can tell you that. Most of it was
never found. What we have in the museum
is only a fraction.

SIMON

Please, ask him.

174. Contd.

When she repeats the question, the old man frowns. Uncomfortable with this line of questioning.

POPOV

I have already said too much. The ramb-
lings of an old fool. Pay no attention.

SIMON

(sensing his unease)
It will go no further than this room.

As she starts to translate again, Popov cuts across her.

POPOV

(shouts)
Nurse...! I am not feeling well! Nurse!

175. EXT. FOREST CLEARING. DAY

A training camp, deep in the Russian forest. A thousand PARAMILITARY SOLDIERS stand rigidly to attention in perfect formation, as they're addressed at an open air rally.

Up on the podium, Karla struts in front of the microphone. A row of BIGWIGS is seated behind him, including Prince Sergei and next to him, Natalia Romanov. They look a somewhat sinister bunch, and she seems uneasy in their company.

KARLA

Brother Russians, I call you to witness! Look around you, at the streets of our beloved cities. Pimps and prostitutes. Moneychangers and racketeers. Gangsters! These are the heirs of 'Glasnost', with their imported German limousines and their Japanese VCRs...! And what of the ordinary, decent citizen? Is his toil rewarded? He has not even bread to put in his family's mouth! But this situation cannot continue, will not continue. I will not allow it - you will not allow it...! Brothers, it is my very great privilege to introduce a man who has truly found his moment in History. Please welcome Prince Sergei Romanov, rightful heir to the Imperial Crown, father of all the Russias!

175. Contd.

There is a deafening roar as Prince Sergei stands. Natalia applauds loudly, as father and daughter exchange a private smile. He moves slowly towards the podium, bringing the text of a prepared speech out of his inner pocket.

PRINCE SERGEI

(nervously)

Friends! Fellow Russians...!

But his words are drowned out, as the crowd chants the word 'Batushka! Batushka!' (Father! Father!) repeatedly, punching the air with their fist in a salute of unmistakably Fascist overtones.

Natalia watches uneasily, with a sidelong glance at Karla. His eyes are glistening. He is revelling in the moment.

And we wonder, who is it who has really found his 'Moment in History'...?

176. EXT. ST PETERSBURG. STREET CORNER. DAY

Simon is talking on a pay-phone, glancing anxiously around him to make sure he isn't being overheard.

SIMON

Did you have any luck with the photograph?

177. INT. BRITISH CONSULATE. HENDERSON'S OFFICE. DAY

HENDERSON is a consular employee, same age as Simon, ostensibly a commercial attache - in fact a member of MI5.

HENDERSON

(chuckles)

You're no David Bailey, I'll say that.

BACK to SIMON (etc):

SIMON

(impatiently)

Well? Did you?

HENDERSON

Yes, we did manage to come up with something. Rather not talk about it over the phone, if you get my meaning.

178. EXT. ST PETERSBURG. NEVSKY RIVER. DAY

Simon and Henderson skate along the frozen river in the company of other enthusiasts.

HENDERSON

The Party's finished, they've disbanded the KGB. But old habits die hard. The spies are still out there, they've just gone freelance, selling to the highest bidder.

SIMON

Where does that leave you?

HENDERSON

Looking for a job, I should think. I'm beginning to miss the Cold War. At least we knew where we stood. You know, they even have 'Rave Nights' in Peter these days!

He sounds genuinely shocked.

SIMON

(affectionately)

You always were a bit of a prig, Charles.

HENDERSON

(laughs)

And proud of it. Anyway, your man, Karla. A nasty piece of work, I'm sure you won't be surprised to learn.

SIMON

Karla?

HENDERSON

Colonel Karla Ivanovich, Order of Lenin, Second Class, to give him his full title. Ex-KGB.

SIMON

Which division?

HENDERSON

He was in charge of Interrogation at Lubyanka. A torturer, not to put too fine a point on it.

SIMON

Charming. What's he up to these days?

178. Contd.

HENDERSON

He's a leading member of the extreme Nationalist movement. The loony Right. They want an ethnically cleansed Russia. Bosnia will seem like a tea party by comparison, if they ever get to power.

SIMON

Is that likely?

HENDERSON

Anything's possible. You've seen the state the country's in. There's a power vacuum. People want strong government. If he can get financial backing, maybe ally himself with the Monarchists - now that would be a dangerous combination.

Simon looks thoughtful. This strikes a chord.

SIMON

What do you know about Prince Sergei?

HENDERSON

One of the pretenders to the Imperial Crown. Probably got as good a claim as anyone. A weak man, well-intentioned, but easily manipulated. Not unlike the last Tsar. Very sexy daughter, I seem to remember.

