

CARNADA  
by  
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Star Thrower Entertainment  
ICM  
Madhouse Entertainment

**SUPER: INSPIRED BY TRUE EVENTS.**

**VIRGINIA, 1990**

**EXT. COLE HOUSE - EVENING**

The full moon illuminates a stark modern house with all the luxury trimmings.

**INT. COLE DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

MAX COLE, late 50's, getting better with age, eats dinner with his equally attractive younger wife, SHELLY, and two daughters, MARGOT, 15, and RUBY, 13. Tasteful jazz emanates from invisible wall speakers as the family passes food around the table.

Ring!

The phone cuts through the picture of a perfect family dinner. Max and Shelly share an "our phone never rings at this hour" look. Max gets up to answer.

MAX  
(into the receiver)  
Hello?

VOICE  
It's me, compadre.

Max's cool demeanor falters for a brief, almost imperceptible moment. Regaining composure...

MAX  
Harry, it's a little late. We're in the middle of dinner.

VOICE  
Your shark's come up for air.

MAX  
Sure, I have it. Hold on one minute, I need to get it from the other room.

Holding his hand over the receiver.

MAX (CONT'D)  
It's Harry, there's an issue with the pipeline vote. I just need to grab something from my briefcase.

Max stretches the phone chord into the kitchen, and closes the door behind him.

**INT. COLE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

Max stands in the dark kitchen, too distracted to turn on the lights.

MAX  
(into the receiver)  
You're sure it's him?

VOICE  
Have you got a pen?  
(beat)  
Batalla del Salado, 40  
Tarifa, Spain.

MAX  
You're sure?

VOICE  
He was spotted in Madrid last week. Just got confirmation on his identity an hour ago.

Processing this, Max looks through the door at his family eating dinner, trying to make a decision.

VOICE (CONT'D)  
You with me?

MAX  
I'll leave in the morning.

**INT. COLE DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Max walks back out into the dining room and sits down at the table. His family is buzzing with energy around him, but Max is no longer there with them.

MARGOT  
Dad, can I go to Danny's party on Saturday night?

Max doesn't respond.

MARGOT (CONT'D)  
Dad?

MAX  
What?

MARGOT

Saturday? Mom says I can only go if you say it's okay.

Shelly examines Max.

SHELLY

Everything alright?

MAX

Yes, fine.

MARGOT

I don't know why you guys have to be so weird all the time.

MAX

I have to go to Dallas tomorrow.

SHELLY

Something wrong on the vote?

MARGOT

So can I go? Dad?

Max just stares at them, without answering either question, as if taking a photo in his mind.

#### **INT. MAX'S STUDY - LATER**

Max opens a wall safe and removes a case. He plugs a ten number code into the lock on the case and clicks it open revealing a professional sniper rifle broken down into several pieces, each perfectly fit into their compartments.

#### **INT. DULLES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - THE NEXT DAY**

Max walks through the international terminal, and we notice for the first time a slight limp breaking his swift gate.

#### **INT. AIRPLANE CABIN - LATER**

Max sits in first class eating a steak and drinking a glass of red wine.

**INT. AIRPLANE CABIN - LATER**

The lights are now off and all of the other passengers are sleeping. Max stares straight ahead, wide awake.

**INT. AIRPLANE CABIN - MORNING**

Max walks down the aisle of the landed airplane towards the exit. Approaching the wide open door, he takes in the tropical palm tree lined sky.

In his mind's eye...

**EXT. MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, TARMAC**

Deplaning, Max, 28, holds his hand up to shield his eyes from the bright Miami sun. Handsome but stiff in a crisp black suit, Max heads down the steps with an air of nervous anticipation.

When he reaches the bottom, he breaks into a wide satisfied grin before continuing on to the terminal.

**SUPER: MIAMI, FL. 1962****INT. MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

Max walks with the same subtle limp through the airport, and sees RAUL SANCHEZ, 26, a tanned wiry Cuban man, holding a sign with his name on it.

**INT. RAUL'S CAR - US-1 - DAY**

Max sits in the passenger seat staring out the window at passing palm trees as Raul drives south down US-1.

Max lowers the window to get some air, takes off his jacket, carefully folds it onto his lap, and rolls up his sleeves.

RAUL

(off: Max's pale skin)

Jesus socio, don't they have a sun where you came from?

Max sticks his pale arm out the window into the sunlight.

MAX

It's December.

(beat)

(MORE)

MAX (CONT'D)

And I've spent the last fourteen months pushing papers around in a windowless basement.

RAUL

Musta done something right. They sent you down here to work with the new big man in charge.

Max doesn't respond.

RAUL (CONT'D)

Oh right.

(puts his index finger over his mouth)

Silencio.

(leans in and winks)

Don't worry, I'm inner circle. You'll see.

Unsure what to make of this guy, Max looks back out the window.

RAUL (CONT'D)

He seems all right. FitzGerald, I mean. I never met the guy myself. Word is he was sent by Kennedy himself.

MAX

I wouldn't know.

RAUL

Right, right, you just got here.

**INT. RAUL'S CAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER**

Raul turns off onto a small road. He winds the car back and forth through a series of turns, deep into a jungle of tropical trees.

RAUL

Middle of nowhere, south of nothing.  
That's how they like it, you know?

They turn into a dirt driveway and stop at a small guard house. Raul flashes an ID card and the gate opens. They enter a small parking lot surrounded by several warehouses.

The largest building in the center of the group has the sign "ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES" on the front of it.

MAX

I was told to report to the main field office.

Turning the car off, Raul smiles and hops out. Leaning down through the open window.

RAUL

Leave your bags in the car.

MAX

Where do I...?

Raul nods towards the biggest building.

RAUL

Feliz Navidad, my man. Welcome to Miami.

**INT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES - WAITING ROOM-  
CONTINUOUS**

Back in his full suit, Max walks through the front doors of the main building into a waiting room. The sign above the receptionist's desk reads "Zenith Technical Enterprises."

The phone rings.

RECEPTIONIST

Zenith Technical Enterprises, please hold.

Not sure if he's in the right place...

MAX

I'm here to see Mr. FitzGerald.

The receptionist looks Max up and down, taking in his perfect hair, dark suit, etc. Fresh off the boat...

RECEPTIONIST

In from Langley?

Max nods.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Take a seat.

**INT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES - WAITING ROOM - 30 MINS  
LATER**

SANDY, 30, pretty blonde, could've been a trophy wife but chose this life instead, walks out into the waiting area.

SANDY

Mr. Cole?

Max jumps to his feet.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Sorry for the wait, you caught us on a crazy one.

(turns on her heels)

Come on back.

Sandy walks back through the door, leaving Max only a second to collect his things and follow.

**INT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES - MAIN OFFICES-  
CONTINUOUS**

Sandy leads Max into a large open warehouse set up with rows and rows of cubicles. The building walls are filled with Zenith Technical Enterprises sales charts and framed awards, while the cubicle walls tell the real story, with aerial maps of Cuba, South America, and the Florida coast.

Latin music fills the room. Field agents dressed in guayaberas and Panama hats drink rum, smoke cigars, and dance with beautiful Latin secretaries.

SANDY

(screaming over the music)

Company Christmas party.

Max stands at attention, his wide eyes taking in the bare sweaty chests and gyrating hips.

Sandy admires Max's clean cut suit.

SANDY (CONT'D)

A wonder you're part of the same agency.

Shaking her head, Sandy heads towards the back of the office.

Max stares at the foreign scene for one more moment before moving to catch up.

**I/E. FITZGERALD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Sandy nods towards FitzGerald's office.

SANDY

Listen, before you go in, I just want to warn you.

She makes a subtle drinking motion with her hand.

SANDY (CONT'D)

He started early today.

**INT. FITZGERALD'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

Max sits across from the new chief of the Cuban Task Force, DESMOND FITZGERALD, 45, blue-blooded, blonde, an original cold warrior.

A framed drawing from FitzGerald's favorite book, "Alice in Wonderland," hangs on the wall, out of place among Zenith Technical Enterprise sales reports and a "Zenith manager of the year" award.

(note: FitzGerald quotes "Alice in Wonderland" often and without explanation to those around him. These quotes will always be shown in quotation marks.)

They sit in silence for a moment listening to the loud Latin music coming through the wall.

FITZGERALD

(re: the music)

The men have had a rough couple months. Important to let them blow off some steam, I think.

Max nods.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Christmas in the tropics, a strange thing...

MAX

May take some getting used to.

FITZGERALD

You have a family, Max?

MAX

Just my parents.

FITZGERALD

Good.

(knocks his forehead)

Easier to clear the deck.

(matter-of-factly)

I've never spent a Christmas with my youngest. I was planning on it this year, finishing up in the Far East. Then October rolled around and Kennedy called. How can I refuse the desk after Khrushchev pulled that stunt with the nukes?

MAX

I don't think you can.

FITZGERALD

So, this is my Christmas present to them. Making sure there's a world for them to grow up in.

(under his breath)

"How long is forever? Sometimes, just one second."

Thumbing through Max's file.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Impressive notes here from Langley.

(reading)

First one in, last to leave at night. Fluent in five languages. Spotless translations.

FitzGerald looks up at Max and dumps his file in the trash.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

None of that matters to me.

Max maintains eye contact, doesn't react.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

What I want to know, is what brings you here?

MAX

They said you'd be needing a translator?

Fitzgerald just stares at Max, as if waiting for his real answer.

MAX (CONT'D)

...And I speak Spanish.

FITZGERALD

I mean The Company, Langley, CIA, all of it.

(beat)

You were top of your class at Yale Law. Why not go to New York, make a buck or two, settle down, pop out a few kids?

Max has never been asked this question so directly.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Relax, there's no wrong answer.

FitzGerald points to a small bar in the corner of his office.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Get yourself a drink.

(downs his drink and holds out his glass)

And here, freshen mine while you're at it.

Max hesitates, but takes the glass and obeys.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Let's start again. Why don't I tell you why I'm here? I'm here because the world needed me and I complied. I'm here because money and creature comforts are merely illusions that keep you from seeing what's really going on out there.

FitzGerald's clearly hit his favorite topic.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

I like a fast car and a beautiful woman just as much as any red-blooded man. But, I also understand that you get called once in your life, if you're lucky, and if you don't answer you lose your chance. And I promise, it'll haunt you the rest of your life.

(looks straight at Max)

Have you been called?

MAX

Yes.

FITZGERALD

Excellent! So then tell me, Max Cole, why are you sitting across from me on Christmas day, in this God-forsaken mosquito-pit of a city?

MAX

The Domino Theory.

FITZGERALD

I'm not asking for the company line.

(beat)

I'm asking what keeps you up at night?

MAX

Communism. I'm here to fight the spread of communism.

FitzGerald slams his hand on the desk.

FITZGERALD

Get out of my office.

Max doesn't move.

MAX

What do you want from me?

FITZGERALD

I want to hear about The Battle of Triangle Hill.

This takes Max's breath away for a moment before he steadies himself.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Don't look so shocked, it's the only interesting thing in your file. Brother, Kevin Cole. KIA, November 23rd, 1952.

(beat)

Why didn't you follow him over there?

MAX

(touches his knee)

They wouldn't take me.

(nods towards the trash)

But then, you already knew that.

FitzGerald smiles, calming down.

FITZGERALD

And?

MAX

(shrugs)

Then the war ended.

FITZGERALD

Korea was a battle, not a war. We're still out there fighting everyday.

(MORE)

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

(beat)

Berlin, Guatemala, Iran, Egypt,  
Indonesia, Vietnam. The planet's red or  
blue now, there's no middle ground.

(beat)

But then, you already knew that.

Max and FitzGerald eye each other.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

For the last time, why are you here?

MAX

I'm here to make sure the good guys win.

(beat)

Whatever it takes.

Fitzgerald nods, satisfied.

FITZGERALD

You know, the men in this office, they're  
not like you and me anymore.

MAX

How's that?

FITZGERALD

Some of them have been working down here  
since '52. Had their hands in a lot of  
South American cookie jars, lost focus.

(beat)

I've seen it time and again. When you  
stay somewhere too long, you lose a piece  
of yourself to that place...go native.

(to himself)

"Down went Alice after it, never once  
considering how in the world she was to  
get out again."

Awkward beat.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Well, I'm gonna tell you, you can't get  
any closer to the action than this.

(beat)

I've walked into a real shit storm down  
here. Bobby's gunning for a free Havana  
before the election and the exiles are  
spitting blood. I need more than a  
translator. I need someone by my side who  
I can trust.

Max nods, trying to contain his pride at being taken in  
like this.

MAX

I'm here for whatever you need.

FITZGERALD

I have a good feeling about you, Max Cole.

Max nods, proud in spite of himself.

**INT. RAUL'S CAR - LATER**

Raul and Max sit in Raul's car outside the Zenith offices.

RAUL

Where to?

MAX

I need a place to stay. The closer to the action the better.

RAUL

How much you wanna spend?

MAX

Depends, when do we get paid?

Raul looks at Max and shakes his head.

RAUL

Coño! I know a place.

**EXT. LITTLE HAVANA - MOMENTS LATER**

Raul drives down SW 8th St (Calle Ocho,) in the heart of Little Havana. Looking out the window, Max is in awe as he's seemingly transported to a foreign land.

Brightly colored images of Cuba adorn building walls.

Old men in lawn chairs line the streets, smoking cigars.

Groups congregate in Domino Park playing tournaments, as a man drums his bongos, giving the neighborhood its own unique rhythm.

**EXT. ROYAL PALMS APARTMENTS - MOMENTS LATER**

Raul pulls up to a small dirty building with a sign out front "Vivienda a corto plazo disponibles." ("Short term housing available.")

**INT. ROYAL PALMS APARTMENTS OFFICES - CONTINUOUS**

Max and Raul stand in front of the desk in the tiny reception area. Raul rings the bell.

A television playing in the corner of the room is the only sign of life.

A NEWSCASTER comes onto the screen.

NEWSCASTER

President Kennedy was in Miami today  
welcoming 1,113 Cuban freedom fighters  
home after a year in custody in Havana.

The screen cuts to President Kennedy addressing a crowd at the packed Orange Bowl stadium. Kennedy holds up the flag of the 2506 Brigade (the freedom fighters from the failed Bay of Pigs invasion.)

PRESIDENT KENNEDY

I want to express my great appreciation  
to the Brigade for making the United  
States the custodian of this flag. I can  
assure you, that this flag will be  
returned to this brigade in a free  
Havana...Your conduct and valor are proof  
that although Castro and his fellow  
dictators may rule nations, they do not  
rule people; that they may imprison  
bodies, but they do not imprison  
spirits...

AN OLD CUBAN WOMAN comes out of the back office, stands and watches Kennedy. Shaking her head, she clicks the TV off.

OLD CUBAN WOMAN

Hola. Que te pasa?

