

## ARGO

Written by

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Based on the May 2007 "Wired" magazine article entitled "The Great Escape" by Joshuah Bearman; and chapter nine of the book entitled "The Master of Disguise" by Antonio Mendez.

### FADE IN:

#### BEGINNING LOGO

The familiar logo WARNER BROS. PRESENTS COMES UP.  
After a beat, it is consumed by FIRE.  
It becomes AN AMERICAN FLAG, BURNING in the street.

#### 1 EXT. U.S. EMBASSY (TEHRAN) - MORNING 1

Effigies of Jimmy Carter and the deposed Shah -- crowds chanting Magbar Carter! Magbar Ahmrika! Fists in the air.

#### SUPERIMPOSE: TEHRAN - NOVEMBER 4, 1979

YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN -- about 2/3 men and 1/3 women, some with flak jackets; about half the young women wear full chador. Many wear plastic bibs with photographs of Ayatollah Khomeini.

PASTED TO ROOSEVELT GATE: photographs of STUDENTS who were killed under the deposed Shah of Iran's regime.

Signs in English: U.S.A. RETURN THE SHAH -- JUSTICE FOR MURDER. A few IRANIAN POLICE attend -- more as bystanders than peacekeepers.

A MAN frantically stabs an EFFIGY of the SHAH.

An IRANIAN STUDENT films the scene with a Super 8 camera.

#### 2 EXT. EMBASSY GROUNDS - MORNING 2

From INSIDE THE EMBASSY GATES we can hear the noise of the protest. There are three primary buildings on campus: the CHANCERY, the embassy's main building, THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE, and the CONSULATE.

We can see that the compound is securitized: sand-filled traps and steel bars on the windows of the consulate.

**3 INT. U.S. EMBASSY - CONSULATE OFFICE - MORNING 3**

Now, we see the POV THROUGH those steel bars.  
Standing on a chair looking at the protest outside the gate, is BOB ANDERS, late 40s-50s, a consular officer.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 2.

**3 CONTINUED: 3**

**BOB ANDERS**

Carnival's bigger today.  
MARK LIJEK, 29, a consular officer, joins Anders at the window.

**4 EXT. ROOSEVELT GATE - MORNING 4**

Then, in a famous piece of archive footage, something simple happens. A YOUNG MAN IN A SWEATER climbs the gate and makes it to the other side.  
And now, we see the REVERSE of that famous shot. This isn't archive footage anymore.  
We're looking at the POV of TOM AHERN, 48, the CIA station chief here.

**5 INT. MARINE GUARD POST - MORNING 5**

From a pillbox on the embassy campus, SGT. ROCKY SICKMANN, a young MARINE, can also see the protestors break across the lawn.

**MARINE SGT. SICKMANN**

(into his radio)  
... Fort Apache is breached --  
please advise --

**6 EXT. ROOSEVELT GATE - MORNING 6**

The PROTEST in front of the gate is getting rowdier -- its energy and numbers swelling.  
A group of STUDENTS -- these more brisk, organized, all bearded and dressed in flak jackets -- push their way to the front of the protest --

WOMEN raise a banner. It's a signal.  
As if on cue, the IRANIAN POLICE move from the gates. A  
WOMAN removes a large pair of bolt cutters from  
underneath her chador -- hands them to a BEARDED STUDENT  
-- who gets to work on the CHAINS holding the gate

**CLOSED --**

When one YOUNG MAN wearing a green military field jacket  
raises his fist, we can see that he has a concealed  
PISTOL in his clothes.  
More STUDENTS climbing the wall -- dropping the 12 feet  
to the other side, one after another.

ARGO - Final 3.

**7 INT. MARINE GUARD POST - MORNING 7**

**MARINE SGT. SICKMANN**

**THEY'RE COMING OVER THE WALLS --**

**8 EXT. ROOSEVELT GATE - MORNING 8**

But a moment later no more climbing is required, because  
the GATE CHAIN IS CUT and protestors FLOOD through the  
embassy gates, a human dam breaking --

**9 INT. CHANCERY OFFICE - MORNING 9**

Mounting chaos in here, the nerve center of the embassy.  
Everyone on a different phone. It's like an emergency  
room where the patient is the whole building.  
ANN SWIFT, 31, Deputy Political Officer, has the phone by  
her ear -- trying to hear reports from D.C.

**ANN SWIFT**

There are hundreds of people out

**THERE --**

**(LOOKS OUT)**

No, thousands... There are

**THOUSANDS --**

**10 IN THE CONSULATE OFFICE - MORNING 10**

Mark Lijek and Bob Anders look out windows, nervous, but not like the Iranian VISA APPLICANTS who are close to panic.

**BOB ANDERS**

Are these supposed to be bulletproof?

**MARK LIJEK**

Well, they've never been tested.

**11 INT. CHANCERY (MARINE POST ONE) - MORNING 11**

Six MARINES watch images from closed-circuit television cameras on chunky 1970's monitors. Crowds of protestors from every part of the embassy campus. AL GOLACINSKI, 30, chief of security for the embassy, shouts into a radio.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 4.

**11 CONTINUED: 11**

**AL GOLACINSKI**

Marines to Number One -- FALL

**BACK --**

**12 EXT. CHANCERY - MORNING 12**

PROTESTORS come running, turning the corner to reach the building. They use bats and crowbars to smash the windows of the building.

**13 INT. CONSULATE OFFICE - MORNING 13**

**BOB ANDERS**

(on the phone)  
Can we get some fucking police please?

**14 INT. MARINE POST ONE - MORNING 14**

One by one, the security monitors are going black -- or smashed. The Marines stare.

**15 EXT. TALEGHANI AVE. - MORNING 15**

An IRANIAN POLICE CAPTAIN smokes a cigarette, watching the mayhem, impassive.

**16 INT. MARINE POST ONE - MORNING 16**

MARINES are putting on armor, gas masks, riot gear. AL GOLACINSKI gs down the line reminding them of protocol.

**AL GOLACINSKI**

Don't shoot. You don't want to be the sonofabitch who started a war -

-

**CUT TO:**

**AL GOLACINSKI**

They need an hour to burn the classified -- Hold.

(beat, stern)

You shoot one person, they'll kill every one of us in here.

**17 EXT. CONSULATE - MORNING 17**

PROTESTORS, now on the embassy grounds, carry banners.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 5.

**17 CONTINUED: 17**

**PROTESTORS**

La ilaha ilallah --

A WOMAN IN A CHADOR uses her own radio.

Some of them ring around the building, holding hands and

chanting. Some carry AUTOMATIC WEAPONS openly.

**18 INT. MARINE POST ONE - MORNING 18**

**AL GOLACINSKI**

**(INTO WALKIE)**

Tear gas as last resort ONLY -- I repeat, only if your life is under threat!

**19 INT. HALLWAY - MORNING 19**

Gallegos and Sickmann hear Golacinski's admonition, but PUMP TEAR GAS out a window onto protestors below despite it. One cannister after another.

**20 INT. CONSULATE OFFICE - MORNING 20**

Now the five in the consulate are joined by LEE SCHATZ, 32, an agricultural attache.

**J STAFFORD**

-- We're not going out in this --

**MARK LIJEK**

**(INTERRUPTING)**

We are in the only building with an exit direct to the street. We need to GO --

The SOUNDS OF MARINES barking at one another over the radio.

**21 OMITTED 21**

**22 INT. HALLWAY - MORNING 22**

They look out a small WINDOW to see a MOB outside.

**AL GOLACINSKI**

I'm going outside.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 6.

**22 CONTINUED: 22**

**GALLEGOS**

Why?

**AL GOLACINSKI**

To reason with them.

Marines open the Chancery door, with a look --

**23 INT. CHANCERY OFFICE - MORNING 23**

FRED KUPKE, 34, communications officer, is shouting at staffers who pile up documents for the shredders --

**KUPKE**

Just everything. Don't sort it --

**ANN SWIFT**

(on the phone)

-- NONE, there are no police --

**ZERO --**

**24 EXT. CHANCERY - MORNING 24**

Al Golacinski steps out onto the steps and immediately there is shouting, and a protestor puts a GUN to his head -- blindfolds him -- PUSHING AL'S head to the ground...

**25 INT. CONSULATE OFFICE - MORNING 25**

**CORA LIJEK**

-- Second floor -- anyone who can

hear this -- we need help --

As we MOVE DOWN the line of desks, J STAFFORD is also on a radio repeating the same in FARSI --

Others PACK things.

**26 INT. THE HALLWAY - INTO THE VAULT - MORNING 26**

MARINES and STAFFERS -- including TOM AHERN -- RUN down the hall, pushing a cart of items to secure. They reach the security locker -- code the door -- and enter the locker, heading to the INCINERATOR to begin destroying classified material --

**27 EXT. CHANCERY - MORNING 27**

Golacinski HELD UP TO THE DOOR -- GUN TO HIS HEAD. He starts to panic.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 7.

**27 CONTINUED: 27**

**AL GOLACINSKI**

Let me in! Jesus Christ! Open  
the fucking door!  
The Marines OPEN THE CHANCERY DOOR -- PROTESTERS POUR IN.

**27A INT. CHANCERY OFFICE - MORNING 27A**

**ANN SWIFT**

-- Washington on flash -- Get Ops  
-- get a line --  
We hear --  
The POUNDING of footsteps on the roof. They look up.

**28 EXT. CONSULATE ROOF - MORNING 28**

Protestors RUNNING on the roof of the consulate building.  
Several stop to try and RIP off a vent cover using CLUBS  
and PIPES.

**29 EXT. EMBASSY GROUNDS - MORNING 29**

THOUSANDS are now on the grounds of the embassy and they  
continue to swarm through the gates.  
The student with the SUPER 8 continues to film it all.  
Also filming, a NEWS PHOTOGRAPHER with a 16 mm camera.  
Smoking cannisters of TEAR GAS, people hurling them.  
A protestor lights a paper on fire to ward off the sting  
of the gas --

**30 INT. CHANCERY OFFICE - MORNING 30**

STAFFERS using pieces of machines to destroy other  
machines -- any embassy equipment that might function --  
Then... screams. The lights have gone out. The power  
has been cut.

**31 IN THE VAULT - MORNING 31**

AHERN destroys the cryptography keys -- box-sized hard drives -- while BILL DAUGHERTY, 33, tosses stacks of papers into an electrical furnace.

(CONTINUED)

ARGO - Final 8.

**31 CONTINUED: 31**

**BILL DAUGHERTY**

Well, Tom. You wanted to see the world...

The furnace makes a LOUD CHUNK and stops. They both hold their looks for a beat.

**BILL DAUGHERTY**

Are you kidding me?

**AHERN**

Get the shredder.

**32 INT. CHANCERY STAIRWELL LEADING TO 2ND FLOOR - MORNING 32**

BROTHER ALI, 20s, one of the student leaders, shouts as he holds a cloth near his face to protect from tear gas.

**33 INT. CHANCERY OFFICE - MORNING 33**

The mood is now frantic -- people destroying things or shouting everywhere --

**ANN SWIFT**

No... Hal -- yes -- INSIDE the building, IN --

**34 INT. CONSULATE OFFICE - MORNING 34**

Bob Anders SMASHES AMERICAN VISA PLATES.  
The visa-applicant Iranians are now huddled in a group.  
A couple of the women are wailing.  
Improv resuming the debate over leaving.  
Lijek on his walkie, but every channel is now speaking

**FARSI.**

**MARK LIJEK**

Nobody is coming. We need to go.

**35 OMITTED 35**

**36 INT. CONSULATE OFFICE - MORNING 36**

Mark gestures for the other six staffers -- and the twenty IRANIAN VISA SEEKERS in the office -- to head to the stairwell.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 9.

**36 CONTINUED: 36**

**BOB ANDERS**

Iranians first.  
(as no one moves)  
Go! Now!

**37 INT. CHANCERY - HALLWAY - MORNING 37**

One STUDENT emerges with a large portrait of KHOMEINI that had been used for dart practice.

**STUDENT**

**(SCREAMING)**

Who has made this!!!  
Two EMBASSY EMPLOYEES look at the floor.

**38 INT. CONSULATE STAIRWELL - MORNING 38**

The twenty VISA-SEEKING IRANIANS pass our guys and run down the stairs out onto the street and disperse outside. Behind them, the FIVE CONSULATE EMPLOYEES we saw head down the stairs.  
So the group of SIX is: MARK AND CORA LIJEK, J AND KATHY STAFFORD, and BOB ANDERS. They get to the bottom of the stairs.

**39 INT. CHANCERY OFFICE - MORNING 39**

The students, guns drawn, burst into the Chancery Office, shouting at Ann Swift and the others. The mood among the staffers is now almost peaceful.

**ANN SWIFT**

(into the phone)  
It's done. They're in.  
She puts down the phone.

**40 EXT. BIST METRI STREET - MORNING 40**

The It's quiet -- the sound of the protest on the other side of the roof and the embassy campus is distant. Just the empty street.

On the ground: discarded banners from the protest, fliers and newspapers.

We see something that looks like BLOOD on the street.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 10.

**40 CONTINUED: 40**

They walk west. They're hurrying but taking care not to run. The five can hear the gunfire and shouting in Farsi. They walk up the street, away from the sounds of the protest, instinctively grouping together. Cora looks back.

**BOB ANDERS**

Keep going.

**41-45 OMITTED 41-45**

**46 INT. STATE DEPARTMENT HALL - SEVENTH FLOOR - NIGHT 46**

Halfway around the world, hell has broken loose here, too. BATES and MALICK, 30s, State Department mid-level aides. A cascade of voices and energy -- a reverberation from the embassy siege -- the building exploding into a crisis center.

**BATES MALICK**

These fucks can hit us, we Mossadeq. We did it to can't hit back? them first.

**BATES**

You think the Russians would put up with this? They'd fucking

**INVADE --**

ROBERT PENDER, 40s, joins them heading down the hall. They've all gotten the same call to get to the Secretary's office. PETER GENCO, late 20s, behind.

**MALICK PENDER**

What did you expect? We (turning behind him) helped a guy torture and de- Schafer! Schafer! ball an entire population --

**BRICE**

At least 60. Could be a hundred.