SIMON

(smiles)

Yes, I had noticed.

179. INT. OLD PEOPLES' HOME. POPOV'S ROOM. DAY

The door opens and Simon enters, followed by Tatiana. He is carrying a large box of Cuban cigars.

SIMON

I've brought you something this time.

He hands the box to Popov. The old man's face lights up. He chuckles wryly.

POPOV

You think you can buy me? Maybe you can. They say everyone is for sale in Russia these days.

179. Contd.

SIMON

(smiles)

I'm not trying to buy you, Tovarisch.
Maybe just a little more of your time.

180. INT. POPOV'S ROOM. DAY - LATER

A while has elapsed. Simon is coming to the end of his pitch. Every now and then he stops to let Tatiana translate the last few sentences, before he continues again in English.

SIMON

... These men are fascists. They are no different from the Nazis you fought at Leningrad... I know you love Mother Russia. I know you are no friend of the Tsar... I appeal to you, as an old soldier and a patriot - if you know anything at all about the bracelets, please tell me... Or I cannot answer for the consequences.

He waits for Tatiana to finish translating. The old man says nothing. He just sits there, puffing his cigar, staring at Simon - maybe trying to figure out whether he can trust him. Finally he nods.

POPOV

(to Tatiana)

Get me my jacket. Over there, on the door.

Tatiana retrieves Popov's jacket as requested. He feels in the lining.

POPOV

I need scissors.

CLOSE ON JACKET

as Popov unpicks the lining, watched eagerly by Simon and Tatiana.

POPOV

My father considered the bracelets his masterpiece. He made copies of the design, from memory.

He retrieves a folded piece of paper and hands it to Simon. It's the design for the bracelets, surprisingly detailed.

180. Contd.

POPOV

For years I've been trying to work out
what it means. Maybe you'll have more
luck?

SIMON

Thank you, Comrade Popov. We won't
trouble you any more.

As they head for the door, Popov calls after them. One last
titbit of information:

POPOV

There is one thing I can tell you.
They make a necklace. The two halves
can be joined to make a necklace.

181. INT. ST. PETERSBURG HOTEL. SIMON'S ROOM. NIGHT

Simon sits in front of his lap top. He has fed the drawings
into his computer and generated a three dimensional color
image.

ANGLE ON SCREEN

He rotates the twin bracelets, aligning them so that the
clasp of one connects with the clasp of the other, forming
one continuous circle - in other words, a necklace.

He studies the whole. The configuration of gems suggests a
series of numbers. Some of the numbers form a date, in
Roman numerals, that much is clear. He writes it down on a
piece of paper:

October 12th 1917.

SIMON

October 1917. Makes sense - probably
when the bracelets were made. But what
the hell do these other numbers mean?

He stares at the screen, hoping for inspiration. He throws
down his pencil in frustration and switches off the
computer.

SIMON

This is hopeless. I need the real
thing.

182. INT. NATALIA'S APARTMENT. NIGHT

At that moment the 'real thing' is being placed by Karla around Natalia Romanov's shapely neck.

KARLA

The Bracelet of Wisdom and the Bracelet of Sincerity... Together at last!

There is a spontaneous burst of applause from the assembled GUESTS - among them her father, Boris, Nikolai and various other faces we recognize from the rally.

KARLA

Very pretty, my dear. It might have been made for you.

There is laughter. Natalia smiles shyly.

NATALIA

It feels strange to wear it. Almost a sacrilege.

KARLA

Nonsense. The necklace was made for a purpose. And now that purpose is served. I'm sure the Tsarina Alexandra would have approved.

Cries of 'Hear, hear!'

KARLA

And now, gentlemen - ladies - a toast! To Sergei the First. The next Tsar of All the Russias!

VARIOUS.

Sergei the First!

Prince Sergei smiles uncomfortably. The others drain their champagne and sling the empty goblets into the hearth in a cacophony of breaking glass.

183. EXT. ST PETERSBURG. BRIDGE OVER THE NEVSKY. NIGHT

A lone figure walks across the snow covered bridge. It's late at night, no cars about. It's Simon. He pauses half way across the bridge, huddled against the cold. He stares the length of the frozen river, towards the Winter Palace. He looks up at the sky, as if in search of inspiration..

HIS POV - THE FIRMAMENT ABOVE

183. Contd.

It's a beautifully clear night. The Heavens are revealed in all their majesty. The Great Bear. Orion. The Plough. And suddenly it hits him!

SIMON

(with a sense of awe)

The heavenly bodies - latitude and longitude. It's a star fix!

184. INT. TATIANA'S APARTMENT. HER ROOM. NIGHT

Tatiana is fast asleep in bed. In the distance, we hear the SOUND of a phone ringing. The door opens, awakening her. A dishevelled middle-aged man, her FATHER, is silhouetted against the corridor light.

