

TERMINAL

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Based on a story
by
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FADE UP

ON A BLUR OF FACES

They gradually come into focus along with the noisy chatter of a hundred different languages - from Swahili to Waray-Waray and Tajik to Cantonese.

The PASSENGERS pour into the bright fluorescent light of the Arrivals Hall of a vast, anonymous International Terminal, expressions grim from seemingly endless journeys across seemingly endless Time Zones.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - OBSERVATION DECK. DAY.

A log jam of people in the immigration hall. A plastic-looking Christmas tree in the corner, incongruous in the stark surroundings.

At the far end of the vast hall, Senior Immigration Officer, MERCER, and his younger assistant THURMAN, stand on an observation platform, gazing out at the multi-colored sea of humanity.

The older man leans across to his subordinate, offering him the benefit of all his eighteen years of experience in the Immigration and Naturalization Service -

MERCER

When the toilets of the third world flush,
Thurman, all the shit comes pouring
through those doors.

Thurman nods.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - IMMIGRATION LINE. DAY.

Close on POLISHED LEATHER SHOES stepping calmly through the doorway into the Arrivals Hall.

We move up an inexpensive but exquisitely maintained brown suit, a crisp white shirt and a plain silk tie to find VIKTOR NAVORSKI, 40s, bloodshot eyes filled with excitement.

Though pushed and shoved like everyone else Viktor remains somehow unruffled, at peace almost, his eyes finding -

THE STATUE OF LIBERTY

seen through a window up ahead, sunlight glistening beautifully off the Hudson.

MANHATTAN

stands proudly behind, framed perfectly, her incandescent grandeur set against an immaculate azure sky.

Viktor is exuberant. He moves toward it...

But his smile starts to fade as he realizes there's no water, no gigantic monument, no city...it's just an elaborate model of New York.

GUARD

Please step back into the line, sir.

Viktor turns to see a pair of uniformed Immigration GUARDS supervising the line.

He smiles again, shaking the first Guard's hand. Viktor's accent is of an indeterminable, though clearly European origin -

VIKTOR

Thank you for having me.

The bemused Guard shakes Viktor's hand, glancing at his colleague -

GUARD

I said step back into the line, sir.

Viktor steps back, a little deflated.

As the line moves past rows of identical counters Viktor catches a glimpse of the distant greeting area through several sets of swinging double doors.

For a brief moment he makes out an excited FAMILY holding up a makeshift sign - "WELCOME HOME".

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - LATER

VIKTOR reaches the front of the long line and hands his passport to an OFFICER.

OFFICER

Welcome to the United States, Mr.
Navorski. Business or pleasure?

The Officer runs Viktor's new passport through a scanning machine, glances up again to see Viktor still smiling back at him.

Viktor carefully considers the question for several beats.
Then several more -

OFFICER
(impatient)
Business or pleasure?

Viktor's just about to answer when the scanning machine makes a strange BEEP.

Checking his computer screen the Officer picks up his phone, regarding Viktor suspiciously all the while -

OFFICER
Mr. Mercer? I have a UV-I on nine.

Viktor turns to the African WOMAN waiting behind him in line with her two young SONS. He smiles.

When he turns back, several OFFICIALS, including THURMAN are standing in front of him.

THURMAN
(reading from the passport,
butchering the name)
Mr...Navorski? Would you step this way?

VIKTOR
Which?

THURMAN
Just follow us.

To the Officer behind the booth, having finally decided on the purpose of his visit -

VIKTOR
Pleasure.

As Viktor follows Thurman, the other officials fall in behind him.

INT. IMMIGRATION HOLDING AREA - DAY

Busy, dark and loud in here. The sound of dogs BARKING.

Flanked by the Officials, a bewildered Viktor is led down a hallway past several doors, some of them open -

A young Chinese MAN shakes with fear. He holds his right hand up in the air and swears an oath to an INTERVIEW OFFICER while an INTERPRETER translates.

DOGS rip into the casing of an ARAB COUPLE's luggage while OFFICERS look on, ignoring the couple's desperate pleas.

Viktor looks back down the corridor again, briefly making eye contact with a terrified VIETNAMESE REFUGEE whose baby is taken away from her by a female OFFICER before she's unceremoniously forced into a holding cell.

At the far end, Thurman holds open the door for his UV-I. Viktor enters, looking back concerned at the wailing child.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Viktor sits in silence for several long beats. The door opens. Mercer appears.

Viktor stands to attention, knocking his chair back.

MERCER

Please. Sit down, Sir.

Viktor sits down again, nervous. Mercer sizes him up. An uncomfortable silence.

MERCER

What are you doing in the United States, Mr. Navorski?

Viktor smiles awkwardly. Hesitantly -

VIKTOR

I am on vacation.

Mercer, expression impenetrable, stares at Viktor.

MERCER

What do you plan on doing during your vacation?

VIKTOR

Vacation.

A beat.

MERCER

You said vacation.

VIKTOR

Yes...I did.

Mercer glances at Thurman.

MERCER

Where are you staying? Do you have
relatives here?

Viktor reaches into his breast pocket and pulls out an
envelope. He opens it, hands the paper inside to Mercer who
reads it.

MERCER

The Happy Traveler Motel.

A second glance to Thurman.

MERCER

How much money do you have?

Viktor nods.

MERCER

I need to see your money, Mr. Navorski.

Viktor quickly produces three more envelopes, each with
something hand-written on the outside. He offers them to
Mercer.

MERCER

Open them, please.

Viktor opens the first envelope, offers Mercer the bills
inside. Mercer doesn't want to touch the money, gestures for
Viktor take it out.

MERCER

Please count the money and mark down the
amount on the piece of paper next to
you.

Mercer and Thurman watch as Viktor slowly counts out the
bills, marking down the amount on the piece of paper as
instructed.

Mercer notices the handwriting on the outside of the first
envelope -

MERCER

(re : the writing)

What does that mean?

Viktor translates -

VIKTOR

Hotel.

Mercer gestures for Viktor to take out the money in the second envelope. Viktor does, marks the amount down.

MERCER

What about that money? What's that for?

VIKTOR

Food. For food.

Viktor opens the final envelope, retrieves a single bill. Mercer looks at him -

VIKTOR

Entertainment.

MERCER

(looking at the bill, then
at Thurman)

Entertainment?

Viktor nods, writes the denomination down, the third number on his piece of paper. Mercer gestures for the paper. Viktor slides it across the table.

Thurman enters the numbers into a calculator and makes the conversion into dollars. He shows Mercer the amount. Mercer nods.

MERCER

(gesturing for it)

Now your return ticket please.

Viktor hands it over. Mercer makes a thorough examination, casually slips Viktor's ticket into an official file and seals it.

VIKTOR

That's mine -

MERCER

It's just procedure, Mr. Navorski.

(indicating the door Thurman
holds open behind him)

If you wouldn't mind waiting in the
waiting room.

Viktor stares back at him.

MERCER

This really won't take long.

Viktor reluctantly walks through.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Sterile in here, a single row of seats, a water dispenser, no windows. A second door indicates a restroom beyond.

Viktor takes off his coat, folds it neatly across one of the chairs and sits down. He looks around, taking in his bland surroundings. His fingers tap nervously on the table.

INT. WAITING ROOM - LATER

Viktor's expression is grim. His tie is off and his shirt is unbuttoned. It's clear some hours have passed.

Viktor approaches the door, hesitates...knocks. No answer. He knocks again.

Eventually, Thurman appears through a window on the door.

THURMAN

(a smile)

Be patient, Mr. Navorski.

The window slams shut.

Viktor just stands there for a moment.

INT. WAITING ROOM - LATER

The door suddenly OPENS. A GUARD thrusts a SANDWICH and a glass of WATER on a tray into Viktor's hands.

VIKTOR

(still getting up)

Thank you very much.

Viktor sits down, rips the Saran and bites into his tuna salad sandwich. He relishes every single mouthful.

INT. WAITING ROOM - LATER

Yawning, Viktor cleans stains off his topcoat with the Saran from the sandwich. He's so exhausted he nearly falls asleep doing it.

He shakes himself awake, returns to the door, knocking on it more insistently this time. Nothing. He knocks again.

Silence.

Resigned to his situation at least for the moment, Viktor returns to his seat and fashions his coat into a pillow. However the chair back isn't high enough and the 'pillow' slips down causing Viktor's head to tilt forward awkwardly to accommodate it.

Laying the pillow on the armrest now, Viktor attempts to squeeze his whole body sideways into the chair. It's an impossible contortion.

Exasperated, he sits back in the chair again and tries every other imaginable position, each less successful than the last.

A SHOE

prods at the sleeping Viktor. He is on the floor, his top coat over him.

The shoe belongs to -

MERCER

He looks down on the extremely haggard Viktor, Thurman beside him.

MERCER

You'd better sit down.

Viktor gets up to sit down on the chair. He notices his suit's a wreck and that Mercer is looking rather grave -

MERCER

Eighteen hours ago the State Department suspended all travelling privileges on passports issued by your country.

VIKTOR

I don't understand -

MERCER

While you were in the air, your country was invaded.

A beat. Viktor, in shock.

VIKTOR

...What?

MERCER

Fortunately, no resistance was offered. There were no casualties.

Viktor' s shock turns to bewilderment.

VIKTOR

Invaded? Who?

MERCER

I 'm sorry.

(getting up to go)

As soon as we have any information, Mr. Navorski, you'll be the first to know.

Rising out of his chair -

VIKTOR

I am going back.

MERCER

Well, that's the problem I'm afraid, Mr. Navorski. I can't send you back just yet. The new Government has sealed the borders for the time-being.

VIKTOR

So I must wait in New York --

MERCER

-- unfortunately I can't allow you to enter the United States at this time either.

VIKTOR

(thoughts tumbling over themselves)

I don't understand. I have a visa.

(pointing)

I have a passport!

MERCER

Not a valid one, Mr. Navorski. Technically at least, the country that issued this passport...

(taking it out of its file, brandishing it)

...no longer exists.

VIKTOR

So, what you are telling me is...I cannot go...

MERCER

No.

VIKTOR
...and I cannot stay.

MERCER
No.
(beat)
Not for the moment.

A beat. Viktor's brain struggles to put all of this together.

MERCER
I'm going to allow you to get your luggage
and authorize you to enter the
International Transit Lounge. Please
wait there until the situation is
resolved.

Mercer indicates to Thurman to please take Viktor away.

MERCER
I assure you, everything will be cleared
up very soon, Mr. Navorski.

Viktor is numb.

INT. BAGGAGE CLAIM AREA - LATER

Viktor, escorted by Thurman and another OFFICIAL, picks his
single BLACK SUITCASE from the few unclaimed cases sitting
between carousels six and seven.

Longingly, Viktor watches the doors at the far end opening
and closing, offering momentary glimpses of the bustling
Terminal beyond and signs indicating ground transportation
into the city.

On the other side of the hall, MULROY - 30s, black, wearing
dirty overalls and ripped gloves - loads his cart with lost
bags.

He notices Viktor being escorted back up the steps to the
secured waiting area.

INT. WAITING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

HANDS roughly go through the few simple items in Viktor's
- bag...socks...a pair of shoes...plain shirts and ties...a
toiletries case...

An ALSATIAN DOG sniffs every inch of the bag. The HANDLER
pulls the dog off.

The Dog licks Viktor's hand, which just for an instant, causes the handler pause before he pulls his dog back out the door.

Thurman zips up Viktor's bag, hands it back to him.

VIKTOR

Thank you.

Viktor, smiling, pulls out the envelope with his hotel details inside.

VIKTOR

Now, can you please tell me where to get the bus for Manhattan?

A beat. Thurman half-smiles, glancing to his colleague.

THURMAN

I don't think you fully comprehended what Mr. Mercer said, Mr. Navorski. You have to wait.

INT. IMMIGRATION AREA, CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

VIKTOR, flanked by Officials led by Thurman, is led down yet another corridor towards a door marked "International Transit lounge, Restricted Access".

INT. INTERNATIONAL TRANSIT LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Emerging into the brittle light of the Terminal, Viktor's immediately and completely overwhelmed at the scale and grandeur of it all. To him, this place is like nothing he's ever he's seen before.

He stands there frozen, mouth agape, as Thurman outlines the specific parameters of his confinement.

THURMAN

This is the International Transit Lounge. You are free to wait in here.

(handing him some food vouchers)

These can be redeemed at any of the concession outlets.

(pointing)

Beyond those doors - look at them, Mr. Navorski -

(he looks)

...is American soil.

VIKTOR
American soil?

THURMAN
Yes. Restricted.

GLASS SECURITY DOORS

open as Passengers wheel luggage-laden trolleys out into the main Terminal.

As Thurman points up to the cameras everywhere -

THURMAN
Any attempt to pass through those doors
or to enter the United States through
any other means will result in your
immediate arrest and confinement in the
Detention Center.

Viktor's hand is trembling with fear.

THURMAN
(noticing)
Don't worry, Mr. Navorski.
(ominous)
We know where you are.

Viktor watches Thurman disappear through the door again.

He finally turns -

VIKTOR'S POV

He is faced with the sprawling, ultra-modern multi-cultural Metropolis of gleaming steel and glass that is the International Transit lounge.

INT. OBSERVATION DECK - LATER

Mercer and Thurman observe Viktor from the mezzanine floor above.

VIKTOR

sits on a seat very near the door. his single case on his knees, his hands resting on the case. He watches the important doors in the distance and the cameras everywhere.

INT. OBSERVATION DECK - CONTINUOUS

Mercer and Thurman notice Viktor as they finish up coffees on their break.

A beat.

THURMAN

He's been sitting there for three hours.

MERCER

Do you know how big it is, this country of his. You can walk from one end to the other in fifteen minutes. There are longer trips to the bathroom in some hotel lobbies.

THURMAN

What's he supposed to do?

A beat.

MERCER

(a shrug)

Let him shop.

They toss their cups and leave.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TRANSIT LOUNGE, LOWER LEVEL - LATER

VIKTOR

hesitantly gets up, starts to walk...

PASSENGERS

move AT him, knocking into him, expressions fierce and rushed.

Petrified, Viktor has to consciously calm his breathing and slow down, the whole place blurring now as he attempts to make it through here --

PASSENGER

Watch it!

The Passenger nearly knocks Viktor over into a fake palm tree.

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES BOARD

Flight information flickers...
 Bahrain...Lima...Brussels...Tangier

VIKTOR

stands amidst a group of late-night TRAVELLERS staring up at the Arrivals/Departures board, looking very lost and alone.

As flights are cancelled, delayed or given the go-ahead to board, groups of passengers arrive and depart. The only constant is Viktor.

He turns around again, confused, unsure of which direction to take.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, UPPER SHOPPING CONCOURSE-LATER

Muzak version of Bach's 'Goldberg Variations' echoes through the hi-tech concourse as Viktor walks past every department store imaginable -

W. H. Smith...Bloomingdale's...Brookstone...Williams Sonoma...
 Banana Republic...

He slows in front of one, takes a moment before saying the words -

VIKTOR

The Gap.

An Indian cleaner, GUPTA, mopping nearby, registers Viktor, watching as he continues past a variety of Duty Free stores advertising remarkable deals on exotic sounding perfumes and cutting-edge palm-held electronic goods.

Viktor stops at one of the windows, intrigued by a giant six-foot high pack of MERIT CIGARETTES, trying to imagine how they would be smoked.

As a puzzled Viktor turns to continue ahead, Gupta looks away.

Now Viktor notices Gupta, watching as passengers trample over his freshly-mopped floor, seemingly oblivious or indifferent to the fact that in a few seconds it will be dirty again.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - DAY

Having finally exhausted his exploration of the upper levels, Viktor is faced with a stained plastic curtain at the end of a long concourse.

A sign apologizes - "Please Excuse Our Appearance During Construction of Our New Wing"

Viktor sneaks a look behind the curtain - WORKMEN, overseen by their foreman KARL IVERSON, are constructing a new concourse including dozens of additional gates.

Viktor studies the workmen, fascinated, gazing towards central area between the distant cluster of gates - a large cavity in the ground indicating where foundations have yet to be laid.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TRANSIT LOUNGE, FOOD COURT AREA - DAY

The food vouchers in his hand, Viktor moves excitedly past a dizzying array of food concession stands. This is the United Nations of cuisine.