**GENCO**

(catching up to them)  
You still haven't found Schafer?

**PENDER**

**(TO GENCO)**

No, I was screaming his name  
~cause I was fucking him.  
HAL SAUNDERS, late 40s, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, perpetually stressed, coming out of his office, out of breath --

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 11.

**46 CONTINUED: 46**

**SAUNDERS**

Six got out!

**47 OMITTED 47**

**47A INT. SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE - NIGHT 47A**

STAPLED PAGES with PHOTOGRAPHS. In the hands of SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE, 62, a former Navy man who is used to telling important people what to do. EVERYONE FROM THE PREVIOUS HALLWAY SCENE is here in attendance as well.

**VANCE**

I was told five.

**BATES**

Apparently it's six now.

**VANCE**

What happened?

**PENDER**

Not clear. We know they escaped the embassy.

**VANCE**

Where are they?

**SAUNDERS**

The Canadian Ambassador's house.

**BATES**

Are we attempting rescue?

**BRICE**

Hold for the Secretary --

**VANCE**

**(HANDED ANOTHER**

**PHONE)**

-- there's no one -- this is he...

(to an aide)

Can we get Ottawa patched? Five phones and none of them work.

Coming back -- on phone --

**VANCE**

Is White House joining?

ARGO - Final 12.

**48 INT. WHITE HOUSE - WEST WING - NIGHT 48**

HAMILTON JORDAN, 40s, Carter's White House Chief of Staff, comes up stairs, trailed by AIDES. Jordan is forty, Southern.

**BUTLER (O.S.)**

They're claiming the embassy was a  
~den of -- ~

**JORDAN**

We wish it was the fucking Den of Espionage. C.I. had three people there, didn't see a revolution coming? I'd call that something other than intelligence --

**49 INT. CHIEF OF STAFF'S OFFICE - NIGHT 49**

There are already maps of Iran on easels in here. The big three plus foreign networks on silent televisions. LANDON BUTLER, 30s, Jordan's Deputy Chief of Staff, is on the phone.

**SECRETARY**

(into a phone)  
Hold for the Chief of Staff --  
(holds out the phone

**TO JORDAN)**

**HODDING --**

**JORDAN BUTLER**

(to Secretary) They're sticking to it. No I'll call him back. release till we expel the shah.  
Jordan sinks into his chair, putting his feet up on the desk.  
JON TITTERTON, 30s, an aide to Jordan --

**TITTERTON**

Put him on a plane. Fuck him.

**JORDAN**

He's half dead and he's in chemo.

**BUTLER**

We took him in. He's ours now.

**TITTERTON**

So we'll take in any prick as long  
as he's got cancer?

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 13.

**49 CONTINUED: 49**

**JORDAN**

No. Just the pricks on our side.  
So all our other pricks on their  
prick thrones know, when they get  
run out on a rail, they won't be  
getting their spleens out by a  
camel vet in the Sinai.

**TITTERTON**

The six with the Canadians.  
Now Jordan is looking at a monitor showing footage of a  
BLINDFOLDED HOSTAGE in front of the Embassy. AL  
GOLACINSKI being prodded and led down the front stairs of  
the embassy.

**JORDAN**

We've got 60 in the embassy with  
guns to their heads right now --

**TITTERTON**

The eyes of the world are on the  
embassy. That makes them safer  
than the six on the street.

**ANALYST**

(coming to the door)  
Bani-Sadr's saying it'll be over  
in 24 hours.

**JORDAN**

Leave the six where they are.  
I'll go brief the president.

**CUT TO BLACK.**

**FADE IN:**

**49A EXT. OLD DOMINION DRIVE (VIRGINIA) - AFTERNOON 49A**

A LONE ribbon sags in the f.g. -- the CAPITOL BUILDING behind.

Yellow ribbons tied to lampposts. A Catholic church with a sign on the lawn that says PRAY FOR OUR HOSTAGES. A dry cleaner with a large American flag in the window and yellow ribbons drawn by kids around it.

The exterior of a neighborhood bar, O'Tooles. More ribbons.

SUPERIMPOSE: McLEAN, VIRGINIA - 69 DAYS LATER

ARGO - Final 14.

**49B INT. MENDEZ APARTMENT - BEFORE DAWN 49B**

A television connected to a faraway wall with an extension cord sits on a coffee table. The t.v. shows color test patterns.

We move over the coffee table, a mess of Chinese food containers and beer bottles, to find TONY MENDEZ, 40, asleep in his clothes from the day before.

The phone rings. He answers it, half awake.

**MENDEZ**

Yeah.

He listens for a moment, then sits up, suddenly wide-awake.

**49E 49E**

**50 EXT. CANAL ROAD - MORNING 50**

Mendez's car speeds by yellow ribbons along trees on Canal Road.

**51 EXT. CIA - PARKING LOT - EARLY MORNING 51**

Mendez gets out of his car and hurries toward a white building that looks like a college campus.

**NEWSCASTER (V.O.)**

Prime Minister Bani-Sadr today re-stated demands for the hostages' release...

**52 INT. CIA DIRECTORATE OF OPERATIONS - MORNING 52**

As we watch him hurry out of his car and into the CIA, we start to pick up TVs as we go by them -- all tuned to some version of the same story.

He enters the front doors and crosses the famous EMBLEM on the ground.

He moves past the STARS ON THE WALL, signifying fallen CIA officers (and there were fewer stars then than now). He passes the SECURITY GUARD at the desk, holds up his badge. The guard nods.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 15.

**52 CONTINUED: 52**

A young Tom Brokaw in a yellow, sleeveless sweater and teal tie plays on the television, intoning on the Today Show. □ ANGELA BELK, young wife of hostage WILLIAM BELK, has a soft Southern voice and fights back tears. ( ABC,

**11/23/79)**

**BROKAW (V.O.) ANGELA BELK (V.O.)**

Week ten of a hostage I'm so afraid that I won't crisis that seems without see him again. That he end. A glimmer of hope won't get out from over after the release of some there, because everything -- women and Afro-Americans it seems like everything but little activity in the they're trying to do is weeks since, and the images just backfiring, it's not of bound Americans under working -- armed guard have many losing hope -- Under these images we hear an undulating drone -- the constant accompaniment of life then -- coverage of the hostage crisis.

**PRESIDENT CARTER (V.O.)**

The United States shall not purchase oil from Iran. Iranian assets shall be frozen and the U.S. shall engage in a forceful campaign of international diplomacy against the Iranians...

**MENDEZ (V.O.)**

Ten weeks State's sitting on this?

**53-55 OMITTED 53-55**

**56 INT. D.O. FLOOR - HALLWAY - LANGLEY - AFTERNOON 56**

O'Donnell, frantically grabbing documents and tossing them into an accordion folder.

**O'DONNELL**

The six of them went out a back exit. Brits turned them away, Kiwis turned them away. The Canadians took them in. They've been there since.

O'Donnell hands Mendez pages with STAFF PHOTOGRAPHS of SIX PEOPLE -- the escaped embassy employees -- as he continues to toss stuff into his folder.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 16.

**56 CONTINUED: 56**

**O'DONNELL**

Traffic calls them The Houseguests. Haven't left the Canadian ambassador's house since it happened.

**MENDEZ**

Compromised?

**O'DONNELL**

(shakes his head)  
Just a matter of time. We've got

Revolutionary Guards going door-to-door like Jehovah's Witnesses, looking for escapees. They're out for blood, Tony. Half of them think Khomeini's been too lenient with the ones in the embassy. Walking out of his office, Mendez following.

**MENDEZ**

White House?

**56A INT. CIA - THE PIT - CONTINUOUS ACTION 56A**

They walk through an open floor of cubicles lined with offices, we get a look at the 1979 CIA headquarters: nothing sleek or sexy about the interior. An open area of desks where Woodward and Bernstein might be spilling coffee on their thick ~70s ties. Papers and files everywhere. Trash emptying happens only once a week. Cigarette and cigar butts in ashtrays. Everything is perpetually a mess. And typewriters. The constant percussive sound of telexes and typing is the metronome that beats out the day here.

**O'DONNELL**

Carter's shitting enough bricks to build the pyramids. He wants the six of them out.

**MENDEZ**

Who else knows?

**O'DONNELL**

Just the families. Meanwhile, some genius in the embassy was keeping a mug book of everybody who worked there.

**MENDEZ**

Jesus Christ.

**(CONTINUED)**

**56A CONTINUED: 56A**

**O'DONNELL**

We think it got shredded before they got in, but the fuckers have sweat-shop kids in there re-assembling the shreds.

**O'DONNELL**

They're gonna make an example of the ones who escaped. Standing-room-only for beheadings in the square.

**MENDEZ**

Who's handling?  
They walk through a door and out of the Pit.

**57 INT. D.O. FLOOR - HALLWAY - AFTERNOON 57**

-- into a HALLWAY WITH POP ART on the walls. People with laminated badges and folders with red stripes walk with purpose.

**O'DONNELL**

State's coordinating in-house.

**MENDEZ**

They don't do exfiles.

**O'DONNELL**

They do now. They want to run it by us, strictly as consultants. Off his look.

**O'DONNELL**

Engell's saying it's lose-lose. These people die, they die badly. Publicly. ~State wants the blame, he'll give it to them.

**MENDEZ**

Then why's he want me?

**O'DONNELL**

So he can tell State he ran it by his best exfil guy.  
They stop in front of a conference room. Jack looks at him.

**O'DONNELL**

Tony. This isn't the kind of

meeting where you talk.

ARGO - Final 18.

**58 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER 58**

They enter to find: ADAM ENGELL, 40s or 50s, Deputy Chief of Operations, hosting visitors from the State Department: PENDER and BATES from State. The State guys are both dressed better than the CIA guys, except for Engell.

Other CIA Operations OFFICERS and ANALYSTS sit in audience.

**ENGELL**

Okay. This is Bob Pender from State O.S. He's been talking to Morgan at ExtAff.

GENCO, a State Department Assistant, removes a drape from the photographs of SIX FACES, State Department I.D. photos. Pender indicates the first two photos -- and during this, we may flash to scenes of the Houseguests in the Canadian ambassador's residence --

**PENDER**

Mark and Cora Lijek, 29 and 25. He's a consular officer and she's an assistant. Newlyweds. They just got there a couple of months ago. No language skills or in-country knowledge.

(re: the next photo)

Henry Lee Schatz. Agricultural attache from Idaho. He was there to sell U.S. tractors to Iranian agro. Hid out with the Swedes during the takeover then made his way to join the others with the Canadians.

(re: next photo)

J Stafford. Late twenties. He's smart and a climber. Speaks Farsi. Arranged the hire of his wife Kathy --

**BATES**

Understaffed so the faculty wives  
were the typing pool.  
That gs without comment in this room of men.

**PENDER**

(then, finally)  
Bob Anders. Senior consular  
officer, oldest of the group.  
Most likely to be group leader.  
So.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 19.

**58 CONTINUED: 58**

**PENDER (CONT'D)**

(now, shifting gears)  
What we like for this are  
bicycles. We've identified  
backroads from the Shemiran  
district -- a couple of rat lines  
through the mountains to the  
crossing at Tabriz. Cars are off  
the table because of the  
roadblocks.  
Pender nods to Bates, who gs to a map, indicating the  
north of Iran.

**BATES**

We wait till the weather clears up  
then we deliver six bikes and  
provide maps to the Turkish  
border.

**PENDER**

We have intelligence they can ride  
bicycles. Or we're prepared to  
send in somebody to teach them.  
The professional spies shifting at the stupidity of it.  
But nobody speaks up. And then --

**MENDEZ**

You can send in training wheels  
and wait at the border with  
Gatorade.

Attention turns to Mendez. O'Donnell shifts. Engell,  
not happy.

**MENDEZ**

It's 300 miles to the Turkish  
crossings. They'd need a support  
crew behind them with a tire pump.

**ENGELL PENDER**

(directed at Mendez) Who is --  
We've only been asked to  
sharpshoot this, State's  
handling the op.

**O'DONNELL**

Tony's an exfil spesh. He got a  
lot of the shah's people out after  
the fall.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 20.

**58 CONTINUED: (2) 58**

**MENDEZ**

**(TO PENDER)**

If these people can read OR add,  
any minute they're gonna figure  
out they're six short of a full  
deck. It's winter. You wanna  
wait around for a nice spring day  
for bike rides?

**(A BEAT)**

The only way out's through the  
airport. You build them new  
identities, a Moses gs in, takes  
them out on a commercial flight.

**BATES ENGELL**

We're exploring that They wouldn't clear airport option. control. Komitech own the place.

**BATES**

They would pose as reporters. The government issued 70-something -- Jumping in--MARIO MALINOV, 30s, an ambitious Bulgarian CIA analyst, Bronx Science and MIT, raised in Queens,

**BATES MALINOV**

-- visas for American 74. journalists.

**MALINOV**

And the Revolutionary Guards keep them on 74 leashes.

**MENDEZ**

They get caught with journalist creds, you've got Peter Jennings with a noose around his neck in an hour.

PAUL LAMONT, late 20s, a Master's from the Woodrow Wilson School before he joined CIA --

**LAMONT**

World Noose Tonight.  
Pender looks at Bates, who is trying to impress his boss.

**BATES**

North American accents give us limited options. So we get the Canadians to issue them passports...

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 21.

**58 CONTINUED: (3) 58**

**GENCO**

English teachers from the international school. Tested model. It's worked before.

**MENDEZ**

The school was shut eight months ago.

Bates, meanwhile, removing a binder from his accordion folder: in the binder, a photograph of an emaciated kid in Namibia.

**BATES**

So do-gooders. They're six Canadians who've been over there inspecting crops. Making sure the kids get enough to eat. Get them creds for an AG NGO --

But he's already lost Mendez, who is going through a newspaper on the table.

**BATES MALINOV**

A Feed the Children thing -- These kids are black. O.S. can make binders with These are African kids. starving kids --

**LAMONT GENCO**

Are there starving kids in We can get ethnically Iran? appropriate kids.

**PENDER ROSSI**

I'm sure there's skinny A logo with... seeds. kids... ~Seeds of Hope'... Mendez holds a page from the newspaper up to Pender.

**MENDEZ**

What do you see in the picture, sir?