FATHER

It's for you. A foreigner.

TATIANA

For me? I am sorry, papa.

185. INT. TATIANA'S APARTMENT. HALLWAY

Tatiana picks up the only phone in the hallway. The apartment is cramped and dilapidated. Her father shuffles off to his room, still grumbling.

TATIANA

Hello? Is it you, Simon?

186. INT. ST PETERSBURG HOTEL. SIMON'S ROOM. NIGHT

Simon is on the phone in his room.

SIMON

Tatiana, I'm sorry. I need your help.

187. INT. HERMITAGE MUSEUM. ARCHIVES. NIGHT

Tatiana walks along with several heavy tomes stacked in her arms.

188. INT. HERMITAGE MUSEUM. READING ROOM. NIGHT

She enters the reading room. Simon is pouring over his computer. She plonks the books on the table.

188. Contd.

SIMON

See the yellow sapphire...? That's the sun. And the pearl - that's the moon... Did you get the almanac?

TATIANA

It's here. And the atlas.

ANGLE ON ATLAS

It's an old atlas, of the period. Simon traces a line across the map of Russia, on a piece of tracing paper. It intersects with another line to pinpoint a location.

Unfortunately bang in the middle of the Caspian Sea.

SIMON

(disappointed)
That can't be right.

TATIANA

Wait a minute, what date are you using?

SIMON

October 12th.

TATIANA

New style or Old style?

SIMON

There's a difference?

TATIANA

Of course. Before the Revolution Russia used a different system. It was two weeks behind the West. I'm sure if this bracelet was made for the Tsar, they would have used the old calendar.

SIMON

(grins)
Tatiana, I love you.

TATIANA

(taken aback)
You do?

SIMON

It's a figure of speech. In the West we don't always say what we mean. Or mean what we say.

188. Contd.

TATIANA

Ah, you mean 'irony'. I learnt about it in college.

SIMON

Well, then. You know what I'm talking about. Could you pass my calculator?

ANGLE ON ATLAS

Central Russia. An overlay of tracing paper, again the intersection of two lines.

Simon lifts the paper to reveal a dot, deep in the forest. The Monastery of St. Peter, at a place called Pavlovsk.

SIMON

Pavlovsk!

He looks at Tatiana triumphantly.

TATIANA

It's a dump.

(pause)

That's not irony.

189. EXT. PAVLOVSK. MAIN STREET. DAY

If you can call it day. More like a grey netherworld where the light seldom shines. Pavlovsk is a modern, grimy, polluted industrial town. Its inhabitants move as if in slow motion down the drab street, past empty-windowed shops, their faces pinched against the cold.

Tatiana was right.

A cab pulls up and Simon gets out. He looks across the street at a large, monolithic, thirties building of utilitarian ugliness.

SIMON

(in halting Russian)

Are you sure this is right?

CABBIE

This used to be the Monastery of St Peter. It was pulled down in the twenties.

Simon thinks for a moment, considering his next move. He gets back into the cab.

189. Contd.

SIMON

Take me to the Town Hall.

190. INT. PAVLOVSK MUNICIPAL HALL. MAYOR'S OFFICE. DAY

Simon sits opposite the mayor, a genial sixty year old not unlike Boris Yeltsin in appearance. He speaks excellent English.

MAYOR

Yes, the site has a rather fascinating history. It is said that Genghis Khan impaled five hundred Christians there. This is why it was chosen by the Archbishop of St Petersburg, who founded the monastery in the sixteenth century. It survived as a place of pilgrimage for almost four hundred years, until it was pulled down in an act of revolutionary fervour. Some might call it vandalism. The new building became the headquarters of the local Communist Party. Now it is a business centre. All that survives is the ancient crypt.

SIMON

(his ears prick up)
Crypt?

MAYOR

There is a whole labyrinth of tunnels and secret passages. Most have collapsed or been flooded.

SIMON

Do any plans exist?

MAYOR

Yes, in the archives. I can let you see them.

SIMON

I'd appreciate it.

As they go to the door:

MAYOR

Tell me, if I may ask, why this sudden interest in the monastery?

190. Contd.

SIMON

What do you mean?

MAYOR

You are the second gentleman today to inquire about it.

191. EXT. PAVLOVSK BUSINESS CENTRE. NIGHT

The building is in darkness. Simon approaches cautiously from the other side of the street.

HIS POV

Lurking in the shadows outside the main entrance is one of Karla's henchmen.

Simon assesses the situation.

192. INT. BUSINESS CENTRE. OFFICE. NIGHT

We are inside one of the upper story offices. Simon is perched on the window ledge outside. Soundlessly he removes a pane of glass and undoes the latch.