**INT. MAX'S ROYAL PALMS APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS**

Max drops his bag and looks around the dirty efficiency apartment without really seeing it. He's "in" and that's all that matters.

Taking a deep breath for energy, he unbuttons and drops his pants, revealing a thick metal knee brace. Max sits down on the bed and loosens the tight brace exposing painfully chaffed skin and a scar running down the middle of his knee. Sweat collects on Max's brow as he removes the brace, bending and straightening his stiff knee.

Now unencumbered, Max reaches down and opens his bag, removing a dark wooden antique desk clock with a picture frame attached. Max stares, taking in the faded photo of himself and his older brother as children, before setting it on the desk.

Next he takes out well worn copies of Don Quixote, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, and The Odyssey and places them carefully next to the clock.

Allowing himself a brief moment of celebration, Max jumps up and down in place like a little boy in solitary celebration. Falling back onto the pillow, he closes his eyes, listens to the familiar tick 'tock of the clock, and smiles.

**INT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES - MORNING**

Max sits across from head of personnel, SAM COOPER, 35, who looks more like a used car salesman than a spy.

SAM

From now on, outside these walls, you're Bill Peterson, salesman extraordinaire.

MAX

Extraordinaire?

SAM

You can be a shitty salesman if you like.

MAX

What do we sell?

Sam shoots Max a surprised look.

MAX (CONT'D)

What?

SAM

You're the first person that's ever asked me that.

(thinking)

Um, hi-tech sound equipment.

MAX

Like what?

SAM

(shrugs)

Government contract kind of stuff.

Max looks at Sam, waiting for details that don't seem to exist.

SAM (CONT'D)

If anyone asks, say you don't understand technology, you're good with people.

MAX

Okay...

SAM

So, driver's license, a credit card, and a box of business cards.

Sam pushes the credentials across the desk.

SAM (CONT'D)

How'd you fare for housing?

MAX

Got set up at a long term furnished apartment in Little Havana. The Royal Palms.

SAM

Yikes.

(laughs)

If you're happy, I'm happy. If you need to relocate, come by my office and we'll find you a spot. We've got safe houses of all shapes and sizes around the city.

MAX

We do?

SAM

Outside Langley, this is the largest CIA operation in the world. We got travel agencies, boat shops, gun shops, real-estate, a goddamned airline. You name it.

This is all news to Max.

**INT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES - LATER**

Max walks up to Sandy's desk outside of FitzGerald's office.

SANDY

(smiles flirtatiously)

Morning, Max.

Max hands Sandy one of his new cards.

MAX

Bill Peterson.

SANDY

(amused)

Nice to meet you, Bill.

Max smiles and nods towards FitzGerald's door.

MAX

He in?

SANDY

He is, but he's running late for a staff meeting.

MAX

He'll probably want me in that.

Sandy looks confused, but whatever you say...

The door opens and FitzGerald walks out looking different than he did yesterday. Slightly more...sober.

FitzGerald looks right through Max.

FITZGERALD

Sandy, there are some papers on my desk to file under AM/RUSH.

MAX

Morning, sir.

FITZGERALD

Ah, the translator. Listen, I'm heading to a staff meeting.

MAX

Should I join?

FITZGERALD

(laughs)

I'm under the impression we hold staff meetings in English, even in the tropics.

FitzGerald knocks Max on the shoulder as he passes.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Actually...

FitzGerald turns and throws Max a set of keys.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

The Jag won't start. Get it in working order, would you?

MAX

I...

FITZGERALD

Thanks old sport.

**I/E. FITZGERALD'S JAGUAR - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS**

Max sits inside a beautiful racing green Jaguar convertible trying to turn the engine, no luck.

He puts his head down on the steering wheel in defeat as the passenger door opens and Raul jumps in.

RAUL

So what, you know a lot about cars or something?

MAX

Yeah, how to turn them on and put them in drive.

RAUL

No shit? I thought you were some kind of car genius.

Max looks up.

MAX

Why?

RAUL

'Cause this little lady's been sitting here for two weeks, word is the British parts are impossible to find down here. Thought you had some trick, or else why would he...

MAX

He's testing me.

Max puts his head back on the steering wheel.

RAUL

Man, you better get this bitch working.

Max doesn't raise his head, he just groans.

RAUL (CONT'D)  
Wait, I got an idea.

**I/E. RAUL'S CAR - DAY**

Max and Raul drive down Calle Ocho towing the Jaguar.

**EXT. LOS CAMINOS GARAGE - CONTINUOUS**

Raul pulls up to Los Caminos Garage, a small dirty building with a few jalopies parked outside.

RAUL  
This is my cousin Souci's place.

MAX  
He know a lot about Jaguars?

RAUL  
Of course.  
(beat)  
He used to steal all the rich people's cars back in Havana.

MAX  
(sarcastic)  
Perfect.

Raul gets out, spotting a burly SHIRTLESS MAN with a Cuban flag tattooed across his back working on a nearby car. Motioning for Max to be quiet, Raul picks up a crow bar, approaches the man from behind and sticks it into his side.

RAUL  
Immigration, motherfucker!

The shirtless man spins and pins Raul to the car by his throat.

A slow smile spreads across the shirtless man's face and he drops Raul.

SHIRTLESS MAN  
Pendejo! I could've snapped you in half.

This is SOUCI, 38, tough as nails.

RAUL  
(massaging his throat)  
Jesus, man. What've they been feeding you in that training camp, little children?

Souci eyes Max.

SOUCI

Who's this?

Before Raul can respond.

MAX

Bill Peterson.

Souci looks past Max to Raul. He puffs up his chest and starts charging towards Raul.

SOUCI

You brought some little agency rat over here?

RAUL

No way, man. Fuck those guys. I told you I'm done with them.

SOUCI

So then who's the suit?

RAUL

This is Bill. We work together at the Eden Roc on the beach.

Souci stands down and starts to laugh.

SOUCI

A hotel actually hired your skinny ass?

Raul eyes Souci carefully, like a dog who may still attack.

RAUL

Parking cars.

When he's satisfied that the danger's passed...

RAUL (CONT'D)

I need a favor.

SOUCI

Cómo?

RAUL

Can you fix a Jaguar?

SOUCI

I can fix anything.  
(looks towards the car and whistles)  
(MORE)

SOUCI (CONT'D)

Who's is it? We should take that thing apart and sell it for parts.

MAX

(whispering to Raul)

Let's go. I'll figure something else out.

RAUL

(getting serious)

Listen man, the guy who owns this car also owns half of Miami Beach. He's a crazy motherfucker, and he loves this car like a child.

SOUCI

So how'd you get it?

RAUL

He gave it to me at the valet last night. I parked it right in front like he asked, but when I went to get it after dinner it wouldn't start. He said if I don't deliver it back to him in working order, he's gonna fucking kill me.

SOUCI

He's gonna kill a valet?

Raul is so worked up that Max almost believes him.

MAX

He's from New York, he's crazy.

RAUL

(tearing up)

I'll owe you forever man.

SOUCI

Okay, relax. Let me take a look at it, make some calls.

**INT. RAUL'S CAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER**

Max and Raul drive back to the station.

MAX

That was...

RAUL

I should move to Hollywood, right?

MAX

You're really related to that guy?

RAUL  
We're all cousins, man.

MAX  
What's his problem with the agency?

RAUL  
He was at the Bay of Pigs. Lost a couple friends.

Max nods, understanding.

RAUL (CONT'D)  
Says the CIA and Kennedy don't give a shit about the Cuban people.  
(beat)  
His own training officer in the 2506 Brigade never bothered to learn Spanish, could barely communicate with his own men.

MAX  
There're whispers of new camps sprouting in the Everglades. That him?

Raul nods.

RAUL  
Crazy bastard's pretty well respected in the local community.  
Runs a group called Compañeros de Armas.

MAX  
They won't have the resources to mount their own attack.

RAUL  
Probably not, but they go out there every couple weeks and train.

Raul shrugs, "what're you gonna do?"

RAUL (CONT'D)  
Cubans love telling stories, especially to themselves.

The radio plays a classic version of "Guantanamera," and Raul turns it up.

The song continues to play over a montage of:

**EXT. FITZGERALD'S OFFICE WAITING AREA**

- Max waits outside of FitzGerald's office.
- Max eats a sandwich outside FitzGerald's office.
- Max nods off in the chair outside FitzGerald's office.
- Max reads the Miami Herald outside FitzGerald's office. FINALLY, the door opens. FitzGerald walks out and breezes right by Max. Unable to contain himself, Max throws the paper down in FitzGerald's wake.

The music comes to an abrupt stop as someone grabs Max's arm.

This is JIM CLEMENT, late 40's, with a bad haircut, cheap suit, and a lifetime of late nights etched into his forehead. A working man's spy.

CLEMENT

Let's take a walk.

Clement walks Max through the cubicles towards the back of the office and out the door.

**EXT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES YARD - CONTINUOUS**

Clement sits Max down on a bench roughly.

Max's adrenaline starts to dissipate and embarrassment begins to creep in.

CLEMENT

What's your name?

MAX

Max Cole.

CLEMENT

Judging from your fresh suit and pasty skin, I'd guess they just sent you down from Langley.

MAX

Last week.

CLEMENT

To support FitzGerald?

Max nods.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

Only, the entitled blow-hard won't give you the time of day?

Max shakes his head.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

Are you ready to work?

MAX

Yes, but...

Max hesitates.

CLEMENT

What?

MAX

Two months ago Kennedy publicly promised not to invade Cuba.

CLEMENT

Yeah?

MAX

There's still a small army of men working down here. What the hell are we doing?

CLEMENT

Your prom date tells you to stop, but meanwhile she leaves your hand between her legs, what do you think she's really saying?

Clement studies Max, considering...

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

Come on. I want to show you something.

Clement starts walking across the grass towards one of the smaller warehouse buildings.

#### **I/E. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES BUILDINGS**

Clement swipes his credentials and leads Max through into....

#### **INT. TECHNICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS**

... a bustling laboratory filled with scientists. A large saltwater aquarium, housing a beautiful coral reef and hundreds of fish, sits in the center of the room.

CLEMENT  
Technical services department.

Max looks around, taking it all in.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)  
We used to have to go through DC to get our ideas signed off on. But that took too long, so they built this place. Now, every time someone has a wet dream about offing Castro, these guys run around creating a new tool to jerk him off with.

Clement points to a wetsuit hanging on the wall.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)  
How about a gift of a poisonous wetsuit for El Presidente?

They walk up to a man painting a perfect looking seashell.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)  
Or a seashell strategically placed in his favorite scuba location loaded with enough C-4 to light up half of Havana?

Clement walks past the seashell to a row of cigars lined up in a glass case.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)  
Or my personal favorite. You ever had a good Cuban Cigar, Max?

MAX  
No.

CLEMENT  
No better way to die, if you ask me.

Clement mimics lighting a cigar and...

CLEMENT (CONT'D)  
Boom!

MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. SEAGUL'S BAR - LATER**

Boom! A flash of light explodes out of a giant top hat on stage as a curvaceous woman, wearing just a bikini and rabbit ears, emerges from a cloud of smoke and begins to dance.

Clement and Max sit at the bar a few feet way.

CLEMENT

You want his respect? You're not going to get it sitting outside his office waiting for him to let you in.

MAX

I gathered that.

CLEMENT

Watch this.

Clement takes a \$20 out of his pocket and motions to the bikini clad waitress walking by. She be-lines for him.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

See, she knows what she wants.

The waitress comes over and lets Clement place the money in her bikini bottom.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

And she's not sittin' at home pouting, she's out here earning it.

The waitress gives Clement a little dance, turns around and hugs his face with her bare cleavage.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

You want to work. Go work.

MAX

What's the directive?

CLEMENT

Directive?

(laughs)

Have you been listening to a word I'm saying? No one knows what the fuck to do. Most of the guys down here are sitting around with their dicks in their hands praying that Castro chokes on his arroz con pollo.

(beat)

You honestly think we're winning this thing with a sea shell and an exploding cigar? It's all theater.

MAX

What then?

CLEMENT

If I knew I wouldn't be sitting here.  
(shrugs)  
Information. A view into Havana. Someone  
on the inside that can help us mount  
effective sabotage.

Clement nods to the bartender for another round.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

Why do you think FitzGerald goes around  
mumbling lines from that goddamned  
children's book?

Max shakes his head.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

He'd rather talk about Wonderland than  
give you directions because he doesn't  
know what directions to give.  
(beat)  
It's not his fault, this battlefield was  
bloody before he walked onto it.

MAX

Why are you telling me this?

CLEMENT

Most of our sources were blown or  
disappeared after the Bay of Pigs, and  
we're worn out. What this fight needs is  
energy, action.

Max considers this and nods.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

This is the wild west, kid. Bring  
FitzGerald something he can use, he'll  
love you for it. Screw up and embarrass  
the agency, they'll hang you. Everything  
in between is purgatory.

Max watches the gyrating bunny, letting this advice sink  
in.

MAX

What time is it?

Clement checks his watch.

CLEMENT

Almost 6pm.

MAX

Shit, I gotta run.

Max jumps up and grabs his jacket.

Clement raises a hand "goodbye" without taking his eyes from the bunny.

**INT. BILTMORE HOTEL DINING ROOM - 30 MINS LATER**

Already seated at the table, Max watches his father, MORT COLE, 50's, a WWII vet who's more interested in making money than fighting wars, walk into the dining room.

Max stands and the two men share a formal handshake.

**INT. BILTMORE HOTEL DINING ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER**

Max and his father sit in silence eating identical plates of meat and potatoes.

MAX

So what time's the conference tomorrow?

MORT

Starts at 8am. If I'm lucky I'll be out by 2pm, catch the afternoon flight home.

MAX

I'm glad you called.

MORT

Wasn't sure I'd get you.

They sit in silence for another moment.

MORT (CONT'D)

(stiff)

So, what do they have you doing down here?

MAX

Officially, I was sent down as a translator.

Mort squints, as if he doesn't understand.

MORT

A translator?

MAX

They don't have many men who speak Spanish fluently, so...

MORT

You repeat other men's words into another language?

Mort shakes his head, unimpressed.

MORT (CONT'D)

My son, the most over-educated secretary on the planet.

MAX

Well actually, the move down here was a promotion of sorts. The man I work for was appointed by Kennedy himself.

Mort continues eating, doesn't respond to this.

MORT

How long do you plan on keeping this up? I didn't pay for law school so you could waste your life making peanuts in some shifty government agency filled with drunken dilettantes who've never seen a battlefield.

MAX

I know it's hard to understand the importance since so much of our work is clandestine, but...

Mort shakes his head and chuckles.

MORT

I'll tell you what I understand. My gout's been acting up, so I can barely walk to the car. Should be retired by now, but I'm still busy as hell flying around the country. I have your mother crying for grandchildren on a nightly basis, and the one son we have left would rather further his childhood fantasies than grow up and join the real world.