A beat. Pender dsn't like this, but he'll play.

**PENDER**

Tehran.

**MENDEZ**

What's on the ground?

**PENDER**

Snow.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 22.

**58 CONTINUED: (4) 58**

**MENDEZ**

So what crops are the do-gooders  
inspecting under Frosty?  
Pender shifts.

**MENDEZ**

Exfils are like abortions. You  
don't wanna need one, but when you  
do, you don't do it yourself.  
The meeting is breaking up. Pender, followed by Bates,  
leaves the room. Engell, who has just been made to look  
bad and inherited a problem, stops by Tony.

**ENGELL**

**(TO MENDEZ)**

You have a better plan?  
Mendez dsn't respond.

**ENGELL**

Get one.

**58A-59 OMITTED 58A-59**

**60 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM - 60**

**NIGHT**

At dinner around a dining room table: the SIX  
HOUSEGUESTS; KEN TAYLOR, 40s, Canadian ambassador. He  
ds much to support the myth that Canadians are always  
in a good mood. Next to him is PAT TAYLOR, Filipino,  
40s. We're joining various conversations, including one  
with LEE SCHATZ, 29, an American agricultural attache,  
the sixth escapee we heard about.

**TAYLOR**

-- Martin was the worst one.  
Martin the Maximo King --

**PAT TAYLOR**

(to Lee Schatz)  
-- he looked like a cartoon witch

doctor, bone through his nose, so  
she asked to take her picture with

**HIM --**

J Stafford, keeping to himself.

**KATHY STAFFORD**

(to J Stafford)  
You okay?

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 23.

**60 CONTINUED: 60**

**CORA LIJEK**

-- if your family's hungry, you  
don't want to hear about  
international law --

**MARK LIJEK CORA LIJEK**

And she's off! Defending Not defending. Explaining.  
them again -- Stockholm

**SYNDROME --**

**MARK LIJEK**

Same thing.  
The sound of a fork on a glass. Ken Taylor is standing  
up.

**TAYLOR**

I read today that Tehran was voted  
the second most desirable city in  
the world to live in. Everywhere  
else tied for first.

**(TOAST)**

To getting through ten weeks. To  
our guests.

**LEE SCHATZ**

(raising his glass)  
Our hosts. Mr. Ambassador...

**BOB ANDERS CORA LIJEK**

Hear, hear... And Mrs.  
But the liquid in their wine glasses is beginning to  
shake. The noise of a HELICOPTER. Taylor tries to be  
pleasant.

**TAYLOR**

You should get into the crawl  
space.

**61-67 OMITTED 61-67**

**68 INT. MENDEZ'S CAR - NIGHT 68**

Mendez listens to the radio as he drives home along the  
bridge, the Jefferson Memorial beyond.

**NEWSCASTER (V.O.)**

The White House Christmas tree was  
taken down today after never  
having been lit, as the cruel  
stalemate in Iran continues.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 24.

**68 CONTINUED: 68**

This is a --

**69 MONTAGE 69**

that jumps around the world -- scenes of our principals  
and overlapping news accounts play.

**FRANK REYNOLDS (V.O.)**

Today, a clear threat to place the  
remaining 50 Americans on trial as  
spies.

**69A INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE (TEHRAN) - NIGHT**

**69A**

The Houseguests getting up from dinner. Kathy Stafford  
hesitates.

**J STAFFORD**

(to Pat Taylor)  
Kathy dsn't want to go down  
again.

**BOB ANDERS J STAFFORD**

Jesus Christ -- She's claustrophobic.

**CUT TO:**

**69B FOOTAGE OF NILOFUR EKTEBAR - AKA TEHRAN MARY 69B**

The Penn-educated Tokyo Rose of the hostage crisis.  
She's reading a statement to the camera.

**TEHRAN MARY (V.O.)**

**(PERFECT AMERICAN**

**ENGLISH)**

Those who remain here are spies.  
They will be treated as spies who  
have interfered with the  
sovereignty of the people of Iran.

**69C INT. MENDEZ' CAR - NIGHT 69C**

Mendez driving -- thinking --

**69D INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE (TEHRAN) - NIGHT**

**69D**

**MARK LIJEK J STAFFORD**

You're putting us all at risk -- They're not going to come  
into the house.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 25.

**69D CONTINUED: 69D**

**LEE SCHATZ BOB ANDERS**

It's her choice. Leave her (angry)

be. G'head. Put flowers in  
their gun barrels --  
SAHAR, housekeeper, is visible here cleaning up after  
their meal.

**70 INT. MUSHROOM INN - DAY 70**

A dark room where hostages are kept in groups of two.  
A 21-year-old with an automatic weapon --

**CROSS-CUTTING WITH --**

**71 INTERVIEW FOOTAGE OF AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI 71**

**KHOMEINI (V.O.)**

**(SUBTITLED)**

If Carter ds not send back the  
Shah, it is possible that they  
will be tried and if they are  
tried, who knows what will happen.

**72 INT. SMALL-TOWN BAR - DAY 72**

News footage of men inside a small-town bar. It's a  
broadcast of RON MILLER reporting from barometer  
community □ Pecatonica, Illinois, on ABC News', America  
Held Hostage. □ ( 11/21/79)

**RON MILLER (V.O.)**

So, like the government in  
Washington, the people in  
Pecatonica are grappling for  
solutions.

JACK STROUP, Vietnam vet, red beard, a cap with the  
Kenworth trucks logo, a denim jacket.

**STROUP (V.O.)**

Even in our little community here,  
people are drawn up, they're  
tense.

**73 OMITTED 73**

**74 INT. CARPET FACTORY - DAY 74**

**ANGLE - A SMALL HAND**

pieces shreds together to form the words: U.S.

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE -- TEHRAN -- CLASSIFIED.**

He is working on reassembling the seized EMBASSY PAPERS -- a giant pile of shredded documents -- with the skill of a blindfolded child Mozart at the harpsichord. We see the unmistakable image of a FACE being formed from the shredded material.

**75 ANGLE - CLOSEUP OF AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI 75**

(Footage from a Mike Wallace interview. □60 Minutes□

11/18/79.)

**KHOMEINI (V.O.)**

**(FARSI)**

Our young people have taken over this nest of corruption. America can't do a damn thing about it --

**76 OMITTED 76**

**77 ARCHIVE FOOTAGE 77**

Rage at an anti-Iran protest in front of the White House. Signs: DEPORT ALL IRANIANS□/□CAMEL JOCKEYS GO HOME.□ An IRANIAN-AMERICAN MAN is kicked as he crouches on the ground. A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN looks murderous as she waves an American flag at the camera.

**CUT TO:**

**78 INT. SMALL-TOWN BAR - DAY 78**

Back to the ABC News report, the bar in Pecatonica.

**STROUP (V.O.)**

I'm like that guy screamin' in that movie-program Network, y'know? I've had it. And if need be, I'll bear arms again.

ARGO - Final 27.

**79 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE (TEHRAN) - NIGHT 79**

The Houseguests descend into the crawlspace, a darkened, cramped area -- first the Lijeks, then Anders and Schatz... then J and Kathy Stafford. The trapdoor closes and the crawlspace goes COMPLETELY

**BLACK.**

**CUT TO:**

**80 INT. MENDEZ APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT 80**

**WALTER CRONKITE (V.O.)**

**(ON TV)**

And that's the way it is, on this, the 70th day of captivity for the American hostages in Iran. Mendez is watching Cronkite on a small television in his kitchen. In front of him, a folder with Xeroxed photographs of the HOUSEGUESTS. He changes the channel and finds a GOOFY SEVENTIES COMMERCIAL -- He picks up the phone.

**81 INT. CHRISTINE'S HOUSE - CROSS-CUTTING - NIGHT 81**

IAN MENDEZ, 7 and about to turn 8, is watching a movie on his bed. He picks up on the second ring.

**IAN**

Hello.

**MENDEZ (V.O.)**

Buddy-man.

**IAN**

Mom's asleep.

**MENDEZ**

You do homework tonight?

**IAN**

Yeah.

**MENDEZ**

What was it?

But Tony can hear a television soundtrack with ominous electronic music.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 28.

**81 CONTINUED: 81**

**MENDEZ**

What do I hear?

**IAN**

**(COMING CLEAN)**

'~Battle for Planet of the Apes.'  
Am I in trouble?  
A beat.

**MENDEZ**

What channel?

**IAN**

Nine.

81 Mendez turns on his living room television to the three-  
hour BATTLE FOR PLANET OF THE APES.□

**MENDEZ**

Catch me up.

Tony listens, staring ahead at the TV . A desert landscape dotted with technological garbage. An ape played by Roddy MacDowell walks across the landscape. He's staring at the television, but now really paying attention.

The apes walk into the ruins of what was once a great city.

RODDY MacDOWELL (V.O.)

(on TV, as Caesar)

This is the hell my forefathers  
used to speak about. (Etc.)

**ON TONY**

staring at the movie. Wheels turning in his head.

CUT TO:

82-85 OMITTED 82-85

86 INT. SCI-FI LAB - A MINOTAUR - DAY 86

A bull/human experiment in a SCI-FI lab, coming to bovine life. A SEXY SPACE NURSE is administering some kind of shot to him. A SECOND NURSE stands by.

SPACE NURSE

My creation... My creation...

(CONTINUED)

ARGO - Final 29.

86 CONTINUED: 86

The Minotaur lifts his head, KNOCKS into the Nurse.

SPACE NURSE

(BREAKING CHARACTER)

What the fuck, Brian?

DIRECTOR (O.S.)

Cut!

A.D. (O.S.)

WE'RE CUTTING!

A bell. WIDER REVEALS that we're on a...

87 INT. WARNER BROS. SOUNDSTAGE - DAY 87

A DIRECTOR, 40s, whispers something to an A.D., mid-thirties.

A.D.

(inquiring into a

WALKIE)

John Chambers. John Chambers make-up...

**CUT TO:**

**88 INT. WARNER BROS. SOUNDSTAGE - DAY 88**

JOHN CHAMBERS, Hollywood's first Oscar winner for makeup, walks onto set carrying a fishing tackle box of supplies.

**SUPERIMPOSE: BURBANK, CALIFORNIA - JANUARY 19, 1980**

The A.D. joins Chambers, walking him onto the set.

**A.D.**

He says the Minotaur's prosthetic is too tight so he can't act.

**CHAMBERS**

If he could act he wouldn't be playing the Minotaur.

He smiles and waves at the Minotaur and begins to work on his prosthetic with a brush and solvent.

**CUT TO:**

ARGO - Final 30.

**89 INT. NEAR CRAFT SERVICES TABLE - DAY 89**

Chambers is foraging through ~70s SNACKS. At the craft service table. A guy in his SPACE ARMOR PANTS without the top is eating as well.

A P.A. approaches, carrying a PHONE on a long cord.

**P.A.**

Mr. Chambers.

**CHAMBERS**

**(STILL FORAGING)**

Who is it?

**P.A.**

Kevin Harkins?

Chambers gives the kid a look, takes the phone from him and puts it to his ear.

**CHAMBERS**

Hey, Tony.

**90 INT. CIA - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 90**

Pender and Engell sit at the table; O'Donnell hovers. A few State Department and CIA ANALYSTS here, including Malinov and Lamont; and DAVID MARMOR, early 30s, Engell's guy.

**O'DONNELL**

(quiet, to Malinov)  
Is he coming?  
Engell nods for the door to be shut.

**ENGELL**

**(TO PENDER)**

Okay. Our N.E. put together a work-up. David.

**MARMOR**

They would pose as teachers from the international school.

**PENDER**

We went through all that -- it's boarded up --  
O'Donnell looking at the clock.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 31.

**90 CONTINUED: 90**

**MARMOR**

Suppose the airport guards don't know that --

**PENDER**

Suppose. Suppose Heckle and Jeckle go over and save them --  
The door swings open.

**MENDEZ**

Hi. Sorry. Hi.

**O'DONNELL**

Have a seat, Tony.  
He dsn't. There's an energy in him we haven't seen  
before.

**MENDEZ**

They're a Canadian film crew on a  
location scout for a science  
fiction movie --  
A shift in the room.

**MENDEZ**

Star Wars, Star Trek. They need  
an exotic place to shoot. We put  
it out -- the Canadian producers  
put it out -- that they're looking  
at Turkey, Egypt, whatever. Then  
we go to the consulate and say we  
wanna look at Iran. I fly in  
there and we fly out together as a  
film crew. Done.

**MARMOR**

**(DRY)**

~In an exfiltration, flamboyant  
cover identities should be  
avoided, as it increases

**OPERATIONAL' --**

**MENDEZ**

This is more plausible than  
foreigners who want to go to  
school in Iran --

**ENGELL**

So you're going to wake up  
tomorrow in the movie business?  
We have credentials for --

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 32.

**90 CONTINUED: (2) 90**

**MENDEZ**

I've got a contact in L.A.

**ENGELL**

**(CATCHING ON)**

Chambers.

**MENDEZ**

**(TO PENDER)**

John Chambers. He's a Hollywood prosthetics guy, ds contracting work for us on the side. If I go see him, he'll set us up. A couple days to make it look real. Mendez and O'Donnell turn their eyes on Pender, who is the decision-maker here.

**PENDER**

(after a beat, to

**MENDEZ)**

Remind me who you are again?

**91 INT. CIA - THE PIT - A FEW MINUTES LATER 91**

Tony stands in small messy KITCHEN AREA, pouring coffee. On the coffeepot somebody's pinned a note: CHANGE FILTER

**IF YOU USE! DO UNTO OTHERS.**

O'Donnell approaches, quietly stands behind him, smoking quietly. Mendez turns around.

**O'DONNELL**

We want you to go to L.A. If you can make the movie thing credible, we'll take it to the Director.  
(a beat; a cigarette

**DRAG)**

Don't fuck up. The whole country's watching you. They just don't know it.

**92 INT. T.W.A. FLIGHT - MORNING 92**

Mendez sits in an aisle seat. The PASSENGER next to him

is looking at the headline of The New York Times: NEW

**THREATS FOR HOSTAGE TRIBUNALS.**□

Mendez is reading THE FIVE C'S OF CINEMATOGRAPHY.