193. INT. BUSINESS CENTRE. MAIN HALL. NIGHT

Simon comes downstairs and crosses the main hall. He passes the porter's office, the door half ajar.

There, bound and gagged, the NIGHTWATCHMAN lies on the floor. He looks up at Simon appealingly. Simon puts his finger to his lips.

SIMON

Patience.

The nightwatchman looks outraged as Simon silently closes the door on him, plunging him into darkness. There is the distant, muted SOUND of a pneumatic drill.

194. INT. BUSINESS CENTRE. BASEMENT. NIGHT

Deep in the bowels of the building, Nikolai drills through three feet of concrete. The noise is deafening in the enclosed space.

194. Contd.

Karla, Boris, Natalia and the Prince stand watching at some distance. Natalia has her fingers in her ears. There are two other of Karla's GOONS, heavily armed.

Nikolai removes his goggles and peers down into the hole he has created, some six feet by four.

195. INT. MONASTERY OF ST PETER. CRYPT. NIGHT

We are in pitch darkness. There is a creak of rusty iron hinges, then a door opens in the ceiling above us.

First Nikolai, then the others, peer down into the void. Nikolai directs a powerful beam from his flashlight, illuminating stone steps leading down from the opening. There is the SOUND of trickling water. A rat scurries for cover.

196. INT. MONASTERY OF ST PETER. TUNNEL. NIGHT

The group makes it way along a low tunnel, sloshing through six inches of water. Nikolai and Boris pull low carts slung with drilling and digging equipment and heavy duty twelve volt batteries.

The two goons bring up the rear. All wear miner's helmets, with built-in flashlights.

197. INT. MONASTERY OF ST PETER. BURIAL CHAMBER, NIGHT

They enter a cavernous, vaulted chamber, filled with human bones and skulls, stacked in alcoves. They continue across towards a doorway on the opposite side of the room.

Natalia cannot repress a shudder. Her father smiles encouragement.

PRINCE SERGEI

The ghosts of the past. They cannot hurt us.

ANGLE ON TUNNEL EXIT

They are all through save, the very last man. As he emerges from the darkness, he is suddenly seized from the rear and dragged back into the tunnel, a hand smothering his cry of alarm before he can make sound.

198. INT. TUNNEL. NIGHT

The man is pulled down and a hypodermic needle jabbed into his neck. Almost instantly, his struggle ceases.

Simon starts to undress the inert body.

199. INT. MONASTERY OF ST PETER. LABRYNTH. NIGHT

The system of tunnels has become more complex. Karla and then others cross a stone bridge over an underground canal and come to a junction.

Karla studies his map, trying to orientate himself.

KARLA

To the right. Or the left. It makes no difference - it's a loop.

They choose the right. As they set off down the tunnel, Simon catches up with them, taking his place unnoticed at the end of the line.

200. INT. MONASTERY OF ST PETER. INNER SANCTUM. NIGHT

They reach a chamber hewn out of the rock, the inner sanctum of the labrynth. A huge stone sarcophagus occupies the centre of the room, the image of the old Archbishop of St Petersburg, lying in state, carved on its heavy lid.

There's a stone staircase carved into the side of the chamber, following the rounded contours of the walls and leading to a higher level, with niches cut into the rockface, presumably containing the remains of lesser luminaries. A network of heavy oak beams criss-crosses overhead, shoring up the domed ceiling.

As the group approaches the sarcophagus, Simon switches off his light and slips up the stairs, undetected.

Boris rigs up the lights, attaching the heavy cables to the batteries with alligator grips.

KARLA

Save your batteries.

The others switch off their lights, leaving the sarcophagus illuminated in all its magnificence. The sides are carved with a frieze depicting the construction of the monastery. The Prince crosses himself.

200. Contd.

PRINCE SERGEI

The construction of the monastery took over a hundred years. The Archbishop did not live to see his dream.

NATALIA

Look at the carving. It's worthy of Michaelangelo.

PRINCE SERGEI

Some nameless craftsman, working in obscurity.

(smiles wryly)

The apotheosis of the artist is a Western invention.

Suddenly Nikolai notices they are missing a man. He turns to LEV, the other goon.

NIKOLAI

Where is Arkady?

LEV

He was behind me. I think. Maybe he took the other turn?

NIKOLAI

(shouts)

Arkady!

No reply. Nickolai shouts again. There is a sudden fall of rock from the steps above. He whips his flashlight onto the area in time to catch a fat RAT scurrying down the steps. Lev lets fly with his Uzi, demolishing the rat.

KARLA

Come on, we're wasting time. The idiot must have got lost in the labrynth. Stand aside, Prince.