His attention is suddenly drawn to a frail YOUNG WOMAN sitting on an over-stuffed suitcase, struggling to shut it.

Viktor watches for a moment, puts down his vouchers on a nearby table and goes to help her.

He lends his weight to the case and the girl, startled by the unusual act of kindness, manages to snap the locks shut.

YOUNG WOMAN

Thank you.

VIKTOR

Don't mention it.

Viktor smiles, watches her wheel the jumbo-sized American Tourister away. He turns back to the table -

The food vouchers are gone. He checks the floor nearby.

Nothing.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, BAGGAGE CLAIM AREA - NIGHT

Tired and hungry, Viktor observes passengers taking their bags off the carousels for a minute.

He makes sure the coast is clear before dropping his own bag
ONTO THE CAROUSEL.

INT. FIRST CLASS LOUNGE AREA - NEXT DAY

Viktor walks the plush-carpeted corridor that links all the
first class lounges.

Outside the Alitalia lounge Viktor hears the POP of a
champagne cork. He jumps, slightly unnerved.

Viktor moves through the glass doors but as they slide open
for him a frosty-looking HOSTESS - smoking her Muratti
Ambassadori with surprising aggression - stops him.

HOSTESS
(Italian accent)
Ticket please.

Viktor shakes his head, no, and moves on.

FLASH OF FLAME

A distinctively gallic-looking CHEF flambes an elaborate
dessert in front of some well-heeled TRAVELLERS.

INT. AIR FRANCE FIRST CLASS - LOUNGE

Viktor watches rather enviously from the hallway, soaking up
the smell that wafts out when the lounge DOORS slide open.

ANCHOR (V.O.)
Although at the moment details of the
invasion are unclear.

Pricking up, Viktor moves closer to watch the CNN report
playing on the TV in the corner -

THE SCREEN

A female ANCHOR speaks to camera.

Pictures of a sleepy town square with SOLDIERS marching
through it.

VIKTOR
(to himself)
My country.

Only managing to hear the television as the glass doors open for people coming in or out, Viktor hears the report in maddeningly short bursts:

ANCHOR (V.O.)

...according to both official communiques and

(door closes and opens)

...a bloodless coup. Troops simply walked across the border early this morning...

A TANK

drives past an ancient CHURCH, a single white flag hanging out of an upper window. 1

VIKTOR

face pressed to the glass, strains to hear as the doors close. He steps on the mat to open them again -

ANCHOR (V.O.)

...And tonight what was once the tiniest Republic in the Balkans is now but an annexed province...

(door closes and opens)

...most feared Nations in the region...

(door closes and opens)

...expansionist tendencies show precious little signs of abating.

As the door closes quickly, Viktor finally sticks his foot on the mat to keep it open.

The SMILING ANCHOR appears on screen -

VOICE (O.S.)

(French accent)

Pardon me, sir.

Lounge STEWARD kicks Viktor's foot out of the way -

STEWARD

(aristocratic disdain)

I'm afraid this is a private club.

Viktor leaves. The Door opens again --

CNN ANCHOR (O.S.)

Next this 'ur - check out the latest pulse-pounding rhythms on the Latin American dance floor. Coming up on World Beat --

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

ENRIQUE, a diminutive Latin Food Manager carrying some trays of food into the Air France lounge, notes the curious and distraught figure of Viktor wandering past, the Steward following behind to ensure he clears the area.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TRANSIT LOUNGE, IMMIGRATION AREA - NIGHT

Viktor stands at the LOCKED DOORS to the Immigration area. He sighs.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TRANSIT LOUNGE, UPPER CONCOURSE - NIGHT

All the stores are locked up too. There's hardly anyone around except a few CLEANERS buffing the floors or hauling huge trash containers behind tiny transportation trucks.

Viktor takes the escalator down to the baggage claim area.

INT. BAGGAGE CLAIM AREA - NIGHT

At the far end, Mulroy loads heavy musicians flight cases onto his motorized trolley. Someone tugs at Mulroy's sleeve.

VOICE (O.S.)

Sir? Did you see a white Samsonite with a big scuff mark on it that kind of looks like France?

Mulroy turns. A tiny WOMAN in furs stands behind him.

MULROY

Ma'am, I'm busy right now. If you've lost your bag, you need to go to
(gesturing over)
Counter B.

OLD WOMAN

It's not really a scuff mark, it's more of a big scratch. I guess it looks more like Italy --

MULROY

(nearing her)
I really don't want to have to repeat myself, Ma-am.

The Woman backs away, scared. Viktor walks towards his bag, the only piece of luggage revolving on the carousel.

Mulroy, loading a cart with heavy flight cases, sees Viktor coming. He watches as Viktor pulls his bag off the carousel, retrieves his toothbrush and puts the bag back on.

Straightening, Viktor notices Mulroy staring at him.

As Viktor's bag revolves around towards Mulroy, Mulroy lifts it off the carousel and drops it by his feet.

A bizarre kind of Mexican stand-off as Viktor and Mulroy stare at each other.

Viktor finally walks to Mulroy, picks up his bag and places it back on the carousel. Mulroy walks around Viktor and casually takes it off. Viktor walks around Mulroy and casually puts it back on.

Mulroy waves his hand, 'enough'. He stomps over to a nearby panel, flicks a switch and the carousel STOPS...Viktor's bag is just sitting there...

MULROY

You take the bags off. You don't put them on.

VIKTOR

It's heavy to carry.

Mulroy approaches Viktor.

MULROY

Well, why don't you go home?

VIKTOR

I just arrived.

Mulroy indicates Viktor's bag -

MULROY

It doesn't matter to me whether you're coming or going. I just want this bag off my carousel.

Viktor looks at him, finally picks up his bag. Mulroy exits, his trolley in tow.

VIKTOR

Sorry.

INT. TERMINAL, NEW WING - NIGHT

Viktor, carrying his bag and looking tired, walks past the gates under construction that seem to stretch off into infinity...38...39...40...41

The higher the gate number, the greater the evidence of construction work - scaffolding, painting equipment, electrical drills, heavy tools.

Viktor stops at the last one.

GATE 50

He smiles and walks inside. It is virtually a shell apart from random pieces of old equipment - seats, gate desks etc. - about to be taken away. Paint cans and ladders everywhere.

Tucked away in the far corner there's a little row of plastic and metal seats with armrests.

Viktor walks over, sits down, fashions his coat into a pillow again to get some rest...He tries the 'pillow' in every imaginable position, each less successful than the last.

INT. IMMIGRATION WAITING ROOM - MORNING

Viktor walks up to the window, holding his badly cricked neck. An Immigration official, OFFICER TORRES, is already shuffling papers behind the window.

Viktor smiles, offering his passport.

VIKTOR

Good morning.

Staring at him all the time, Officer Torres casually places a small placard between them which reads 'Back in half an hour' and sharply pulls down the window shade.

VIKTOR

Hello? Hello?

Silence.

INT. IMMIGRATION AREA - LATER

Viktor stands in a long line waiting. After a while he reaches the front.

VIKTOR
I should speak to Mr. Mercer.

The female Officer, busy with paperwork, doesn't look at him -

OFFICER
Mr. Mercer is busy right now, sir.

VIKTOR
I am Viktor Navorski. I must talk to --

OFFICER
-- Any questions you have can be taken
care of at Window Nineteen.

She points to a huge line across the hall.

OFFICER
Next!

Viktor sighs.

VIKTOR

Waits patiently in the long line. Finally he reaches the
front. Officer Torres looks at him.

VIKTOR
I am Viktor Navorski.
The name means nothing to Torres.

VIKTOR
I was told you could help me.

OFFICER TORRES
Let's see your paperwork.

Viktor hands over his passport.

OFFICER TORRES
No, sir. Your green entry form.

Viktor shrugs, he doesn't have one.

OFFICER TORRES
I can't do anything without the green
form.

VIKTOR
Where do I get the green form?

He looks Viktor over.

OFFICER TORRES

Not here. Next!

BACK IN LINE

Viktor finally reaches the front of the line.

Just as he approaches the window with his passport and filled-out Green form, Officer Torres CLOSES the window.

VIKTOR

No. Please!

INT. MAIN IMMIGRATION WAITING ROOM - NEXT DAY

Viktor waits with his case on his knees, his hands over his case, waiting in the waiting room. The clock on the wall reads 6.15.

A door opens, MERCER, appears. Viktor chases after him.

VIKTOR

When can I leave?

Mercer keeps walking.

MERCER

Not yet.

Viktor defiantly blocks Mercer's path.

VIKTOR

An airport is a place you go to go, not
a place you go to stay

Mercer finally stops, glares at Viktor is about to say something when --

A COMMOTION

up ahead in the distance distracts them -

TWO YOUNG CHINESE MEN

make a run for it through Passport control. The Men manage to make it through the doors and RUSH the Baggage Claim area, KNOCKING PASSENGERS over as they struggle to find a way out.

VIKTOR

watches, rapt, as the Men near him and Mercer, pursued by a dozen

IMMIGRATION OFFICERS

Led by DANIELS, female, 30s -

DANIELS

(shouting)

Stop where you are!

The Men turn, stopping only when they see

MORE OFFICERS

waiting for them at the other end.

Cornered, they jump onto a carousel, scrambling desperately over bags to get to the opening above where they're coming from.

Viktor's with their every move.

The Officers jump on the carousels now too, grabbing the men by their legs, pulling off their shoes...

SHOUTS as the fierce struggle continues, the men kicking out at the Officers, clinging desperately onto bags, onto anything they can find that might stop them getting caught --

But the escapees are quickly overwhelmed, the Officers pulling them violently off the carousels and THROWING them to the concrete not far from Viktor.

Somehow, one of the Men manages to BREAK FREE -

Mulroy DECKS him with a Delsey Hard shell.

MULROY

(whispering to his shell-shocked victim)

Please don't stand on the carousels.

The two Prisoners plead to their captors in Chinese.

His Prisoner screaming at him -

SECOND OFFICER

(turning him round)

'Happy New Year' to you too, Chop Suey.

As the Officers hustle the illegals towards the Security doors at the far end, one of the prisoners starts to cry.

VIKTOR

watches, frightened.

Mercer gestures to Thurman who's nearby. He whispers something into Thurman's ear, walks out past Viktor.

THURMAN

Come with me, Mr. Navorski.

Viktor, panicked, watches Mercer go, worried he may finally have pushed Mercer too far.

INT. IMMIGRATION AREA - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Thurman leads Viktor down another corridor. Viktor is clearly terrified something awful is about to happen. Thurman opens a door onto a huge hall which looks down onto the baggage claim area below.

THURMAN

Since you don't have any U.S. currency, Mr. Mercer says you can call home. Tell your family what's going on.

After a moment -

VIKTOR

Call my family. Of course.

Thurman gestures to the single red telephone on a stand, a chair next to it, at the far end of the room.

VIKTOR

Thank you.

Viktor walks toward the far end, peers down through the glass at the crush of passengers trying to find their bags.

At the phone, Viktor looks back and sees Thurman still watching him. He forces a smile.

He picks up the receiver and dials the number.

INT. BAGGAGE CLAIM AREA - CONTINUOUS

Mulroy takes off his gloves and wipes his sweaty forehead. Looking up he notices Viktor in profile through the glass, standing by the phone.

Daniels, the female Immigration Officer who arrested the Chinese men and still a little sweaty from all the action, passes by with a couple of coffees. Mulroy stops her.

MULROY
(gesturing up at Viktor)
What's his deal?

DANIELS
Who?
(she looks)
Oh him. No papers. He's calling his family.
(leaving)
Happy New Year, Mulroy.

MULROY
Oh, yeah. You too.

VIKTOR

mumbles into the phone, a single tear runs down his cheek.
Mulroy watches.

Shaking his head again at "these kind of people", Mulroy puts his gloves back on and resumes working, grabbing bags off the packed carousel and lining them up on the floor.

After a while Mulroy looks up again but Viktor's gone...the receiver dangles off the hook.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL IMMIGRATION AREA - HOURS LATER

Immigration OFFICERS have a cheerless New Years eve party - a quick drink and perfunctory toast before they toss their plastic cups and put their coats on.

There's a TV on in there too - DICK CLARK speaks excitedly into his mic, overlooking the CROWDS in Times Square.

THE MAIN CONCOURSE

Completely empty and abandoned. An eerie silence...

INT. GATE FIFTY - NIGHT

Viktor sits on the seats and stares out at the runways. An AIR INDIA 747 is taking off. Viktor watches the plane arc up into the starry winter sky.

He looks at his watch. It's just after eleven-thirty.

VIKTOR
Late again, Delhi.

He sighs deeply, waiting...and waiting...He looks around the gate. Nothing. Not a sound.

Viktor can't escape it, he knows he could be here literally forever.

Viktor reaches into his pocket, pulls out

THE FEW COINS

from his homeland still in his pocket.

A sad look on his face. He takes one of them, examines it...an idea hits him. He ducks underneath the seats and uses the edge of the coin to remove a screw

MOMENTS LATER

A pile of screws on the floor, all of the ARMRESTS on the row of seats detached.

Now he uses the coin to make TWO GROOVES in the wall, one for each day he's been here.

Viktor lies down on his new 'bed'. A sigh of deep satisfaction as he reaches down to make sure his BAG is still right beside him on the floor.

Despite the bright lights above, Viktor begins to drift, HAND still gripping tightly onto his bag...

THE TIMES SQUARE BALL

drops as the New Year chimes in with a MIGHTY ROAR. It rains confetti over the thousands packed into Times Square.

INT. IMMIGRATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As the crowd's CHEERING continues we pull back off the image playing on the TV in the corner to see the room is vacant...

THE ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES BOARD

It flickers to life with fresh information for multiple flights to Rome...Amsterdam...Brussels...London

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, ARRIVALS GATE - NIGHT

Viktor watches through the glass as FAMILIES are re-united with their loved ones arriving off long-haul flights -

An elderly WOMAN (60s) hugs her slightly younger SISTER.
They cry tears of joy. It's been a long time since they saw
each other.

A small BLACK kid, perhaps nine or ten, jumps into his
FATHER's arms as he runs out the gate with his beaming MOTHER.

A blonde GIRL runs into her boyfriend's arms. He lifts her
up, her legs wrapping around his waist as they kiss
passionately without even saying hello.

A CRASHING sound -

VOICE (O.S.)

Shit.

Viktor turns to see a young FLIGHT ATTENDANT - Hispanic,
30s, no-make-up - arms and legs akimbo, lying on the floor
not far from him, the contents of her bag spread out all
over the place.

She realizes her heel's broken, curses to herself in Spanish
and starts to gather up her scattered schedules -

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Shit. Shit. Shit

Viktor approaches, helps pick up some of her things including
several well-thumbed books.

VIKTOR

(giving them to her)

Where are you going?

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Buenos Aires.

(struggling to find the right
schedule)

I just can't remember where from.

Viktor notes her United uniform, looks at her watch.

VIKTOR

Flight two-fifteen. Gate twenty four.

AMELIA

Thanks.

Handing back her broken heel -

VIKTOR

This area in particular, from the gift shop to the courtesy phones, is the most slippery. They mop twice.

She regards him briefly.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Oh really...Why?

Viktor notices her nametag now - 'Amelia Sanchez'.

VIKTOR

I don't know. I can find out.

He helps her up.

VIKTOR

May I suggest sensible heels? Payless Shoe Center. Level three.

She half-smiles, nods, takes off her shoes and starts running towards her gate -

AMELIA

(shouting back)

Thanks again.

VIKTOR

(after her)

Don't run.

He watches her disappear around a corner, turns to see

GUPTA

the cleaner he first saw at the food court, mopping nearby while listening to loud Hindi MUSIC through badly taped-up headphones.

Viktor approaches, noticing the 'WET FLOOR - CAUTION' signs still on his cart.

VIKTOR

(the signs)

You should put those out so people don't slip.

Gupta can't hear what Viktor's saying. He takes off his headphones -

VIKTOR
I said you should put those out so people
don't slip.

Gupta just stares at him...then offers Viktor the mop.