MAX

The real world's going on out there. Real events. Real people. Real problems that actually need to be solved.

MORT

And you think you can solve 'em?  
 (shakes his head)  
 This hero delusion of yours is no excuse  
 to walk away from your family  
 responsibilities.

MAX

Kevin signed up and you never said a  
 word.

MORT

You're not Kevin.

Mort looks back to his steak. The conversation is over.

**I/E. MAX'S ROYAL PALMS APARTMENTS - LATER**

Warm rain pisses down as Max quickly unlocks his door and  
 slips into the room. Flicking on the light, he sees a  
 leak gushing down from the ceiling.

MAX

Goddammit.

Max turns on his heels and runs back out into the storm.

**INT. ROYAL PALMS APARTMENTS OFFICES - CONTINUOUS**

Max rushes in and rings the bell several times.

The Old Cuban Woman drifts out of the back office.

MAX

I have a leak.

She looks at him blankly.

MAX (CONT'D)

Tengo una fuga. Grande!

OLD CUBAN WOMAN

Adios mio.

MAX

Si. Apúrate, por favor.

She jumps to action, dashing into the back office and  
 grabbing a large bucket.

**INT. MAX'S ROYAL PALMS APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER**

Max and the Old Cuban Woman place the bucket underneath the cascading waterfall.

(Note: They speak the rest of this scene in Spanish.)

OLD CUBAN WOMAN

I'm sorry for your trouble. Someone will come tomorrow to fix it.

MAX

No problem.

(off: the bucket)

This should work for the night. Thank you.

OLD CUBAN WOMAN

(examines Max)

Such a polite, handsome boy. If only I was a few years younger...

She grabs Max's hand and holds it to her cheek playfully.

OLD CUBAN WOMAN (CONT'D)

So nice you speak Spanish.

She turns and heads out the door.

Laying down on the bed, Max takes a deep breath and listens to the streaming water. Suddenly something hits him, he shoots up and runs out the door.

**EXT. LOS CAMINOS GARAGE - NIGHT**

Max pulls up in a taxi and gets out. Steeling himself, Max walks up to the alley door and knocks.

A chubby Cuban man with a MUSTACHE opens the door and looks Max up and down.

MAX

Is Souci here?

MUSTACHE

Who're you?

MAX

I need to talk to Souci.

Mustache stares daggers into Max's eyes before turning....

MUSTACHE  
(over his shoulder)  
Souci, some little Gringo's here to see  
you.

Souci walks over and looks at Max.

MAX  
Bill. I met you with Raul the other day.  
Souci nods slightly.

SOUCI  
And?

MAX  
Can we talk?  
Souci doesn't move.

MAX (CONT'D)  
Outside.

SOUCI  
(to Mustache)  
Vuelvo en seguida.

Souci follows Max out to the parking lot.

SOUCI (CONT'D)  
I'm in the middle of something. This  
better be good.

MAX  
I'm CIA.

Souci eyes go wide, and the veins in his forehead begin  
to bulge.

SOUCI  
That little maricón. I fucking knew it.

He grabs Max, spins him around and punches him in the  
face. Reeling, Max falls to the floor. Max moves to  
stand, but Souci takes a handgun out of the back of his  
pants and whips Max in the face.

SOUCI (CONT'D)  
You're not welcomed here.

He points the gun at Max's head.

MAX

Before you do something stupid, my boss knows I'm here. Anything happens to me, I go missing, they come right to your door.

Souci cocks the gun.

SOUCI

Let them come, I can tell them what I think of them. Hijos de puta.

Max closes his eyes.

MAX

(switching into Spanish)

Listen, I know you hate us. After what you've been through, I can't blame you, but the truth is, we all still want the same thing.

Hearing Max's perfect Spanish softens Souci just a little.

(Note: the rest of this interaction will be in Spanish.)

SOUCI

What's that?

MAX

Castro out. A free Havana.

(beat)

I understand you're not interested in working with the Americans anymore, but we can help each other.

Souci pulls the gun back and uncocks it.

SOUCI

Get outta here.

Souci kicks Max once more and turns and begins to walk away. Max scrambles to his feet holding his ribs.

MAX

I know you've been in the Everglades training for your own invasion.

Souci turns around.

SOUCI

Are you slow or something? I said leave.

MAX

I also know that without our money and guns, you might as well be out in the swamps training for the boy scouts, because it won't matter.

SOUCI

You don't know shit.

MAX

How would your brothers feel if they knew your feelings got in the way of the mission?

Souci thinks about this for a moment. Annoyed, but...

SOUCI

So what? You came here to offer us support?

MAX

Maybe.

SOUCI

What the fuck, man? You wasting my time?

MAX

Depends on you. I can get you what you need, but first I need your help.

SOUCI

What kind of help?

MAX

I need access to the immigrant community. I want a list of every political group operating in Little Havana right now, and I want to talk to every Cuban who has a shred of solid intelligence about Castro's government.

SOUCI

(sarcastic)

That all?

MAX

You do that, and I'll make sure that you have what you need when the time comes.

Souci looks at Max, considering.

SOUCI

Why should I trust you?

MAX

You have a better option?

(shrugs)

Take it.

Souci considers this for a moment and nods, "okay".

SOUCI

You're a crazy motherfucker, you know that?

Max nods back and wipes his bloody lip for the first time.

MAX

Also, I need that Jag running.

(beat)

Tonight.

**I/E. RICKENBACKER CAUSEWAY - DAWN**

Max drives FitzGerald's green Jaguar across the bridge onto Key Biscayne.

**EXT. FITZGERLD'S HOUSE - MORNING**

Max pulls the car up a long palm tree lined driveway towards a palatial Mediterranean style mansion overlooking Biscayne Bay.

Max parks the car, walks up to the front door and knocks. FitzGerald answers.

FITZGERALD

It's Saturday.

Max hands FitzGerald the car keys. FitzGerald raises one eyebrow.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

It's running?

MAX

Good as new.

FitzGerald's impressed. Max hands him a file.

MAX (CONT'D)

An up to date list of every Cuban political action and splinter group currently operating in Miami.

FitzGerald eyes Max noticing his freshly bruised face and blood on his white collar.

FITZGERALD

This accurate?

MAX

One hundred percent.

(beat)

I plan on submitting weekly updates to this list as well as any pertinent intelligence gathered from nightly interview sessions I'll be conducting in Little Havana.

FitzGerald examines a few pages in the folder.

FITZGERALD

(under his breath)

"If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there."

He moves to shut the door.

MAX

Wait.

Max sticks his foot in the door.

MAX (CONT'D)

The information's not free.

FITZGERALD

No, it never is.

FitzGerald nods "okay."

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Come by my office on Monday, we'll discuss the details.

He shuts the door in Max's face.

Max smiles to himself as he walks slowly back down the path.

**I/E. CLEMENT'S OFFICE - DAY**

Max knocks on Clements door.

CLEMENT

It's open.

Max walks in and Clement eyes the bruises on his face.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

What happened, girlfriend come to town?

Max takes a seat in front of Clement.

MAX

Let me read through some of your files,  
familiarize myself with your old assets.

CLEMENT

You're just chasing ghosts. Once they  
disappear they've either changed their  
minds, ended up in prison or dead.

MAX

I'm out there pounding the pavement, just  
give me something to chew on.

Clement thinks about this for a minute and shrugs. He takes a key out the top drawer of his desk, gets up and opens the filing cabinet hidden under his desk. He removes a pile of files and slams them on the table in front of Max.

CLEMENT

The bosses love a go-getter. Keep this up  
and you'll be shitting your pants in the  
middle of some third world coup in no  
time.

Max looks down at the files, excited.

MAX

Thank you.

Max jumps up and heads out the door.

**INT. MAX'S ROYAL PALMS APARTMENT - LATER**

Max sits on the bed with ice on his knee, reading through Clements files and taking notes.

Time lapse montage:

**INT. LOS CAMINOS GARAGE - NIGHT**

Max sits in Souci's garage taking notes as a Cuban man talks.

**INT. LOS CAMINOS GARAGE - LATER**

Max hands Souci a brown paper bag of cash.

**INT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES - DAY**

Max knocks on FitzGerald's door and leaves a report.

**INT. CORAL GABLES PRINT SHOP - DAY**

Max picks up a box of business cards. He takes one out and looks at it. It's a blank white card with a phone number.

**EXT. CAMINOS GARAGE - DAY**

Max hands the box of cards to Souci.

**EXT. DOMINO PARK - DAY**

Raul and Max hand out Max's new cards to a table of men playing dominos.

**EXT. EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK - DAY**

Max, Souci, and Cuban trainees holding machine guns travel in an airboat through the mangroves towards a training camp.

**INT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES - CONFERENCE ROOM**

Max sits in a staff meeting lead by FitzGerald.

**INT. CUBAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

Max takes notes and sips a Cuban coffee as he interviews a young Cuban couple.

**I/E. VARIOUS LOCATIONS AROUND MIAMI**

Shots of Max interviewing hundreds of different Cubans flash across the screen quicker and quicker, until finally....

**I/E. FITZGERALD'S OFFICE - DAY**

Max knocks on the door and walks in to deliver a weekly report.

Fitzgerald looks up and motions for Max to sit down.

FITZGERALD

Shut the door.

He slides a folder across the desk towards Max.

Max opens the folder and sees various surveillance photos of two men eating dinner together at a restaurant.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

A little present from our friends over at the FBI.

Max looks confused.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

You don't know who those men are, do you?

MAX

No.

Points to the picture.

FITZGERALD

That is the mobster Johnny Roselli. And that bloated son-of-a-bitch sitting across from him is my predecessor, Bill Harvey. They're on a little date at Joe's Stone Crabs for the whole world to see.

Max examines the photos.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Harvey thought the mafia could be trusted to solve the Castro problem. Took it upon himself to set things up and apparently made friends in the process.

(gets up to make a drink)

Hoover's been sitting on these pictures for a year, decided now was the time to send them around town, make us all look bad.

Max isn't sure how to respond to this insane bit of information about the ex-station chief.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Speechless?

(mumbles to himself)

Ah, yes. "Little Alice fell down the hole, bumped her head and bruised her soul."

(beat)

What upsets me about this is that beyond being idiotic, Harvey was sloppy.

FitzGerald hands Max one of the business cards he's been handing out around Little Havana.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

What's this?

Max is starting to understand what this is all about.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Am I to understand you're advertising our services?

MAX

I'm giving people access to us.

FITZGERALD

We're supposed to be in the background.

MAX

People know we're here.

FITZGERALD

There's knowing...

FitzGerald lays down a black and white surveillance photo of Max on the airboat with Souci and the Cubans.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

...and there's proving.

MAX

Why's the FBI watching us? Aren't we on the same side?

FITZGERALD

You think Hoover gives a shit?

(beat)

Just last week he sent a friendly note over to the justice department to let Bobby know that the President's new Friday night girl's been spending her Saturdays with the mob boss Sam Giancana.

MAX

Jesus.

FITZGERALD

And he's got the tapes to prove it. How do you think that plays in the upcoming election?

(beat)

Nobody's off limits to that little prick.

MAX

I'll be more careful.

FITZGERALD

You've been writing these reports for months and they're nothing but meaningless gossip.

MAX

I'm in the center of the community getting to know the right people.

FITZGERALD

Right, a bunch of old Cubans trying to feel important.

(beat)

I have the FBI tracking our every move, the Kennedy twins breathing down my neck demanding results, and Miami's filled with nothing but losers and dead ends.

Fitzgerald throws Max's report across the room.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Wrap it up, you're done.

**INT. MAX'S ROYAL PALMS APARTMENT - NIGHT**

Max lays in bed. The phone rings. Max ignores it, just listens. Ring. Ring. Ring.

Finally, he picks up the receiver and lets it fall to the ground.

**INT. MAX'S ROYAL PALMS APARTMENT - LATER**

There's a knock at the door. The knock turns into banging.

VOICE  
(through the door)  
Come on, man, I know you're in there.  
Open the door.

Max gets out of bed and opens the door. Raul walks past him into the room.

RAUL  
I've been calling you all night.

Raul sees the phone receiver on the floor.

RAUL (CONT'D)  
What's going on?

MAX  
FitzGerald shut us down.

RAUL  
Coño,  
(shakes his head)  
Bad timing.

MAX  
Why? What's happening?

RAUL  
Fifty Cubans just came ashore and they  
all want to talk.

Max is tempted, but shakes his head.

RAUL (CONT'D)  
There's this one old guy in the group  
who's been asking for the CIA all night.  
Says he's a doctor, has a message for the  
agency from an old student.

MAX  
Let me guess, his cousin's wife's brother  
cut Fidel's hair once and can tell us all  
about it.

RAUL  
I told you, Cuban's like to tell stories.

MAX  
Yeah, well they can tell 'em to someone  
else.

Raul shrugs and walks out, leaving Max alone again.

**INT. MAX'S ROYAL PALMS APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING**

Max lays in bed bouncing a ball against the wall, listening to the rain outside his window. He throws the ball a little too high, it hits the ceiling and bounces awkwardly into the corner of the room.

Walking towards the ball, Max kneels down to grab it. Noticing the box of Clement's files out of the corner of his eye, something clicks in his head. Dropping the ball, he walks over to the files and thumbs through the box. Picking out one in particular, he opens it and reads the words...

MAX

"Medical student turned revolutionary assassin" "pursued" "disappeared."

He stares at a photo of an attractive man in his mid-40s

Max looks at his brother's face staring up at him from the clock.

MAX (CONT'D)

What the hell.

He slips the photo into the file and walks out the door.

**INT. LOS CAMINOS GARAGE - DAWN**

Max walks into the garage. There are several groups of Cubans sitting around chatting. Most of them are dirty, sunburned, and wrapped in wool blankets.

Max spots Souci and makes his way over.

MAX

Where's the doctor?

SOUCI

Who?

MAX

The doctor. The one who was asking for the agency.

SOUCI

Oh, the old guy?

MAX

Where is he?

SOUCI

His brother came to get him a few hours ago. When you didn't show, they left.

MAX

Do you know where his brother lives?

SOUCI

Raul told me they shut you down. No more money, no more help.

Souci turns to walk away.

MAX

You know, I've been hearing all kinds of crazy stories about the FBI rounding up militarized Cubans, shipping 'em back to Havana, letting Castro deal with 'em.

Souci stops and faces Max.

MAX (CONT'D)

I'd hate for your name to accidentally end up on the wrong list.

The two of them face-off.

SOUCI

So now you threaten me in my own garage?

MAX

I have a feeling about this guy. This might just be the break we need to keep this operation alive and your money flowing.

The two men stare at each other.

MAX (CONT'D)

Get me an address.