He approaches the sarcophagus with raised sledgehammer.

PRINCE SERGEI

(horrified)

Please, go gently. I am sure there is a way to remove the lid without damaging the sarcophagus. We are not grave robbers!

Karla pauses, as if taking the Prince's reproach to heart. He lowers the hammer, suitably chastened. Then he smiles, unpleasantly.

200. Contd.

KARLA

But Prince - that is precisely what we are.

He brings down the hammer with a movement shocking in its sudden violence. It's the cue for his goons to follow suit.

The Prince and Natalia can only stand and watch the destruction, as Karla's men make short work of the intricate stone casing.

UP ABOVE

Simon clings precariously to the heavy wooden beam. He edges slowly towards the centre, away from the steps.

BELOW

The men tear away the shattered stone fragments.

The bones of the old Archbishop lie on a slab, encased in the rotting fabric of his ceremonial robes.

Karla steps forward and unceremoniously scoops them aside.

KARLA

Lift the slab!

Nikolai and Lev get hold of either end of the stone and heave. Boris takes the centre. Between them they manage to inch the slab across, exposing a dark cavity.

They shine their flashlights below. Steps lead down to a small chamber, stacked with metal boxes.

Simon watches, as Karla's men descend into the hidden vault.

201. INT. MONASTERY OF ST PETER. INNER SANCTUM - LATER

Nikolai and Lev stagger up the steps with the last of the strong boxes.

The rest have been recovered and opened - some twenty in all. The Imperial Throne has been extracted from one of them - it stands there in all its golden magnificence.

Karla dips his hand into a strong box, delving up to his elbow in a fabulous pile of cut diamonds.

201. Contd.

Even Natalia and the Prince cannot repress a gleam of fascination, as the gems cascade from Karla's hand in a sparkling shower.

KARLA

The riches of the dynasty finance its restoration. I don't think you can quarrel with that, Prince.

PRINCE

(smiles)

There is a certain circularity... But where is the Cap of Monamakh?

He looks around anxiously, as Nikolai dumps the last of the boxes at Karla's feet. There is the gold image of the Imperial Crown stencilled on the lid.

KARLA

Open it.

Nikolai takes a crow bar and jemmies open the lock. The lid hinges back to reveal the Crown in all its splendour, untouched since it was packed away all those years ago.

Karla steps forward to lift it out of its box. The Prince intercedes, gentle but firm.

PRINCE SERGEI

I'm sorry. Only the Tsar or his Heir may touch the crown.

Karla looks at him askance. Reluctantly, he stands aside.

KARLA

But of course. Excuse me, 'Your Highness'.

He gives a little flourish of a bow. There's no mistaking the insolent sarcasm of his tone.

The Prince reaches for the crown and raises it in front of him, examining its awesome beauty.

Natalia wipes away a tear of pride. It's the moment she's been dreaming of since she was a child.

NATALIA

Put it on, Papa.

PRINCE SERGEI

Do you think so?

201. Contd.

NATALIA

It's yours. It's your right.

Still the Prince hesitates. It's a dramatic moment. The entire group stands as if mesmerised.

Up above, Simon edges forward to get a better view. The beam creaks ominously.

The Prince takes his courage and places the crown on his head.

There's a sudden loud CRACK! - like a thunderbolt of divine disapproval.

The beam supporting Simon gives way, swinging through the air like a giant pendulum, with Simon clinging on to the end for dear life.

The beam swishes past Lev, practically decapitating him. He is flung against the wall with Simon on top of him.

Karla shows his true colours. Imagining they are under attack, he grabs the crown from the Prince's head, pushing him rudely aside and running for the door.

The Prince falls badly, twisting his ankle. Natalia rushes to his side.

NATALIA

Papa! Are you okay?

PRINCE SERGEI

It's nothing.

But he winces with pain.

Meanwhile Karla has recovered from his initial shock. He is laughing at the heap of twisted humanity lying on the floor. Lev is out cold. Simon stirs groggily.

KARLA

Well if it isn't our friend in need -
the famous Saint!

He digs him with his foot.

KARLA

(grins)
Nice of you to drop in!

201. Contd.

SIMON

I don't know what you're talking about.
I'm an archaeologist. I'm researching a
book about the monastery.

KARLA

(suddenly ice cold)
Don't insult my intelligence, Mr
Templar. You will make me very angry.
My old firm has files on you this high.
Why do you think you were chosen to
steal the bracelet?

Simon looks across at Natalia. She turns her head away,
unable to meet his gaze.

202. INT. MONASTERY OF ST PETER. INNER SANCTUM

Simon is trussed hand and foot, tied to the Throne, his
legs spread apart.