VIKTOR
No, thank you.

Gupta's accent is Pukkah-British -

GUPTA
Mind your own business then.

Intrigued by the friendliness of his contempt, Viktor stays
where he is, watches Gupta mopping.

VIKTOR
How long have you worked here?
Gupta looks Viktor over once again.

GUPTA
A while.

VIKTOR
Really? That's surprising.

GUPTA
I used to work at Heathrow, Terminal
three, before but...
(glancing off)
...I needed a change.

VIKTOR
What's it like there?

GUPTA
It smells the same.

A loud CRASH from behind them. A BUSINESSMAN's slipped on
the wet floor by the restrooms. He gets up, angrily mops
down his Brooks Brothers suit -

BUSINESSMAN
(to apathetic passers-by)
It's like a goddam swimming pool out
here!

Gupta quietly wheels his trolley past Viktor.

GUPTA
It's the only fun I have.

Off Viktor's appalled expression.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TRANSIT LOUNGE, GATE THIRTY - NIGHT

En route to "bed", Viktor slows at Gate Thirty, noting the stacked cans of PAINT under plastic. He looks around to check the coast is clear.

Viktor peels the plastic back to get a better look at the cans. Unused BRUSHES too.

Viktor considers the peeling far wall. He takes off his tie, shirt, jacket and trousers and folds them neatly in a pile.

Without so much as a second thought, Viktor lifts a nearby LADDER off the ground, flips it up and leans it against the wall. Using the edge of a large coin, Viktor pops the lid on the paint, dips one of the brushes in and climbs up the ladder.

Viktor starts painting. He works carefully and exactly.

INT. GATE THIRTY - LATER

On Viktor's FEET. The ladder is further along now, half the wall already painted.

Viktor climbs down to get a fresh can of paint. He's now wrapped in paint-splattered plastic, to protect his underclothes. He resembles some kind of French Avant Garde Fashion experiment (failed).

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, GATE THIRTY - DAWN

Looking tired but happy, Viktor picks up his ladder to go. At the door, he turns back to admire his perfectly painted wall. He smiles to himself.

IN THE CORRIDOR

Viktor looks out across the runways. The first fingers of early morning light are stretching out across the horizon.

Viktor continues 'home', whistling.

EXT. RUNWAY - DAY

A Cathay Pacific jumbo jet takes off with a giant ROAR.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, BATHROOM - MORNING

A well-dressed BUSINESSMAN washes his hands at the sink, checking out his reflection in the mirror.

Viktor emerges from one of the stalls behind him, wearing white jockey shorts and a T-shirt and brushing his teeth.

The man watches as Viktor approaches one of the basins and spits into it. The Businessman looks at Viktor, disgusted.

Viktor offers a toothpaste-lathered smile as an apology.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - MORNING

A stray luggage cart parked at an angle in the middle of the concourse. Passing by, Viktor politely returns it to a nearby machine. The machine's refund mechanism unexpectedly spits A QUARTER back out.

Viktor looks around, pockets it.

ANOTHER GATE

Viktor pushes two more carts and returns them to the machine. Two more quarters pop out.

ANOTHER GATE

Viktor rounds up another eight carts. More quarters.

INT. TRANSIT LOUNGE, FOOD COURT AREA - DAY

Viktor's HAND, full of quarters. Once again he walks past the multi-colored storefronts displaying various National flags, smelling the air, pleased but confused at the multitude of aromatic options.

INT. TRANSIT LOUNGE, FOOD COURT - LATER

TWO BOWLS of hot minestrone on a moving tray, Viktor loading on dozens of crackers on the way to the register, where he hands over his coins.

The CASHIER glances at the crackers, then witheringly up at Viktor, slides the next tray up.

FOOD COURT TABLES

Viktor, napkin carefully tucked into his shirt, slurps at his soup.

Enrique, the First Class lounge Food Manager, driving his motorized food trolley - whose engine makes an odd whistling sound - notices Viktor, the curious man he saw ejected from the lounges earlier, eating on the other side of the Food Court.

He studies him for a moment, approaches Gupta, who's mopping nearby.

ENRIQUE

What's up with him?

GUPTA

Who?

ENRIQUE

(pointing)

Brown suit. Two o'clock.

GUPTA

Oh, him. Stuck here.

ENRIQUE

Like everyone else.

GUPTA

Worse. Some kind of paperwork problem. Serious according to Mulroy. He's living over at 50.

ENRIQUE

Gate 50?

Gupta moves away with his mop-cart.

GUPTA

Not such a bad part of the world.

A black Female CUSTOMS OFFICER passes Enrique. They exchange a flirtatious little look.

CUSTOMS OFFICER

(his cart)

Anything good to eat.

ENRIQUE

A little left-over Bratwurst. Tyrolean Air.

She smiles, moves on.

VIKTOR

drinks the last of his soup, oblivious to the fact that he's being watched. He puts down the bowl, tries to smile but he's still famished.

Viktor looks up - A FAMILY OF FOUR finishes a dinner of Chinese food at a nearby table. The YOUNGEST, who's crying, hasn't even touched his burger and Fries. Viktor stares at the untouched meal longingly. Finally, the family gets up to leave.

Viktor rises, instinctively MOVING TOWARD the table when a BUSBOY appears out of nowhere and scoops up the all the trays - including the untouched burger - and throws it away. Viktor can't believe it.

ENRIQUE

watches from the other side.

ENRIQUE

He'll get tapeworm from those burgers.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, NEW WING, GATES - DAY

Karl, the foreman and his CREW MANAGER make an examination, with plans, of work to be done.

CREW MANAGER

This section here should take us till March 30.

KARL

If we want to make this deadline all the crews have to be syncopated, Brian. Like a ballet.

CREW MANAGER

(rolling his eyes)

I got it, Karl.

As they pass Gate Thirty, Karl notices the painted back wall.

KARL

Hold on.

Karl and the Crew Manager enter the gate.

VIKTOR

appears, quietly follows them inside, excitedly anticipating the positive reaction to his work.

KARL

Who's been working here?

CREW MANAGER

(checking his plans)

No-one.

Karl holds up a paint-flecked finger.

KARL

It doesn't look like no-one to me.

The Crew Manager shrugs, checking his schedules again.

CREW MANAGER

We don't start here for another week.

Karl examines the precision work more closely.

KARL

Look at this cornicing. Must be Harry's crew.

(shaking his head in dismay)

Any chance to make us look bad. They're trying to cause trouble again, Brian.

VIKTOR

crestfallen, disappears out of view.

INT. BAGGAGE HANDLING AREA - DAY

His bag by his side and looking rather forlorn, Viktor stares at the empty carousels spinning for quite a long time.

Mulroy, emerges from behind a door marked "restricted", tossing bags carelessly onto a cart. He sees Viktor at the far end. Mulroy just watches, noting Viktor glancing at his watch every once and a while.

Mulroy makes his way over. Viktor sees Mulroy coming, goes back to watching his carousel.

VIKTOR

I was noticing this carousel here.

MULROY

Carousel seven.

VIKTOR

Yes. She takes fifty-eight seconds to go in one circle.

MULROY

Really?

Viktor indicates the next carousel.

VIKTOR

And this one here.

MULROY

Eleven. Carousel Eleven.

VIKTOR

Eleven, yes. She takes longer. Seventy seconds. And they're the same size.

Mulroy stares at him, unimpressed.

VIKTOR

I think there's a problem with the ball bearings.

A beat.

MULROY

I'll speak to engineering.

Mulroy hurls a bag carelessly towards his cart, missing it.

VIKTOR

Why do you throw the bags? They belong to the passengers.

MULROY

When exactly are you leaving?

VIKTOR

Any time. I'm on vacation.

A beat.

MULROY

One hell of a vacation.

The two men regard one another now and as they do some kind of understanding is reached between them, in the silence.

Mulroy subtly gestures to Viktor's bag, then nods to the carousel.

MULROY
Just for the moment.

Viktor drops his bag on the carousel.

VIKTOR
(after him)
Thank you.

Walking away and without looking back, Mulroy raises his arm to Viktor and disappears through the doors into the secured Baggage Claim Area.

INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

Viktor is in the 'Home Computing and Electronics' section. He refers to a simple guide to home electronics, copying a diagram from an open page onto a food court napkin.

Viktor puts the book back on the shelf, turns -

AMELIA

the Flight Attendant he helped earlier, browses in Historical biographies nearby.

She's in her own world, lost in a book, occasionally translating words to herself in Spanish.

Viktor finds himself frozen to the spot, unable to blink even, entranced by her unexpected beauty, her calm, her complete lack of self-consciousness...

AMELIA
(turning)
You're creeping me out, okay buddy --

Then she recognizes him. Viktor almost jumps.

AMELIA
Oh...it's you.

A beat. Viktor's eyes are drawn down to her flat shoes.

VIKTOR
Better. Sensible heels.

AMELIA
(still a little thrown)
I didn't expect to see you again.

She smiles at him. He smiles back, awkwardly.

AMELIA

Anyway...thanks again for the other day.

She looks at her watch.

AMELIA

I'm going to be late again.

She starts walking. Viktor follows her, searching for something, anything to say. He notices the biography of Napoleon in her hand -

VIKTOR

So...you like history?

AMELIA

Only when I fly. You get a lot of perspective up there.

VIKTOR

Why Napoleon?

AMELIA

Any story about a man with an ego bigger than his own country has got to be good for a few laughs.

(she looks at the price)

Six hundred pages for nine, ninety nine. Can't beat that

VIKTOR

I think maybe it was his ego that saved him.

She looks at him, puzzled. Viktor continues --

VIKTOR

After defeat at Waterloo, Napoleon was exiled to the island of Elba. He felt the only noble thing to do was commit suicide.

(beat)

But because he considered himself to be superhuman he took six times the lethal dose of poison.

He looks up. She's listening -

VIKTOR

The amount was so huge his body rejected it immediately. He didn't die. In the end, you see, it was his ego that saved him...

A long beat.

AMELIA

I didn't know that.

A beat. She takes a closer look at him.

AMELIA

You come through here a lot?

VIKTOR

I'm here all the time.

She smiles, moving a little closer.

Nervous, Viktor begins taking random travel books off a nearby shelf.

AMELIA

(looking around)

Seems like that sometimes, doesn't it? I don't know how you frequent flyers do it.

He manages to put back 'Gay Beaches of the Caribbean' before she notices..

AMELIA

At least we get paid. Where are you off to today?

She sees the assorted guides to the Philippines in his hands.

AMELIA

Oh, Manila? Where the envelopes come from.

Viktor doesn't get it.

AMELIA

It's a joke.

They walk towards the registers.

IN LINE

VIKTOR

(clutching an armful of books)

I...just can't decide.

She takes them out of his hands one by one, sorts through them.

AMELIA

Not this one. Forget this. A total rip off...

(she chooses one)

This series is pretty reliable.

She drops it in Viktor's hand.

VIKTOR

Thank you.

He looks down at -

THE BOOK

Lonely Planet.

Amelia picks up a second book of poetry from the counter display, examines it.

AMELIA

Frankly poems are much better for the air. You stand a chance of finishing one before the passengers want something.

It's Viktor's turn in line.

LADY CASHIER

Yes, sir.

The cashier stares at Viktor's hand asking for his book.

VIKTOR

(moving behind Amelia
nervously)

She's got a flight to catch.

AMELIA

(checking her watch again)

Shit. You're right.

She quickly hands her book to the cashier and pays.

At the door she turns back, waves at Viktor and runs away down the concourse.

CASHIER

That'll be twelve, thirty four. Cash or credit?

Viktor turns to see the cashier's already rung up Viktor's book.

VIKTOR

I've...changed my plans.
(taking the book back)
I'm thinking more about...Osaka.

The Cashier looks at him.

CASHIER

The Pacific Rim. Aisle three.

VIKTOR

Right.

He leaves.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, GATE FIFTY - NIGHT

Viktor returns to see a foil-covered white plastic TRAY waiting by his 'bed'. He pulls back the foil -

THE MEAL

A roll. A miniature salad. A tasty-looking miniature crumb cake. Under a second layer of foil, some kind of undeterminable frozen chicken. The name embossed onto the sealed napkin pouch -- KLM.economy.

Next to it is a British Airways First class travel kit.

Viktor looks around the gate. It's completely empty.

VIKTOR

Hello?

THE KIT

Open and laid out. Viktor, eating his salad, excitedly tries out or plays with each of the following items: Silver razor...mini shave foam...perfumed towelettes...ear plugs...eye-shades...lip balm...mini-cologne soft-spray...pencil and paper...toothbrush and toothpaste...nail file...scissors...needle and thread.

Viktor stuffs another plastic forkful of food into his mouth, admiring his cache of personal grooming aids.

INT. GATE FIFTY - LATER

Viktor, now in his pajamas, and munching on the crumb cake, stands by the circuit box on the wall.

We notice there are several more scratches on it, indicating the passing of the days.

He pries opens the box and referring to the diagram he made on the napkin in the bookstore, fiddles with the wires inside.

After a few aborted attempts - lights turning on and off over various parts of the gate - the overhead light directly above Viktor's 'bed' goes out.

Moments later, Viktor is lying down in his bed, his coat over him, smiling.

A long shot of the abandoned gate, well-lit except for the area around Viktor's 'bed', shrouded in darkness.

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES BOARD

The first arrivals of the morning flash on the board...
Madrid... Madras... Bern... Addis Ababa...

INT. FOOD COURT - DAY

Viktor waits patiently by a microwave at the Heat-your-own Burrito stand. A well-dressed WOMAN, 40s, waits behind him in line with her burrito.

When the oven pings Viktor opens the door and pulls out a pair of SOCKS. They're not quite dry yet. He smiles at the woman, pops them in for another few seconds. He takes them out, leaves.

After Viktor's gone, the woman considers her burrito, thinks better of it, decides to opt for something a little more healthy instead.

INT. IMMIGRATION OFFICE - DAY LATER

Viktor reaches the head of the line. He slides his filled out immigration form across the counter.

Officer Torres doesn't even bother to look at it, matter-of-factly stamps ENTRY DENIED across it.

OFFICER

Next.

Viktor 'borrows' some blank Immigration forms with him as he goes.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, NEW WING CONCOURSE - DAY

In a corner not far from the stained plastic curtain, several long lines of WORKERS waiting to get their assignments for the day.

Viktor casually joins one of the lines. After a while, he reaches the front. The Crew Manager doesn't bother looking at him-

CREW MANAGER

Name?

VIKTOR

Navorski, Viktor.

He checks his list.

CREW MANAGER

I don't have you down here.

VIKTOR

I'm new.

CREW MANAGER

What do you do?

VIKTOR

Builder.

CREW MANAGER

Could you try and be a little more specific?

VIKTOR

Painter. Mason. Plumber.

He looks Viktor over again.

CREW MANAGER

(to himself)

Great. A jerk of all trades.

VIKTOR

(straining to hear)

Excuse me?

CREW MANAGER

Never mind. Who sent you anyway?

VIKTOR
(hesitant)
I heard Harry --

CREW MANAGER
(to his Junior)
-- one of Harry's infamous
recommendations. A very bad omen, my
friend. He talk to you about pay and
terms?

VIKTOR
(hesitant)
...No.

CREW MANAGER
He never does.
(warily handing him a slip)
Get a uniform from the shell.

He gestures over to the workers HUT nearby.

VIKTOR
Thank you. Thank you very much.

INT. WORKERS HUT - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Viktor emerges carrying a pair of pressed white overalls and
a hat.

INT. GATE TEN - DAY

Viktor, now sporting his new overalls, walks in. The other
WORKERS, many of whom are Puerto Rican, watch him arrive. He
waves politely at them

VIKTOR
Hello.

They ignore him, turning back to their work. Viktor spots
the brushes and paint in the corner. Helping himself he makes
his way over to the far side of the gate where no-one else
is working.

INT. GATE THIRTY - LATER

Viktor's wall is only half-painted. Viktor turns to see the
other workers packing up for the day. Their walls are already
finished.

Viktor turns back to his work. He continues slowly, carefully, exactly.

INT. FOOD COURT AREA - NIGHT

Exhausted after his first day at work, Viktor - now changed back into his suit - walks through the concourse.