ARGO - Final 33.

**93 INT. MIDDLE-CLASS TEHRAN HOUSE - NIGHT 93**

Six KOMITEH force their way into a house.

**KOMITEH SOLDIER**

**SAVAK! SAVAK!**

A Komiteh drags away a MAN in his forties while the man's wife cries. Automatic weapons are aimed at him, point-blank.

From ACROSS THE STREET, an IRANIAN WOMAN, 20s, watches.

**94 OMITTED 94**

**95 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - 95**

**NIGHT**

Lee Schatz and Bob Anders play poker in a room decorated with Persian carpets and mosaics. The gunfire audible here too. Staring at their cards.

**LEE SCHATZ**

50 caliber?

**BOB ANDERS**

Mmm. 50, 35.

**95A INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM - 95A**

**NIGHT**

Pat Taylor helps THE SAME WOMAN we just saw, SAHAR, 20s, clear the table. She is their housekeeper.

**SAHAR**

Your friends from Canada, ma'am.  
All this time. They never go out.

A significant moment of eye contact. Then Sahar goes back to clearing the table.

**96 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - LATER 96**

Kathy Stafford is roughly washing wine glasses at the sink.

**J STAFFORD**

You've washed them three times.  
He puts his arm on her shoulder. She keeps scrubbing.

ARGO - Final 34.

**97 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

97

Ken Taylor is brushing his teeth in the mirror. Pat comes in.

**PAT TAYLOR**

Sahar knows.

**98 EXT. BURBANK - AFTERNOON 98**

The water tower on Warner Bros. studio -- which in 1980 read, Burbank Studios.□

**99 INT. CHAMBERS' STUDIO - AFTERNOON 99**

Chambers leads Mendez into his makeup studio and starts to open windows. Around the studio: stunt double-masks, deformed monster foreheads, dental implants on shelves. Planet of the Apes prosthetics. Mr. Spock ears on Styrofoam stands. (Chambers created all these -- really.)

**MENDEZ**

What are you shooting?

**CHAMBERS**

A monster movie.

**MENDEZ**

Any good?

**CHAMBERS**

The target audience will hate it.

**MENDEZ**

Who's the target audience?

**CHAMBERS**

People with eyes. Talk to me.

**MENDEZ**

It's an exfil.

**CHAMBERS**

From where?

**MENDEZ**

Worst place you can think of.

**CHAMBERS**

Universal City.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 35.

**99 CONTINUED: 99**

Mendez picks up a Newsweek magazine under a can of Tab on a makeup table: blindfolded Iran hostages on the cover. Chambers takes it in for a moment -- the gravity of it.

**CHAMBERS**

How you getting in the embassy?

**MENDEZ**

Six got away. They're hiding in the city. I'm going over to get them.

**CHAMBERS**

What am I making?

**MENDEZ**

I need you to help me make a fake movie.

**CHAMBERS**

You've come to the right place.

**MENDEZ**

I need to set up a production company and build a cover around making a movie.

**CHAMBERS**

That we're not going to make.

**MENDEZ**

No.

**CHAMBERS**

You want to go around Hollywood acting like you're an important person in the movie business.

**MENDEZ**

That's right.

**CHAMBERS**

But you don't want to actually do anything.

**MENDEZ**

No.

**CHAMBERS**

You'll fit right in.

ARGO - Final 36.

**100 INT. SMOKE HOUSE - AFTERNOON 100**

A couple of empty highball glasses on the table. Chambers is looking at PHOTOGRAPHS of the SIX. Mendez is taking notes. On a photo of Cora Lijek.

**CHAMBERS**

This one's got an M.A. in English. She should be your screenwriter. Sometimes they go on scouts ~cause

they want the free meals.  
(re: Bob Anders)  
This guy's the director.

**MENDEZ**

Can you teach a guy how to be a  
director in a day?

**CHAMBERS**

You can teach a rhesus monkey to  
be a director in a day. Look, if  
you're gonna do it, you've got to  
do it. The Khomaniacs are fruit  
loops, but they have cousins  
selling eight tracks and prayer  
rugs on La Brea. You can't build  
cover stories around a movie that  
dsn't exist. You need a script.  
You need a producer.

**MENDEZ**

I'm the producer.

**CHAMBERS**

No, you're not. ~Associate' at  
best. If it's a twenty-million  
dollar Star Wars rip-off, you need  
somebody who's a somebody to put  
his name on it.  
Here we see some AUTOGRAPHED ~70s CELEBRITY 8X10s hanging  
on the wall.  
The waiter brings a bill.

**CHAMBERS**

Somebody respectable. With  
credits. Who we can trust with  
classified information. Who'll  
produce a fake movie. For free.

**101 EXT. BEVERLY HILLS - EVENING 101**

They walk up the driveway of a ~70s Bel Air home.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 37.

**101 CONTINUED: 101**

**SIEGEL (V.O.)**

Yeah, come in.

**102 INT. SIEGEL HOUSE - HALLWAY - EVENING 102**

And there's LESTER SIEGEL, a semi-legendary producer in his semi-legendary seventies. He's equal parts bookie and rabbi. His father sold perfume on the Lower East Side. Lester is halfway to dressed in a tuxedo.

**SIEGEL**

**(SHAKES HANDS)**

I only got a couple minutes. I'm getting a lifetime achievement award tonight.

**CHAMBERS**

Mazel tov, Lester.

**SIEGEL**

Aaah, I'd rather stay home and count the wrinkles on my dog's balls. These fuckin' things are like getting measured for your coffin. ~He don't look so good. Let's give him an honorary award.'

**TIME CUT TO:**

**103 INT. SIEGEL'S DEN - ANGLE ON TV - TED KOPPEL - EVENING**

103

Reporting on Iran.

**SIEGEL (O.S.)**

A little experiment. You be me hearing you.

The TV we're watching sits in a room with a couple of Golden Globes and pictures of a younger Lester.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

**SIEGEL**

Six people in the middle of a city of, what, four million --

ON TV, a wild-eyed woman in the crowd (in one of the most widely-played clips of the hostage crisis) makes an ax-

falling gesture with her arm repeatedly.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 38.

**103 CONTINUED: 103**

**SIEGEL**

-- who chant 'Death to America'  
all the livelong day. You wanna  
set up a picture in a week. Lie  
to a whole town of people who lie  
for a living. Have Double-O-Seven  
here sneak into a country that  
wants CIA blood with their  
breakfast cereal. Duck Iranian  
intelligence. Then walk the Brady  
Bunch out of the most watched city  
in the world...

**MENDEZ**

... and past a hundred Komiteh at  
the airport.

**SIEGEL**

Look, I wanna help you but... In  
the Army, we did suicide missions  
that had better odds. So lemme  
hit it again for the cheap seats:

**NO.**

Chambers gives Mendez a look.

**CHAMBERS**

(to Lester, as he

**GETS UP)**

Enjoy your fish dinner tonight.  
Chambers stops at the muted television. More images of  
angry crowds.

**CHAMBERS**

You ever think, Lester, how it's  
all for the cameras?

**SIEGEL**

They're getting the ratings, I'll  
give 'em that --  
Siegel looks at the TV: at that moment, a HOSTAGE TAKER  
holding up photos of hostages for CAMERAS in front of  
him. He takes a beat.

**SIEGEL**

We're gonna need a script.  
A beat of silence. A LOOK from Siegel to Chambers.

**CHAMBERS (V.O.)**

**(PRE-LAP)**

How 'bout The Horses of Achilles?

ARGO - Final 39.

**104 EXT. BY LESTER'S POOL - MORNING 104**

Chambers, on hold on the phone, walks to Siegel holding  
up The Horses of Achilles script in a William Morris  
binder. Stacks of scripts on a table outside. Siegel's  
new A.F.I. award is being used as a coaster.

**SIEGEL**

Nobody makes Westerns anymore.

**CHAMBERS**

(looking through it)  
It's ancient Troy.

**SIEGEL**

If it's got horses in the title,  
it's a Western.

**CHAMBERS**

(into the phone)  
Yeah, Kenny, please. It's John  
Chambers, about the office space.

**(THEN)**

It dsn't matter. It's a fake  
movie.

**SIEGEL**

If I'm doing a fake movie, it's gonna be a fake hit.

**CHAMBERS**

**(TO PHONE)**

Is A006 still open on the lot?

**105 INT. SIEGEL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY 105**

Mendez, on the PHONE near a fully stocked bar.

**O'DONNELL (V.O.)**

The Canadians are done. Say they're bearing too much risk.

**106 INT. O'DONNELL'S OFFICE - CROSS-CUTTING - DAY 106**

**O'DONNELL**

Foreign Secretary cornered Vance in Brussels and told him she's serving eviction papers. The Cardinal wants all cover options on his desk Friday morning.

**MELENDEZ**

That's too soon.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 40.

**106 CONTINUED: 106**

**O'DONNELL**

Engell's prepping the Bikes Option and the Teachers Option. You've got 72 hours to make yours better...

**107 INT. SIEGEL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY 107**

Mendez is looking down at the SCRIPT in front of him. He opens to the first page.

**ANGLE ON HIM**

reading, thinking.

**108 EXT. LESTER'S POOL - DAY 108**

Mendez walks up to the table where Siegel and Chambers are already eating.

**MENDEZ**

(entering, reading)  
~Fade in on starship landing. An exotic, Middle Eastern vibe. Women gather, offering ecstatic libations to the sky gods.'

**(LOOKS UP)**

~ARGO. A science-fantasy adventure.'  
Mendez throws down the script.

**SIEGEL**

It's in turnaround. It's dog shit.

**MENDEZ**

It's a space movie in the Middle East. Ds it matter?  
Chambers looks at the BULLSEYE logo on the cover page.  
Reacts.

**CHAMBERS**

**(TO LESTER)**

Can we get the option?

**MENDEZ**

Why do we need the option?

**(CONTINUED)**

108 CONTINUED: 108

**SIEGEL**

You're worried about the  
Ayatollah? Try the WGA.

**109 EXT. CROSSROADS OF THE WORLD (HOLLYWOOD) - DAY 109**

Tony and Lester turn off Sunset Blvd. and into the office  
complex.

**SIEGEL**

He's only a prick if you catch him  
on the wrong day.

**MENDEZ**

Is it the wrong day?

**SIEGEL**

It's always the wrong day.  
They've arrived at a door with a sign: MAX KLEIN

**PRODUCTIONS/BULLSEYE FILMS. □**

110 OMITTED 110

**111 INT. MAX KLEIN'S OFFICE - A FEW MINUTES LATER 111**

We see all kinds of MOVIE POSTERS AND MEMORABILIA ALL  
**OVER THE OFFICE.**

**KLEIN**

You're gonna get this into  
production in one month?

**MENDEZ**

One month.

**KLEIN**

Who are you again?

**MENDEZ**

Kevin Harkins. Studio Six Films.

**SIEGEL**

He's the money.

**KLEIN**

I thought you were retired,  
Lester.

(CONTINUED)

ARGO - Final 42.

**111 CONTINUED: 111**

**SIEGEL**

-- Till I read the Argo. Look, how 'bout we say fifteen thou and close on this?

**KLEIN**

You want me to be honest with you, Les?

**SIEGEL**

Naah, bullshit me, Max.

**KLEIN**

Okay. Because I enjoyed your films, the early ones. I took this meeting out of respect because I wanted to tell you 'no' to your face.

**SIEGEL**

Thank you. Very respectful.

**KLEIN**

You're done, Lester. You've gotta get your cataracts fixed and read the trades. MGM just capitalized for six new films and they're desperate for Sci-Fi. They've already offered me four times what you are.

**SIEGEL**

**(A BEAT)**

What can I say? Congratulations.  
(shrugs to Mendez)  
He's got me.  
A beat. Mendez ready to go --

**SIEGEL**

But see -- it worries me, what you said, and I'll tell you why. A couple weeks back I was sitting in Trader Vic's enjoying a Mai Tai when my pal Warren Beatty came to wish me well and we had a little chat. Seems he was attached to star in Zulu Empire -- which was gonna anchor that MGM slate -- but Warren confided in me that the picture's gone over-budget 'cause the Zulu extras wanna unionize.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 43.

**111 CONTINUED: (2) 111**

**SIEGEL (CONT'D)**

They may be cannibals swallowing each other up but they want health and dental, so the movie's kaput -- which means that MGM deal ain't gonna happen and your script ain't worth the buffalo-shit on a nickel. So.

Lester takes some documents out of a folder.

**SIEGEL**

The way this looks to me -- through the cataracts, I grant you -- is that you can either sign here and take ten thousand for your toilet-paper script -- or you can go fuck yourself.

Siegel smiles kindly and holds a pen and the contracts out to Klein. Klein takes them.

**112 EXT. STREET - A FEW MINUTES LATER 112**

**MENDEZ**

You know Warren Beatty?

**SIEGEL**

I took a leak next to him at the Golden Globes.

**(BEAT)**

Taco?

**113 OMITTED 113**

**114 EXT. WARNER BROS. LOT - LATE DAY 114**

Lester and Tony eat tacos at a picnic table on the lot.

**MENDEZ**

You got kids, Lester?

**SIEGEL**

Two daughters.

**MENDEZ**

You see them much?

**SIEGEL**

I talk to them once a year, maybe.

**MENDEZ**

Why's that?

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 44.

**114 CONTINUED: 114**

**SIEGEL**

I was a terrible father.

**(BEAT)**

The bullshit business is like coal mining. You can't wash it off before you kiss your wife and kids... You?

**MENDEZ**

A son. Lives with his mother in Virginia.

**SIEGEL**

You're divorced?

**MENDEZ**

Taking time off.  
(then, quiet)  
He's gotta... stay where he is.

**SIEGEL**

**(BEAT)**

Kids need the mother.

**114A**

**114A EXT. ARGO PRODUCTION OFFICE (LOT - NY STREET) - MORNING**

Chambers and a GRAPHIC ARTIST walk through the set. We REVEAL a couple of CYLON RAIDERS, helmets off, taking a break from shooting and leaning against the wall.

**115 INT. O'DONNELL'S OFFICE - DAY 115**

O'DONNELL reads from the EYES ONLY document.