Boris comes up with a large jug - solid gold - and pours
its contents all over Simon's lap. Cold, freezing water,
scooped from the chamber's floor.

Karla approaches, clutching a pair of leads connected to the
bank of batteries.

KARLA

They say necessity is the mother of
invention. Though I have to admit, we
were somewhat better equipped in the
Lubyanka.

He plunges the terminals into Simon's groin. The lights
flicker. Simon lets out a terrible GROAN, convulsed in
agony.

Natalia has to look away.

Karla holds the terminals there for what seems like an
eternity. Finally he lets go. Simon subsides.

KARLA

(grins)
Not bad, eh?

Immediately, he sticks the terminals back on. This time
Simon grits his teeth and refuses himself the luxury of
crying out. Karla nods to Nikolai, over by the battery
bank. Nikolai pumps up the voltage on a rheostat.

202. Contd.

SIMON

AARGH...!

Briefly, the lights dim to the point of darkness. Karla relaxes, satisfied for the moment. The lights come back on.

KARLA

Now maybe you will take me seriously?

Simon eyes him apprehensively. It is hard not to fear a man who takes such evident pleasure in inflicting pain.

SIMON

How can I take you seriously when you don't listen? I'm going to say it once again. I've told no one. I don't work for anyone.

(patiently)

I only operate on my own. If you know anything about me at all, you must know that.

KARLA

(really not listening)

I have this theory, you see. No man can resist torture. It's only a question of time. The brave man simply holds out a little longer.

ANGLE ON LIGHTS

They dim again, as we hear Simon's screams OFF-SCREEN.

BACK TO SCENE

KARLA

Never been proved wrong yet. No one's ever died on me, either...

He brings his face close up to Simon's. Simon is almost passing out from the pain.

KARLA

... Unintentionally, that is.

The lights flicker again.

KARLA

I know you have contacts with MI5. The Old Boy Network. Henderson's 'our man in Peter', if I'm not mistaken. Weren't you two at school together?

202. Contd.

SIMON

(through gritted teeth)
Couldn't stand him. Been avoiding him
ever since... You know, you're really
not as smart as you think... Aargh..!

KARLA

(maintaining electrical contact)
You are a very obstinate man.

He pulls the cables away. Simon subsides, breathing heavily. How much more of this can he take?

Karla catches Natalia's eye, registers her look of disgust.

KARLA

(shrugs)
You said he was a lousy lover. I'm only
trying to improve his performance.

NATALIA

You bastard.

KARLA

Careful. I might think you don't like
me.

NATALIA

(distraught)
I'm sorry, Simon. Tell him, please, it
makes no difference now.

Karla unholsters his gun and holds it to Simon's temple.

KARLA

As I say, it's only a question of time.
Unfortunately, time I do not have. Mr
Templar, I give you one last chance.

The Prince exchanges a horrified look with Natalia. What
kind of man have they fallen in with?

On the floor nearby is Lev's gun, dropped when he was
struck by the falling beam.

At last Natalia acts. She scoops up the gun and sticks it
in Karla's back.

NATALIA

Kill him and it's the last thing you do.
I mean it!

202. Contd.

PRINCE SERGEI
Be careful, Natalia!

As he moves forward, Nikolai and Boris grab their weapons and train them on him. But they dare not fire.

KARLA
Let's not be melodramatic. You know you don't mean it. The future of the Romanov dynasty is at stake.

NATALIA
That's what I'm worried about. Drop your guns. And you, untie him!

She looks at Boris. He hesitates. She digs the barrel of her gun deeper into Karla's spine.

Under his cool, Karla is showing signs of anxiety. He nods to Boris.

KARLA
Do as she says.

ANGLE ON NATALIA

She watches nervously as Boris loosens the last of Simon's bonds. He seems to be taking an awfully long time about it. Simon stares at the battery bank, as if in a daze.

NATALIA
Hurry up!

At last Simon's hands become free.

NATALIA
Get up, Simon. Come to me.

Just at that moment, Karla drives his elbow back into her solar plexus. She doubles up in pain, gasping for breath.

KARLA
Get her gun!

Simultaneously, Simon lunges for the battery cables, holding them together and causing a short circuit that plunges them into absolute darkness.

In the confusion, Simon crawls across the floor and locates one of the flashlights, on top of the battery bank. He switches it on at arm's length and dives for cover.

202. Contd.

Almost immediately there's a blaze of automatic gunfire, directed at the flashlight, which explodes under the impact. Darkness returns.

Simon moves swiftly on the source of the gunfire. He locks his arm around Boris's neck and breaks it with a sudden twist. There's the sickening CRACK! of breaking bone.