Enrique's food trolley, its engine still making the strange whistling noise, drives straight past him. Viktor turns, sniffs the air.

He follows Enrique's trolley.

INT. CATERING RETURNS AREA - LATER

Enrique takes a hot tray of appetizers from a compartment on his food trolley and hands it to a waiting BA catering WORKFR. He sees Viktor standing there.

VIKTOR

Thank you for dinner. And toothpaste.

A very long beat. Enrique scrutinizes him.

ENRIQUE

How did you know it was me?

Viktor leans forward over the food trolley, smelling the assorted aromas. He taps one of the compartments. Enrique opens it.

VIKTOR

It's the one you gave me

ENRIQUE

(pretending to be unimpressed)

KLM? Those clog-wearing amateurs can't cook to save their asses.

VIKTOR

I liked it. Thank you.

ENRIQUE

(like it was nothing)

Returns. They get tossed anyhow.

Now Cathay Imperial Class...

He opens another drawer, allows Viktor a brief, tantalizing glimpse of an exquisite-looking MEAL before SLAMMING it shut again -

ENRIQUE

Not too many miles on it, either. It's
only come from Santiago.

Enrique kisses his fingers, jumps back onto his train and
turns on the engine. It makes the strange whistling sound
again.

Viktor approaches, flips up the hood and makes a quick and
precise adjustment. The whistling stops.

A beat.

ENRIQUE

I could send a few more your way if you'd
like.

Viktor nods, graciously accepting the kind offer. Enrique
turns his cart around.

ENRIQUE

I hear you're going to be with us for a
while.

VIKTOR

No. I leave any day now.

Enrique takes off in the other direction.

ENRIQUE

Really? I don't see a boarding pass
sticking out of your top pocket.

Off Viktor's expression.

INT. TERMINAL - MORNING

Viktor walks past a row of PAY TV's. As he passes a WOMAN
leaves her booth, TV still on.

TV (O.S.)

The situation in Eastern European
situation looks unlikely to be settled
in the immediate future --

Viktor stops in his tracks, turns, sits down in the vacant
booth to watch the news.

We hold on Viktor's face as we hear -

TV NEWSCASTER

The United Nations delegation last night could not even convince the Leaders of the Principalities to agree on a meeting place to begin talks aimed at resolving the historical border --

The TV switches OFF. Viktor slaps it. Nothing. He fiddles with all the buttons. Still nothing. Now Viktor hits the TV, calls it a name.

Frustrated, he looks over to the next booth where a young KID wearing Death Metal clothes watches cartoons. The Kid turns to Viktor, a look of casual contempt.

Viktor smiles and leaves.

INT. GATE FIFTY - NIGHT

Viktor, in his pajamas now and ready for bed is at the circuit box by the wall. He makes another groove in the wall with his coin. There are dozens.

Viktor's expression, realizing it's not going to be "any day now."

INT. TERMINAL, UNITED AIRLINES LONG HAUL DESK - NIGHT

A TICKET GIRL, sits behind the abandoned desk, looks out at the empty Terminal, yawns. She checks her watch, leaves.

Viktor appears, casually walks past the desk before ducking behind it.

HANDS ruffle through a drawer - baggage stickers, forms, a book of ticket stubs, slam it shut.

A SECOND DRAWER - a list of employees. Viktor's hands nervously flick through it. The title at the top "Ground Staff".

A THIRD DRAWER - Viktor finds another list of employees - 'JFK Flight staff schedules'.

He hurriedly pores down the list.

VIKTOR

Sanchez Amelia... Sanchez Amelia...
Sanchez Amelia...

His fingers track down each name on the list, finally finding
THE NAME -

VIKTOR
(reading her full name aloud
from the card)
Amelia Luisa Sanchez.

Across from it...her exact schedule.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - NIGHT

Viktor waits for the flight crews emerging from a tunnel.

From the tunnel opposite, Viktor practices timing his walk
to coincide with the arriving crews.

He sees Amelia appear. Refolding his monogrammed handkerchief
in his top pocket and quickly adjusting his tie, Viktor gives
his best impersonation of a "frequent-flyer" as he moves
towards her.

But it's not her...just a flight attendant who looks very
similar.

VIKTOR
Sorry. Pardon me.

Viktor returns to his starting position. He waits. Finally
he sees

AMELIA

waits till she gets closer to make sure it's her. It is.

He begins his walk

Amelia begins to smile when she sees -

MAX

her boyfriend, a well-dressed Businessman wearing generous
amounts of gold jewelry. He opens his arms, kisses her
passionately. They go off arm in arm.

VIKTOR

crushed, watches them leave.

Amelia and Max laugh and joke, kissing again, unable to keep
their hands off each other.

Viktor, dejected, starts walking back home across the concourse.

MULROY

watches from around a nearby corner, he's witnessed the whole scene.

VIKTOR

continues ahead.

MULROY (O. S.)
We're flying tonight.

Viktor turns to see where the whisper is coming from, sees Mulroy standing there.

MULROY
At eleven.

VIKTOR
(approaching)
Flying?

MULROY
Air Jamaica.

Viktor, puzzled.

MULROY
Just meet me in front of Carousel Six.

He disappears.

A POT

boils angrily on a rickety hot plate.

INT. TERMINAL - MULROY'S HIDEAWAY

Deep in the bowels of the Baggage handling area, conveyors and carousels groaning somewhere in the distance.

Mulroy stirs the pot, intermittently singing along to the Loretta Lynn song coming out of the yellow Binatone stereo and smoking a matching yellow corn-paper joint as he talks -

MULROY
I've banged them all, man. Every trolley-dolly from Aeroflot to Zimbabwe Air.
There was one girl--
(MORE)

MULROY

(a brief faraway look)

Aer Lingus.

Viktor sits uncomfortably at a makeshift table in the corner - a rusted DC 9 wing panel, staring down at enough roach clips to hang a shower curtain.

MULROY

They're not like normal women, Viktor.
They're some kind of separate breed.
Flying back and forth across all those
time zones screws with their hormones.
Girls just shouldn't be up that high
that long. It's unnatural. Trust me,
unless you're just in the market for a
little fun, stay away, man.

Mulroy turns round with a taste on the end of a large cooking spoon for Viktor -

MULROY

Try this. My mother's recipe.

Viktor tastes it -

VIKTOR

(grimacing)

It's very good. Thank you.

Mulroy reaches above him to one of the old overhead 747 containers - complete with faded Pan Am logo - opens it, pulls out a huge BONG made of engine piping, drops it in front of Viktor.

Viktor examines it, worried.

MULROY

Just the tonic for a man in your predicament.

A bang at the door. Enrique appears, wheeling a labrador under a blanket (SCOUT) on a make-shift trolley behind him.

He hugs Mulroy, looks at Viktor.

ENRIQUE

The man with no country.

Enrique reaches down, pulls out a couple of bottles of DOM PERIGNON from under Scout's blanket.

MULROY

The Air France lounge?

50.
ENRIQUE
(French Accent)
Mais bien sur. Merci!

MULROY
(taking the bottles, to Viktor)
Free to those that can't afford it.

VIKTOR
You stole them?

Enrique feigns shock.

ENRIQUE
My God.
(mockingly, to Mulroy)
I stole them.

Enrique cackles as he pops the cork. Viktor's in no mood to celebrate. He reaches down to Scout who licks his hand.

INT. MULROY' S HIDEAWAY - LATER

The room is filled with thick Marijuana smoke from the superbong. The champagne bottles are empty too. Viktor looks uncomfortable, almost like he wants to leave but is frightened to excuse himself.

He reaches down to pet the dog again, noting the braces on both his hind legs this time.

ENRIQUE ♦
You like him, huh? He's an old DEA dog. They were about to 'retire' him, if you know what I mean, but I convinced them to let me have him.

MULROY
He's got a golden nose, this one.

SCOUT - IN FLASHBACK

Sniffing vigorously, his crippled legs dangling uselessly from a luggage cart is wheeled slowly past a mountain of BAGS by Mulroy. A furtive Enrique trails, making sure the coast is clear...

MULROY (V.O.)
We wheel him past the bags before the first team dogs go in.

Scout starts to sniff and grab at a back pack. Mulroy opens it, pulls out a small CUCINA DOLL inside, puts it in front of Scout's nose. He barks. Mulroy twists off the doll's head, looks inside, then up at Enrique...Bingo.

INT. MULROY'S HIDEAWAY - CONTINUOUS

Viktor watches as Enrique reaches down to the barrel hanging off Scout's collar and pulls out two large bags of weed.

ENRIQUE

(handing them to Mulroy)

Kingston Press. Fresh off the plane.

(Scout)

Good boy.

A lit joint already in his mouth, Mulroy shoves the bags of weed into a little flight bag.

MULROY

A little take-out.

VIKTOR

(watching Mulroy pack the weed away)

What if they catch you?

He exhales right into Viktor's face. Viktor is beginning to look rather pale. He coughs. His eyes are beginning to change.

MULROY

No-one checks the ~~baggage~~ handlers' baggage. It's an unspoken rule.

ENRIQUE

They got more important things to worry about. Like you, Vik. When they going to let you outta here, anyway?

VIKTOR

Any day now.

Viktor begins eating Mulroy's 'stew'. For some reason, it doesn't seem to taste that bad anymore.

ENRIQUE

(a stoned laugh)

Someone's lying to you, man.

MULROY

Leave him alone.

ENRIQUE
Fuck them. You should just leave.

MULROY
They'll send him to the Detention Center.

ENRIQUE
Not if they don't catch him.
(tokes, boldly)
I can get you out of here.

Viktor stops eating.

MULROY
(to Viktor)
He can't get you out of here.

ENRIQUE
Damn Skippy I can get him out of here!

Viktor chokes on the smoke again. His eyes are looking very glazed over by now.

VIKTOR
How?

ENRIQUE
You could just fly right out.

VIKTOR
I can't.

ENRIQUE
Have you ever been inside the wheel well
of an A3507

VIKTOR
No.

ENRIQUE
It's the size of a one bedroom apartment.

MULROY
He'd freeze to death.

ENRIQUE
(like he's an imbecile)
I don't know whether you've noticed,
Mulroy, but there have been some
breathtaking advances in Western
technology in the last few years.

A withering look from Mulroy as he hands Enrique the joint.

55.
ENRIQUE
Industrial grade Aluminum foil.

Viktor stares at Enrique, his drug-addled brain taking hold of the idea -

EXT. SKY - VIKTOR'S FANTASY

A gleaming 747 makes its final approach to the runway.

INT. WHEEL WELL - CONTINUOUS

A pair of eyes, icicles dripping off the brows, stare terrified out of a small hole beneath thick layers of Aluminum foil.

INT. COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

The CAPTAIN activates his landing gear. A button flashes a MALFUNCTION. He looks to his CO-PILOT, aghast.

THE TARMAC

Minutes later. FIRE MARSHALS pick over the charred, smoking WRECKAGE of the downed Jet.

FIRST MARSHALL
Take a look at this, sir.

The SENIOR MARSHALL comes over and watches as carbon-streaked layers of tin foil are peeled back. Steam and smoke pour from the center.

The last layer is peeled away.

FIRST MARSHALL
Mother of God.

SENIOR MARSHALL
Baked like a potato.

INT. MULROY'S HIDEAWAY - CONTINUOUS

Mulroy laughing. Viktor's expression, horrified.

ENRIQUE
Maybe that one's not for you.

Enrique waves in front of Viktor's eyes. Viktor seems to be catatonic. Mulroy still laughing.

ENRIQUE
Viktor, are you alright?

MULROY
I think he's having a heart attack.

ENRIQUE
(eureka)
That's it! Cardiac arrest. They'll have to take him to emergency at St. Joseph's.

VIKTOR'S MIND

Viktor, on a gurney and clutching his chest is rushed out of the Terminal to a waiting AMBULANCE.

INT. AMBULANCE

Strapped down on the gurney, Viktor has electrodes attached to every part of his body.

PARAMEDIC ONE reads off the monitors.

PARAMEDIC ONE
Not just his heart. Lungs, kidneys, corneas. Everything's in perfect health.

PARAMEDIC TWO
(consulting Viktor's chart)
Since he has no legal right to be in this country, I see no reason why his organs shouldn't be harvested...

PARAMEDIC ONE
(getting the idea)
...for legitimate U.S. citizens.

Viktor RIPS all the electrodes off his body.

INT. MULROY'S HIDEAWAY - LATER

Viktor looks whiter than a sheet. Mulroy is laughing so much now no sound is coming out.

VIKTOR
(calmly crawling off, hoarse)
Thank you for a lovely evening.

Enrique and Mulroy high five.

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES BOARD

The first morning arrivals flicker to life
Durban...Vienna...Monte Carlo...Kinshassa...

EXT. RUNWAY - DAY

A Mexicana 747 takes off with a ROAR.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, NEW WING - MORNING

Viktor, looking worse for wear, and the other workers emerge from the hut in their overalls, ready to begin on the next gate.

KARL

poking his head out of Gate Ten, shouts over to his men -

KARL

You. All of you. Here. Now.

MINUTES LATER

Viktor and the other workmen stand in front of Viktor's perfectly painted wall.

KARL

Gather round. Look at this.

Smiling, Karl runs his fingers over the intricate moulding work at the base.

KARL

See this, Gentlemen. Old world
craftsmanship. Detailed. Precise.
Beautiful.

Viktor's thrilled.

KARL

So, who did it?

Viktor's simply too embarrassed to take the credit.

KARL

Come on, I'm sure we'd all love to know
who's responsible for such beautiful
work.

Viktor, finally overcoming his humility, steps forward.

KARL

What's your name?

VIKTOR

Viktor.

Karl approaches, his smile suddenly dropping -

KARL

(gesturing to the walls)
It's got to stop, Viktor.

Viktor, confused.

KARL

This is an airport. People want to get
through here as fast they can. No-one
notices the goddamn walls in an airport.
Work like this takes too long. We miss
our deadline, I don't get my target bonus.
And if I don't get mine, then you -
(gesturing grandly)
- all of you, don't get yours.

Viktor wishes the earth would swallow him up. The Workers
look at each other.

KARL

People like you are stopping everyone
else from making money.

The Workers glare at Viktor. Karl nears him.

Hesitantly -

VIKTOR

I can do the best job...quicker.

A long beat.

KARL

I don't think so.

INT. GATE FIFTEEN - MOMENTS LATER

Karl leads Viktor into the abandoned gate, trailed by the other workers.

KARL

Okay, you've got until lunchtime.

Viktor looks around the huge gate. After a moment -

VIKTOR

The whole gate?

KARL

Any one of these men could paint this whole gate before lunch...

(turning to them)

...right?

They all shake their heads, delighting in Viktor's torment.

Viktor nods his head, alright.

Karl leaves the gate, trailed by the workers, a couple of them high-fiving.

VIKTOR

looks around at the endless expanse of WALL. He gulps.

INT. NEW WING, OFFICE - LATER

Karl is arguing loudly the phone. Brian, the Crew Manager appears. He looks worried.

CREW MANAGER

Karl.

KARL

What?

CREW MANAGER

You'd better come here.

INT. GATE FIFTEEN - MINUTES LATER

The clock on the wall reads ten minutes to one. Viktor sits calmly in the middle of the room finishing a TWA children's fish supper.

30.
Karl and Brian arrive. Karl can hardly believe his eyes.
Viktor's not only painted everything perfectly, he's finished
the moulding on the base as well.

A beat.

KARL
I don't like you, Navorski.

He leaves. Viktor savors the last of his Jello cup.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, MAIN CONCOURSE - DAY

Returning from work, Viktor walks across the main concourse.
People are starting to recognize him.

DUSTY, A sandy-haired airlines purser approaches, handing
Viktor a Continental Club Class travel kit.

DUSTY
Enrique told me about your...
(looking around)
... 'situation'.

Viktor takes it, slightly surprised.

DUSTY
(leaving, a wink)
I'm Dusty.

VIKTOR
I'm sorry.

DUSTY
No, that's my name.

VIKTOR
I'm Sorry. Thank you.

EXT. RUNWAY - NIGHT

An Air Canada 767 taxis into the deserted gate area, landing
lights flickering through the falling rain.