#### **INT. GONZALEZ HOME - LATER**

Max sits at the kitchen table across from, LUCILE AND JORGE GONZALEZ, 60's, emanating intelligence and class despite being exhausted.

JORGE

I didn't think you'd come.

Jorge tries to hold back his emotions as the relief washes over him. His wife grabs his hand.

LUCILLE

He's here now.

MAX

I was told you have information you want to share?

JORGE

I'm a...

(correcting himself)

I was a doctor. I taught medicine at the University of Havana.

MAX

Until when?

MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES - INTERROGATION  
OBSERVATION ROOM - LATER**

FitzGerald and TED SHACKLEY, 40's, head of the Miami Station, who looks more like a corporate litigator than a CIA agent, and several other department heads watch through a two-way mirror as Max interviews Jorge Gonazalez.

Gonzalez is now hooked up to a polygraph machine.

JORGE

I was fired a few months ago.

Max nods for him to continue.

**INT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES - INTERROGATION ROOM -  
CONTINUOUS**

JORGE

In the late 40's, one of my best students was a man by the name of Rolando Cubela.

Max picks the photo up off the table and shows Jorge.

MAX

Is this him?

JORGE

Yes.

(beat)

He was very intelligent, would've made a great doctor.

MAX

But he quit?

JORGE

He became very outspoken against Batista, joined a group called the Students Revolutionary Directorate. They weren't communists, they just wanted Batista out.

MAX

Okay. Then what happened?

JORGE

In '56, he was involved in the assassination of one of Batista's inner circle, a man by the name of Blanco Rico, and had to leave Havana.

MAX

Where did he go?

JORGE

I don't know. Abroad maybe? Maybe into the jungle?

MAX

To fight along side Castro?

JORGE

I don't know.

MAX

Okay, and after the revolution he returned to Havana?

JORGE

I saw him once, a few years ago. He had become a general in the army.

MAX

Castro's army?

Jorge glances nervously at his own reflection in the two-way mirror.

JORGE

Yes. By that time many of the revolutionary groups had fallen in line under Castro. Rolando never agreed with Castro's policies, though.

MAX

When did you see him next?

JORGE

Last week. He came to see me out of the blue, told me I was on the list for the next roundup and I needed to leave Havana as soon as possible.

MAX

How did he know?

JORGE

He's a Cuban ambassador now. He helped to arrange a boat for me and my wife.

(beat)

Saved our lives.

MAX

And he asked you for a favor in return?

JORGE

He asked me to make contact with the CIA.

(beat)

He can't stand watching Castro ruin our country and he wants him stopped. He wants to help the United States paralyze Castro's regime from the inside out.

MAX

In return for asylum?

Jorge nods.

JORGE

He'll be attending a conference in Brussels on September 15th. He'll have more freedom to move around.

MAX

In two days?

JORGE

(nods)

He'll be staying at the Hotel Metropole.

**INT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES - INTERROGATION  
OBSERVATION ROOM - LATER**

Max is now behind the glass with FitzGerald and Shakley.

FITZGERALD

All true. He passed with flying colors.

Max is trying to play it cool, but he's elated.

**INT. SEAGUL'S BAR - NIGHT**

Max walks into the bar and looks around. He spots Clement sitting by himself at a table in the corner and walks over.

MAX

I've been looking for you.

Clement nods for Max to sit down.

CLEMENT

You look like shit.

Max smiles proudly.

MAX

Haven't slept much.

CLEMENT

I heard about Cubela.

MAX

Wanted to tell you myself, it's been a crazy night.

CLEMENT

Good work. Keep it up and you'll hook a real one soon.

MAX

What're you talking about?

CLEMENT

Cubela jerked us around back in '61, talked about wanting to get out of Cuba. We spent months setting things up and then, poof, he disappeared.

MAX

Yeah well, now he's back.

CLEMENT

Sorry kid, an asset's value doesn't grow in proportion to how badly you want him to work.

MAX

Maybe he's ready this time? We should at least hear him out.

CLEMENT

I know this probably seems exciting to you.

(MORE)

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

That's how they hook ya', those recruiter motherfuckers.

(mimicking)

You want to change the world? Spend your days wading knee-deep through a river of pussy and adventure? Come join the agency.

(beat)

But this isn't another drill at The Farm. The Cubans are serious, and Cubela could be a snake in the grass.

MAX

And if you're wrong?

Clement thinks about this, not likely but...

CLEMENT

That's on FitzGerald, I guess. I sent him everything I had on Cubela before I left the office with my recommendation to drop this.

Max slams the table.

MAX

Goddammit.

**EXT. FITZGERALD'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Max drives up FitzGerald's driveway. Walks up to his house and knocks on the door.

**I/E. FITZGERALD'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

FitzGerald answers in his pajamas.

FITZGERALD

It's the middle of the night.

Max storms past FitzGerald into the house, so amped up he's shaking.

MAX

I know Cubela's burned us before, and I don't care. You have to let me go to Brussels.

FITZGERALD

Do I? Why's that?

MAX

Because there's too much at stake to let him just walk away. All these months, all those interviews. I believe he has the access we've been waiting for and we both know that isn't easy to come by.

FitzGerald looks Max over, letting him stew. Finally...

FITZGERALD

I think you're right.

MAX

What?

FITZGERALD

I read Clement's report, and I don't care. This is the closest we've come to something solid in over a year and we don't have the luxury to wait. Clement's not like you and me. He just sees the small fraction of the world that lies on the surface. We understand the possibilities that lie beneath.

(beat)

"Imagination is the only weapon in the war against reality."

(beat)

Go to Brussels. Feel him out.

**INT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES - MORNING**

Max sits with Sam Cooper.

SAM

Canada never broke ties with Cuba, so you'll travel with a Canadian passport.

Sam slides a new set of credentials across the table.

Max looks over his new identity.

**EXT. BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAWN**

A large airplane flies over the city and lands on a runway.

**SUPER: BRUSSELS, BELGIUM.**

**I/E. TAXI - MORNING**

Max drives through the picturesque streets looking out the window, trying to calm his nerves.

**INT. HOTEL MOTROPOLE, BRUSSELS - LATER**

Max sits in the dark wooden lobby watching high-end travelers come and go.

A WAITER walks up behind him.

WAITER

Another coffee?

Max jumps at the sound. Realizing how tightly wound he is, Max smiles and tries to relax his muscles.

MAX

No, thank you.

Something behind the waiter catches Max's eye. Springing to action, he moves quickly towards a group of men congregating on the other side of the lobby.

**INT. HOTEL MOTROPOLE - CONTINUOUS**

Max follows the group, who are chatting and moving towards the elevator. He specifically watches one man, ROLANDO CUBELA (who we recognize from the surveillance photo,) 40's, tan skin and clear green eyes, wearing military fatigues and boots, as he shakes hands with the other men and breaks away from the group.

Max follows CUBELA across the lobby. Walking closely behind him Max whispers.

MAX

It's raining in Miami.

Without turning around, Cubela nods his head slightly and palms Max a piece of paper.

Max walks out of the hotel.

**EXT. BRUSSELS STREET - CONTINUOUS**

Max walks around the corner, opens the folded piece of paper, and reads:

Cafe Rose, Rue du Cornet 6. 10pm.

**EXT. BRUSSELS STREET - EVENING**

Max winds carefully through the streets, making sure that he isn't being followed.

**INT. CAFÉ ROSE - EVENING**

Max sits in the quiet cafe. He checks his watch, it's 9:58.

Right on time, Cubela, walks in wearing a crisp white shirt and slacks. Without the uniform he's more handsome than intimidating.

Cubela casually glances past Max, walks to a table on the other side of the room and sits down.

Confused, Max tries to make eye contact, but Cubela won't look at him. Cubela orders a coffee from the waitress and begins to read the newspaper.

**INT. CAFÉ ROSE - 30 MINS LATER**

Cubela checks his watch and sighs, as if he's been stood-up. He throws money on the table and walks out.

Alarmed, but trying not to show it, Max considers his next move. His eyes fall on the newspaper still sitting open where Cubela left it. Grabbing his coat, Max casually walks by the table lifting the newspaper as he passes.

**EXT. BRUSSELS STREET - CONTINUOUS**

Max walks around the corner. Making sure he's alone, he opens the paper and thumbs through each page, searching for any sort of note or marking. Not noticing anything, he chucks the paper onto a pile of trash and turns to leave.

After a few steps, something dawns on him and he runs back, recovering the paper just as the cold wind begins whipping its pages.

Flipping the paper over, Max examines a thick coffee ring on the back page encircling an advertisement for a bar across town. Max rips the page out and tosses the rest of the paper back on the pile.

**INT. BEATNIK BAR - TWO HOURS LATER**

Max sits at a table at the back end of a smoke filled room. A few attractive young people dressed in a uniform of all black with berets are sprinkled across the bar talking about serious things.

Max checks his watch, unsure if he's in the right place.

As if on cue, Cubela walks in, looks around cautiously and walks towards Max.

Without sitting down...

CUBELA

I thought you'd be a serious contact.

Already nervous, Max is thrown by this comment.

MAX

Excuse me?

CUBELA

When we're in public, if I ignore you, you take a hint. You don't look at me. You don't try to get my attention.

(beat)

I was tailed. Took me almost two hours to shake them. If they saw you staring at me, signaling...

Cubela shakes his head.

MAX

I didn't signal you.

CUBELA

I'm risking my life. If the Americans want to fuck around and send an inexperienced kid to meet me, I'm not wasting any more of my time.

Cubela moves to leave. Max can't believe it, after all he did to get here...

Max moves between Cubela and the door, getting right up in his face. The words begin to pour out of him.

MAX

My coworkers think you're an unreliable piece-of-shit. I, on the other hand, have the insane idea that you could be something more.

(MORE)

MAX (CONT'D)

And maybe, just maybe, we could cut through the incessant bullshit that I've been shoveling around Miami for the past year and move the needle for your country.

(beat)

In other words, this "kid" is the only reason you're standing here right now.

Cubela doesn't react, but he also doesn't move to leave.

MAX (CONT'D)

I have the full support of the United States government, and I'm the only one coming, so why don't you take a seat and convince me you're not wasting my time.

Max sits back down and takes a breath, calming down.

Cubela squints and his eye twitches for a moment. He looks like he's about to lunge at Max, but then a smile spreads slowly across his face and he sits down.

Leaning in, his demeanor flips and he begins speaking to Max like an old friend.

CUBELA

You must understand, Fidel has the DGI watching everyone. His own mother has shadows following her to the hair salon.

Max nods.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

I've started to see them everywhere I look. Every pretty woman, every old man reading the paper. It's no way to live.

Cubela nods around the bar.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

That's why I like it here. We stick out, but so would they.

A waitress walks over.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

Two scotches, please.

As soon as the waitress walks away.

MAX

I understand you're looking to defect.

Cubela looks around the room again, instinctively.

CUBELA  
 Cálmate, por favor.  
 (beat)  
 First, tell me who I'm talking to.

MAX  
 My name is Bill Peterson. Two days ago  
 Jorge Gonzalez came ashore with a message  
 from you requesting a sit down. So far,  
 everything about his story checks out, so  
 here I am.

CUBELA  
 I'm relieved to hear that Dr. Gonzalez is  
 safe. He's a good man.  
 (beat)  
 And his wife?

Max nods. The waitress drops the drinks and leaves.  
 Cubela raises a glass.

CUBELA (CONT'D)  
 Bueno, to the Gonzalezes.

Max raises the drink and puts it right down without  
 taking a sip.

MAX  
 Tell me why I'm here.

CUBELA  
 I want to bring down Castro's government.

MAX  
 You and fifty thousand other Cubans. What  
 do you have that they don't?

CUBELA  
 Castro's trust and a seat at his table.

Max sits up a little straighter.

MAX  
 You have my attention.

CUBELA  
 I know all his vulnerabilities. I could  
 tell you exactly when and where to  
 strike.

MAX

And you're ready to share this information with us?

CUBELA

I'll never be ready to help you.

(beat)

But I will if it means hurting him.

MAX

What do you need from me?

CUBELA

Before anything, some assurances.

MAX

What kind of assurances?

CUBELA

I'll be traveling to Paris tomorrow for another three day conference.

(beat)

If we're going to do this, I need proof that this is coming straight from the top with real resources and won't be just another bungled American operation. Get me that, and we move forward.

**INT. MAX'S HOTEL ROOM - BRUSSELS**

Max sits on the bed and dials.

MAX

It's me. He has the access we've been looking for.

**SUPER: PARIS, FRANCE.**

**EXT. SEINE RIVER BANK - MORNING**

Tourists mill around posing for snapshots in front of the Pont Neuf as Parisians rush past on their way to work.

Max stands at the bank of the river looking out with binoculars at the passing boats.

On the bench behind him, FitzGerld reads a newspaper.

Cubela walks over and sits on the bench without looking at either of them. He takes out a baguette and a thermos of hot coffee and begins eating.

CUBELA

I have men inside the Matahambre copper mines and two key oil refineries.

FITZGERALD

You and I both know that sabotage missions are mosquito bites, which may or may not be effective over a series of years.

(beat)

That's not what we're looking for at this time.

Cubela makes eye contact with Max, who turns around for a brief moment, confused, before catching himself.

CUBELA

Then why are we here?

FITZGERALD

I understand you have direct access to the man in charge.

Cubela pours his coffee and takes a slow careful sip.

CUBELA

And you're hoping for a more immediate, permanent solution?

FITZGERALD

I was on a student tour of Germany in 1932 and one day I passed by Adolph Hitler's motorcade on the Autobahn. I often think, if only I had swerved my car, I could have prevented a world war.

CUBELA

Out of curiosity, in this fantasy of yours, do you survive the crash?

FITZGERALD

Wholly irrelevant.

Cubela smiles and nods slightly, taking a bite of bread.

CUBELA

Is it you who's hoping for this solution, or the United States Government?

FITZGERALD

As far as this conversation is concerned, I am the United States Government.

Cubela takes a long sip of his drink, letting this sink in.

CUBELA

I'll need to know this comes directly from your President.

FITZGERALD

That's why I'm here.

CUBELA

You're not enough, not for this. I need the order in writing.

FITZGERALD

That will never happen.

CUBELA

Then how can I know this isn't just the invention of an ambitious CIA middleman?

FITZGERALD

Tell me, how would you describe Castro's regime?

CUBELA

They're a small band of conspirators who have stripped the Cuban people of their freedom and handed over the independence and sovereignty of the Cuban nation to forces beyond our hemisphere.

FITZGERALD

Very well. Next week Kennedy will give a speech at a press conference in Miami. Listen for your words. Let them serve as proof that I have direct contact with the Kennedys and they're well aware of our plans.

Cubela considers this for a moment and nods.

CUBELA

I'll be listening.