He's suddenly caught in a beam of light, as Karla trains one of the other flashlights on him. A split second later comes the rapid fire of his machine pistol. Nikolai follows suit, lacing the air with bullets.

Simon rolls to safety behind the stacked metal boxes. He lies there, dead still, blood oozing from a flesh wound to his thigh.

The Prince is not so lucky. He's been hit in the chest by a stray bullet. He lies on the ground, groaning.

NATALIA

Papa!

She switches on her miner's light and runs to his side. Karla cuts her down with a stream of bullets.

Simon seizes his chance and bolts for the tunnel entrance.

KARLA

He's over there!

He whips his flashlight round to Simon's disappearing figure - briefly illuminating a strongbox crammed with priceless Faberge eggs.

203. INT. MONASTERY OF ST PETER. TUNNELS

Simon lopes along with only his miner's light to guide him, limping badly. We HEAR Karla and Nikolai follow, their echoing voices drawing closer along the tunnel.

He comes to a fork. He makes an instant decision. He goes to the left.

204. INT. LEFT HAND TUNNEL

Ahead there is an archway in the side of the tunnel wall, with steps leading down to what looks like a canal. He goes down the steps.

205. INT. TUNNELS. Y JUNCTION

Karla and Nikolai come to the fork. They hesitate for a moment.

NIKOLAI

Look!

He shines his flashlight onto the ground. There's a trail of blood, clearly marking Simon's progress down the left hand tunnel.

206. INT. MONASTERY OF ST PETER. CANAL SYSTEM

Simon runs along the bed of the canal, up to his knees in freezing water.

He can hear an answering splashes coming up from the canal behind him.

AHEAD

The canal seems to end in a blank wall. There are three arched channels at ground level, through which the water cascades to a lower canal - too narrow for a man to pass through.

He is trapped!

He looks around in desperation. There is an archway, reached by stone steps that lead up out of the canal. Water is pouring down in a gentle stream, replenishing the canal.

207. INT. MONASTERY OF ST PETER. SLUICE ROOM

Simon comes through the archway, emerging into a tall, circular room, with a vaulted ceiling high above. Two huge and rusting cogged wheels dominate the centre area, with heavy chains disappearing up into the rafters to a wooden platform. There is the SOUND of running water.

SUDDENLY a large RAT jumps up at him! He knocks it to the ground and wades across the floor towards a ladder formed in the wall by iron hoops. He starts to haul himself up towards the roof.

208. INT. CANAL SYSTEM

Karla and Nikolai reach the same cul-de-sac Simon was at moments before. They shine their flashlights on the walls, discovering the archway leading to the sluice room.

209. INT. SLUICE ROOM

Karla and Nikolai enter the tall chamber. They train their flashlights on the walls around them - no sign of Simon.

They finally notice the iron hoops. They exchange a significant look. Karla nods - 'go ahead'. Nikolai makes his way towards the ladder.

SUDDENLY Simon descends from the roof with a bloodcurdling YELL!, clinging to the whirring chain.

Simultaneously, one of the giant wheels turns, raising a heavy wooden sluice gate set high in the wall.

A CASCADE OF WATER belches forth, engulfing the two men on the ground.

Karla and Nikolai are swept through the arch towards the canal below.

Simon comes to rest at water level, clinging onto the chain for dear life. He slowly begins to haul himself back up, hand over fist.

210. INT. CANAL SYSTEM

Nikolai emerges first, dashed by the current onto the stone wall opposite the archway. His head CRACKS! against the side.

Karla bounces off Nikolai's inert body and is carried SCREAMING down the canal, his miner's lamp casting crazy patterns on the walls - finally disappearing into the darkness as the water rises rapidly to the roof and swallows him up.

211. INT. SLUICE ROOM

Simon hauls himself the last few feet up onto the wooden platform. There is a wooden walkway, leading to a door. The door is padlocked.

He prises the hasp away from the rotten woodwork.

212. EXT. MONASTERY OF ST PETER. NIGHT

The door opens with a groan of rusty hinges. Simon emerges onto a narrow quay by the river that runs through the centre of town, behind the site of the old monastery - the source of the underground canal system he has left behind.

213. EXT. PAVLOVSK BUSINESS CENTRE. DAWN

POLICE VEHICLES, FIRE ENGINES, AMBULANCES are parked outside the entrance.

Simon stands next to the mayor, as the metal boxes are carried out one by one and stacked in the back of a military truck.

MAYOR

We are very grateful to you, Mr
Templar. Maybe even more than we
realise.

The boxes are followed by the Prince first, and then Natalia, both on stretchers.

Simon moves forward. The Prince is hooked up to a drip. He looks pale, but he will survive. He looks at Simon sadly.