INT. TERMINAL, UPPER CONCOURSE - INDIVIDUAL PAYPHONE AREA

Viktor nears a bank of public phones, each topped with a
Plexiglas bubble for privacy.

He slows, hearing an agitated WOMAN'S VOICE. As Viktor gets closer he realizes she's screaming in rapid-fire Spanish.

The argument crescendoes, insults coming fast and furious. The Woman finally SLAMS down the phone. We hear a muffled sob.

The woman steps out of the bubble. It's Amelia. Tears in her eyes.

AMELIA

Asshole.

She kicks the phone.

AMELIA

Asshole phone!

She collapses into her seat, rifles through her bag for a Kleenex, tips the entire thing up. Suddenly -

A MONOGRAMMED HANDKERCHIEF

appears in front of her face. The one that's been poking out of Viktor's suit pocket since the day he arrived.

She looks up, sees Viktor.

AMELIA

You again?

Viktor gently places the handkerchief next to her and starts to go.

AMELIA

What are you trying to do?

Viktor pauses where he is, a deer in the headlights. She grabs the handkerchief, tries to wipe away her tears, the mascara running down her face. She blinks. It hurts.

AMELIA

Goddamn things.

She looks for her contacts case amidst the contents of her bag, spread out everywhere.

She gets down on the floor, hunting for them, looking under the seat. Viktor joins in.

AMELIA

Men. You're all the same. You should all come with a little warning sticker from the World Health Authority - 'Anything that comes out of this mouth is horseshit'.

Viktor finds the case, hands it to her -

AMELIA

It's a simple 'yes or no' question? 'Are you leaving her?' "Yes or No? How complicated is that?

She opens it, begins peeling the contacts out of her eyes.

AMELIA

Tell me the truth so I can get on with my life. Is that really so much to ask?
(her eye)
Ow.

She starts sobbing again. Viktor is unsure what to do. He considers putting his hand on her shoulder, thinks better of it, sits down quietly next to her instead.

After a moment, she turns to Viktor, a little calmer now.

VIKTOR

You love him.

AMELIA

I wanted to marry him. I mean, he's already married but

VIKTOR

Three of you. Crowded.

She laughs, looks at him -

AMELIA

(as it occurs to her)
What are you doing here at this hour anyway?

VIKTOR

...I'm delayed.

AMELIA

Again? You need to find a new travel agent.

She notices the flecks of paint on his hands.

AMELIA
What business are you in?

VIKTOR
Building.

AMELIA
Building?

VIKTOR
I travel between one building and another
building...building. International
building. Yes.
(glancing nervously at his
watch)
I'd better get to my gate.

As he gets up to leave, she watches him.

Viktor turns back. He wants to say something...but he can't.
He continues on his way.

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES BOARD

Flight information for endless destinations flickers to
life...Dar Es Salaam...Madrid...Dublin...Bonn...

INT. IMMIGRATION OFFICE DAY

Viktor reaches the head of the line. He slides his filled
out immigration form across the counter.

Officer Torres looks at Viktor stamps ENTRY DENIED across
the green form. Viktor leaves.

OFFICER TORRES
Viktor.

Viktor turns, approaches the window again.

OFFICER TORRES
(a discreet whisper)
Listen, Viktor. Just between us. You
don't have to fill the form out every
time. Why don't you fill out a pile and
I'll just stamp them with different dates?
Might save you some time.

VIKTOR
I don't want to get you into any trouble.

A beat.

OFFICER TORRES

You may be illegal Viktor, but you're a gentleman.

Viktor helps himself to some blank IMMIGRATION FORMS as he leaves.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - DAY

Viktor and the other WORKERS are on a lunch break. The Crew Manager comes round with paychecks. He hands an envelope to everyone except Viktor.

CREW MANAGER

You didn't fill out the paperwork properly.

Viktor looks up at him.

CREW MANAGER

I can't pay you without a social security number, Viktor.

VIKTOR

It's okay.

Viktor doesn't seem that bothered.

CREW MANAGER

You do want to get paid, right?

Viktor smiles.

CREW MANAGER

Well, as soon as you get it.

Viktor goes back to his tuna salad sandwich.

Karl caught the exchange.

He approaches, reaches into his pocket, stuffs a couple of bills into Viktor's top overall pocket.

KARL

An advance. Till it gets straightened out.

A long beat -

KARL
(reluctantly)
...You're a good worker, Viktor.

Karl leaves. Viktor pulls out the two twenty dollar bills, looks at them, smiles, takes another bite of his sandwich and wanders over to the

UNFILLED HOLE

In the middle of the New Wing walkway that he saw when he first arrived. It's become a make-shift garbage dump...old paint cans, drink containers, discarded building materials...

An idea is forming in his mind.

INT. BAGGAGE CLAIM AREA - LATER

Viktor, taking some things out of his bag on the carousel, spots Mulroy as he emerges from the Baggage claim security doors at the far end, wearing plain clothes. He looks like he's on his way home.

As Viktor looks up he notices a couple of POLICE OFFICERS casually milling around. Viktor senses something is wrong.

He stands up, sees SCOUT Mulroy's lame Labrador, being put into a cage by two HANDLERS on the other side of a nearby partition.

He turns around, his eyes finding one of the Policemen mouthing something surreptitiously into a radio as he discreetly tracks Mulroy making his way across the hall...

Viktor hurries towards Mulroy. Mulroy spots him, smiles.

VIKTOR
(angry)
You lost my bag again.

MULROY
What the hell are you talking about?

Viktor starts to throw a fit.

VIKTOR
I've had it with you, Mulroy.
(a whisper)
They're waiting for you.

MULROY
What?

VIKTOR
Fight with me.

Viktor pushes him.

MULROY
(pushing back)
Damn right, I'm going to fight with you.

The policemen watch the exchange, confused.

VIKTOR
Don't push me.
(whisper)
They know.

Mulroy begins to sense the policeman now too.

VIKTOR
(whisper)
Give it to me. They won't stop me.

He pushes Mulroy again.

VIKTOR
(angrily)
Everything I have in the world is in
that bag!

The Policemen are beginning to stir, starting to move casually
towards them now...

MULROY
I never touched your goddamned bag!
(whisper, subtly gesturing)
The phones.

They begin to move as they push and shove each other --

MULROY
If you've got a complaint, go to Window
C.

Viktor pushes him against the phones.

VIKTOR
Why should I go to window C? You lost my
bag.

THE PHONES

In a flash TWO TAPED PACKAGES are suddenly lodged in the
booth alcove.

Mulroy pushes Viktor back against the booth now. Viktor clumsily scoops the packages under his coat.

MULROY

That's right. Find it yourself.

Several policeman, including their bald Sergeant, suddenly surround Mulroy.

MULROY

What?

They start to hustle him away.

MULROY

What's your problem, Kojak?

Moving away from the phones, Viktor sighs with relief. A DOG stares at Viktor, looking over its shoulder as it's led away by the Handler.

Viktor suddenly sees Mercer and Thurman walking TOWARDS HIM. He freezes, looks like he wants to die.

THURMAN

What's going on, Navorski? We haven't seen you at the counter in days.

VIKTOR

(sweating)

Busy.

THURMAN

(noticing the sweat)

What's wrong? Too hot in here for you?
Cause we can certainly turn the heat up.

A beat. They walk away.

INT. RESTROOM - LATER

THE TWO PACKAGES

Of drugs, taped up. Viktor stares down at them in his hands.

He rips open the packages, pours the marijuana into the toilet bowl, flushes.

Viktor emerges from the stall. A Hippie BACK PACKER is at the sink. He watches Viktor in the mirror, notices his hands are covered with buds. viktor washes them.

The Back Packer looks at Viktor longingly as he leaves.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - DAY

Viktor, still shaken, walks across the teeming main concourse. Opposite him on the other side is the Airport Police Station. Just as Viktor passes, he sees

MULROY

emerging from a door across the way, two angry-looking Airport Cops closing the door after him.

Mulroy sees Viktor. They stand and stare at each other for a moment, Mulroy finally mouthing the words 'thank you'.

Viktor nods back.

From above, the two men, on opposite sides of the busy concourse, walk off in opposite directions.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, GATE FIFTY - NIGHT

Viktor, yawning, arrives back at the end of a very long day.

He peels off his overalls and folds them up.

He turns to his 'bed'.

There, on the end of it, his monogrammed handkerchief, folded and laundered. On top of it, Amelia's biography of Napoleon.

Viktor opens it, inside AN INSCRIPTION - 'For Viktor, in exile Amelia.'

Down at the bottom in smaller lettering - 'P.S. see page 524'

Viktor looks around. The entire gate is empty. Not a single noise apart from the distant whir of the cleaning machines.

He traces his finger over her signature, opens the book to the first page...

LATER

The light above his bed out, Viktor sleeps, his arms clutching the open book on his chest.

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES BOARD

More destinations flicker to
life...Edinburgh...Rio...Florence...Lima...

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - NEW WING, GATES - DAY

Perching on metal scaffolding with a mouth full of nails,
Viktor hammers in dry-wall.

Amelia enters the gate. She looks up, watches Viktor for a
moment.

AMELIA

Viktor.

He turns, manages what passes for a smile.

She approaches.

AMELIA

They said I'd find you here.

He mumbles something, nails in his mouth, takes them out.

A beat. He puts down his tools.

AMELIA

I guess you really do have a bad travel
agent --

VIKTOR

-- I just didn't know how to tell you.

AMELIA

You lied to me, Viktor.

VIKTOR

(looking away)

I --

AMELIA

-- It's okay. In fact, I like that you
lied to me.

He's confused.

AMELIA

You're not very good at it, Viktor.

(beat)

(MORE)

AMELIA

It's the ones that are, that are the problem.

VIKTOR

I didn't think...
(gesturing around the airport,
hunting for the words)
...because of...this.

AMELIA

Well, what's...wrong with this?

She nears him. A beat.

AMELIA

There's nothing to be ashamed of.

It's difficult for him to accept that.

VIKTOR

Who told you?

AMELIA

Come on, Viktor. Everyone in the Terminal knows about you.

Viktor looks away. She starts to climb the scaffolding.

VIKTOR

(nervously watching, helping
her up the last step)
Careful, fresh paint

She doesn't care.

A beat.

AMELIA

(looking down again)

You get a lot of perspective.

She smiles. Viktor's starting to feel a little more relaxed. For a moment they just watch PEOPLE walking back and forth below them.

A very long beat.

AMELIA

I guess they don't deliver pizza or anything up here.

He smiles, taking off his paint-spattered smock.

VIKTOR

Allow me.

INT. TERMINAL, UPPER CONCOURSE - LATER

Munching on slices of pizza, Viktor and Amelia stroll through the upper concourse. People greet and wave at Viktor as he passes.

She seems to enjoy being with him.

VIKTOR

Everything you could ever want is right here in the Terminal.

(pointing with his slice
below them)

Five thousand people work on these three levels alone. There are 324 retail outlets, 245 restaurants, a police station, a church, a fire department, a Post Office. Even the FBI and the CIA have offices in the basement.

AMELIA

I had no idea.

VIKTOR

Every nationality, every color, every language. The whole world under one roof.

He stops.

VIKTOR

You see it doesn't matter who you are on the outside, everyone has to go through Customs and Immigration. In here, everyone's equal.

AMELIA

I've really never thought about it like that.

Beat. She's about to toss her pizza crust.

VIKTOR

No, don't.

AMELIA

What?

VIKTOR
(taking her hand)
We're going to the zoo.

AMELIA
They have a zoo?

INT. QUARANTINE - MOMENTS LATER

Amelia and Viktor enter the large room filled with ANIMALS in cages. The noise is intense.

AMELIA
I don't think I've ever smelled anything like this before.

Viktor leads her down to a vast cage at the end of the room. Inside, are about three hundred bright yellow and green CANARIES.

AMELIA
They're beautiful.

VIKTOR
Tomorrow they go to the sanctuary in Oslo.

They push their pizza through the bars. The birds flock to them, pecking away at the crusts.

AMELIA
You wish you could go with them?

A beat.

VIKTOR
I thought I told you.

He looks at her, smiles --

VIKTOR
I have everything I need right here.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, MAIN PARTITION DOORS - DAY

Amelia stands at the door, Viktor beside her. She glances almost guiltily to the exit.

AMELIA
I'd better get going.

VIKTOR
I wish I could walk you to the cab.

AMELIA
Listen, in the morning I fly to San Jose,
then to Sao Paulo, but when I get back --

VIKTOR
-- how long?

AMELIA
(checks her watch)
About eighty six hours.

VIKTOR
Girls just shouldn't be up that high
that long.

Amelia smiles.

VIKTOR
So maybe we could --

AMELIA
Dinner.

VIKTOR
Maybe we could dinner, yes.

AMELIA
I'll meet you under the
Arrivals/Departures board.

She kisses him on the cheek, leaves

VIKTOR
(after her)
Eighty-six hours!

On the Board clock, the minute CLICKS over.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL GATE FIFTY - NIGHT

A paint brush paints over the grooves in the wall indicating
the months of Viktor's "incarceration" in the airport.

Viktor smiles and settles back in bed. He idly constructs a
beautiful paper airplane - a McDonnell Douglas DC 10, jets
and all - made from 'borrowed' folded forms from Immigration.

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES BOARD

A slew of new destinations
appears...Madrid...Bogota...Nice...Seoul...

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, MAIN CONCOURSE - ANOTHER DAY

We follow VIKTOR as he walks through the main concourse. By now almost everyone who works in the Terminal knows him, acknowledging him with a wave or a 'Hello, Viktor.'

As he crosses the floor smiling back at people, it is as if the town Mayor is greeting his constituents on the way to City Hall.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, VARIOUS PLACES - DAY

VIKTOR wanders through the Terminal passing beneath the information point sign. Mistaking Viktor's meticulous suit and tie for the uniform of some member of airport personnel -

WOMAN

I'm sorry. Do you work here?

VIKTOR

No.

(glancing at her ticket)

Gate twenty two.

She leaves. Another WOMAN, this time with her YOUNG CHILD, approaches.

VIKTOR

(glancing to her ticket)

Sixteen.

A young MAN sees Viktor's giving out information. He approaches, doesn't even say a word before -

VIKTOR

Eighty-four.

MAN

I haven't shown you my ticket yet.

VIKTOR

You're visiting friends or relatives in
Ho Chi Minh City.

The Man is thrown.

MAN

How the hell did you know that?

Viktor points to the large cannisters of coffee the man is carrying in plastic bags.

VIKTOR

Coffee shortage. Gate Eighty-four.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - LATER

An overwhelmed airport Attendant beckons to Viktor and hands off a curmudgeonly wheelchair-bound MAN. The man cusses at the appalling service.

MAN

In thirty-five years of air travel I've never experienced anything remotely like this.

VIKTOR

Thank you very much.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - DAY

A MOTHER struggles with the coin-slot on the broken motorized HORSE her CHILD sits on crying because it won't move.

As Viktor passes on his way back towards the new wing he kicks the horse in just the right place. It begins to rock back and forth...

The Mother smiles at him.

EXT/ INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL MAINTENANCE ROOM - LATER

In a good mood, Viktor walks past one of the maintenance rooms, hears the noise of a FIGHT, enters.

A pair of CLEANERS, their mops raised, spar viciously with each other while other CLEANERS surround them, egging them on.

As Viktor gets closer he realizes one of the cleaners is Gupta.

VIKTOR

What is happening here?

CLEANER

An old grudge. Ancient rivals from
neighboring villages -- back in their
homeland.

The two men fight viciously.

CLEANER

The wound was re-opened because Gupta
went to the movies with Sanjay's
girlfriend, Pria.

Viktor steps forward, moving very close to them. He clears
his throat. The cleaners don't even notice him.

Viktor clears his throat again, LOUDLY this time.

Still, the cleaners go at it with their mops like crazed
cocks, oblivious.

Finally, and very loudly -

VIKTOR

GENTLEMEN. STOP!...Please.

Everyone, including the fighting cleaners, freezes, stunned
by Viktor's uncharacteristic outburst.

VIKTOR

(softly)

This is the international Transit lounge.
This is a neutral zone. Whatever
differences you may have in the outside
world do not matter here.