FitzGerald drops a card on the bench between them. Cubela moves his leg over it.

FITZGERALD

Once you're satisfied, contact me at that number.

FitzGerald stands up and walks away.

Max follows FitzGerald with his binoculars, letting the gravity of the meeting sink in. A slow smile spreads across his face.

**INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY**

Max wakes up in his Royal Palms apartment. He gets up and tries to shake off the jet lag.

**INT. MAX'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Max hums in the shower.

**INT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES - MORNING**

Max bounces into the office in a great mood. Sandy motions for him.

SANDY

Well, someone had a good weekend.

(beat)

He asked to see you right away.

Max winks at Sandy and walks into FitzGerald's office.

**INT. FITZGERALD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

MAX

Morning, sir.

FITZGERALD

Take a seat.

Max sits.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

How do you feel?

MAX

Like it was all a dream.

FitzGerald nods, knowingly.

FITZGERALD

Now listen, you've done a great job on this, Max. Really, I see a big career in your future.

MAX

Thank you, sir.

FITZGERALD

I just got word from Washington. They're uncomfortable using someone so young and inexperienced on an operation of this magnitude.

MAX

Excuse me?

FITZGERALD

You'll have to hand this one off.

MAX

It's my operation.

FITZGERALD

*Was* your operation.

MAX

I found Cubela. I fought for this.

FITZGERALD

And none of that will be forgotten.

Furious and disappointed, Max gets up and walks out.

**INT. SEAGUL'S BAR - DAY**

Max sits at the bar by himself halfheartedly watching girls dance around him.

**INT. MAX'S CAR - LATER**

Max sits in a parked car listening to the radio.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

President Kennedy spoke at the Americana Hotel in Miami Beach today to the Inter-American Press Association. The following is an excerpt of his remarks regarding US relations with Cuba.

Max turns up the volume.

PRESIDENT KENNEDY (V.O.)

The genuine Cuban Revolution...had the support of many whose aims and concepts were democratic. But that hope of freedom and progress was destroyed. The goals proclaimed in the Sierra Maestra were betrayed in Havana.

(MORE)

PRESIDENT KENNEDY (V.O.)

It is important to restate what now divides Cuba from my country and any other countries in the Hemisphere. It is the fact that a small band of conspirators have stripped the Cuban people of their freedom and handed over the independence and sovereignty of the Cuban nation to forces beyond the hemisphere.

Max sits in awe, he can't believe that it actually worked. Remembering that it's not his operation anymore, he clicks the radio off roughly and pulls away.

**EXT. MIAMI BEACH - NIGHT**

Max walks down the dark beach by himself holding a bottle of gin. He thinks he sees a raft out on the horizon. He wades out with his shoes and stares for a moment, before realizing that it's merely a reflection on the water. An optical illusion.

**INT. MAX'S ROYAL PALMS APARTMENT - DAWN**

Max stumbles through the door, drunk. He falls flat on the bed.

The only sound is the ticking of Kevin's clock. Max reaches up and knocks the clock off the dresser.

**INT. MAX'S ROYAL PALMS APARTMENT - MORNING**

Max lays in bed fully clothed. There's a knock at the door.

He ignores it at first. BANG, BANG, BANG, it just gets louder and louder. Max stumbles out of bed and answers.

FitzGerald is standing at his door.

FITZGERALD

Cubela made contact last night. He's ready to proceed.

MAX

(walks back inside)

Why're you telling me?

FitzGerald follows him into the room. He looks around, taking in Max's squalid living quarters, trying to breathe out of his mouth.

FITZGERALD

Because he refuses to work with anyone but you.

MAX

(turning around)

What?

FITZGERALD

Apparently, you made an impression on him. He wants you to be his case officer.

Max sits down on the bed, too stunned to be excited.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

This is what you've been waiting for. Come on, pack a bag, I'll take you to the airport.

**INT. FITZGERALD'S CAR - LATER**

Max sits in the passenger seat of FitzGerald's car.

FITZGERALD

He'll be representing the Cubans this weekend at the Pan American Games in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Looking out the car window, Max examines his own reflection.

MATCH CUT TO:

**SUPER: PORTO ALEGRE, BRAZIL.**

**I/E. TAXI - PORTO ALEGRE, BRAZIL**

Max's reflection, now sitting in the back of a taxi taking in the lush tropical urban landscape.

FITZGERALD (V.O.)

When he made contact he said in light of the new objective, he has a few more conditions before he'll move forward.

Max looks up at the thick canopy of trees lining the well manicured road into the city.

FITZGERALD (V.O.)

We can sort out whatever he wants when you get back. Your job is to keep him happy and keep him on the hook.

**INT. HOTEL EMBAIXADOR - EARLY EVENING**

Max walks through the hotel hallway and knocks on a door.

Cubela opens the door and lets Max in. A room service table sits in the corner with two place settings.

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

CUBELA

Thank you for traveling all this way for dinner.

Cubela turns and walks back over to the window overlooking famous Guaiba Lake.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

Beautiful sunset, no?

MAX

I understand you have some new requests that you want to discuss.

Cubela turns to face Max, smiling.

CUBELA

All business? All the time?

Cubela looks Max over.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

I know we're here to work, but at least loosen that tie, amigo. You look like you're going to a funeral.

Max touches his tie self-consciously, but doesn't loosen it.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

You never want to be the most dressed-up man in the room.

Max doesn't respond.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

What happened to your leg?

MAX

What?

CUBELA

You have a limp, no?

MAX

Let's stay on topic.

Cubela begins to unbutton his shirt. He pulls the sleeve down off of his left shoulder revealing a jagged scar running from the top of his shoulder down through his bicep.

CUBELA

One of the final battles in the Sierra Maestra. I was separated from the rest of the men when those army motherfuckers started shooting. Never been so scared in my life. Didn't know which direction the bullets were flying, I just knew I had to move. Corrí como el viento.

MAX

You were shot?

Cubela laughs and begins to button his shirt back up.

CUBELA

No, a root came out of nowhere and grabbed my fucking foot.

(slams his hand down on the desk)

I fell so fast and hard I was convinced I caught a bullet.

(touches his arm)

Took two days to get out of that jungle and have the bone set.

Max winces at the thought.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

But don't worry, I shoot with my right hand.

Cubela winks.

MAX

Can I ask you a question?

CUBELA

Claro.

MAX

Why did you request me?

Cubela takes his time, thinking about how to answer.

CUBELA

I saw something in you that I haven't seen in years.

MAX

What's that?

CUBELA

The belief that things can still be turned around, put back together.

MAX

Why else would any of us be here?

CUBELA

See, that's why I need you here. To remind me.

(beat)

Are you hungry?

MAX

What?

CUBELA

(off: the room service table)

Now, I mean. I'm not very hungry.

(touches his stomach)

All the travel.

MAX

No, I guess I'm not either.

CUBELA

Fantastic, let's go.

MAX

The plan is we meet in this room.

Max steps in front of Cubela.

MAX (CONT'D)

We stick to the plan.

CUBELA

They told you to keep me happy, no?

Max and Cubela stare each other down. Max steps back.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

That's what I thought. Vamonos.

Cubela grabs his jacket and heads out of the room.

**EXT. HOTEL EMBAIXADORE - CONTINUOUS**

Max follows Cubela out onto the street.

Cubela hails a cab and gets in, leaving the door open for Max, who rushes to catch up.

**INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS**

Cubela leans forward saying something to the driver in broken Portuguese and then shuts the window on the glass partition.

MAX

Where're we going?

CUBELA

It's a surprise. You're going to love it.

(beat)

It's nice being far enough away that we don't have to hide in back alleys and dark corners. We need to take advantage.

He sits back and looks out the window.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

I'm no longer interested in defecting.

MAX

What?

CUBELA

There's only one place I belong. I want to create a real government for the people, the way it's supposed to be. The way it should've been four years ago.

MAX

You were quite the idealist before the revolution.

CUBELA

I'm not a communist, if that's what you're asking.

MAX

What exactly are you?

CUBELA

I'm a Cuban man. I believe in my country and its people's right to not be taken advantage of.

MAX

And that makes you qualified to run a nation?

CUBELA

I don't know, but I think wanting what's best for the people is a good start.

The taxi pulls over and Cubela hops out leaving Max to pay.

**EXT. CLUBE DE CHAVE - CONTINUOUS**

Max emerges from the taxi into a sea of people waiting to get into the hottest club in town.

Cubela walks through the crowd, straight up to the doorman and whispers something to him pointing and nodding back towards Max.

The doorman checks Max out skeptically, shrugs, and nods for them both to pass.

CUBELA

Come on.

Cubela grabs Max's arm and pulls him through the front door.

**INT. CLUBE DE CHAVE - CONTINUOUS**

Max follows Cubela into a cavernous room already teeming with people.

MAX

What'd you tell him?

CUBELA

(shrugs)

My Portuguese isn't that great.

MAX

What do you think you told him?

CUBELA

That you're a big American movie star who drinks a lot of champagne.

**INT. CLUBE DE CHAVE - LATER**

Cubela and Max sit at a table in front of the dance floor. A six piece band performs Bossa Nova as the dance floor fills up with beautiful young locals.

CUBELA

You know, this is what I miss, great music, dancing.

Cubela closes his eyes and sways to the soft stylized jazz beat.

MAX

Listen, even if I wanted to give you what you asked for, I don't have the power.

CUBELA

Ah, that's where you're wrong. The minute I requested you, the minute I said I'd only work with you, I gave you power.

MAX

How's that?

CUBELA

I have something they want, something that's very important to them, and I've made clear that you're the only way they can get it. That, my friend, is power.

A beautiful Brazilian woman in a sequin dress smiles at them. Cubela smiles back and winks.

MAX

And if I can deliver?

CUBELA

If you can secure the full support of the U.S. Government backing me as the new leader of Cuba, I will agree to perform what's been asked of me.

Cubela gets up and approaches the Sequin Dress. He leans in and whispers something, motioning back towards Max. Giggling, she grabs a girlfriend and the two girls follow Cubela back to the table.

Cubela starts to dance with both of the girls in front of the table.

Max sits motionlessly, watching them.

Cubela circles back around and sits next to Max.

CUBELA (CONT'D)  
What's the matter with you?

MAX  
This isn't a vacation.

Cubela shakes his head.

CUBELA  
You're in the prime of your life, in a beautiful city half way around the world. Jesus Christ, you better lighten the fuck up and grab it by the balls.

MAX  
Grab what?

CUBELA  
Su Vida. No one's going to do it for you. Not your bosses, and certainly not your precious government.

Pours two shots.

CUBELA (CONT'D)  
Courtesy of your Uncle Sam.

He puts one in front of Max and holds up the other.

CUBELA (CONT'D)  
To hope.

Max sees the beautiful women dancing behind Cubela and picks up the glass.

They both down the shots. Max winces.

**INT. CLUBE DE CHAVE - LATER**

Max at the table by himself watching Cubela work the dance floor.

Sequin Dress shimmies over and leans down to Max.

SEQUIN DRESS  
Dança? No?

She dances away, shaking her perfect ass in his face. Max pours himself a shot and takes it down. He stands up and sways rigidly, a sad attempt at dancing.

Cubela watches the scene out of the corner of his eye. He dances over behind Max, grabs his hips and pushes them into rhythm with the music.

CUBELA

Tranquilízate!

Sequin Dress dances back over and presses her body into Max's, putting her face right up to his.

She hands him another shot and he takes it.

The music seems to get louder. Max closes his eyes, breathes in Sequin Dress's thick perfume, and listens to the blowing horns and staccato drums.

**INT. CLUBE DE CHAVE - DAWN**

The club has emptied out. Max and Sequin Dress dance slowly to "The Girl from Ipanema."

Sequin dress leans in and whispers something to Max, she grabs his hand and leads him out of the club.

Watching from the table, Cubela puffs on his cigar and smiles proudly.

**INT. ZENITH OFFICES - MORNING**

Max walks into the office a little taller and heads to get a cup of coffee. As he pours, Clement approaches him.

CLEMENT

Well shit, James Bond himself.

Max rolls his eyes, ignoring the jab.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

You hear Castro's radio address this morning?

MAX

(shakes his head)

I just got in.

CLEMENT

You'll want to. Come on, I have a transcript.

**INT. CLEMENT'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Max reads the piece of paper.

MAX

Shit.

Letting his hand drop to his side, he collapses into the chair. Clement takes the paper out of his hand and reads...

CLEMENT

"If any foreign government, at any time, should make an attempt on my life, I shall answer in kind."

MAX

He said that this morning?

CLEMENT

From the Brazilian embassy in Havana.  
(nodding)  
Might as well have called us on the phone.

MAX

What if it's a coincidence?

CLEMENT

What if Cubela's a dangle? You willing to take that bet?

Max stands up and grabs the transcript from Clement.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

Where're you going?

**EXT. FITZGERALD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Max walks up to Sandy, who's on the phone.

MAX

He in yet?

SANDY

(hanging up the receiver)  
I was just calling your desk. He's looking for you. Go on in.

**INT. FITZGERALD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Max knocks lightly and enters.

MAX

I wasted your time.

FITZGERALD

What're you talking about?

Max hands FitzGerald the transcript and takes a seat, giving FitzGerald a chance to read it for himself.

FitzGerald finishes and looks up from the paper.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

So what?

MAX

He said those things this morning.

FITZGERALD

Those are the hyperbolic ravings of a mad man.

MAX

And the timing?

Holding up the paper.

FITZGERALD

This come from Clement?

Max nods.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

He's a paranoid old drunk and frankly it's getting dangerous.

(beat)

This speech doesn't make me want to cancel the operation, it makes me want to push forward even harder.

Max takes this in. Obviously, it's what he wants to hear, but...

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Tell me, how was Brazil?

MAX

He doesn't want to defect anymore.

FITZGERALD

Let me guess, he wants the top spot?

Max nods.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

You've spent some time with him, what do you think?

Max is caught off guard, he wasn't expecting to be asked.

MAX

I think it's risky.

FitzGerald stares at Max, waiting for the right answer.

MAX (CONT'D)

But obviously worth pursuing at this stage.

FitzGerald nods.

FITZGERALD

Let me run it up the line, see where they stand.

Max gets up and starts to walk out.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

I'm having a little party tonight, why don't you come by.

A little surprised by the invitation.

MAX

Okay.

Max smiles and walks out.

**EXT. FITZGERALD'S HOUSE - EVENING**

Max drives up the driveway. Just before reaching the valet stand he stops the car, loosens his tie pulling it up over his head, and throws it in the glove compartment. Unbuttoning his top button, he takes a nervous breath and continues the rest of the way up the drive.

**EXT. FITZGERALD'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - LATER**

A full moon twinkles over Biscayne Bay, as beautiful people mill around FitzGerald's sprawling backyard drinking and eating hors d'oeuvres.