PRINCE SERGEI

I have been foolish. Very foolish.

SIMON

Natalia?

The Prince shakes his head. He dare not speak, for fear of breaking down. The PARAMEDICS slot him into the rear of the ambulance.

PRINCE SERGEI

Stay with her.

Simon moves towards Natalia's stretcher. She's in a bad way, her life ebbing away right in front of our eyes.

He takes her hand tenderly.

SIMON

Are you in pain?

He glances anxiously at the paramedics, hoping for encouragement - receiving none.

NATALIA

I feel nothing. Will you hold my hand?
I think I will be less afraid.

SIMON

Of course.

He gets into the ambulance with her. The doors close. The ambulance takes off, blue light flashing soundlessly.

214. INT. AMBULANCE. NIGHT - TRAVELLING

Simon sits beside her, holding her hand. She speaks very softly - the effort costs her dear.

NATALIA

Those things I said in New York - I meant them... Do you believe me?

He smiles gently, nods. She is staring into his eyes, drawing strength from him. It's an unequal struggle. Her eyes glaze over, as life departs her.

At first Simon doesn't realise what's happened. It only sinks in when the paramedic leans across and pulls down her eyelids.

PARAMEDIC

She's gone.

She lies there, beautiful in death.

SLOW FADE

215. INT. ST PETERSBURG HOTEL. LOBBY. DAY

Simon sits with Henderson in the lobby of his hotel.

HENDERSON

The President himself, no less! Wants to express the gratitude of the Russian people.

SIMON

Thanks, but - no thanks. Little too high profile for my taste.

HENDERSON

They are offering a reward. Five hundred grand.

SIMON

Dollars?

HENDERSON

(grins)
Roubles.

SIMON

(smiles)
That's very kind. But... the Bracelets are reunited at last. I think that's reward enough, don't you?

215. Contd.

HENDERSON

There must be something, Simon.

The Saint considers for a moment.

SIMON

Well actually, there is something:

216. INT. FOREIGN MINISTER'S OFFICE. DAY

Simon sits in the office of the FOREIGN MINISTER. The latter sits behind a huge desk in a vast room empty of furniture save for the chair facing it.

MINISTER

I regret that Mr Kasparov is out of town.

SIMON

What a shame.

MINISTER

I can offer you Mr Karpov?

SIMON

That's very kind. But I had my heart set on meeting Gary.

MINISTER

Chess is our national passion.
(ruefully)
Maybe if it had been baseball..?

SIMON

Who knows?

MINISTER

(smiles)
Surely there's something we can do for you, Mr Templar? To show our appreciation?

SIMON

Well, as it happens I have a rather pressing engagement in London...

217. EXT. MILITARY AIR STRIP. DAY

A military Jeep races across the tarmac to a waiting six-seater jet.

217. Contd.

Simon sits in the back, clutching a briefcase.

218. INT. PASSENGER JET. DAY

Simon fastens his seat belt in the converted lounge, as the jet begins to taxi down the runway.

219. EXT. MILITARY AIRSTRIP. DAY

The jet takes off into the sky.

220. INT. ST PETERSBURG MUSEUM. STORE ROOM. DAY

The contents of the strongboxes are being unpacked for labelling and catalogueing. The MUSEUM WORKERS handle the items with almost religious care. They wear aprons and cotton gloves - a scene reminiscent of the Winter Palace prior to the Tsar's flight.

The entire operation is being overseen by Tatiana. One of the WORKERS calls to her excitedly.

MUSEUM WORKER

Miss Arkanovich! Come quickly!

Tatiana hurries over. The man is unpacking the box containing the Faberge eggs. He holds out a small card - like a visiting card.

MUSEUM WORKER

It was in the box.

Tatiana takes the card and examines it.

There's no name or signature, just a drawing of a stick figure with a halo.

The Saint.

She smiles quizzically and murmurs to herself, in English.

TATIANA

Is this irony?

221. INT. PASSENGER JET. DUSK - TRAVELLING

The Captain's VOICE comes over the intercom.

221. Contd.

CAPTAIN (o.s.)

We will land at Heathrow in approximately twenty minutes, Mr Templar.

Simon reaches for his mobile phone and dials a number.

SIMON

Homegirl? It's me. Still on for dinner?

(he smiles)

French, Chinese, Italian. I'll leave it to you - as long as it's not Argentinian.

He hangs up with a grin before she can hit him with a tirade.

He puts his mobile phone back in his briefcase. He can't resist a peek at the contents.

HIS POV - INSIDE THE BRIEFCASE

Three peerless Faberge eggs stare back at him. Each worth a cool one million dollars.

He relaxes back into his seat.

Ah, well.

Old habits die hard.

THE END

Dec 1st 1993