**O'DONNELL**

They caught the shah's chief of security trying to get on a plane to Paris.

**INTERCUT WITH:**

**116 INT. PRODUCTION OFFICE - MORNING 116**

WIDER REVEALS that the production office is being set up. A couple of FURNITURE GUYS move chairs in. Mendez is looking at a POSTER. It reads: Studio Six Productions presents: ARGO. A COSMIC WAR.□

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 45.

**116 CONTINUED: 116**

**MENDEZ**

(to a graphic artist)  
~War' sounds like Star Wars.  
Let's use a different word.  
Mendez closes the door to his private office.

**O'DONNELL**

~Since the incident, the number of  
guards at the airport has doubled.  
Thorough background examinations  
should be expected.'

**MENDEZ**

I need another week.

**O'DONNELL**

You don't have it.

**117 INT. ARGO PRODUCTION OFFICE - NIGHT 117**

Mendez gs out into the main part of the office -- it's  
Tony, Siegel, and Chambers now.  
They have hung up all their ARGO MATERIALS on the wall  
and are reviewing them.

**MENDEZ**

We've got a script. We've got  
business cards. We've got a poster.  
If I'm them? It's nothing we  
couldn't make at home.

**CHAMBERS**

I did a movie with Rock Hudson  
once.

**(A BEAT)**

~You need to sell a lie, you get  
the press to sell it for you.'

**118 INT. ARGO PRODUCTION OFFICE - DAY 118**

Now it's noisy in here now -- a PUBLICIST, ASSISTANTS and  
controlled chaos --

**SIEGEL**

(on the phone)  
-- press event and reading... No,  
I promised Variety exclusive on

that one...  
Mendez is making a list with a PUBLICIST.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 46.

**118 CONTINUED: 118**

**MENDEZ**

~Biggest Canadian production in  
history.' Canadian Gone With The

**WIND --**

**PUBLICIST ASSISTANT #2**

Canadian Sci-Fi Gone With Studio Six Films.  
The Wind.

As Chambers pulls Mendez --

**SIEGEL**

(on the phone)

I gotta get back to you, Phil. I  
can't get my own mother a ticket.  
I had to tell her it was  
cancelled.

**MENDEZ**

Are you turning people away?

**SIEGEL**

(covering the phone)

You know what gets more suckers  
than a sign that says ~Brooklyn  
Bridge For Sale'? ~Brooklyn  
Bridge: Approved Buyers Only.'

(as they go)

Philip? You there?

Chambers leads us into the main room, leading Tony to a  
table where JACK KIRBY, 62, comics artist, fusses with  
large COMIC PANELS of ARGO CONCEPT DRAWINGS spread over a  
table.

Kirby starts to distribute storyboards. Some hold on to  
them and an ASSISTANT begins putting them up on the  
board.

Mendez looks at them. Impressed. He picks up a drawing of some futuristic-looking vehicles.

**MENDEZ**

Any way to make the chariots look more -- Middle-Eastern -- ?

**KIRBY**

Mesopotamia... Egypt...

**MENDEZ**

Iran.

Kirby takes out a marker and starts to sketch a futuristic-looking desert glider.

ARGO - Final 47.

**119 OMITTED 119**

**120 OMITTED 120**

**121 OMITTED 121**

**122 OMITTED 122**

**123 EXT./INT. BEVERLY HILTON - LATE DAY 123**

A black sedan pulls up to the hotel. A driver opens the back door. Mendez, Siegel, and Chambers get out of the car. They're wearing suits.

They walk past a sign that reads: PRESS EVENT and READING FOR ARGO. A couple of posters with the explosion-in-space ARGO: A COSMIC CONFLAGRATION logo.

**124 INT. BEVERLY HILTON - STARDUST LOUNGE - DUSK 124**

Tony is on a balcony outside the ballroom. He passes the bar on his way in.

Inside he sees Chambers, Lester and a PUBLICIST who promptly moves Tony into a conversation with a REPORTER.

**PUBLICIST**

Janet from the Times -- You know Johnny Chambers and Lester Siegel. This is Kevin Harkins. He'll tell

you a bit about the film --  
We leave Mendez with the L.A. Times --  
FOLLOWING Siegel --  
Jack Kirby's storyboard drawings throughout the room.  
Four or five ACTORS IN SCI-FI COSTUMES.

**WOMAN (O.S.)**

Lester.  
He turns around. NINA, a woman in her early sixties,  
made up to look younger.

**SIEGEL**

You're gorgeous. You're in the  
reading?

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 48.

**124 CONTINUED: 124**

**NINA**

I'm playing Serksi, the Galactic  
Witch.

BACK TO: Mendez. A Publicist is guiding Mendez toward  
an anemic-looking man --

**PUBLICIST**

(to Mendez,

**INTRODUCING)**

Rodd from Variety. Kevin Harkins.  
BACK TO Siegel and Chambers, walking away from NINA.

**SIEGEL**

Keep that fucking space witch away  
from me.

**CHAMBERS**

You know her?

**SIEGEL**

I was married to her.  
Mendez, now talking to RODD, from VARIETY.

**RODD**

**(TO MENDEZ)**

You said shooting in Iran with an

**N?**

**MENDEZ**

Tehran.

**RODD**

You ever watch the news?

Publicist hands Mendez a LASER GUN and a photographer snaps his picture. Siegel walks by, downing one from the bar.

**BACK TO SIEGEL AND CHAMBERS**

A Hollywood Reporter writer talking to Siegel. The publicist stands by --

**REPORTER**

So the title refers to...

**SIEGEL**

The Argo, it's the, y'know, the

**THING --**

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 49.

**124 CONTINUED: (2) 124**

Siegel takes a couple of canapés from a passing Waiter, starts eating.

**REPORTER**

... Jason and the Golden Fleece, or...?

**SIEGEL**

**(CHEWING)**

-- the spaceship, it flies around space, alllll over space --

**REPORTER**

Is it the Argonaut?  
Siegel dsn't know what he's talking about.

**SIEGEL**

No.

**REPORTER**

Then what ds ~Argo' mean?  
And finally Lester's had it -- with his mouth full --

**SIEGEL**

It means Argo fuck yourself.

**PUBLICIST**

Let's all take our places for the  
reading.  
And we SETTLE ON MENDEZ. He takes a glass of wine from a  
passing waiter's tray, downs it, and puts it on another  
WAITER'S tray. We FOLLOW that waiter THROUGH a swinging  
door, INTO the kitchen and prep area, where a small black  
and white TV plays...

**125 ARCHIVE FOOTAGE 125**

Tehran Mary speaks into a microphone.

**TEHRAN MARY (V.O.)**

**(ON TV)**

As the Imam Khomeini said, we have  
found no evidence that proves that  
these people are diplomats.

**126 INT. O'DONNELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT 126**

O'Donnell, watching the same footage on the News.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 50.

**126 CONTINUED: 126**

**TEHRAN MARY (V.O.)**

**(ON TV)**

All evidence proves that these  
people are spies.

The ARRAY OF VIDEO CAMERAS on tripods recording her.

**NINA (V.O.)**

**(AS SERKSI)**

Our world has changed.

**127 INT. BEVERLY HILTON HOTEL - STARDUST LOUNGE - DUSK 127**

The reading of Argo is happening around a table.

**PRINCESS ALEPPA**

The fire of hope stopped burning  
in this galaxy long ago.

A HANDSOME LEAD, ACHILLES CRUX, says his line.

**ACHILLES CRUX**

Fire the thrusters!!

**128 INT. AROUND THE CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE (TEHRAN)**

128

**- NIGHT**

**MARK LIJEK**

-- fifty-seven -- fifty-eight --

Mark counts out as Lee Schatz ds push-ups. Bob Anders  
watches a television in the b.g., subtitled in Farsi.

**JIMMY CARTER (V.O.)**

**(ON TV)**

We will not yield to international  
terror or to blackmail.

**129-130 OMITTED 129-130**

**131 INT. MUSHROOM INN (AMERICAN EMBASSY, TEHRAN) - NIGHT 131**

Five of the EMBASSY HOSTAGES -- men from their 20s to  
their 50s -- are roused from their sleeping mats by  
Komiteh. Hoods are put over their heads.

**PRINCESS ALEPPA (V.O.)**

The old ways are lost, but there  
is still hope.

(CONTINUED)

ARGO - Final 51.

**131 CONTINUED: 131**

**TEHRAN MARY (V.O.)**

We will begin the trials and will  
carry out the sentences.

This MONTAGE: Voice upon voice, image upon image, landing  
on television sets.

**132 OMITTED 132**

**133 INT. AMERICAN EMBASSY (TEHRAN) - BASEMENT - NIGHT 133**

The four hostages, hoods on their heads, placed against  
the wall. HOSTAGE TAKERS raise their guns at the men.

**GREEN JACKET PRINCESS ALEPPA (V.O.)**

(Farsi) If we find his ship, we  
Fire! will find our chance.

Aboard the Argo lies my  
hope. My hero. My  
husband.

They pull their triggers. But nothing happens. It's a  
mock execution (actually occurred -- February 5, 1980).  
The five hostages, after a beat, either scream or  
collapse.

**134 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT 134**

J Stafford, watching Khomeini on TV, to Bob Anders --

**J STAFFORD**

**(REALIZING THE**

gravity of it)  
He's marginalized the moderates  
now.

**MARK LIJEK**

A hundred and twelve --

**134A INT. BEVERLY HILTON - DUSK 134A**

**NESTOR THE DROID**

We're hit. We'll never clear the  
Perseus Range!

We see the ROW OF PRESS PEOPLE. Not unlike the ones  
watching Tehran Mary.

ARGO - Final 52.

**134B INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT 134B**

Lee Schatz collapses from his push-ups. Breathing  
heavily.

**MARK LIJEK**

And we have a new champion.

Bob Anders looks up from Khomeini, who keeps talking in  
the b.g., and applauds.

**134C OMITTED 134C**

**134D INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT 134D**

SAHAR quietly cleans a table. She's watching the  
Houseguests.

**CHAMBERS (V.O.)**

~Crane down over the battlefield  
and hold there...'

**135 INT. BEVERLY HILTON HOTEL - NIGHT 135**

Chambers, at the table, sitting next to Siegel. Mendez  
sits off to the side.

**CHAMBERS**

**(READING STAGE**

**DIRECTIONS)**

~... on a single red flower  
growing from the ruins of the  
starship in the desert. Fade to  
black. The End.'

**APPLAUSE.**

**136 OMITTED 136**

**136A OMITTED 136A**

**137 INT. TONY'S HOTEL ROOM - EVENING 137**

Mendez, lying on his bed with the phone. Near him, a copy of VARIETY turned to a full-page ad. ( This is real -- Variety): STUDIO SIX PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS: ARGO: A

**COSMIC CONFLAGRATION.**

ARGO - Final 53.

**138 INT. NEAR O'DONNELL'S OFFICE - MORNING 138**

O'Donnell comes from the kitchen to find ENGELL waiting. He hands O'Donnell a copy of Variety. ARGO TO BEGIN SHOOTING IN MARCH. Oscar-winner Chambers, Siegel Among Producers.□

And there is a photo of Mendez from the press event. Smiling and holding a laser gun.

**139 INT. TONY'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING 139**

Mendez, seeing red, pacing --

**MENDEZ**

Why'd he do it?

**O'DONNELL (V.O.)**

He did it ~cause he did it.

**INTERCUT WITH:**

**140 INT. O'DONNELL'S OFFICE - MORNING 140**

**O'DONNELL**

He saw a covert intelligence officer saying ~cheese' with R2-D2. They're going with the

teachers.

**MENDEZ**

It's a death sentence, Jack.

**O'DONNELL**

Well then it's on Engell.

**(A BEAT)**

It's done, Tony. Wash your hands.  
He hangs up. Mendez, looking out the hotel window at

**L.A.**

**141 INT. ARGO PRODUCTION OFFICE - MORNING 141**

While Tony packs a bag of papers from his desk.

**SIEGEL**

I made thirty pictures. Half of  
them the pricks upstairs tried to  
shut me down.  
Mendez finishes packing, zips up the bag.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 54.

**141 CONTINUED: 141**

**SIEGEL**

My ass is staying right here and  
running a movie company.  
Mendez stops zipping as Siegel takes a bottle of Jack and  
three shot glasses from a drawer.

**SIEGEL**

**(POURS)**

Ey. The first shot of the  
picture.  
Lester gives glasses to each of them. Chambers holds up  
his glass.

**CHAMBERS**

Argo fuck yourself.  
They raise to that.

**MENDEZ AND SIEGEL**

Argo fuck yourself.  
They each do a shot. Then Tony picks up his bag and  
heads out. Before he gs --

**MENDEZ**

How'd you always get around the  
pricks upstairs?

**SIEGEL**

There's always another prick one  
floor higher up.

**142 EXT. STATE DEPARTMENT - DAY 142**

Mendez approaches the iconic building.

**143 INT. STATE DEPARTMENT LOBBY - DAY 143**

Mendez catches up with Jack on the second level of the  
lobby, opposite the row of flags.

**O'DONNELL**

What did you do to get the  
meeting?

**MENDEZ**

I used your name.  
Jack looks to Tony.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 55.

**143 CONTINUED: 143**

**MENDEZ**

You can forget about that time-  
share in Ocean City, Jack.

**144 INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - SEVENTH FLOOR - RECEPTION ROOM -**

**DAY**

Tony and O'Donnell sit in the waiting area, across from a SECRETARY. They look down the hall to see: CIA DIRECTOR ADMIRAL STANSFIELD TURNER, 50s, and SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE walk down the hall together, discussing something in hushed tones.

**O'DONNELL**

(under his breath)  
Brace yourself. It's like talking to those two old fucks on 'The Muppets.'  
Vance and Turner enter the room without recognizing them. Mendez and O'Donnell stand up.

145

**145 INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - SEVENTH FLOOR OFFICE - ANGLE -**

**DAY**

A concept drawing from Argo.

**TURNER (O.S.)**

Aliens and robots.

**MENDEZ (O.S.)**

Yes, sir.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

The four men are gathered in the back of Vance's office, around a table. Over them we see the STATE DEPARTMENT

**EMBLEM.**

TURNER is looking at the storyboard.