Max walks around the party by himself, taking it all in.

A voice from behind...

VOICE

You look a little lost.

Max spins around to find Sandy, dressed up and stunning.

SANDY

Evening Bill Peterson.

MAX

Sandy, hi. What're you doing here?

SANDY

I was about to ask you the same question.  
Is party crashing your new tactic to get  
noticed?

MAX

Actually, I was invited.

Sandy smiles, impressed.

MAX (CONT'D)

What's your excuse?

SANDY

Fitz asked me to come by. Think he needed  
a little extra window dressing tonight.

(beat)

Fine by me, look at this place!

They both look around.

MAX

How's he get a place like this on a  
government salary?

SANDY

Oh, it's not his. It's a safe house given  
to the agency by a wealthy benefactor.  
They let him use it so that he can host  
VIP's.

Sandy looks Max over and touches his collar, smoothing it  
down.

A crowd gathers on the other side of the pool.

MAX

What's going on?

SANDY

Bobby Kennedy's here. Come on.

Sandy grabs Max by the arm. They walk over towards the crowd of well wishers looking to shake hands with the Attorney General.

Sandy pushes Max into Kennedy's line of sight. He looks at Max and smiles his big white toothy grin.

KENNEDY  
(holds out his hand)  
Robert Kennedy.

MAX  
Max Cole.

KENNEDY  
(familiar Boston accent)  
Now, what do you do?

MAX  
I work for Mr. Fitzgerald.

KENNEDY  
It's an important service you all do for this country.

Kennedy smiles and leans in so just Max can hear him.

KENNEDY (CONT'D)  
You've got a hell of a mission. I know you won't let us down.

He holds Max's hand for an extra second, smiling conspiratorially before turning towards the next guest.

Kennedy moves along, leaving an enthralled Max in his wake. Max smiles. He has arrived. He hates how much he likes it.

**EXT. FITZGERALD'S HOUSE - LATER**

Max walks down the long sloping lawn towards the dock. FitzGerald stands in the moonlight smoking a cigar.

MAX  
You wanted to see me, sir?

Without taking his eyes off the water.

FITZGERALD  
Bobby gave the go ahead. Cubela gets what he wants.

Max nods, understanding the magnitude of what's just been decided.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

He'll be in Paris. Go figure out what physical support he's going to need from our end.

(beat)

Max, don't let Clement's paranoid bullshit get in your head. An opportunity presented itself, so we mold it to fit our needs. That's the job.

(beat)

We do this right, nothing will ever be the same again. We screw it up, well, nothing will ever be the same again.

FitzGerald throws his cigar into the water and watches the small light extinguish with a hiss.

**INT. FITZGERALD'S HOUSE - A FEW MINUTES LATER**

Walking up from the water, Max's eyes search through the crowd of party guests. Spotting Sandy, he crosses the dance floor towards her.

MAX

You want to get out of here?

SANDY

Right now?

MAX

Right now.

Max grabs her hand and leads her out, snagging a bottle of champagne as he passes the bar.

**EXT. MIAMI BEACH - NIGHT**

Max and Sandy sit on the beach. Sharing a bottle of champagne.

SANDY

You're different than all of the other guys in the office.

MAX

How's that?

SANDY

I don't know. More serious somehow.

MAX

You mean stiff?

SANDY

No, I mean focused. It's a compliment,  
really.

Max leans over and kisses her and they fall back onto the sand.

**INT. MAX'S ROYAL PALMS APARTMENT - EVENING**

Max packs a bag, meticulously placing each item inside.

He looks at Kevin's clock, carefully picks it up, lays it inside his bag, and zips it.

**EXT. PARIS - MORNING**

A taxi drives through the streets of Paris, pulls up to The Grand Hotel and Max gets out with his bags.

**SUPER: PARIS, FRANCE**

**INT. GRAND HOTEL - CONTINUOUS**

Max walks up to the front desk.

MAX

Bill Peterson, checking-in.

FRONT DESK

Ah, Mr. Peterson. There's a message for you. A friend of yours called, said he had to leave Paris.

MAX

What?

FRONT DESK

He left this address for you to meet him.

Max looks at the piece of paper.

MAX

Switzerland?

The desk clerk shrugs and walks away. Max sighs in frustration.

**INT. TRAIN CAR - LATER**

Max sits on a train watching the beautiful scenery fly by.

**EXT. SWISS ALPS - LATE AFTERNOON**

Max winds the car up narrow roads cut into the mountain while looking at a map spread across the passenger seat. Coming upon a tall ornate gate, he checks the address against a piece of paper in his pocket and pulls through.

**SUPER: LENK, SWITZERLAND****INT. LENK RESORT - MOMENTS LATER**

Max hands the desk clerk his Canadian credentials, looking around at the luxury spa, mostly empty for the off-season.

DESK CLERK

Mr. Peterson, welcome to Lenk. As soon as you're settled, Mr. Cubela asked that you please meet him down at the pool.

Frustrated, Max nods a stiff thank you.

**INT. MAX'S HOTEL ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER**

Max stands in front of the mirror rehearsing.

MAX

There are several weapon options....

He stops talking and studies his image, examining his perfectly parted hair, combed neatly down on both sides. Max runs his hands through his hair and messes up the part.

**INT. LENK SPA POOL - MOMENTS LATER**

Max walks down to an expansive indoor/outdoor pool with a retractable glass wall offering a spectacular view of the Alps as far as the eye can see.

He spots Cubela sitting alone on a lounge chair, wearing a thick white robe over a bathing suit. Relaxed in this setting, Cubela looks more like a doctor at a medical conference, than a revolutionary.

CUBELA

Bill, you found us.

Cubela pops up and gives Max a hug. Max stiffens, uncomfortable with this show of affection.

MAX

(angry whisper)

What the hell is this place?

CUBELA

Relax, a friend of mine owns it, we're safe here.

MAX

Once again, this was not the plan...

CUBELA

Patience my friend, all in good time.

A breathtaking beauty emerges from the pool right in front of them. Max follows her with his eyes.

Noticing Max's look, Cubela claps him on the shoulder a little harder than usual.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

Bill, I'd like you to meet my daughter, Andrea.

ANDREA CUBELA, 24, tall, lean, dirty blonde, with green eyes and clear olive skin towels off lightly, and smiles at Max.

ANDREA

Nice to meet you, Bill.

Dumbstruck, Max just nods in her direction.

Andrea lays down next to Cubela to air dry.

ANDREA (CONT'D)

(to Cubela in Spanish)

You're right, he does seem a little uptight.

Embarrassed and thrown by yet another surprise, Max falls back onto a chair exhausted.

CUBELA

We have the weekend off before we have to head home and Andrea had never been to Switzerland.

MAX

How is she allowed to...?

CUBELA

As an Ambassador, I'm permitted to bring an assistant with me when I travel to long conferences.

MAX

Right.

CUBELA

Don't worry, we'll have plenty of time to work, but for now, perhaps we could just enjoy the afternoon?

Knowing he can't win, Max puts his head back and closes his eyes.

**INT. LENK RESORT RESTAURANT - LATER**

Max walks up to the maître d' and is lead through the restaurant.

Cubela and Andrea sit at the table in the corner. As Max approaches he sees Andrea, stunning in a short red cocktail dress.

As he sits, he silently chides himself for looking, reminding himself why he's there.

CUBELA

Wine?

A waiter begins to pour red wine into the glasses. Max quickly covers his glass.

MAX

Not for me, thanks.

CUBELA

You must try it, it's really a special bottle.

Cubela nods to the waiter who pours a little in Max's glass.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

To new friends.

Cubela and Andrea toast. Max reluctantly raises his glass and takes a small sip.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

Good, no?

Max nods slightly.

ANDREA

It's nice to have another young person around. Most people at these conferences are ancient.

CUBELA

Bill is worldly beyond his years. Born to spread his wings and be part of the larger story.

(beat)

Isn't that right, Bill?

Max is suddenly more skeptical than flattered. He studies Cubela carefully, as if for the first time.

ANDREA

I'm starving, what shall we order?

CUBELA

They have a beautiful venison here.

ANDREA

Ah, that sounds perfect.

Max is still staring at Cubela.

MAX

Yes, almost too good to be true.

ANDREA

Venison?

CUBELA

Why do you say that?

MAX

I don't know. Seems like it just appeared on the menu, right when I was craving it.

Cubela smiles, welcoming this thinly veiled challenge.

CUBELA

What's wrong with that?

MAX

Well, nothing on the surface, of course. It sounds delicious, but what if it comes and I can't cut into it?

CUBELA

That would be a very tough piece of meat.

MAX

Yes, it would. What if it's all wining and dining, looks great on the plate, but I can't even get through the first layer to see how it's cooked inside?

Andrea looks at both of them like they're crazy.

ANDREA

You can just tell the waiter. Send it back.

CUBELA

She's right. That's the beauty of a gourmet restaurant in a free country, you don't need to commit to anything you're not sure of.

MAX

But shouldn't there be a way to know? Something to convince me I'm making the right choice.

ANDREA

Before you order?

MAX

Yes, before I order.

CUBELA

Life doesn't work that way. Sometimes you just have to take a leap of faith. We all do.

ANDREA

(exasperated)

It's really not life or death, you know. It's just dinner!

The waiter comes over.

ANDREA (CONT'D)

He'll have the venison.

Cubela smiles at Max triumphantly as they hand their menus back to the waiter.

Max sighs and takes a sip of his wine.

CUBELA

Now that we've gotten that out of the way...

(beat)

Tell us Bill, where're you from?

Max considers the risk of answering honestly, but doesn't see the harm.

MAX

New Jersey...But trust me, no one wants to hear about that.

(facing towards Andrea)

How about you? What do you do when you're not assisting your father?

CUBELA

She was a medical student.

Andrea rolls her eyes.

ANDREA

Sorry to disappoint you, papa.

MAX

You didn't like it?

ANDREA

Helping people, yes. Studying in a classroom all day, no.

(beat)

"My taste is for freedom, and I have no relish for constraint."

Max smiles.

MAX

Don Quixote.

ANDREA

You know it?

MAX

I wrote my senior thesis on it in college. Got published in a few literary journals.

ANDREA

Muy impresionante.

CUBELA

I gave her my copy when I left for the mountains. She was just a little thing.

ANDREA

I used to sound the words out every night before bed.

(beat)

"Finally, from so little sleeping and so much reading..."

MAX

"...his brain dried up and he went completely out of his mind."

Max and Andrea smile at each other across the table.

**INT. LENK RESORT RESTAURANT - LATER**

Max, Andrea, and Cubela sit at the table with half-eaten desserts. The rest of the plates have been cleared. The restaurant is empty except for a few lingering waiters.

The waiter tops their wine glasses and Max no longer seems to mind.

Cubela takes out two cigars and hands one to Max.

MAX

No, thank you. I don't smoke.

CUBELA

You should smoke this. The best in the world.

Cubela shrugs and lights his own cigar.

Andrea takes out a cigarette and puts it to her lips. She tries to strike a match and breaks it in half, burning her finger slightly.

ANDREA

Shit.

She drops the matchbook and sticks her finger in her mouth. Max reaches over to help.

MAX

Here, let me.

Grabbing the matches he strikes one and moves to light Andrea's cigarette. Leaning in, she gently cups her hand around his, letting her touch linger for an extra second.

Cubela notes this.

Setting the matches down on the table, Max registers the name "**Hotel Bastille**" with a Paris address.

MAX (CONT'D)

So, have you managed to see a lot of Paris?

ANDREA

No, all I've seen is the dining room and lobby of the Grand Hotel. European travel may sound glamorous, but trust me, he's a slave driver.

The waiter approaches.

WAITER

Anything else for you tonight?

CUBELA

No, we'll get out of your way.

Cubela stands up and looks at Max.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

Bueno, I have to make a quick call before I turn in. Walk Andrea to her room, would you? We'll meet in the morning.

Max nods and looks at Andrea.

MAX

Ready?

Standing up, Max grabs the matchbook off the table and pockets it before following Andrea out of the restaurant.

#### **INT. LENK RESORT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Max and Andrea walk side by side through the long cavernous hallway.

MAX

So, what do you think?

ANDREA

About what?

MAX

Uptight or not?

ANDREA

What?

MAX  
(in perfect Spanish)  
Do I still seem uptight to you?

Andrea smiles flirtatiously as they arrive at her door.

ANDREA  
(in Spanish)  
I haven't made up my mind yet.

Unlocking the door she turns and kisses Max on the cheek, lingering for an extra moment so that he can smell her perfume.

ANDREA (CONT'D)  
(in English)  
Perhaps, you'll find a way to convince me.

She walks in and shuts the door in Max's face.

Max sighs, trying to remove the big stupid grin on his face.

**INT. MAX'S HOTEL ROOM - DAWN**

Max sleeps in bed. There is a knock at his door. Max gets up and answers. Andrea stands there in her robe.

ANDREA  
Let's go swimming.

Max knows this is a terrible idea, but...

**INT. LENK SPA POOL - A FEW MINUTES LATER**

Max and Andrea swim together. They both go under the water, they chase each other around like children.

Andrea swims up to the side of the pool and looks out the window at the mountains. Max swims up next to her and they look out together.

ANDREA  
Is New Jersey beautiful like this?

Max laughs and shakes his head.

MAX  
Not exactly.

ANDREA

Cuba is. Colors like you've never seen.  
The greenest greens and the bluest blues.  
Crystal clear water as far as the eye can  
see.

Their forearms touch.

MAX

I'd like to see it one day.

ANDREA

I'd like to show you.

Andrea leans in and kisses Max. Before he knows what he's doing Max kisses her back. The electricity is palpable, and for a few moments the rest of the world and all the stress and worry Max has been feeling falls away.

ANDREA (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Well, maybe if you make a deal with my  
father.

Max pulls back, snapping out of whatever fantasy he was in.

MAX

What has he told you?

ANDREA

Nothing. But you're American, he works  
for the Cuban Government, I'm not stupid.

Max jumps out of the pool and grabs his towel.

MAX

I'm sorry, this is a mistake.

**EXT. LENK RESORT GARDENS - THE NEXT MORNING**

The gardens back up to the lush green mountains. Cubela and Max wind around the grounds in silence.

MAX

Your conditions have been approved.

Cubela nods. Max takes a quick glance around the empty grounds. Satisfied...

MAX (CONT'D)

Ideally, the assassination will take  
place...

Cubela quickly grabs Max by the throat and pushes him against a tall shrub.

CUBELA

Don't say that word to me. Ever.

Unable to speak, Max just nods.

Regaining his composure, Cubela drops Max's neck, and continues strolling as if nothing happened.

MAX

I'm sorry, I thought...It's just us talking here.

CUBELA

I don't care. I hate that word. It's an ugly word.

MAX

Okay. What would you prefer?

CUBELA

Eliminate is fine.