Viktor gently takes their mops, drops them into their buckets
and leaves.

Everyone stands there, speechless, watching him go...

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, NEW WING - DAY

Viktor sits in front of the

UNFILLED HOLE

excitedly sketching something out on a food court napkin.

EXT. RUNWAY - DAWN

An EL-AL AIRBUS THREE THIRTY takes off with a roar.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - EARLY MORNING

A red-faced Viktor, now wearing only his underclothes, jogs alongside the people mover.

After several strides he reaches across for the bottle of water that keeps pace with him on the moving hand-rail.

A bemused maintenance WORKER watches Viktor go by. Viktor waves at him, gasping for breath.

The Worker just stares at Viktor.

INT. IMMIGRATION WAITING ROOM - MORNING

Without breaking stride Viktor jogs up to the window, drops his filled-out immigration card on the counter and keeps running in a little circle until Officer Torres has stamped ENTRY DENIED on the card.

He grabs it again and jogs away, picking up some blank immigration forms as he goes.

Officer Torres watches him leave.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, REFURBISHED GATE - LATER

Viktor lifts heavy pieces of broken stone from the old walls left in the corner of the gate for pick-up onto Enrique's food trolley.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, MAIN CONCOURSE - DAY

Viktor unloads the pieces of stone by the gaping hole.

LATER

Viktor excavates the mess and garbage inside with a shovel.

LATER Liquid concrete pours into the cleaned base from a mixer. Viktor stops the mixer when the base is covered.

LATER

The stone pieces are laid out in a rough crescent around the half-filled hole.

INT. FIRST CLASS LOUNGE AREA - NIGHT

Viktor and the surly Steward, who prevented Viktor's entry into the Air France Lounge earlier, have a hushed conversation.

STEWARD

This is highly irregular, Viktor.

VIKTOR

I promise. Not a word to anyone.

A beat. The Steward sighs dramatically.

STEWARD

I'm only doing this because it's you.

VIKTOR

Thank you, Pierre.

A beat before the Steward drops some KEYS into Viktor's hand.

STEWARD

(after him)

Don't make a mess. You know what they're like.

INT. BAGGAGE CLAIM AREA - NIGHT

Viktor, taking some things out of his bag on the carousel, sees Mulroy approaching.

VIKTOR

Mulroy, I need a new suit. I wondered whether -

MULROY

What am I, a tailor? You need Hector.

VIKTOR

Who?

MULROY

Basement.

INT. LOST LUGGAGE - NIGHT

Strange and dark in here. Cases piled upon cases. Skis, instrument cases, trunks.

The farther Viktor moves inside the place the more it starts to resemble some kind of bizarre Souk - African drums, musty fur coats in plastic, half an accordion...

VOICE (O.S.)

Can I help you?

Viktor spins to see the plump, red-haired HECTOR sitting behind the dusty counter. He speaks with the aid of a tracheal vocal device.

It takes a while for Viktor to say anything.

VIKTOR

I am Viktor Navorski. Mulroy sent me --

HECTOR

I know who you are. What do you expect me to do, roll out the red carpet?

VIKTOR

That's okay.

HECTOR

What do you want?

Viktor pauses.

VIKTOR

To borrow something smart to wear.

Hector looks at him, thinks about it.

HECTOR

Come here, then. Let's get a proper look at you.

Viktor approaches. Hector turns him around.

HECTOR

(grumpily)

What are you, a forty two short?

Viktor shrugs.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, MAIN CONCOURSE - NIGHT

Karl and his crew Manager stand by the hole, looking down at

THE FOUNDATION

Viktor's laid.

KARL

What the hell's going on? This is just
meant to be filled and tiled over.

The Crew Manager checks his plans/records.

CREW MANAGER

Maybe someone got the wrong instructions?

Karl examines the stone crescent.

KARL

I just don't understand it.

CREW MANAGER

(nothing about it on his
plans)

It's weird, Karl. Like...Druids or
something.

Karl looks up at him like he's a complete imbecile.

EXT. GATES - NIGHT

A United Airlines 747 Sits at one of the gates.

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES BOARD

Marrakech...Prague...Vienna... Cape Town...

VIKTOR

waits under the board, worriedly checks his watch.

INT. FIRST CLASS CABIN - NIGHT

The plane is entirely empty apart from a single PASSENGER
sitting in First Class who's intensely focussed on his book.

AMELIA

Excuse me. We landed twenty minutes ago,
Sir. Could you disembark, please?

He ignores her.

AMELIA

Economy is already being groomed, Sir.

PASSENGER

I'll be finished with my book in a few
minutes. This is First Class.

Amelia looks at the book he's reading, sees he's got about thirty pages to go.

AMELIA

Normally I wouldn't mind staying, Sir,
but I have to leave.

PASSENGER

(sharp)

Is this plane leaving right now?

The Man noisily flips the page. She just stands there for a moment, considering what to do. Finally -

AMELIA

Rebecca doesn't have cancer. It was a misdiagnosis. Danny comes back. But he decides to marry Jane after all.

Off the Passenger's look.

INT. TERMINAL, ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES BOARD - NIGHT

Viktor paces, wearing the blue pinstripe suit and hat Hector lent him. It's been a long time now. Should he leave?

AMELIA (O.S.)

Sorry. I had a first class problem.

Amelia's changed into a pretty dress. She looks startlingly beautiful.

AMELIA

And we were an hour late coming in --

VIKTOR

-- eighty seven hours, twenty four minutes
(his watch)
Forty two seconds.

A beat. He looks at her properly.

VIKTOR

You look...

There isn't a word good enough.

EXT. OBSERVATION DECK - NIGHT

An exquisitely-dressed TABLE for two is set up in front of the railings overlooking runway six. China plates alongside Lufthansa linen Napkins, Japan Airlines cutlery and Stemware from British Caledonian.

AMELIA

You really didn't have to go to all this trouble.

Viktor escorts Amelia to her seat, makes sure she's comfortable.

VIKTOR

Thank Enrique.

AMELIA

Enrique?

Viktor smiles, goes over to the two heated containers warmed by candles.

VIKTOR

Chicken or beef?

A beat.

AMELIA

No Kosher?

Viktor checks, confused. She laughs.

AMELIA

Chicken's fine.

Viktor offers Amelia an Air France basket filled with a light selection of warmed breads.

AMELIA

(picking a croissant)

I love French food.

VIKTOR

(her croissant)

They were invented in Romania. In 1742, the Turks invaded Bucharest, making a surprise attack under the cover of night. But the town bakers, working in the early hours, spotted the invaders by the light of the moon. They alerted the garrison and the Turks were defeated.

(MORE)

VIKTOR
To commemorate the victory and honor his
army's courage, Prince Leopold
commissioned a pastry shaped like the
moon.

He takes a huge bite out of it.

VIKTOR
(mouth full, a shrug)
The Croissant.

EXT. OBSERVATION DECK - LATER

The remains of the meal in front of them, Viktor gets up. He
leads her to the edge of the Observation deck, overlooking
the runways.

VIKTOR
You can see much better from here.

A beat.

VIKTOR
Twelve hundred planes a day.

AMELIA
And not one with you on it.

VIKTOR
One day.

She looks at him.

AMELIA
I admire you, Viktor. For making a life
here, being in the situation you're in.
But how could you not be angry being
stuck in the Terminal?

VIKTOR
No time.

AMELIA
You don't miss home?

He doesn't react. He points to the old Maintenance Terminal
on the other side of the runways.

Just outside the entrance, discarded pieces of old airport
equipment, decrepit motorized boarding ramps, baggage trains
etc, are clearly visible.

VIKTOR

That's where the planes go to die.

A beat. He takes some blank immigration forms, starts to fold them together.

AMELIA

What's it like there?

Viktor pauses...tears one of the forms in two and adds the last piece to -

THE PAPER PLANE

in Viktor's hand.

It's meticulously constructed. She watches Viktor expertly adjust the wings, balancing them to exactly the right angle.

VIKTOR

Airbus 330.

Viktor takes a pen from his pocket, turns away from her to write something on the side.

AMELIA

What are you writing?

VIKTOR

It's just a little game I play.

(he shrugs)

You can write anything. Something you want. Someone you miss. A wish.

Viktor hurls the plane off the deck towards the runway. They watch it fly for a moment before it's swallowed by the darkness.

AMELIA

Was it...something about going home?

VIKTOR

-- you're not meant to say.

Viktor pulls a second plane out of his pocket, drops it in her palm.

VIKTOR

Your turn.

She examines it.

VIKTOR
Boeing 747, XA4. Cargo capable.

He adjusts wings and rudders, checking it's ready to fly.

Viktor catches her gaze again. This time his eyes don't skate away so fast. She gestures for the pen now, turning away from him to write something on its side.

She hurls it off the edge...

THE PLANE

soars. After a few moments it spirals crazily and disappears down towards the runway.

A beat. Hesitantly -

VIKTOR
What did you write?

A beat. She puts her hand on his...

AMELIA
You're not meant to say.

INT. LUFTHANSA FIRST CLASS LOUNGE - NIGHT

The sound of a key turning in a lock. Viktor and Amelia enter the plush lounge. Viktor turns on the lights.

AMELIA
(taking the place in)
Lufthansa?

VIKTOR
It was the only key I could get.

She absently kicks off her shoes, turns to Viktor and kisses him. She starts moving him towards the executive sofas -

VIKTOR
Hold on.

Rushing to the cupboard above the Media console, he pulls down some BLANKETS.

VIKTOR
(throwing one around her)
Silk and Cashmere.

AMELIA
(feeling it)
They think of everything, the Germans.

She kisses him again. Deeply this time. Beautifully...

INT. LUFTHANSA LOUNGE - DAWN

Through the lounge windows, the first imprint of morning.
cobalt-blue against the horizon.

VIKTOR AND AMELIA

wrapped in blankets on the floor.

In the half-light, Viktor wakes, is able to make out Amelia
doing something, tracing the contours of his palm, fingertips
running over microscopic lines, carefully slowly, exactly...

After a moment -

VIKTOR
(a whisper)
What are you doing?

She looks back at him, smiles.

AMELIA
Memorizing you.

She stops, turns to him -

AMELIA
I guess it's just like the Mile High
Club.

A beat.

VIKTOR
Only lower.

She laughs, kisses him again.

She reaches over to the complimentary Duty Free cigarettes,
lights one for each of them.

She looks at him for a long beat.

AMELIA
Viktor, there's a family friend of mine,
a lawyer.
(MORE)

AMELIA (cont' d)
I told him about you, about your
situation. He has friends in Immigration.

A beat.

AMELIA
He says there may be a way for you to
get out of the airport.

VIKTOR
How?

AMELIA
He might be able to persuade them to
issue you with a weekend pass.

Viktor absorbs this -

VIKTOR
I don't know.

AMELIA
You could get out of here, Viktor. At
least talk to him?

Viktor looks at his watch, gets up.

VIKTOR
The first passengers will be here in
twenty minutes. The morning flight to
Bonn.

She watches as he starts to dress.

EXT. RUNWAY - LATER

A Sabena Air DC 9 takes off.

INT. IMMIGRATION ARRIVALS HALL - DAY

A Maintenance WORKER erects a plastic-looking CHRISTMAS TREE
in the far corner. It is incongruous in the stark
surroundings.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TRANSIT LOUNGE, MAIN CONCOURSE - DAY
Christmas carols pipe out of the Airport PA.

A crush of harried PASSENGERS, flight CREWS and Terminal
STAFF. The place is absolutely teeming...

A drunken SANTA, rings his bell, sipping indiscreetly at a flask.

INT. TERMINAL, MAIN FLOOR - DAY

Gupta, listening to his taped-up headphones at maximum volume, mops with his usual focus and intensity outside the restrooms.

After he's completed the area in front of the doors, he puts 'Caution, Wet Floor - Slippery' signs around it.

INT. FIRST CLASS LOUNGE AREA - DAY

Enrique delivers trays of festive hot appetizers to the Air France lounge.

As he drops them on a counter in the kitchen area he sees a case of Dom Perignon just sitting there. He stares at the bottles for a moment then up at Pierre, the lounge steward, through the hatch, chatting away with a PASSENGER.

Enrique looks back at the bottles, hesitates...then leaves.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, MAIN CONCOURSE - NIGHT

Sweating, Viktor works at a piece of stone with a hammer and chisel.

KARL arrives, carrying a roll of architectural blueprints.

KARL

There's nothing about a fountain on the blueprints.

VIKTOR

(studying them)

You're right.

KARL

I talked to payroll. Why aren't you on their lists.

(a beat)

Who are you?

VIKTOR

Viktor Navorski.

KARL

Well, whoever you are, you're fired.

VIKTOR
I'm not hired.

CREW MANAGER
He's right. To be fired, you have to be
hired first. It stands to reas--

KARL
-- Shut up, Brian.

VIKTOR
You don't have to pay me.

Karl tries to make sense of it -

KARL
Why are you doing this?

A beat. Viktor looks at him -

VIKTOR
It's what I do.

Karl looks at the skilled cornicing work that's already been
completed on the base, considers Viktor once more.

He walks away.

INT. BYE-BYE BAR- NIGHT

Viktor, Amelia and MR. KEBAKIAN, a surprisingly tan lawyer
in clashing Gucci, sit in one of the booths having a drink.

Kebakian slides an envelope across the table to Viktor.

MR. KEBAKIAN
There it is. A weekend pass. You'll be a
free man by next Friday.

As if suddenly overwhelmed by the spirit of his own largesse,
Kebakian looks over at Amelia, smiling -

MR. KEBAKIAN
Don't ask me how I did it.

Viktor opens the envelope, looks at the pass inside with HIS
NAME on it.

MR. KEBAKIAN
It's all in there. All you do is present
it with your passport at the Immigration
desk no later than 6pm next Friday.

Amelia is clearly excited.

AMELIA
You can leave the Terminal, Viktor.

MR. KEBAKIAN
(leaning in, conspiratorial)
And when you don't come back after the weekend...

He lets the implication sink in, starts to chuckle. He taps the uncomfortable Viktor on the shoulder -

KEBAKIAN
God Bless America, eh?

As Kebakian heaves out of the booth, Viktor's half-blinded by his generously bejeweled Cartier.

AMELIA
(getting up, kissing him)
Thank you, Gogan.

VIKTOR
-Thanks-

As he shakes Viktor's hand, he slips him his card.

KEBAKIAN
When you need working papers, you call me.

He leaves.

VIKTOR
How do you know him?

AMELIA
He got a Green Card for my cousin Chilita.

A beat.

AMELIA
Don't worry...it's going to be great.

But Viktor does seem worried. She moves closer, taking his hand.

AMELIA
It's just like the Terminal out there,
Viktor. Only better. There's more of it.
You can walk around. Breathe real air.
(MORE)

AMELIA (CONT'D)

You don't have to eat a hot pretzel under a plastic tree in the food court, you can eat one under a plastic tree on the corner of Fifth Avenue! Think about it.

(she nears him, fingers touching his)

We could visit the Statue of Liberty every day if we wanted to.

VIKTOR

Where would I stay?

AMELIA

With me, of course.

She pauses.

AMELIA

I'm not trying to put you under pressure, Viktor, because there isn't any. I'm just...really looking forward to spending time with you.

She looks up at him -

AMELIA

And who knows what could happen?

Her meaning is clear.

A very long beat.

VIKTOR

In here, they know who I am. Out there...

She searches his expression, the pained look in his eyes...

AMELIA

Look at what you've done in here. Imagine what you could do outside.

She kisses him on the cheek, gets up to go. He watches her leave. At the door she turns back -

She disappears into the swarm of PASSENGERS in the main concourse:

UKRANIANS, IRANIANS, MACEDONIANS, KENYANS, KIWIS...

His gaze returns to

THE ENVELOPE

on the table. He slips it into his pocket.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, MAIN CONCOURSE - DAY

Viktor continues working. We see now it's a beautiful three-tier FOUNTAIN. In the background and just out of earshot of Viktor, Karl argues with his boss, LARABEE.

The fountain under construction is now the only sign of work still going on in the Terminal.

LARABEE

We're meant to be out of here by now.

KARL

He's nearly finished.

LARABEE

I don't care.