**TURNER**

You're telling me there's a movie office in Hollywood right now that's funded by the Central Intelligence Agency.

**MENDEZ**

Yes, sir.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 56.

**145 CONTINUED: 145**

**VANCE**

What's wrong with the bikes again?  
Vance, with a copy of Comics Week. THE NEXT STAR WARS?  
Next to it, a photograph from the press event: Mendez  
holding a laser gun. CANADIAN EPIC WILL BE FILMED IN THE

**MIDDLE EAST.**

**TURNER O'DONNELL**

... you think this -- We tried to get the message

**UPSTAIRS --**

**TURNER**

-- this is more plausible than  
teachers?

**O'DONNELL**

One, there are no foreign teachers  
in Iran anymore --

**MENDEZ**

-- two, we think everybody knows  
Hollywood people. And everybody  
thinks they would shoot during  
Stalingrad with Pol Pot directing  
if it'd sell tickets.

**(BEAT)**

There are only bad options. It's  
about finding the best one.

**TURNER**

You don't have a better bad idea  
than this?

**O'DONNELL**

This is the best bad idea we have,  
sir. By far.  
Vance and Turner exchange looks.

**TURNER**

**(TO MENDEZ)**

The United States government just

sanctioned your science fiction  
movie.

**146 INT. MENDEZ'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT 146**

Mendez is packing to go. He packs a passport with his photo and the name KEVIN COSTA HARKINS. He takes off his wedding band and places it with care -- almost with ceremony -- in a spot on his dresser.

ARGO - Final 57.

**147 OMITTED 147**

**148 INT. O'DONNELL'S CAR - NIGHT 148**

O'Donnell is driving, Mendez in the passenger seat. They just sit there for a moment. In the car.

**O'DONNELL**

I'm required to remind you that if you're detained, the agency will not claim you.

**MENDEZ**

Barely claim me as it is.

**O'DONNELL**

Your 'In Case Of's' good?

**MENDEZ**

Just Christine.  
They don't need to look at one another. A shared understanding.

**MENDEZ**

Guess I should have brought some books to read in prison.

**O'DONNELL**

Nah. They'll kill you long before prison.  
Tony gets out of the car, pulls his bags from the back seat, and slams the door. Headed into the airport.

**149 INT. ARGO PRODUCTION OFFICE - DUSK 149**

Siegel is standing in the office watching Jimmy Carter speak mournfully on TV, Chambers watching from a desk behind him.

**SIEGEL**

Bad news, bad news, even when it's good news it's bad news. Christ.  
(a phone starts

**RINGING)**

John Wayne's in the ground six months and this is what's left of America.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 58.

**149 CONTINUED: 149**

**CHAMBERS**

(picking up the

**PHONE)**

Studio Six.

**INTERCUT WITH:**

**150 INT. DULLES AIRPORT - NIGHT 150**

**MENDEZ**

We've got a green light.  
Chambers gives Siegel a thumbs-up.

**MENDEZ**

Keep the office running till you hear otherwise.  
(this means thank

**YOU)**

Argo fuck yourself.

151 INT. ARGO PRODUCTION OFFICE - DUSK 151

**CHAMBERS**

Argo fuck yourself.

152 OMITTED 152

153 INT. CHRISTINE'S HOUSE - NIGHT 153

The phone in the living room rings. No one is home.

154 INT. DULLES AIRPORT - NIGHT 154

Mendez hangs up the airport pay phone.

**CUT TO:**

155 INT. DULLES AIRPORT - LATER 155

He sits near a mailbox inside the terminal writing on a postcard with the Washington Monument on it.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE BUDDY-MAN. NO PHONE FOR A WHILE.**  
JACK WILL CALL. LOVE YOU BOTH. Then he adds: SO MUCH.  
He drops the card in the box and heads toward a gate marked LUFTHANSA.□

ARGO - Final 59.

156 OMITTED 156

157 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

157

The Houseguests are gathered around Bob Anders.

**BOB ANDERS**

-- it was thirty seconds for  
Christ's sake. To get some air in  
the yard. I couldn't breathe --

**MARK LIJEK J STAFFORD**

You know what the rules All it takes is one second  
are. to spot you.

**BOB ANDERS**

Who saw me go out?

**MARK LIJEK CORA LIJEK**

It dsn't matter. You did I did, actually. I saw go out. you.

**BOB ANDERS**

(to Cora Lijek)  
Miss Hall Monitor. Creeping around with her notebook --

**MARK LIJEK**

**(SOMETHING ROUSED)**

Don't talk to her that way.

**CORA LIJEK BOB ANDERS**

(to Mark) Little Laura Ingalls.  
I'll defend myself. Okay? Watching every move --  
A sound at the door, and they go silent.

**LEE SCHATZ**

Dad's home.  
Ken carrying his briefcase, cheerfully oblivious to what he's walked into.

**TAYLOR**

You're getting a visitor.

**158 OMITTED 158**

**159 INT. WEST WING - MORNING 159**

An NSC LIAISON, holding a file with a red stripe, walks to Jordan's office.

ARGO - Final 60.

**160 INT. CHIEF OF STAFF OFFICE - MORNING 160**

He finds Jordan sitting on a long table, looking exhausted, silently watching one of the monitors: The Today Show□ on NBC.

**JORDAN**

A man in Scranton's putting a flag on his lawn for every day of captivity.

**(BEAT)**

When he runs out of lawn, Kennedy wins the primary.  
Vance hands him the folder.

**LIAISON**

The six with the Canadians are coming out.  
Jordan, brought back from Scranton and politics by this, opens the file and looks at it.

**JORDAN**

(after a moment)  
Who signed off on this?

**161 OMITTED 161**

**161A EXT. ISTANBUL - DAY 161A**

ESTABLISHING SHOT. WIDE. OVER the city, featuring the famous domed mosques.

**SUPERIMPOSE: ISTANBUL - JANUARY 25**

**162 EXT. ISTANBUL - PLAZA ON THE WATER - DAY 162**

Mendez walks, the BOSPHORUS in the b.g. He reaches the doors of an OFFICIAL-LOOKING BUILDING and gs inside.

**163 INT. IRANIAN CONSULATE (ISTANBUL) - DAY 163**

Mendez sits in a reception room with a few VISA APPLICANTS. Photographs of the Ayatollah Khomeini hang on the wall. Two REVOLUTIONARY GUARD OFFICIALS in ill-fitting suits sit at a desk.

ARGO - Final 61.

**164 INT. IRANIAN CONSULATE - VISA OFFICE - DAY 164**

The IRANIAN CONSUL OFFICIAL, late 30s, is smoking.

**CONSUL OFFICIAL**

What will be the purpose of your visit to Iran?

**MENDEZ**

Business. Film production.  
The Consul Official looks at his Canadian passport.

**CONSUL OFFICIAL**

Why didn't you get your visa in Canada?

**MENDEZ**

My boss waited until I was here to send the telex.

**(LIGHTING CIGARETTE)**

If he had a thought in his head, it would die of loneliness. Pointed look from Mendez. The universal condition of boss hatred almost always works for him, and it ds now. Consul nods. Stamps the passport. KINGDOM OF IRAN -- He crosses out KINGDOM and writes by hand: ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF.

**164A EXT. BLUE MOSQUE - MORNING 164A**

Tony walks through the doorway revealing the historic mosque, we hear the call to prayer echo through the courtyard. Tony walks through the courtyard. We see some TOURISTS with ~70s Instamatics. Locals are HEADING

**IN TO PRAY.**

**165 INT. HAGIA SOPHIA - UPPER LEVEL - LATER 165**

We see the beautiful ceiling of the former cathedral. PULL BACK to reveal Tony stands looking out over the second level balcony. A MAN walks up behind him.

**MAN (O.S.)**

~Iran is a hundred percent not in a pre-revolutionary state.' End quote.

Mendez looks up: a MAN, late 40s-50s with a British accent, is talking to him. PETER NICHOLLS, an Oxbridge type and a very good spy.

(CONTINUED)

ARGO - Final 62.

**165 CONTINUED: 165**

**MENDEZ**

Can't be right all the time.

**NICHOLLS**

Mr. Harkins.

**MENDEZ**

When'd you get back?

**CUT TO:**

**165A INT. HAGIA SOPHIA - LOWER LEVEL - DAY 165A**

FIND Mendez and Nicholls.

**MENDEZ**

Were you metal detecting?

**NICHOLLS**

None left to find. Shah escaped with a 747 so laden with gold bars it nearly didn't make it off the runway.

**MENDEZ**

But you kept busy.

**NICHOLLS**

Ferrying out the torture apparatus of our friend's fallen dictatorship. Both these men do this work and share an unspoken understanding. They stop and look up at a MOSAIC on the wall. An ancient rendition of Christ, fashioned before the Muslims took the city and converted this church to a mosque. Nicholls has WHITE AND YELLOW SLIPS OF PAPER with Farsi writing on them in hand. He gives them to Tony.

**NICHOLLS**

It's getting worse. Everybody who lands at Mehrabad now fills out one of these.

(a WHITE one)

That slip makes a copy to this one underneath.

(a YELLOW one)

Passenger keeps Yellow, Airport keeps White.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 63.

**165A CONTINUED: 165A**

**NICHOLLS (CONT'D)**

When you leave the country, they match them up to verify you came into the country when you said you did.

**MENDEZ**

So if they look, they'll know six people didn't come in with me.

**NICHOLLS**

If they look.

Nicholls and Tony turn away from the mosaic, surreptitious work now done, and meander toward the middle of the great room.

**166 INT. HAGIA SOPHIA - CONTINUOUS ACTION 166**

Nicholls and Tony walk towards the inner courtyard.

**NICHOLLS**

When you land, you should go straight to the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance to kiss the ring. Get on record as having applied for a film permit.

If they catch you later, at least they'll be confused while they're torturing you... Your biggest problem may be convincing the six of them to go with you. They're foreign service. They're willful. Nicholls takes a picture.

**MENDEZ**

How's June?

**NICHOLLS**

Left.

**MENDEZ**

I'm sorry.

**NICHOLLS**

She picked out a ring and gave me a choice. She's a Chinese national. If I married her, I'd have to resign, so. You and Christine?

**MENDEZ**

Good. Yeah.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 64.

**166 CONTINUED: 166**

He said that without hesitation. Maybe here we realize that Mendez is a very good liar.

**166A EXT./INT. PRODUCERS' BUILDING - NIGHT 166A**

Lester is BOUNCING A RUBBER BALL. The PRODUCER from later in the movie walks by.

**PRODUCER**

You're working late.

**SIEGEL**

~Til the dawn's early light.

**PRODUCER**

You got stamina, Lester. I wanna be you.

**SIEGEL**

You wouldn't be me for long. I'm

**80.**

Producer walks away and Lester looks into the ~Argo' office as he squeezes the ball.  
FROM INSIDE THE OFFICE -- In the foreground, we see what Lester is looking at: a phone. Stubbornly silent.

**167 OMITTED 167**

**168 OMITTED 168**

**169 OMITTED 169**

**170 INT. BRITISH AIRWAYS DC-10 - MORNING 170**

Mendez sits in a window seat. A FLIGHT ATTENDANT speaks with a pleasant British accent.

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT (V.O.)**

The Captain has informed us that we have entered Iranian airspace. Members of our cabin crew will be coming through to collect any remaining alcoholic beverages at this time.

ARGO - Final 65.

**171 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY 171**

Mendez walks through the terminal of a crowded 1960s-era airport. Newly-hung portraits of the Ayatollah Khomeini watch over the duty-free shops.

**SUPERIMPOSE: TEHRAN - JANUARY 26**

The MOBS OF PEOPLE WITH BOXES OF THEIR WORLDLY BELONGINGS puts in high relief that Tony is going into a place that everyone else is desperately fleeing.

**172 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT IMMIGRATION - DAY 172**

Tony fills out a white form. It makes an impression on a YELLOW form.

Tony presents his passport to a REVOLUTIONARY GUARD IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL. Official looks at it, Tony hears the sound of a woman screaming in Farsi.

Three lanes away, at the outgoing immigration station, a Revolutionary Guard is dragging away the woman's HUSBAND. The Immigration Official stamps Tony's passport -- takes the white form, gives Tony the yellow one -- and waves him through.

**173 EXT. TEHRAN - DAY 173**

Archive footage may be mixed with new footage. Normal city life mixed with men with automatic weapons. The contradictions of Tehran at this moment.

**173A EXT. TEHRAN - DAY 173A**

A Massive HELICOPTER SHOT OF TEHRAN. We TILT DOWN to see a traffic jam SPRAWLS AROUND THE AZADI MONUMENT. Bikes, mopeds, pedestrians, peddlers and old, patched together cars compete for space. No one gets anywhere.

**174 INT. TAXI - DAY 174**

Mendez sits in the back of a taxi in the Tehran traffic, some of the worst traffic in the world. We see the AZADI MONUMENT out his window.

**ANGLES OUT HIS WINDOWS**

The Ayatollah looks down from everywhere.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 66.

**174 CONTINUED: 174**

A MAN IS HANGING FROM A CRANE. People mill underneath. Women in chadors at Kentucky Fried Chicken. An ARMED GANG in the back of pickup truck pulls up near his taxi.

We see PROPAGANDA painted on a wall/window.

**175 INT. TAXI/EXT. MINISTRY - DAY 175**

The taxi pulls up to a FORMAL, PINK BUILDING.  
The Driver stops. They've arrived.

**176 INT. MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND ISLAMIC GUIDANCE - DAY 176**

MEHDI BEHROUZ, 33, is the newly appointed Deputy Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance. Like many of the stars of the Revolution, he was educated in the U.S. Right now he's looking at the ARGO script.

**BEHROUZ**

This film crew is just yourself?

**MENDEZ**

Six more are joining me today.  
They're coming from Canada.

**BEHROUZ**

You'd like to film at the bazaar?

**MENDEZ**

The bazaar, maybe the palace.

**BEHROUZ**

**(NOT PARTICULARLY**

**FRIENDLY)**

I see. The exotic Orient. Snake charmers and flying carpets.

**(A BEAT)**

You come to us at a complicated time. Before the Revolution, 40 percent of the movie theaters in Tehran were showing pornography. Our function is purification as well as promotion of the arts.