Max nods. The men walk in silence for a moment.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

Have you ever taken a life?

Max shakes his head.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

But you're ready to send me off to do so?

Max thinks about this for a moment.

MAX

Yes.

CUBELA

Why?

MAX

We're in a war and I believe we're on the right side.

CUBELA

You better know, because there's no going back. The ramifications of an act like this ripple in time. You have to make the decision for yourself, not for me or your country.

(MORE)

CUBELA (CONT'D)

It's you who will have to live with it every night when you close your eyes, I promise you.

(beat)

I made a mistake once, I took the life of a man who didn't deserve it.

MAX

Blanco Rico.

CUBELA

He was a good man in a bad operation.

MAX

Men have died for less.

CUBELA

For years I saw him everywhere.

MAX

This is different. This is no innocent man.

CUBELA

You're wrong. There's innocence in everyone. Black and white, right and wrong, these are merely fantasies you tell yourself to keep your conscience intact.

MAX

Is that why you went dark on us in '61? Your conscience got the best of you?

CUBELA

The timing wasn't right.

MAX

And now?

CUBELA

There's an opportunity to do things the right way.

(beat)

Timing is everything in life. It's the language of the universe. You can't force a wound to heal or a flower to bloom.

Cubela plucks a flower from a nearby bush.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

A man must have patience. Everything happens in its right time.

(beat)

(MORE)

CUBELA (CONT'D)

I have one more Paris conference planned in a few weeks. By then, I should have a time and place mapped out.

MAX

What do you need from us?

CUBELA

A long range rifle and scopes are hard to come by.

MAX

Not a problem. We'll also set you up with a viable short range option in case the opportunity becomes available to you.

Cubela nods.

CUBELA

Promise me you'll think about what we discussed. Make sure this is what you want, for the right reasons.

MAX

It's not my decision to make.

CUBELA

Of course it is.

Ignoring this, Max fishes into his pocket for a piece of paper and gives it to Cubela.

MAX

I'll be in Paris tonight at this address in case you need to reach me.

CUBELA

We head directly to the airport to fly home.

(sticks his hands out)

Until next time.

**SUPER: PARIS, FRANCE.**

**I/E. PARIS TRAIN STATION - DUSK**

Max walks through the rush hour crowd.

**INT. PARIS BAR - EVENING**

Max sits by himself at a bar eating dinner. A man sits down next to him and take out a cigarette.

MAN

Pour une lumière?

Max starts to shake his head "no" and then he remembers something. He searches in his pocket and retrieves Andrea's matches.

Staring at the matches for a moment, Max reads the words "Hotel Bastille" with a Paris address underneath. Something clicks, he throws some money on the table and walks out of the bar.

**INT. HOTEL BASTILLE - LATER**

Max sits in the corner of the lobby restaurant with an empty drink in front of him, watching the front door. He looks at his watch, which reads 1 am and shakes his head at his own crazy paranoia. He gets up and begins to put his coat on when...

He sees Cubela enter the hotel with two pale middle-aged men in overcoats. They're having a serious conversation and Cubela looks very heated, not his normal cool self.

The group heads towards the restaurant. Looking around, Max realizes that he's backed himself into a corner and there's no way for him to get out of the hotel without being seen. His heart begins to race, as he considers what this man, who he thought he knew, would do to him rather than be found out.

Adrenaline starts to pump as Max watches the men approach, their argument getting more and more heated. Suddenly, Cubela stops and faces his companions, shouting something in Russian.

Max spots the waiter coming out of the kitchen. Taking the opportunity, he ducks down and moves as quickly as he can through the revolving kitchen door.

Just as the door swings shut behind Max, Cubela looks up and spots the back of Max's head.

**EXT. PARIS STREET - A FEW MINUTES LATER**

Max rushes through the street sweating, trying to piece together what he's just seen.

**INT. PARIS HOTEL ROOM - LATER**

Max sits on the bed and picks up the phone.

MAX

(to the operator)

I'd like to make an outside call. United States.

There is a knock at the door. Max puts the phone down. He grabs a gun from the drawer and looks through the peephole.

Andrea is standing there. Max puts the gun in the back of his pants and opens the door.

MAX (CONT'D)

What're you doing here?

ANDREA

I found the address in my father's coat.

(beat)

We were at the airport and he picked up a message directing him to come back to Paris for a last minute meeting.

MAX

Leave now.

Max goes to shut the door. But she sticks her foot out.

ANDREA

Wait, please. I wanted to apologize for earlier, I got carried away.

MAX

You shouldn't be here.

ANDREA

I don't want that to be our goodbye.

Max lets the door go and Andrea walks in and shuts it behind her.

MAX

Where are you staying?

ANDREA

The Grand Hotel.

MAX

Why are you lying?

ANDREA

What?

MAX

Where are you staying?

ANDREA  
The Grand Hotel.

Max grabs her by the shoulders and pushes her against the door hard.

MAX  
Why are you lying?

Andrea shakes her head.

MAX (CONT'D)  
Who are those men?

ANDREA  
What men?

Slams her again.

MAX  
Where are you staying?

ANDREA  
The Grand Hotel.

Max takes the gun out of his pants and points it at Andrea.

MAX  
One more time, where are you staying?

ANDREA  
(catches her breath)  
Hotel Bastille.

MAX  
Why did you lie?

ANDREA  
My father didn't know if he could trust you.

MAX  
Why are you here?

ANDREA  
I wanted to see you.

MAX  
Who were those men with your father?

ANDREA  
(starting to cry)  
What men? I don't know.

MAX

Who are those men?

ANDREA

(crying)

They're from the Russian embassy. My father's the Cuban ambassador. He's doing his job.

Andrea slides down the wall and starts to sob.

ANDREA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry we lied to you about the hotel. He was nervous you'd show up there.

(beat)

The Russians would kill him for talking to an American.

He was protecting me.

MAX

You have to leave. Now.

Max walks to the other side of the room and puts his gun back in the drawer.

Andrea gets up, walks over, and stands face to face with Max. Her face is flushed from crying. Max has never seen anything so beautiful.

She takes his hand and puts it to her lips and mouths. "I'm sorry." She drags his hand down to her breast and kisses him.

Max pushes her against the wall and kisses her deeply. He pulls back, his head spinning, he knows he can't do this, but he has never wanted anything more.

Andrea unbuttons her shirt and lets it fall to the floor. Leaning into him, she whispers in his ear.

ANDREA

(In Spanish)

Let go.

Max picks her up and carries her over to bed.

#### **INT. PARIS HOTEL ROOM - DAWN**

Max lays in bed and stares up at the ceiling deep in thought. Andrea sleeps on his chest. Making a decision, Max kisses her on the head tenderly, moves out from under her, and sits on the side of the bed.

**EXT. PARIS ALLEY - MORNING**

Max stands in the alley drinking a coffee and watching the front door of the Hotel Bastille. Cubela and Andrea exit the hotel and head down the street on foot.

Max follows.

**EXT. PARIS STREET - CONTINUOUS**

Max watches from half a block down as Cubela and Andrea walk into a cafe.

**INT. PARIS CAFE KITCHEN - A FEW MINUTES LATER**

Max waits in the kitchen for a waitress to walk through the door separating the kitchen from the public space. As she enters, she sees him and jumps. He puts his hands up to calm her down.

MAX

(in French)

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to startle you.

Max hands her a folded piece of paper and a few Francs. He points out the kitchen window to one of her tables.

MAX (CONT'D)

Can you please give this to the man at the center table?

The waitress looks uncomfortable, but she clocks the money and nods.

WAITRESS

Okay, but you can't be in here.

MAX

I'm leaving.

She turns and walks back out into the cafe.

**INT. PARIS CAFE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

Max watches through the window as she walks out and hands the note to Cubela. Cubela takes the note and looks around the room.

Max ducks down.

Satisfied, he turns and walks out the back alley of the cafe.

**EXT. CIA SAFEHOUSE - DAY**

Max waits outside the door of a small walk-up building. He sees Cubela approaching from down the street. Turning, he enters a building, leaving the door slightly ajar.

**INT. CIA SAFEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

Cubela enters the room on the second floor. The room is sparse, with just a single table and some chairs in the corner. A large polygraph machine sits on the table. Cubela nods to Max, who is already seated next to the machine.

CUBELA

So, it comes to this?

Max doesn't respond.

MAX

You should be half way to Havana by now.

CUBELA

I got called back for a last minute meeting.

MAX

And the Hotel Bastille?

CUBELA

I lied, but it was for our protection.

(beat)

A necessary evil in this world.

Max doesn't respond.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

(sounding hurt)

So that's it, now you don't trust me?

MAX

I don't trust myself.

Cubela nods towards the machine.

CUBELA

And if I refuse?

Max shrugs.

MAX

We all go home.

Cubela eyes Max, trying to read him. Finally, seeing the resolve in Max's eyes, he nods.

**INT. CIA SAFEHOUSE - A FEW MINUTES LATER**

Cubela sits across from Max hooked up to the polygraph machine.

MAX

Please state your full name.

CUBELA

Tell me what happened to your leg.

MAX

Can we just get this over with?

CUBELA

One for one, it's the only way. Answer my questions, I'll tell you whatever you want to know.

Max considers this for a moment.

MAX

It was my second year playing for Yale. Late in the second half of a playoff game. Tied score. I went up for a rebound and when I landed there was someone under me. My foot went one way, my body went the other.

Cubela nods.

MAX (CONT'D)

State your full name.

CUBELA

Rolando Cubela Secades.

MAX

Place of birth.

CUBELA

Cienfuegos, Cuba.

(beat)

How bad was the injury?

MAX

I played through it. That's when the real damage was done.

(beat)

They had to carry me off at the buzzer. Doctor said a few more minutes and I would've never walked again.

(beat)

Do you currently reside in Havana, Cuba.

CUBELA

Yes.

(beat)

Weren't you in pain?

MAX

(Shakes his head)

I didn't feel it.

(beat)

Are you a Cuban ambassador?

CUBELA

Yes.

MAX

Are you currently traveling with your daughter, Andrea?

CUBELA

Yes.

(beat)

Did you win the game?

Max smiles ruefully and shakes his head.

MAX

Are you currently working with the CIA?

CUBELA

Yes.

MAX

Have you been honest in all of the information you've provided the CIA.

CUBELA

Yes.

MAX

Why did you stay in Paris an extra night?

CUBELA

I had last minute business I had to attend to.

MAX

Are you assisting the CIA in eliminating Fidel Castro?

Cubela pauses for a moment.

CUBELA

Why did you stay on the basketball court?

Max shakes his head.

MAX

Are you assisting the CIA in eliminating Fidel Castro?

(beat)

Answer the question.

CUBELA

I haven't decided yet.

MAX

What?

Cubela studies Max.

CUBELA

I don't think you have either, not completely.

MAX

You're wrong.

CUBELA

Why did you stay on that basketball court?

MAX

I needed to finish. To win.

CUBELA

Why?

Max thinks about this for a moment, he's never talked about it before.

MAX

My brother had a perfect jump shot - couldn't miss.

CUBELA

What happened?

MAX

A bullet hit him in the side of the head.  
 (beat)  
 When they brought his body back from  
 Korea we had to keep the coffin closed.

Cubela nods, understanding.

CUBELA

(Sings the line from the  
 Cuban Anthem)  
*Que morir por la patria es vivir.*

Max nods in agreement.

MAX

(thoughtfully)  
 "To die for the motherland is to live."

CUBELA

I understand that need, to finish what he  
 started.  
 (beat)  
 But none of it brings him back.

Max shakes his head.

MAX

No.

CUBELA

You really believe this could work? A  
 free Cuba. Me at the helm?

MAX

It will work.

Cubela studies Max, makes a decision.

CUBELA

Ask me your question again.

MAX

Are you currently assisting the CIA in  
 eliminating Fidel Castro?

CUBELA

Yes.

Max looks down at the results and back up at Cubela.

**I/E. CLEMENT'S OFFICE - MORNING**

Max walks up to the door and knocks. Clement motions for him to come in.

CLEMENT

The prodigal son returns.

Max walks in. Clement takes a bottle of bourbon and two paper cups out of his desk.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

You look like shit.

Max sits down, but doesn't say anything. He stares out the window.

MAX

He passed a polygraph.

CLEMENT

Congratulations.

(beat)

Whaddy'a want from me?

MAX

I want you to tell me that I'm doing the right thing.

Clement laughs.

CLEMENT

I wish I could, kid.

MAX

He wants what's best for his country. I think he can really give it to them.

CLEMENT

Cubela? What're you talking about?

MAX

If he goes through with it. If he pulls it off. They're gonna put him in power.

CLEMENT

Come on.

MAX

FitzGerald got the Kennedy's approval. They promised him our full support.

Clement laughs.

CLEMENT

Grow up kid.

MAX

What's funny?

CLEMENT

You really think FitzGerald asked the President of the United States to support putting a communist revolutionary murderer into power to replace the current communist revolutionary?

MAX

He's not a communist.

CLEMENT

Oh yeah, I see. I'm sure deep down he's a good guy, right? What'd he tell you about his family? How much he loves his mother?

Max doesn't respond.

CLEMENT (CONT'D)

He played you. FitzGerald's playing you.  
(beat)

You want my advice? It's not too late to call the whole thing off. Go be a lawyer.

(beat)

Eh, what do I care? I'm outta here end of the week anyway.

MAX

What do you mean?

Clement hands him a piece of paper.

CLEMENT

Transfer order. Seems the Rome office could use an extra hand.

(beat)

Or maybe management didn't like what I had to say about your new best friend.

Max knows this is his fault. He shakes his head, feeling helpless.

MAX

I'm sorry.

Max hands back the piece of paper, gets up and walks out of the office.

**INT. TECHNICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT - LATER**

Max stands with a CIA SCIENTIST holding a pen.

CIA SCIENTIST  
So the poison goes in here.

Points to an almost imperceptible hole at the top of the pen.

CIA SCIENTIST (CONT'D)  
Once it's locked and loaded, all he has  
do to is touch Castro's arm with it...

The scientist reaches out and touches Max with the pen.

CIA SCIENTIST (CONT'D)  
...and good night.

Max pulls his arm back.

MAX  
Hey.

CIA SCIENTIST  
You feel anything?

Considers this for a moment.

MAX  
No.

CIA SCIENTIST  
(smiles proudly)  
You were pricked. Incredible, right?

MAX  
What the hell, man?

CIA SCIENTIST  
Relax, there's nothing in it. Point is,  
now you can report first hand to your  
asset that Castro won't feel a thing.

MAX  
Great.

CIA SCIENTIST  
It takes a few hours for the poison to  
set in. By the time El Presidente is  
shitting blood, your guy should be long  
gone.

Disturbed, Max nods and walks out.