KARL

He's the best worker we've got.

LARABEE

He's not a worker. He's a vagrant.

KARL

He's still the best. Let him finish his work. Look, Dave. Look at it. It's a piece of art.

LARABEE

It's a goddamn fountain.

KARL

It's a goddamn beautiful fountain.

LARABEE

So what if it's beautiful.

He glances at Viktor, then back at Karl. A beat.

LARABEE

Okay. One week.

Larabee leaves. Karl, beaming, calls after him -

KARL

You're a patron of the arts now!

LARABEE

A what?

Karl waves him on, laughs, turns back to watch Viktor working a moment before taking off in another direction.

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES BOARD

Dares Salaam...Rio...Leningrad...Dublin...We see the DATE

FRIDAY the 6th - 4.48 PM

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, GATE FIFTY - NIGHT

Viktor lays out his twenty or so different TRAVEL KITS belonging to every airline from KLM to JAL to SAA...

Viktor stops his organizing a moment, looks out through the glass at the desolate runways.

INT. LOST LUGGAGE AREA - DAY

Hector slides some FRESH CLOTHES across the counter to Viktor.

HECTOR

All the rage these days.

Viktor looks down at the Bright red rave PANTS and matching SHOES (circa 1988), takes them with a smile.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, UPPER LEVEL, SUPERCUTS - DAY

Viktor stares at himself in the mirror as a super-fast Supercuts STYLIST cuts, spritzes and moulds Viktor's hair all at the same time.

AT THE STAINED CURTAIN

that divides the New Wing from the rest of the Transit lounge, Viktor gazes at his -

UNFINISHED FOUNTAIN

A look of regret on his face - a feeling of unfinished business.

INT. IMMIGRATION DESK - DAY

Viktor watches other passengers making their way through the immigration channels. He looks down at the pass in his hand.

It's trembling...finally he joins the line. He's never gotten near the front of a line in here so quickly.

Viktor's closer to the doors than he's ever been. Viktor hands OFFICER TORRES his weekend pass.

Torres looks over the paperwork, seems surprised that it's bona fide, STAMPS it.

OFFICER TORRES

Welcome to the United States.

See you on Monday.

(leaning closer, a beat)

Good-luck, Viktor.

Freedom is only a few feet away if he'll take it. But

VIKTOR

freezes, for the first time staring properly out into THE MAIN TERMINAL Friday rush-hour. A deafening noise of crazed, angry TRAVELLERS pushing in and out of the front doors out onto the sidewalk...CABS honking, POLICEMEN whistling, PAN-HANDLERS fighting, NEW YORKERS jostling and shoving like mad - JFK at her most fierce and frenzied, beyond...

MANHATTAN

looms like some strange planet, a million lights piercing the falling darkness.

AMELIA

pushes through the crowd TOWARDS Viktor, waving a bunch of flowers above her head.

VIKTOR

sees her. A large Pakistani FAMILY suddenly obscuring his view. The Passenger behind, bumps into him

PASSENGER

Keep moving, asshole!

AMELIA

watches, concerned. She gestures, 'come on'...

Viktor tries to move but he can't. He looks back over his shoulder into the calm sanctuary of the Transit lounge.

He turns back to her...a tense beat...before he spins around and heads back inside...

TORRES
(watching him)
Viktor!

INT. MAIN TERMINAL - DAY

From behind, we watch Amelia walk away, dropping the flowers into an overflowing trash can as she leaves...

VARIOUS SHOTS

Of the Airport - BAGS spinning on carousels...LUGGAGE CARTS lined up waiting for passengers...individual portions of airline FOOD splurged onto trays on a moving production line.

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES BOARD

Lima...Cancun...Manilla...Tahiti...

INT. BAGGAGE CLAIM AREA - LATER

Viktor walks in, it's pandemonium. A fussily-dressed WOMAN PASSENGER, holding a box marked 'FRAGILE', is tearing into Mulroy's new Deputy, SPINKS - 30s, bandana, enough gold-teeth to be declared an official asset.

Viktor watches as -

PASSENGER
Can't you read, stupid? It's a two thousand dollar Lalique vase.

SPINKS
Sorry, dawg -

MULROY-
(taking over, seeing her
look of horror)
-- It's his first day on the job, ma'am.
I'm still training him --

PASSENGER
-- You have to train him to read the word 'Fragile'? I demand to speak to your supervisor.

A beat.

MULROY
I am the supervisor.

As she starts hurling outraged abuse, Viktor slinks away...

INT. NONDENOMINATIONAL AIRPORT CHAPEL - DAY

Like some sort of science fiction dental waiting room. The high walls are bright white. The floor is shiny and spotless. The simple elegant decor is designed not to offend any parochial sensibility.

Viktor kneels on his individual prayer pod - also white - with his eyes closed and hands clasped together.

A man (40s) approaches and kneels down on the prayer pod next to Viktor.

After a minute, he glances nervously at Viktor.

MAN
Do you mind if I talk to you?

Viktor doesn't answer.

MAN
Sometimes it helps to talk to someone
you're never going to see again, you
know.

Viktor finally turns to him.

MAN
I always go to Church on New Years.

The man moves almost uncomfortably close to Viktor.

MAN
Usually with my wife.
(a long beat)
Turns out she doesn't love me. The truth
is I knew she didn't love me.
(a beat)
I knew it when we were walking down the
aisle. I knew she didn't and that she
was probably marrying me for...different
reasons and I just thought...

The man bows his head.

MAN

I thought over time she'd learn to love me the way I love her. Now she's leaving. I wanted to make it work, somehow...but I couldn't. I don't know...

The Man stares into Viktor's eyes.

MAN

You can't make someone love you, can you?

After a few reflective beats, the man gets up to go.

MAN

Thank you.

Viktor watches the man walk away before looking up through the skylight -

THE PERFECT BLUE SKY

The peace is shattered as a JET loudly crosses into view.

INT. TERMINAL, UNITED DESK - DAY

Viktor approaches the nearly abandoned desk where a female SUPERVISOR's inputting some data into her computer.

VIKTOR

I wondered if you could tell me what flight Amelia Sanchez is coming in on?

A beat.

SUPERVISOR

Amelia Sanchez...

(checking a list)

I think she...transferred to Newark.

She starts back on her computer again.

Viktor leaves.

SUPERVISOR

(uncertainly)

Are you, Viktor?

He pauses...

SUPERVISOR

(rummaging in a drawer)

She left something for you.

She hands him a LETTER.

INT. GATE FIFTY - NIGHT

Viktor sits back to read the hand-written note. He opens it -

AMELIA (O.S.)

Dear Viktor, I guess when the homeless guy won't come home with you, you start to take a look at your life. I don't mean to joke. I realize now how selfish it was of me to think you'd give up the chance of seeing your family again. Even though you never said it, I know how much you've always longed to be with them.

Viktor stops reading, looks out across the runways again.

AMELIA (O.S.)

I suppose I just wish you and I had the chance to come home to each other...Amelia.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, MAIN CONCOURSE - DAY

Viktor trudges past the row of PAY TV's. He looks awful, vaguely catatonic, not even hearing the voice of the CNN reporter on one of the monitors, playing to an empty seat...

CNN REPORTER (O.S.)

The success of the Paris accords in settling the border issues between the Eastern European principalities caused much jubilation here amongst the Diplomatic ranks this morning.

Viktor's IMAGE slowly blurs as we find

THE SCREEN

A bundled-up REPORTER speaks to camera as he waits outside the Ministry of Affairs in Paris, DIPLOMATS bustling into the building behind him.

CNN REPORTER (O.S.)

But for many thousands across the troubled region the opening of the borders tonight means a chance to once again taste the freedom that has been so unceremoniously denied them for twelve long months...

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - DAY

VIKTOR

Sleeps next to his fountain, a piece of painter's canvas as his blanket, a chisel still in his hand...

Mulroy appears.

MULROY (O.S.)

Hey !

Mulroy shakes him awake, smiling.

MULROY

Get up, Man. Looks like your prayers have been answered !

Bleary-eyed, Viktor looks up at him, puzzled.

INT. THE BYE BYE BAR - DAY

Mulroy pulls a delirious Viktor inside. The Barman watches the TV, laughing at the pet wrestling on a Morning Talk show.

MULROY

(to the barman)

Put it on CNN.

BARMAN

Who the hell are you?

MULROY

Change it.

The Barman is frightened enough to do so.

ON THE TV

JUBILANT LOCALS

celebrate in the town square we saw earlier, waving into the camera.

CNN REPORTER
Throughout the Principalities, people
are taking to the streets tonight to
celebrate.

SOLDIERS

A convoy of tanks, leave town, waving good-bye.

CNN REPORTER
And already talk of reparations for the
harm done to indigenous local industries
has caused many in the region to believe
that a renewed period of economic
prosperity may be just around the corner.

MULROY

shakes Viktor.

MULROY
Look at them.

He sees Viktor's ambivalence -

MULROY
What the fuck is wrong with you, man?

Viktor looks up at the

EXCITED FACES

on the screen. Finally, he smiles.

MULROY
(hitting him)
Get out of my Terminal, you Balkan
bastard!

The jubilant CHEERS of the locals on TV become the cheers of -

VIKTOR'S FRIENDS

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, LUFTHANSA LOUNGE - NIGHT

Gathered around to say good-bye - Mulroy, Enrique, Hector,
Karl, Daniels, Gupta, Larabee, Pierre. Assorted other airport
WORKERS, ticketing PEOPLE and Immigration SECRETARIES milling
about too. Viktor stands under some balloons and a banner
saying 'Bon Voyage'.

People come up and congratulate Viktor. He shakes hands and smiles...but there's something about his expression that's off.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - MORNING

Mercer breaks the seal on Viktor's file, hands back his ticket.

MERCER

This only permits you to return home.
Your visa to enter the United States
expired nine months ago.

Viktor looks at his ticket.

VIKTOR

I understand.

As Viktor walks out the open door -

MERCER

(not looking at him)
Good-bye, Viktor.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, DEPARTURE GATE - DAY

Mulroy waits at the gate for Viktor to appear.

PA ANNOUNCEMENT

This is the final boarding call for Lot
Air Flight 245 to Krakow. Will all
passengers please make their way to gate
forty-four immediately.

THE ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES BOARD

More flights are announced
...Bombay...Venice...Amsterdam...Nairobi...

...The last column 'GOOD LUCK VIKTOR'.

EXT. RUNWAY SIX - DAY

The Lot DC-10 accelerates with a mighty roar as it lifts
into the sky.

INT. BAGGAGE CLAIM AREA - LATER

Mulroy arrives with an empty luggage cart. He looks across to carousel seven, sees -

VIKTOR'S BLACK SUITCASE

still spinning on it.

INT. IMMIGRATION AREA, TERMINAL - DAY

Mercer arrives for work.

Viktor sees him coming, hides...

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, CONCOURSE/WING - LATE AT NIGHT

Mulroy ducks behind the curtain to the new wing. He stops at the sight of -

VIKTOR

in his work overalls, carefully applying finishing touches to the second tier of his fountain.

Mulroy just studies Viktor from a distance for a moment. Sensing someone's there, Viktor turns, spots Mulroy making his way over to him, returns to his work.

A beat.

MULROY

I got to hand it to you, man. A year early for your flight and you still manage to miss it.

Viktor doesn't answer, gestures for Mulroy to please hand him a fresh can of sealant. He does.

MULROY

I don't understand you, Viktor.

A beat. Mulroy closes in, trying to make Viktor face him.

MULROY

What about your family? Have you thought about them?

Viktor calmly continues with his work, expertly coating the underside of a tricky corner.

MULROY
Maybe they miss you, Viktor.

Viktor still won't respond or look at him.

MULROY
Because I know you miss them.

VIKTOR
No.

MULROY
Look, man, I saw you when you first arrived. You called them. I saw you crying.

Finally, Viktor's eyes meet his.

VIKTOR
(matter-of-fact)
I was crying because I had no-one to call.

MULROY
I don't understand...
(the memory replaying in his mind)
...but I saw you

VIKTOR
There was no-one on the other end of the line.
(looks at Mulroy again)
No one's waiting for me back home.
This is my home.

MULROY
This is an airport.

VIKTOR
I came to this country to make a new life.
(a beat)
I didn't expect to find it here.

MULROY
No, Viktor. Nobody starts a new life in a transit lounge. Everyone hates it here. Because one way or another they know they're stuck. People only work here because they have to. As soon as they've got the chance to get out, they do...because this is an airport, Viktor.
(MORE)

MULROY

(gesturing)

Look around, I mean look at the goddam carpet for Christ's sakes, this whole place is a nightmare.

VIKTOR

Not to me.

MULROY

It doesn't make sense, Viktor.

Viktor steps down from the tier, screws the cap back on the sealant.

When Viktor speaks now, it is from another place -

VIKTOR

I was a builder in my hometown. I was commissioned to build a new school. People trusted me. The whole town trusted me. Everyone felt I was the only man for the job. I was honored. We started work but there were many delays. I told them we could not complete the building in time but they insisted - the school had to be ready...so we worked day and night until it was done. On time. The whole town, everyone, congratulated me on my magnificent job. I had never felt more proud.

Viktor stops, his voice dropping to barely a whisper.

VIKTOR

A month later the rains came, and the wall facing the hill...

(his words spill out in a panic)

---in our hurry we didn't make the foundations strong enough. The rains weakened it. The wall collapsed. A child was killed. Tatiana.

Viktor's expression, haunted by the memory.

VIKTOR

I went to her family's house and saw her body. She stared at me...and stared at me. I tried to explain...but nothing was the same after that.

Viktor bows his head. A long beat.

VIKTOR

When I arrived here, I knew I was never going back.

Mulroy looks at Viktor, at the fountain he's building...it's all starting to make sense.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, NEW WING - DAWN

The morning begins to glow over the runways.

Viktor, alone, looks out across them, his eyes heavy. He turns to his fountain. There's no more he can do. He just hopes it's good enough...

He walks back over to it, and taking his chisel, very discreetly engraves a name into the scroll work...

'Tatiana'

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES BOARD

A slew of new destinations...Marrakech...Addis Ababa...Sydney...Vienna...

EXT. RUNWAY - DAY

An Aer Lingus Jumbo lifts off the tarmac with an almighty ROAR -

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, TRANSIT LOUNGE - DAY

Viktor, shaved and dressed now, walks across the main concourse, nodding acknowledgements to people he recognizes.

Some appear surprised, though pleasantly so, that Viktor is still in the Terminal.

Gupta spots Viktor and takes off his headphones -

GUPTA

You did the right thing, Viktor.

Viktor stops.

GUPTA

You'd miss it here.

(a shrug)

Certain people might have missed you.

He starts on his way again, slipping his headphones back on.

GUPTA

Not me, of course.

Viktor continues on.

Gupta turns to watch as a beautiful Asian STEWARDESS approaches Viktor and hands him a Thai Air Club Class Travel Kit on the way to her gate.

INT. GATE FIFTY - DAY

Viktor inspects his newly refurbished gate -

ENRIQUE (O. S.)

Danair pork dumplings.

Viktor turns. Enrique is holding out a tray.

ENRIQUE

They've only come from Orly.

Viktor gratefully accepts it, examines his meal...

A beat.

VIKTOR

(not looking at him)

You spoke to Mulroy?

A beat.

ENRIQUE

The first time I saw you, I knew you were a lifer like the rest of us.

(turning to go)

Oh, I nearly forgot. They need you over at the fountain. Some kind of thing with, I don't know, the plumbing...

Viktor hastily puts down the tray.

VIKTOR

Why didn't you tell me?

Enrique shrugs as Viktor grabs his jacket and leaves.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, MAIN CONCOURSE - DAY

An agitated Viktor rushes around the corner. We see the completed

FOUNTAIN

it's stunning, even against the modern surroundings.

Karl comes into view.

VIKTOR

(reaching the fountain)

Karl, what is it?

KARL

Nothing. You'd better take a look at this.

Karl signals to one of the Puerto Rican workers around the corner --

THE FOUNTAIN

turns on and jets of water SHOOT prettily into the air. VIKTOR Amazed.

ENRIQUE (O. S.)

The plumbing. Just like I said.