**(TAKES SCRIPT)**

I'll review for the Minister.

ARGO - Final 67.

**177 EXT. CANADIAN EMBASSY - DAY 177**

A TAXI pulls away.  
Mendez, carrying his luggage, stands at a wrought iron gate with MAPLE LEAVES worked into the iron. Ken Taylor comes out of the building, opens the gate himself.

**MENDEZ**

Mr. Ambassador.

**TAYLOR**

Ken Taylor.  
He shakes Tony's hand and they start to walk to Taylor's car.

**TAYLOR**

I was expecting more of a G-Man look.

**MENDEZ**

You're thinking of FBI, sir.  
They get into the car.

**178 INT. TAYLOR'S CAR - OUTSIDE EMBASSY - CONTINUOUS ACTION**

178

Taylor gives Tony SIX BLANK CANADIAN PASSPORTS.

**TAYLOR**

These are blank, y'know. The stamps?

**MENDEZ**

I'll take care of that.

**TAYLOR**

How long?

**MENDEZ**

A day to prep them with their cover stories. Two if they need it.

**TAYLOR**

And you'll fly out with them?  
Tony nods. A distant sound of a crowd outside.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 68.

**178 CONTINUED: 178**

**TAYLOR**

There's something you should know.  
We think one of our housekeepers  
figured out who they are. We  
don't know if we can trust her.  
Now the noise outside is louder. Taylor turns to the  
window. Tony joins him.

**TAYLOR**

So sooner is better.  
They stand listening to the demonstration sounds, echoing  
over the rooftops of the city.

**179 OMITTED 179**

**179A INT. CIA - O'DONNELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT 179A**

**O'DONNELL**

He got to the embassy.  
O'Donnell closes the door. Pender, wearing an undone  
tuxedo, as if he's just been pulled from a formal event.  
They stay standing.

**O'DONNELL**

I can't tell you more than that  
~cause I don't know any more.

**PENDER**

(cutting to it)  
The Times and A.P. found out  
they're with the Canadians.  
Somebody in one of the families  
talked.

**O'DONNELL**

Mother of God.

**PENDER**

I just put Vance on a plane to  
take the editors to Le Cirque. He

thinks he can get them to sit on it. For now.

**(A BEAT)**

Your guy better get them and get the hell out.

ARGO - Final 69.

**180 EXT. SHEMIRANAT (TEHRAN) - DAY 180**

Ken Taylor drives up to a nice, but not huge, home in the expat/diplomatic neighborhood of Tehran. Automatic gates open.

**181 EXT./INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - DAY 181**

Taylor leads Mendez inside. Pat Taylor waits for them in the hall. Takes Tony's hand.

**182 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE (TEHRAN) - DAY 182**

They enter the LIVING ROOM... and here are the SIX HOUSEGUESTS. They're looking at Mendez like kids waiting to be told the lesson plan.

**183 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - 183**

**NIGHT**

Each Houseguest has a copy of the ARGO script.

**BOB ANDERS**

It's theater of the absurd.

**MARK LIJEK**

What are the chances?

**MENDEZ**

The chances are good.

**MARK LIJEK**

What's the number value of ~good'?  
30 percent chance of success? 80  
percent?

**CORA LIJEK**

We just --

**BOB ANDERS**

What was the objection to picking normal cover identities?

**MENDEZ**

There are no Canadians in the country for normal reasons.

**KATHY STAFFORD MARK LIJEK**

They'll sniff us out The Swedish consul said regardless. they accused him of being an American at the airport and held him for an hour.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 70.

**183 CONTINUED: 183**

**BOB ANDERS**

We can't stand up to that. We don't know what the hell movie people do.

**MENDEZ**

That's why I'm here. I'll be with you. This is what I do.

**CORA LIJEK**

Have you gotten people out this way before?

**MENDEZ**

This would be a first.

**CUT TO:**

**184 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - 184**

**NIGHT**

**THE HOUSEGUESTS --**

minus J and Kathy Stafford, go into the living room. Mendez stays in his seat; J approaches him.

**J STAFFORD KATHY STAFFORD**

Do you know that every ... J, don't. day...

**J STAFFORD**

... every day they catch another friend of the shah at the airport. Kangaroo trials then firing squads. Just for having American names in their phone books. He puts the Iranian newspaper in front of Mendez.

**J STAFFORD**

You've been here an hour and you're asking us to trust you with our lives, Mr. --

**MENDEZ**

Harkins.

**J STAFFORD**

Is that your real name?  
A beat.

**MENDEZ**

No.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 71.

**184 CONTINUED: 184**

J Stafford nods, as if this has proven a point. He goes back into the living room, followed by Kathy.

**ANGLE ON THE PHOTOGRAPH**

in the Tehran Times. A MAN IN A SUIT at Mehrabad Airport. Terrified, being led out at gunpoint.

**185 EXT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - VERANDA - NIGHT**

Mendez comes out and lights a cigarette. Ken Taylor is already there.

**TAYLOR**

We've got orders to close the embassy and go back. There's nowhere for them to stay.

**186 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - 186****NIGHT****J STAFFORD**

I'm serious, too. This is what?

**BOB ANDERS J STAFFORD**

Don't do this, J... ... the part where we say, ~That's so crazy it just might work'? C'mon...

**BOB ANDERS**

I saw it in Burma. They get people out. They know how.

**J STAFFORD**

Snitches in banana republics. They get them over the border after the coup...

**BOB ANDERS J STAFFORD**

That's your opinion. ... pay the guards at the crossing a hundred bucks to look the other way...

**MARK LIJEK**

His opinion got us out of the embassy in the first place.

## 187 EXT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - VERANDA - NIGHT

**MENDEZ**

If we go, you need to leave immediately. There's a

**DANGER --**

**TAYLOR**

Pat and I discussed it. If they catch you at the airport, they come here and we go on trial for harboring the enemy. It's a risk we took.

(after a moment)

Can you pull this off?

**MENDEZ**

I don't know.

## 188 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - 188

**NIGHT**

**J STAFFORD**

-- even if they do. They find us here, we're not lying, we're just hiding. We go out there with fake passports, we're spies, period, execution.

**CORA LIJEK**

So how long do we stay? A month? A year?

**J STAFFORD**

That man out there, he's got bad cards, he's gonna lose. If he loses, it's our lives.

**KATHY STAFFORD**

(after a beat)

And his life too.

Another beat. ANGLES ON the Houseguests.

**CUT TO:**

**189 OMITTED 189**

ARGO - Final 73.

189A

**189A INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM -**

**NIGHT**

**MENDEZ**

Your cover identities were created specifically for each one of you. Mendez, now dressed to leave, is handing each Houseguest an envelope.

**MENDEZ**

What I need you to do is memorize everything inside. Who you are, what you are, where you've been. Cora Lijek looks at a document from inside her envelope. A union card for the Canadian Writers Guild with her picture on it.

**MENDEZ**

When we're done, you'll know these so well that you'll dream as these people. Mendez nods at them, and gs. The Houseguests look at what's inside their envelopes -- all except J Stafford, whose envelope remains sealed.

**190 INT. SHERATON HOTEL - NIGHT 190**

A TELEFAX MACHINE spells out a message, letter by letter:

**MR KEVIN HARKINS - CARE OF HOTEL SHERATON.□**

**191 OMITTED 191**

**192 INT. SHERATON ROOM - NIGHT 192**

Tony is PREPPING the CANADIAN PASSPORTS -- expertly copying Farsi stamps with a small sharpened stick. A KNOCK on the door. Tony hides the passports. Answers the door.

**BELLHOP**

Sir, a telex arrived for you.  
The BELLHOP hands Tony a piece of paper. He reads it.

**CUT TO:**

ARGO - Final 74.

**193 INT. SHERATON ROOM - NIGHT 193**

Mendez takes a small 1978 model radio out of his suitcase. He unscrews the casing and from inside takes out what looks like a 6-inch transistor board for the radio.

On either side of the board: telephone jacks. He detaches the cords from the hotel phone and plugs them into the jacks on the transistor board. It's a phone scrambler.

**MENDEZ (V.O.)**

'The Minister of Culture and Guidance has approved your location scout.'

**194 INT. SHERATON ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER 194**

Mendez, on the phone --

**MENDEZ**

(reading the telefax)  
'He will send a representative to meet you and your crew at the Khayyam entrance to the Grand Bazaar tomorrow at 3 PM.'

**INTERCUT WITH:**

**195 INT. O'DONNELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT 195**

O'Donnell on the phone.

**O'DONNELL**

They called your bluff.

**MENDEZ**

Or maybe they're cooperating.

**O'DONNELL**

N.E. says absolutely not. Seven Americans walking the bazaar, you're asking for a riot, it's the

**HIVE --**

**MENDEZ**

Seven Canadians, Jack.

**O'DONNELL**

Never give them multiple shots at a cover. Are they even ready?

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 75.

**195 CONTINUED: 195**

**MENDEZ**

They're getting there.

**O'DONNELL**

Terrific. There's no prize for ~Most Improved.'

**MENDEZ**

**(ESCALATING)**

I don't have a choice. We say no, they come to the residence and pull everyone out at gunpoint. How do you think the covers hold up with their fingernails pulled out?

**196 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

196

Mark Lijek is studying pages from the envelope Tony gave him. J Stafford is sitting near him, having a drink, watching Iranian State Television footage of the

Ayatollah. J Stafford translates out loud.

**J STAFFORD**

~We are a nation of 35 million  
and... many of these people are  
looking forward to martyrdom.~  
Kathy Stafford looks into the room. J stops talking,  
looks up.

**J STAFFORD**

**(TO KATHY)**

Five minutes?  
He smiles at her. Kathy, who looks like she hasn't been  
sleeping, nods and leaves. J takes a drink. After a

**MOMENT --**

**J STAFFORD**

She pleaded with me.  
Mark, looking to J. This is new.

**J STAFFORD**

When it started in the streets  
nine months ago. She begged for  
us to leave. She packed our bags.  
I said, ~A little longer.' And  
what I was thinking was, ~This is  
a good thing for me. Stay. Show  
Newsom you've got the balls. Grab  
for the ring.'

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 76.

**196 CONTINUED: 196**

**J STAFFORD (CONT'D)**

**(A BEAT)**

I think we're gonna die here.

**197 INT. KOMITEH HEADQUARTERS (AMIR ABAD DISTRICT) - DAY 197**

The feeling here is dangerous. Young men carrying automatic weapons casually. Behrouz stands next to ALI KHALKALI, 30s, a Revolutionary Committee security official. There are RECONSTRUCTED

**EMBASSY PICTURES ON THE WALL.**

We see the FAMOUS PICTURES OF THE HOSTAGES BEING MARCHED  
**DOWN THE STEPS.**

**197A**

**197A INT. KOMITEH HEADQUARTERS STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS ACTION**

A Kafka-esque stairway. We see a YOUNG KOMITEH call up from the bottom and head up the stairs.  
JUMP CUT TO: one flight to go.  
Now on the level WITH CAMERA, we carry him INTO the office as he hands off the ARGO script and STUDIO SIX BUSINESS CARD. Khalkali has some words in Farsi for the young man.

**198 EXT. SHERATON BALCONY - MORNING 198**

Tony looks at one of the Argo storyboards -- one depicting an EXOTIC SPICE MARKET, a BAZAAR -- in the light.

**CORA LIJEK (V.O.)**

This isn't what we agreed to.

**199**

**199 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - KEN'S OFFICE -**

**MORNING**

The Houseguests are gathered in the office. Cora hands the telefax to Bob Anders. J Stafford, looking on.

**CORA LIJEK**

You said ~a day to learn your covers then straight to the airport.' You said that.

**BOB ANDERS**

They suspect something?

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 77.

**199 CONTINUED: 199**

**MENDEZ**

What I know is we need to act like a movie crew. We go to the bazaar today, we fly out tomorrow. Silent assent among the group. Then J Stafford, sitting with his wife, speaks up --

**J STAFFORD**

We won't do it.

**MARK LIJEK**

He told them there were six of us. They're expecting six.

**J STAFFORD**

**(TO MENDEZ)**

You are about to show the only card we're holding. Which is that they don't know we're here.

**MENDEZ**

I'm asking you to trust me.

**J STAFFORD**

I don't trust you.

**BOB ANDERS**

(fed up, to J)  
What's the alternative? This is the ball game, J. What world are you living in?

**J STAFFORD**

The one where they're hanging people from construction cranes, Bob.  
J takes Kathy's hand and goes, leaving Mendez with the others. After a moment --

**MARK LIJEK**

**(TO MENDEZ)**

So we'll see you at two?

**200 INT. CARPET FACTORY - MORNING 200**

A KOMITEH BOSS inspects the work of the CARPET WEAVER KIDS -- whose numbers have grown into the HUNDREDS -- as they labor quietly.  
Some HEADSHOTS are in various stages of repair.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 78.

**200 CONTINUED: 200**

Dozens of documents are now complete, sitting on the floor in rows. Some pages from the EMBASSY MUG BOOK are now re-assembled. The boss picks one of the pages up: meticulously worked so that text and photos are now intact.

**201 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - DAY 201**

**PAT TAYLOR**

This one.

She gives Bob Anders a Canadian maple leaf lapel pin, which he affixes to his shirt. Cora Lijek paints lighter hair dye onto her hair. The Houseguests are making subtle efforts to disguise themselves.

**CORA LIJEK**

(at a mirror, quoting

**INSTRUCTIONS)**

So don't be recognizable, but look exactly like your passport picture.

**MARK LIJEK**

Not that picture. You won't want to scare them.

A nervous smile. Trying to deal with anxiety.  
J and Kathy Stafford look to each other. Sitting reading newspapers while the other Houseguests prep for the scout. The PHONE starts ringing.

**PAT TAYLOR**

(answering the phone)  
Hello?  
A cloud comes over Pat as she listens.

**PAT TAYLOR**

No, there's no one like that here.  
She hangs up the phone fast, as if it were hot to the touch.

**BOB ANDERS**

Who was it?  
Pat shakes her head.

**ON J STAFFORD**

listening. Kathy takes his hand.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 79.