**INT. ZENITH TECHNICAL ENTERPRISES CONFERENCE ROOM -  
AFTERNOON**

Max sits at a long table with FitzGerald, Ted Shakley, and several CIA BIG WIGS from DC.

FITZGERALD

So once we get word, weapons will be traveled by agent X (AKA Max Cole, AKA Bill Peterson) to the mutually agreed upon location. AM/LASH will then travel said weapons back to Havana and wait for the next best opportunity.

CIA BIG WIG

When do we expect the drop to happen?

FITZGERALD

Judging from past experience, we should know his travel plans within a few days.

Max sits in the meeting looking distant, like he's trying to make a decision.

TED SHACKLEY

(noticing Max's far off  
stare)

You with us, son?

FITZGERALD

Max.

MAX

What? Yes, I'm here.

Building his confidence.

MAX (CONT'D)

And after the mission. What's the plan for a successful transition of power?

The men just stare at Max as if his question is way out of line.

FITZGERALD

If that's all gentleman, why don't we move this meeting to lunch and a drink?

**EXT. MIAMI BEACH - EARLY EVENING**

Max sits on the beach staring out at the ocean.

FitzGerald walks up behind him.

FITZGERALD

Come with me.

Surprised, Max jumps up.

MAX

How'd you find me?

FitzGerald just rolls his eyes and starts to walk back up towards the boardwalk. Max runs to catch up.

FITZGERALD

What happened in that meeting today?

MAX

Will Cubela have our support?

FitzGerald doesn't answer.

MAX (CONT'D)

These are people's lives we're playing with.

FitzGerald stops walking and faces Max.

FITZGERALD

Why're you here?

MAX

Excuse me?

FITZGERALD

I asked you that on your first day, and what did you say?

MAX

I'm here to fight a war.

FITZGERALD

So what the fuck is your problem? This is it, this is the fight.

MAX

We do this, break international law, make promises we don't intend to keep, we're no better than them.

FITZGERALD

Let me explain something to you. We are better than them. We will always be better than them.

MAX

Why?

FITZGERALD

We defend liberty and self-determination,  
while they stifle every shred of  
humanity.

(beat)

You think I'm exaggerating when I say  
we're fighting for this planet? Eastern  
Europe, Southeast Asia, South America. If  
we're not careful, the communists will  
pick this world off bit by bit.

MAX

If we open this door, where does it end?

FitzGerald considers the best way to answer.

FITZGERALD

You know, I was stationed in the Hunan  
Province in '45 when we got news of  
Hiroshima and Nagasaki. My men  
celebrated. Hell, for them it meant the  
end of the war, a chance to go home, get  
back to normal.

(beat)

I drank right along with them, but  
inside, all I felt was immense personal  
futility. Suddenly, my entire battalion  
was capable of causing about 1/300th as  
much damage as the crew of one B-29  
bomber.

(beat)

An operation like this, if it's  
successful...

(beat)

You can make a real difference.

Max nods slightly, as if he's trying to convince himself.  
That's all he's ever wanted.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

"An eat or be eaten attitude permeates  
Wonderland."

Max looks out towards the ocean and sighs.

#### **I/E. ROYAL PALMS APARTMENTS - EVENING**

Max walks out of his apartment with his bags and spots  
Raul, leaning up against his car in the parking lot.

RAUL

Need a lift?

Max smiles and nods.

**INT. RAUL'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER**

RAUL  
You alright, man?

Max looks straight ahead, doesn't respond. Raul turns and studies Max for a minute.

RAUL (CONT'D)  
I know, you can't tell me anything,  
but...

MAX  
What if everything we've been working  
towards, everything we think we know  
isn't...

Max shakes his head.

MAX (CONT'D)  
You know what? Never mind.

Raul shrugs and smiles.

RAUL  
You worry too much, gringo.

Raul turns the radio up. Max closes his eyes and leans his head back into the sun.

**INT. MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - EVENING**

Max walks through the airport in a daze.

**INT. AIRPLANE CABIN - NIGHT**

Max sits on an airplane wide awake, thinking.

**SUPER: PARIS, FRANCE.**

**INT. HOTEL BASTILLE - AFTERNOON**

Max walks through the lobby and into the elevator.

**INT. CUBELA'S HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Max and Cubela sit in the room together.

CUBELA  
You look tired, amigo.

Feeling terrible, Max makes a decision...

MAX  
Listen, before we do this, there's  
something I need to tell you.

CUBELA  
You don't need to say it. I already know.

MAX  
What? How?

CUBELA  
Andrea told me.

Max is caught off guard, not what he expected to hear.

CUBELA (CONT'D)  
(off: Max's look)  
We're close, she can't keep a secret.

MAX  
Right.

CUBELA  
I'm not angry.

Max nods, but doesn't know how to respond.

CUBELA (CONT'D)  
She cares for you.

Max nods again and smiles. Somehow his own moment for  
truth has passed.

Turning to the case he brought with him.

MAX  
As requested.

Max opens the empty suitcase. He peels back a small  
section of the lining and presses a button. The bottom of  
the suitcase opens up revealing a hidden compartment.  
Rifle parts are fit perfectly in the small space.

CUBELA  
Thank you.

Max hands him the scope.

MAX

Keep this separate. In case anything happens to the gun you can always use the scope on another rifle.

Max latches the case and hands it over to Cubela. Cubela grabs the handle and squeezes Max's hand so that he can't release it. He looks Max in the eye.

CUBELA

A man's life in your hands. Right now. In this moment.

(beat)

You're sure?

These words hit Max hard, but there's no going back.

MAX

(nodding)

I know what I'm doing.

A brief flicker of disappointment registers in Cubela's eyes as he releases Max's hand.

CUBELA

Very well.

Max then takes out a pen case.

MAX

And here.

CUBELA

You want me to write him a note?

MAX

Poison goes in here. There's a tiny needle on the end. It's an imperceptible pin prick, he won't feel a thing.

Cubela studies Max for a long moment before taking the pen and putting it in his breast pocket.

CUBELA

Bueno, let's have a drink.

Cubela opens a bottle of Scotch and pours two glasses. He raises the glass and they toast.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

Next time, we'll be drinking a cold one on my boat.

Max drinks the scotch, feeling sick.

MAX

I should be going.

Max reaches his hand out to shake Cubela's. Cubela grabs his hand and pulls Max in for a hug.

CUBELA

Be well, Amigo. Recuerda, eres un buen hombre.

**EXT. PARIS STREET - DUSK**

Max winds through the streets swigging from a bottle of booze.

**INT. PARIS HOTEL ROOM - LATER**

Max wakes up fully-clothed with a half-empty bottle of scotch laying next to him.

Disoriented, he walks to the window and looks out on the quiet early morning street.

**EXT. PARIS STREET - DAWN**

Max walks out into the fresh air and takes a deep breath. He weaves down the street and spots a café open for business.

**INT. PARIS CAFÉ - CONTINUOUS**

As soon as he enters the cafe, Max notices a small crowd gathered around the bar staring up at the television. An emergency broadcast is playing.

FRENCH NEWSCASTER

(in french)

American President, John F. Kennedy was shot and killed today in Dallas, Texas.

The sound begins to pulse in and out of Max's ears like a siren.

FRENCH NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)

We will now hear from American Journalist, Walter Cronkite.

The screen cuts to the famous Walter Cronkite announcement.

WALTER CRONKITE

From Dallas, Texas, the flash apparently official: President Kennedy died at 1 p.m. Central Standard Time, 2:00 Eastern Standard Time, some 38 minutes ago.

Cronkite pauses, fighting back tears, and regains his composure.

WALTER CRONKITE (CONT'D)

Vice President Johnson has left the hospital in Dallas, but we do not know to where he has proceeded; presumably, he will be taking the oath of office shortly and become the 36th President of the United States.

Max runs out onto the street...

**EXT. PARIS STREET - CONTINUOUS**

...and spots a newspaper boy, surrounded by a crowd of stunned Parisians. Rushing over he grabs a paper out of the boy's hand.

Max sees the image of The First Lady crouched over the trunk of the convertible.

The hearse carrying the president arriving at Air Force One, with the First Lady sitting next to the bronze coffin.

His eyes glide over the thick block headline:

"KENNEDY ASSASSINE"

The world begins to spin around him.

Flashes of French women crying, and men shaking their heads and wringing their hands in disgust play in front of him.

He runs over to the trash can and vomits.

**EXT. PARIS STREET - CONTINUOUS**

Max rushes through the Paris street as the sun begins to rise over the city.

**INT. HOTEL BASTILLE - CONTINUOUS**

Max bounds through the lobby and up the steps, two at a time, to Cubela's room. He pounds on the door. No one answers.

Other tenants start opening their doors to see what all the commotion is about.

**INT. HOTEL BASTILLE - CONTINUOUS**

Max runs back down to the front desk.

MAX

The Cuban man who stays here, Cubela.  
Have you seen him?

The FRONT DESK CLERK just stares at Max with a snotty expression.

MAX (CONT'D)

Come on, I know he was here earlier  
tonight.

(beat - nothing)

And a few weeks ago with a pretty young  
girl, his daughter?

Again, the clerk plays dumb. Understanding, Max hands him a few bills.

FRONT DESK CLERK

(heavy french accent)

You missed him. He left for the airport  
about four hours ago.

Max hits the counter with his fist. He turns to walk out of the lobby.

The Front Desk Clerk leans over to his co-worker, laughing.

FRONT DESK CLERK (CONT'D)

(in French)

His daughter?

Both men laugh loudly, almost clownishly.

Max turns back, understanding... wishing he didn't.

Dizzy, Max walks out to the street and crumbles on the hotel steps.

**EXT. HOTEL BASTILLE - CONTINUOUS**

Max's body is numb, but his mind is racing.

In flashes, we see what he sees:

**EXT. SEINE RIVER BANK - MORNING**

CUBELA

You're hoping for a more immediate and permanent solution?

**INT. CLEMENT'S OFFICE - DAY**

CLEMENT

"If any foreign government, at any time, should make an attempt on my life, I shall answer in kind."

**EXT. LENK RESORT GARDENS - EVENING**

CUBELA

The ramifications of an act like this ripple in time.

**INT. HOTEL BASTILLE - NIGHT**

Cubela yelling at the Russian agents.

**INT. PARIS HOTEL ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT**

Andrea showing up at his door.

Andrea kissing him.

**INT. HOTEL BASTILLE - NIGHT**

Cubela grabs the handle and squeezes Max's hand so that he can't release it. He looks Max in the eye.

CUBELA

A man's life in your hands. Right now. In this moment.

(beat)

You're sure?

And finally....

**EXT. HOTEL BASTILLE - CONTINUOUS**

Max hears the voice as if it's next to him.

CLEMENT (V.O.)

He played you. FitzGerald's playing you.

(beat)

You want my advice? It's not too late to call the whole thing off.

(beat)

Go be a lawyer.

Close up on Max's distraught face.

MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. AIRPORT - LATER**

Close on 50-year-old Max as he walks through the terminal.

**I/E. CONVERTABLE - DAY**

Max drives south along coast towards...

**SUPER: TARIFA, SPAIN 1990**

**EXT. TARIFA CAFÉ - MORNING**

Max sits in a café staring at a man across the street buying a newspaper and a loaf of bread.

We easily recognize Cubela, now in his 70's, but still striking, with his tan skin and cool green eyes.

**EXT. TARIFA STREET - CONTINUOUS**

Max watches Cubela walk away and gives him a long lead before getting up from the table and following.

Catching glimpses of Cubela every few blocks, Max crosses streets, staying in the shadows of the old buildings.

Max rounds a corner and runs smack...into a dead-end alley.

He hears a familiar voice from behind.

VOICE

A little rusty, are we?

Max turns and pulls his gun. Cubela smiles and puts his hands in the air.

CUBELA

I'm an old man now. I come in peace.

Max doesn't respond.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

Come on. Let's go have a drink, shall we?

**EXT. SEASIDE CAFE - LATER**

Max and Cubela sit across from one another.

CUBELA

You look like the years have been good to you.

Max nods. It's true, he's had a good life.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

It wasn't what I wanted. None of it was personal.

MAX

Who was she?

CUBELA

Oh her?

(laughs)

Just a little bit of fog on the shore for a weary young sailor. Nothing more.

Max takes this in.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

Tell me, did the communist boogie man ever come?

Max doesn't respond.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

Oh well, it was a fun game regardless, no? Kept us all busy for a while.

MAX

Those were people's lives you were playing with.

(MORE)

MAX (CONT'D)

(beat)

Your people.

CUBELA

You think I'm to blame? I was a pawn,  
just like you. Carnada. Live Bait.

MAX

You knew what you were doing.

CUBELA

You still haven't figured it out, have  
you?

MAX

What're you talking about?

CUBELA

Did you know that Kennedy was trying to  
make peace with Castro that winter? It's  
true. He sent an emissary to Cuba just  
before he was killed.

Max shakes his head.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

Castro liked Kennedy, respected him, but  
he was never sure if he could trust him.  
So he sent me in. When I went home and  
told Castro what the CIA had planned, I  
expected him to spit in Kennedy's face,  
kill the deal, but I never thought...

MAX

Why me? You didn't need me.

CUBELA

You were different, a believer, I saw it  
immediately. I thought if I could stall  
long enough, maybe change course a  
little.

(sighs)

But I was stupid. There's no changing the  
wheels of history, they turn with or  
without us.

MAX

You're wrong. You should've warned me.

CUBELA

My family was still in Cuba. I couldn't  
risk it.

MAX

So that was your whole plan? We live for a while, basking in each other's lies? The American hero and the Cuban liberator.

(beat)

I could've stopped it. Gotten word to the right people.

CUBELA

They knew all along who I was.

Cubela stares at Max, letting this sink it.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

Tell me, old friend. Do you think your bosses would have liked to see your President sitting next to mine at a state dinner? Do you think that would've been good for business?

Max shakes his head, not wanting to hear any of this.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

They let you live all these years thinking it was your fault, didn't they? A heavy burden to bear.

MAX

This wasn't a game. It was the real world. Real problems that needed to be solved.

CUBELA

And you thought you could solve them.

Max puts his gun on the table without breaking eye contact.

CUBELA (CONT'D)

Come on, you're not going to kill me.

MAX

No? Why's that?

Cubela shrugs and smiles at Max.

CUBELA

Wars end. Walls fall down. You change sides so many times that you forget which side you were on to begin with. Eventually, black and white mix and paint the whole world grey.

(beat)

(MORE)

CUBELA (CONT'D)

None of this matters anymore. Drink your drink and go home to your life.

MAX

You're right about one thing, it has been a long time.

(beat)

But a wise man once told me that timing is everything in life, and patience a necessity.

Max cocks his gun, the two men lock eyes.

MAX (CONT'D)

Que morir por la patria es vivir.

(To die for the motherland is to live)

The screen goes black.