He turns to see Enrique, Gupta, Mulroy and dozen or so of his co-workers behind him, gradually surrounding him. Larabee pushes to the front, offering his hand to Viktor.

A nod of acknowledgement to Viktor's fountain -

LARABEE

Every airport should have a Viktor Navorski.

From behind his back, he produces A BOX with a bow around it. Viktor opens it.

Inside there's a pair of new white work overalls with 'VIKTOR' embroidered over the breast pocket.

LARABEE

We're starting work on the East concourse next week.

(MORE)

LARABEE
(like it's no big deal)
It would mean a raise of course.

Looking up from his gift, Viktor finally smiles.

VIKTOR
You don't have to pay me.

A beat.

KARL
You're badly fucked-up, Viktor.

VIKTOR
Thank you.

VIKTOR

surrounded by the smiling faces of his friends. He looks up at the fountain again. It's almost too much for him to take in.

People pat Viktor on the back.

WORKER #1
Looks like the poor baby's gonna cry!

ENRIQUE
Need a Kleenex, Vik?

More laughter as Viktor smiles self-consciously, wipes a tiny tear from his eye.

INT. OBSERVATION DECK - SAME TIME

Two NEW OFFICERS drink coffees on their break.

FIRST OFFICER
(the happy little group in
the distance)
Who's that guy they're having the party
for?

SECOND OFFICER
I don't know.
(looking more closely)
But I like what they've done with that
fountain.

They toss their cups and leave.

HUNDREDS OF COINS

dot the bottom of the fountain now.

EXT. RUNWAY - NIGHT

An Air Mozambique 727 brakes hard as she touches down on the runway...

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - NIGHT

Viktor, wearing his new overalls, walks back home through the main concourse. As various airport personnel pass him in quick succession, he greets each of them with a short wave or nod -

SANITATION WORKER

Hey, Vik.

WOMAN CLEANER

Good-night, Viktor.

CUSTOMS OFFICER

Manana, Navorski.

Viktor stops to stare out the windows at Runway Seven. A moment of reflection, a hint in Viktor's expression that something somewhere inside him is not right...

A CLEANING VEHICLE

Emerges through a security door that leads to the outside runways.

The driver stops his cart just ahead of Viktor, who, still in his own world, watches the Air Mozambique 727 taxiing past the window towards its gate.

The driver of the cleaning vehicle jumps out, ducks into a restroom nearby.

The loud PA announcement of the flight's arrival breaks Viktor's reverie.

He starts on his way again.

Passing the cleaning vehicle, he pauses, half-glimpsing something in one of the open bags of rubbish collected from the runways. He moves closer, uncertain...

As he nears it, its form becomes more distinct --

A MANGLED PAPER AIRPLANE

It's the plane he made for Amelia, the one she threw off the Observation Deck.

Viktor pulls it out, wipes off the dirt, examines it.

A beat.

Viktor's eyes are dark, his expression broken.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, EAST CONCOURSE - DAY

A BRUSH mechanically paints a section of wall.

Viktor works without feeling, and by the absent look on his face, seemingly without consciousness either.

On Viktor's BRUSH again as it slowly crosses the border over onto the adjoining wall and absently paints a messy CROOKED LINE across it.

Viktor puts his brush back into the paint, moves the can over to start work on the next section. One of the Puerto Ricans working nearby notices the crooked line on the wall -

PUERTO RICAN WORKER

Viktor, you seen what you did?

Viktor stops, looks at the glaring mistake he's just made.

VIKTOR

(a shrug)

Good enough.

He continues working. The other workers exchange worried glances.

INT. GATE FIFTY - NIGHT

Enrique drives his food trolley towards Viktor's seats. He takes a couple of extra trays of food from it, turning to set them down in the usual place.

ENRIQUE

You're gonna love this, Vik. One word.

Alital--

He stops, sees the THREE TRAYS of untouched food.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, BATHROOM - DAY

A razor against a neck as it moves slowly up a lathered chin.

The razor leaves a couple of bloody nicks in its trail. Tiny pieces of toilet paper are used to blot them. The sound of running WATER as the razor is cleaned.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

FINGERS fasten the top button of a crisp white shirt...pull a plain black belt with a polished buckle through the waist loops of a pair of pressed trousers...fold a plain brown tie over and guide it up to the neck...slip the sleeves of a fraying jacket over a white shirt...shine the tips of polished black leather shoes with a Kiwi travel kit pad...

VIKTOR

stares at himself in the mirror for quite a long time. He is dressed exactly the same as when he arrived.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, IMMIGRATION COUNTER - DAY

Viktor walks past the deserted counter, discreetly pushes a small brown PACKAGE through the open hatch.

It's addressed - 'Mercer.'

INT. BAGGAGE AREA - LATER

CLOSE ON Viktor's black suitcase revolving on the carousel. Nearby, we hear Mulroy arguing with one of his co-workers -

MULROY (O.S.)

Just take a little more care, Spinks.
How would you like it if I did that to
your suitcase?

SPINKS (O.S.)

Are you shitting me, Mulroy?

MULROY (O.S.)

That could be my mother's case.

SPINKS (O.S.)

Your mother's never left Nassau County.

MULROY (O. S.)
Looky here, Spinks --

A HAND is reaching for Viktor Navorski's suitcase, seemingly in slow motion --

MULROY
(spinning instinctively)
Don't touch that, it belongs --

He sees VIKTOR

all dressed up, grabbing his bag OFF the carousel for the first time.

MULROY
Viktor, are you okay?

Without replying Viktor turns and walks out of the baggage claim area, holding his bag.

MULROY
Did you see that? He just took his bag off the carousel!

SPINKS
(slowly, like he's an idiot)
Isn't that what they're meant to do?

MULROY
Shut up!
(tearing off his gloves)
Christ.

Mulroy chases Viktor who's already moving rapidly up the escalator.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, TRANSIT LOUNGE - DAY

Viktor marches down the middle of the incredibly long concourse.

Hesitating at the top of the escalator a moment, Mulroy watches Viktor pass the Main PARTITION DOORS to his left, heading for the far end where we can just about make out signs for the New Wing's RESTRICTED SECURITY AREA guarded by two IMMIGRATION OFFICERS.

Tchaikovsky's Emperor's Suite begins to play over the PA, softly echoing throughout the concrete concourse --

GUPTA

is cleaning a patch of floor just in front of Williams Sonoma.

GUPTA

Hey, Viktor.

Viktor continues past him. Strange. Gupta looks up, sees Viktor's heading straight towards the Security Area at the far end. Mulroy passes Gupta now too, following Viktor, gesturing towards

THE BAG

Viktor's holding in his hand -

Gupta spots it, shrugs to Mulroy as if to ask 'What the hell's going on?' Mulroy shrugs back, he hasn't a clue, gesturing for Gupta to follow him...

VIKTOR

strides ahead, glancing passengers in his path, a look of unflinching resolve in his eye.

Gupta scoots up ahead, passing Mulroy, pulls his mop-cart up alongside Viktor.

GUPTA

What's wrong with you?

Viktor still doesn't react. Gupta circles him, trying to get a response...

GUPTA

(noticing the guards, a
whisper)

What are you doing, you Balkan nutbag?

Viktor picks up the pace, making a b-line for the TWO SECURITY GUARDS now sharing a Danish and a joke in front of the Security Area up ahead.

Gupta gestures back to Mulroy, pointing to his head -Viktor's gone mental. Trying as best he can not to draw attention, Mulroy catches up to Viktor now...

MULROY

(a harsh whisper)

Viktor. They'll take you to the Detention Center. Viktor.

Viktor ignores him.

MULROY

You think you're just going to walk out
of here?

VIKTOR

(serene)

Yes.

He pulls ahead of Mulroy, The Tchaikovsky getting louder all
the time, punctuating the ballet of escape -

KARL

appears at the top of another escalator.

KARL

You're late, Navorski. Where the hell --

Viktor shoots straight past him too.

Karl looks back to see Gupta quietly shaking his head, Mulroy
'casually' trailing too, trying to figure out what to do
next.

Karl regards Mulroy, then Viktor, then the Guards up ahead.
He understands.

Quietly, into his radio

KARL

I need a partition in front of the Gap.
Level three. Pronto.

Gupta, covering Viktor's flank, spots TWO CUSTOMS GUARDS,
coming in from a side angle, on a collision course with
Viktor.

He expertly scatters a trio of CAUTION - WET FLOOR signs
across the concrete like a spread of mines, blocking their
path...

OFFICER

(his foot touching one)

What's the problem?

Gupta furiously mops the floor right in front of them.

GUPTA

Vomit. Infected.

(beat)

Heroin addict.

The Guards step back, sickened.

GUPTA

You'd better take level two.

The Guards turn back towards the escalators.

VIKTOR

is only fifty feet away from the secure area now, knuckles white as they clench the bag.

As the Tchaikovsky deepens and intensifies, some airport staff - SANITATION PEOPLE, FLIGHT CREWS, STORE WORKERS - stop where they are or emerge from doorways, sensing the surge of activity in the Terminal, their eyes somehow drawn to --

VIKTOR

trailed almost comedically by Mulroy, Gupta and Karl who continues whispering surreptitious instructions into his radio.

Two STORE WORKERS shudder when they see -

The female CUSTOMS OFFICER

Enrique flirted with earlier, emerging from an Office door across the concourse directly across from Viktor.

She sees Viktor, the look of determination on his face, senses something strange may be going on, but just as the thought is forming --

A FOOD CART

BRAKES loudly in front of her, blocking her view of Viktor. A smiling Enrique springs out, presenting the Agent with a china plate of Petits Fours from his top compartment -

ENRIQUE

Warmed Zambuca truffles. Air Maroc.

(sexily)

I thought you might...

AGENT

(their pungent aroma enticing her)

I shouldn't. I'm working.

ENRIQUE
(a wink, gently nibbling one
himself)
Me too.

THE STORE WORKERS

sigh with relief as Enrique's tactic works.

VIKTOR

is only feet from the door now --

FROM ABOVE

We observe the final movement of the ballet as Karl peels off to the left and Mulroy to the right, Gupta mopping with Olympic ferocity directly behind Viktor, providing close cover.

Karl whistles over to the Danish-munching guards, drawing their attention momentarily away while the PARTITION, carried by Karl's WORKERS, sweeps in behind, elegantly disguising Viktor's entry into the restricted area.

THE ALARM GOES OFF

MULROY

grabs a large TUMI off a passing Japanese Man's trolley heaves it INTO THE AIR. It smashes straight through the CONCOURSE WINDOW causing another ALARM, covering the first, to sound.

The confused guards, clutching their ears at the deafening racket, rush over to the smashed window, looking down at

THE BAG

on the runway below them.

Mulroy appears, holding his hands out in 'shock'.

MULROY
Just slipped right out of my hands.

VIKTOR

has reached the last door at the end of the long corridor now. The Alarm continues to blare as Viktor smashes open a circuit box, deftly rewiring it...

THE EXIT DOOR

Springs open. Viktor walks through it and steps outside --

EXT. THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Viktor inhales deeply, choking on all the fresh air.

He looks up into the sky, squinting, sunlight brilliant against his pale face.

He starts off towards the runways, gradually picking up speed...

INT. ELECTRONICS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The alarm is blaring in here too. Daniels, supervising a bank of screens, sees

VIKTOR

running towards the runway on security camera six. She freezes.

MERCER

Rushes into the control room.

MERCER

Where's that coming from?

Almost without even knowing she's doing it, Daniels quickly pushes a button and the image on the screen showing Viktor changes to a different camera's POV showing -

AN EMPTY STRETCH OF RUNWAY

DANIELS

False alarm. I'll have engineering check it out.

Mercer looks at her, leaves...

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - DAY

Gupta and Enrique help Mulroy clean up the glass. Looks exchanged.

Behind them the Security Guards try and figure out what just happened. They know something did, they just can't quite put their finger on it.

110.
A beat. Mulroy addresses his friends -

MULROY

He was the only one who ever had a chance
of getting out of here.

The thought resonates. They all stop what they're doing...

EXT. RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

Viktor, running now, makes his way across a bank of thick,
trash-covered grass towards THE RUNWAYS, wind blowing his
coat up around his ears.

From a distance we watch as Viktor, a speck against this
vast open vista, makes his across the runway.

A 747

is about to land. At the last minute THE JUMBO sees him,
banks hard back up with a deafening ROAR. The gale force
wind from the jets nearly knocks Viktor over.

Looking back over his shoulder as the plane lifts back into
the sky -

VIKTOR

On time, Delhi!

Viktor heads across runway three towards THE OLD MAINTENANCE
TERMINAL up ahead.

Arriving desperately out of breath, he jumps into the Driver's
seat of an old motorized BOARDING VEHICLE parked in the mouth
of the hangar.

No keys. He reaches under the dash, fiddles, the ancient
engine splutters to life.

VIKTOR

slams the dilapidated vehicle into reverse, turns with a
SCREECH and drives STRAIGHT ACROSS the remaining runways
towards

THE FAR PERIMETER WALL

careening madly up and down the grassy verges between the
runways...on the final runway an Airbus LANDS only a few
feet ahead of him...

it's not far now...Viktor floors it...

AT THE WALL

Viktor maneuvers the ramp into exactly the right position, jumps out of the cab and CLANKS noisily up the steps.

Pausing at the top, he looks back --

THE TERMINAL

The place he lived in for so long. The place that was his home.

Viktor smiles. It is just an airport.

He jumps down an overgrown knoll to freedom...

VIKTOR

Welcome to the United States, Mr.
Navorski.

INT. TRANSPORTATION STATION - LATER

Viktor buys a ticket at a window.

EXT. TRANSPORTATION TERMINAL, BAY SIXTEEN - NIGHT

A BUS pulls into the station. Viktor is the last in line.

As the other PASSENGERS board, Viktor checks his reflection in the silver siding of the bus. He straightens his tie, adjusts his coat and walks the couple of stairs up into the bus. The door closes behind him.

The Bus reverses out. We see the destination on the front -

NEWARK

The Transfer Bus drives away. We follow it as the Terminal begins to fade into the background.

INT. BUS - DUSK

It's getting dark outside. Viktor sits in the last row. He stares out the window at the distant city whose lights seem to stretch out across the horizon into infinity. Rain smashing against the windows now...

In the far distance, the Statue of Liberty. Viktor presses his face against the glass. The Statue's LIGHTS - beautiful, distorted through the heavy rain.

Viktor pulls back, wipes his face with the handkerchief from his top pocket.

INT. INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL, OBSERVATION DECK - DAY

A log jam of people in the immigration hall. The noisy chatter of a hundred different languages - from Swahili to Waray-Waray and Tajik to Cantonese.

At the far end Mercer and Thurman stand on an observation platform, looking down on the multi-colored sea of humanity.

Daniels appears.

DANIELS

This came for you, Sir.

She hands him the BROWN PACKAGE Viktor left at the front. Mercer opens it -

THE BIOGRAPHY OF NAPOLEON

He reads the inscription - 'To Viktor, In exile... Amelia.'

Baffled, he stares at Thurman, then back at the book again. It doesn't make any sense. He notices the smaller lettering down at the bottom 'P.S. ... see page 524.'

He flips the book open to page 524.

The bookmark - Viktor's green 'Entry Denied' form - blocks the chapter heading

ESCAPE FROM ELBA

...the realization hits him.

He calmly looks down onto the Immigration hall again, at the HUNDREDS pouring through the doors...

EXT. NEWARK AIRPORT - NIGHT

Viktor exits the bus and gazes up at the terminal sign - "NEWARK - Departures."

INT. DEPARTURE TERMINAL

DOORS part to find POLISHED LEATHER SHOES standing at the doorway to the main Terminal concourse.

The NOISE of the packed Terminal hits as passengers, in their hurry to make it through here as quickly as possible, stream and swirl around him but somehow

VIKTOR

remains unruffled, at peace.

At last, he steps across the threshold into the Terminal and starts to walk... the camera drifting down to the paper AIRPLANE gripped tightly in his hand...written on it in badly smudged ink...'Viktor'.

We pull up and watch him go...the crowd swallowing him, until finally and far away...a tiny speck in the distance...Viktor disappears...

TER-019