**201 CONTINUED: 201**

**KATHY STAFFORD**

**(TO J)**

Somebody knows.

**202 INT. SHERATON ROOM - DAY 202**

Tony getting dressed. Thinking.  
He gets up and leaves, and we start to hear the sound of a man talking fast in Farsi.

**203 EXT. CAR RENTAL - DAY 203**

It's a CAR RENTAL MAN, 60s, speaking. Tony is looking at a MINIVAN on a lot of beaten-up rental cars.

**MENDEZ**

This one, how much? One day, how much?

**204 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - DAY 204**

Four of the Houseguests are waiting on the couch, dressed in their best approximation of the clothes of a movie scout crew. Cora has the maple leaf flag pin on her shirt.

They turn when they see Tony come in the door.

Tony as he steps down into the living room, down the hall

--

**205 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - DAY 205**

... to find J Stafford sitting at the table. They are badly shaken.

**MENDEZ**

I promise you that if you will play along today, I will get you out tomorrow.

**J STAFFORD**

I wish I could believe you, Mr. Harkins.

**MENDEZ**

My name is Tony Mendez.  
Mendez goes back out to the minivan. STAY WITH J and Kathy.

ARGO - Final 80.

**206 INT. MINIVAN - DAY 206**

Mendez, in the driver's seat, looks at the house, then at his watch. He starts up the van, filled with four of the Houseguests.

Then he looks in the rearview and sees one of the back doors open. J and Kathy Stafford board.

**207 EXT. TEHRAN - DAY 207**

Tony drives the minivan through streets of Tehran. The Houseguests sit in silence, looking out the windows. There is a vehement DEMONSTRATION going on -- stars-and-stripes burning in Molavi Square -- and it's taking place

right in their way.  
They stop at the demonstration, then realize people aren't passing by as much as celebrating in the street. Tony is forced to nose his way through the crowd -- chanting and yelling -- some SLAPPING THE WINDOWS. They finally get through and pull away. With the demonstration receding behind them, Tony tries to regain their focus.

**MENDEZ**

Tell me who you are.  
This recalls attention from the windows.

**LEE SCHATZ**

Mike McEwan, cameraman.

**BOB ANDERS**

Robert Baker, director.

**MARK LIJEK**

Timothy Harris, location manager.

**CORA LIJEK**

Mary Ann Boyd, screenwriter.

**KATHY STAFFORD**

Rachel Dewart, production designer.  
Kathy looks at her husband.

**J STAFFORD**

Sean Bissett, associate producer.

**MENDEZ**

Let's make a movie.

ARGO - Final 81.

**208 EXT. STREET NEAR THE BAZAAR - DAY 208**

The minivan double-parks on Musavi Street. Taxis, men loading and unloading rolled-up carpets onto pickup trucks, chaos.  
A YOUNG MAN IN SUIT WITH NO TIE waits. This is REZA, mid-20s, a low-level administrator in the Ministry of

Guidance.

Mendez gets out and they speak and shake hands. The image FREEZES. In a BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPH. They exchange pleasantries and Reza leads them down a narrow street toward the bazaar.

**209 EXT./INT. TEHRAN BAZAAR - DAY 209**

Reza is leading Mendez and the group of Houseguests through the Tehran Bazaar. A word about the place: the world's largest bazaar. 10 kilometers of narrow alleys. Chinese-made Swiss watches, banks, mosques, butchers, fabric stores, gold stands. Boys with hand-trucks loaded down with piles of fabric cut through the crowd. Older Islamic architecture elbows up against neon signs and rickety wooden stands with second-story balconies like Bourbon Street.

Bob Anders walks toward the front.

**REZA**

You are the director?

**BOB ANDERS**

Yes.

**REZA**

**(PLEASANT)**

Is this film a foreign bride film?

**BOB ANDERS**

I'm sorry?

**REZA**

A film where a foreign bride is brought to Iran, but she dsn't understand the language and customs and there are misunderstandings and laughs.

**BOB ANDERS**

No.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 82.

**209 CONTINUED: 209**

**REZA**

(not happy with that)

Mmmm.

Mendez walking toward the back of the group. Lee, the cameraman, is looking through a viewfinder down the alley of the bazaar.

**MENDEZ**

**(QUIET)**

Mike?

**LEE SCHATZ**

(not looking up)

Yeh.

**MENDEZ**

If I said you were looking through the wrong end of that viewfinder, would I be right?

Lee turns the viewfinder around and looks through it again.

**LEE SCHATZ**

Yep.

**ANGLE**

Mendez talking to Lee from a distance. A zoom, a closer snapshot of LEE. Then of CORA LIJEK, who walks through the bazaar with an open ARGO SCRIPT in her hand. The Revolutionary Guard photographer is taking pictures of each of the Houseguests, picking their portraits off one by one like a sniper.

**210 EXT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE (TEHRAN) - DAY 210**

Two sedans turn onto the property and head up the driveway.

Ali Khalkali, the revolutionary official, gets out of one of the cars. He's joined by a couple other OFFICIALS and by two armed REVOLUTIONARY GUARDS.

Sahar is moving through the garden, she sees the men approach. She goes to greet them at the gate.

**SAHAR**

(Farsi, from behind

**THE GATE)**

Yes?

ARGO - Final 83.

**211 OMITTED 211**

**212 INT. TEHRAN BAZAAR - DAY 212**

Reza leads Mendez and the Houseguests deeper into this city within a city; fundamentalist ground zero. BAZAARIS stand at their shop doors; puzzled; unfriendly; watching the visitors.

Kathy Stafford, the production designer on the scout, takes a Polaroid of a window adorned in gold. The SHOPKEEPER, a 70-ish bazaari, sees her do so. He hurries out of his store, speaking in rapid-fire Farsi at her. The Houseguests stop. Reza speaks to the Shopkeeper.

**REZA**

**(TO KATHY)**

He wants the photograph you took.

**MENDEZ**

She's the production designer.  
Her job is to take photographs.  
SHOPKEEPER getting more and more heated in Farsi.

**REZA**

He says he did not give you permission to take a photograph of his store.  
Other BAZAARIS and SHOPPERS are starting to gather.  
Kathy holds out the Polaroid toward the Shopkeeper.

**KATHY STAFFORD**

He can have the photograph. Tell

**HIM --**

The Shopkeeper knocks the Polaroid out of her hand.

**213 INT./EXT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - ENTRANCE -**

**DAY**

**KHALKALI**

**(FARSI)**

When did they arrive?

**SAHAR**

**(FARSI)**

I'm sorry?

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 84.

**213 CONTINUED: 213**

**KHALKALI**

**(FARSI)**

The guests of the ambassador. How long have they been in this house?

**214 INT. TEHRAN BAZAAR - DAY 214**

People are now starting to surround Mendez and Reza and the Houseguests. Bazaaris more and more heated. Women in chadors are screaming and finger-pointing.

**ANGRY MAN**

**(IN ENGLISH)**

America NO!... NO!

Then he speaks in Farsi and makes shooting gestures with his hand.

**LEE SCHATZ**

(quiet, to Mendez)

He's saying the Shah killed his son with an American gun.

Cauldron heating up and --

215

215 INT./EXT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - ENTRANCE -

**DAY**

ON Sahar -- her face impassive -- and then --

**SAHAR**

**(FARSI)**

Two days. They arrived two days ago.

Khalkali looks to the other Officials.

216

216 INT. TEHRAN BAZAAR - ANGLE ON MORE AND MORE BAZAARIS -

**DAY**

A CROWD starts to gather around the group.

**ON KATHY**

Her claustrophobia as the crowd closes in -- an ANGRY BAZAARI WOMAN sticks her finger in Kathy's face --

**CORA LIJEK**

(to one of the women)  
Canada... Ca-na-da...

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 85.

**216 CONTINUED: 216**

She's showing a Canadian flag, Bob Anders' lapel button --

**LEE SCHATZ**

(quiet; to Mendez)  
He says we're the CIA taking photographs to plan the bombing of the city.

217

217 INT./EXT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - ENTRANCE -

**DAY**

Khalkali eyes Sahar, gauging her. She hides her fear well.

**KHALKALI**

**(FARSI)**

Sister, those who are with him, Rasool of Allah, we are tender among ourselves.

**(BEAT)**

But stern against the kuffar.

**SAHAR**

As god wills it.

**KHALKALI**

**(QUOTING MOSSADEGH)**

But those who sit silently have sinned.

Does he know? Does he not know? Is he trying to trick her? His opacity makes it impossible to know. He holds his look to her -- and she holds hers.

**218 INT. TEHRAN BAZAAR - DAY 218**

Reza indicates an exit to the street.

**219 INT./EXT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - ENTRANCE -**

219

**DAY**

-- and Sahar, so dignified and stony she is almost shaming these men --

**SAHAR**

Everyone in this house is a friend of Iran.

Khalkali makes his decision. He wordlessly turns to go.

**220 INT. TEHRAN BAZAAR - DAY 220**

The CROWD heckles the Houseguests as they walk toward the exit.

**221 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - FOYER - DAY 221**

Sahar calmly closes the door.  
After she ds, she lets the facade go. All of a sudden scared. Maybe she tears up. Either way, it's clear she knows the stakes of the game she is playing.

**222 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - AFTERNOON 222**

The aftermath. The Houseguests, badly shaken, come inside. Each dealing with shock and adrenaline. Ken Taylor comes up next to Mendez and, for once, Taylor's ambassadorial calm is breaking.

**TAYLOR**

They drew you out there to take your picture.

**MENDEZ**

Nobody broke.  
At the door to the residence, Tony can see Pat Taylor, holding Sahar's hand, both looking spooked as the Houseguests come inside.

**TAYLOR**

**(SOBERED NOW)**

And tomorrow?  
A beat on Mendez, who stamps out his cigarette and follows.

**MENDEZ**

Tomorrow they'll be ready.  
We start to hear the sound of the evening's call to prayer, amplified over a megaphone, in the distance.

**THEN --**

**223-224 OMITTED 223-224**

ARGO - Final 87.

**224A MONTAGE - EXT. TEHRAN - DUSK 224A**

The call to prayer echoing as night falls in Tehran. In an alley where cloaked women hurry past posters of Khomeini. On a street where a five-year-old boy, in the care of his eight-year-old brother, watches a pickup truck of armed komiteh speed past.

**224B INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT 224B**

Mendez holds a passport and some papers in front of Bob Anders' face. It feels late. The Houseguests are tired, sweating, sitting around a dining room. Mendez, sleeves rolled up, drilling them. The ARGO STORYBOARDS are scattered around the room.

**MENDEZ**

Where was your passport issued?  
Bob Anders dsn't know. ANGLES ON the Houseguests.

**ANDERS**

Vancouver.

**MENDEZ**

Where were you born?

**BOB ANDERS**

Toronto.

**MENDEZ**

Toronno like piranha. Canadians don't pronounce the T.

**LEE SCHATZ**

Some border guard's gonna know that?

**MENDEZ**

If you're held for questioning, they'll bring in somebody who knows that.

**MENDEZ**

(to Cora Lijek)  
Last three Canadian prime minsters.

**CORA LIJEK**

(an A student)

Trudeau, Pearson, Diefenbaker.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 88.

**224B CONTINUED: 224B**

**MENDEZ**

Good.  
(to J Stafford)  
Your job on the film.

**J STAFFORD**

Producer.

**MENDEZ**

Associate Producer. What's the name of the last film you worked on?

**J STAFFORD**

Uh... High and Dry.

**MENDEZ**

Who paid for the movie?

**J STAFFORD**

**C.F.D.C.**

**MENDEZ**

What's your middle name?  
J Stafford is silent. He looks down to consult the paper in front of him, but before he can, Mendez pulls the paper.

**MENDEZ**

He's an American spy. Shoot him.  
A beat on Stafford, frustrated --

**MENDEZ**

They'll try to break you by getting you agitated. You need to know your rÃ©sumÃ© so well that you

don't flinch.

**J STAFFORD**

(nearly defeated,

**LOOKING AWAY)**

You think your little story will matter when there's guns to our heads?

**MENDEZ**

My story's the only thing between you and the gun to your head. A beat. Mendez puts the rÃ©sumÃ© back in front of Stafford. Kathy looks at her husband: he just isn't good at this.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 89.

**224B CONTINUED: (2) 224B**

**MENDEZ**

Let's go again.

**224C INT. CIA - THE PIT - AFTERNOON 224C**

O'Donnell, walking toward his office. It's the first time today Malinov has seen him.

**MALINOV**

**(GOOD NEWS)**

They made it through the location scout.

O'Donnell ignores him. He goes straight to his office. Looking like he's seen a ghost.

**224D EXT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - VERANDA - NIGHT**

**224D**

Mendez, finishing a cigarette outside. We might hear the distant sound of a phone ringing. Ken Taylor emerges. Waits a beat.

**TAYLOR**

Kevin.

**224E INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - KEN TAYLOR'S**  
**224E**

**OFFICE - CROSS-CUTTING - NIGHT**

Mendez picks up the complicated-looking satellite phone in Ken Taylor's home office. As soon as he ds --

**O'DONNELL**

Go to black on green.  
Jack's calling him here, so he knows something's wrong.

**MENDEZ**

What is it?

**O'DONNELL**

Go to black on green.  
Mendez turns knobs on the satellite phone.

**224F INT. O'DONNELL'S OFFICE - CROSS-CUTTING - AFTERNOON**  
**224F**

We see Jack is on a GREEN PHONE.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 90.

**224F CONTINUED: 224F**

**O'DONNELL**

It all just changed. They called the game. You've got to come back.  
ON Mendez, not believing what he's hearing.

**O'DONNELL**

(quiet, fast, clear)  
Joint Chiefs are planning a military rescue of the hostages in a month. Delta Force started

training to storm the grounds. So if the six of them get brought down there, they won't be held for long.

**MENDEZ**

I never would have exposed them if I wasn't authorized to take them out.

**O'DONNELL**

It's over, Tony.

**MENDEZ**

They will be taken. Probably not

**ALIVE --**

**O'DONNELL**

LISTEN TO ME. The thinking's changed. Six Americans get pulled out of a Canadian diplomat's house and executed, it's another world outrage. Six Americans get caught playing movie make-believe with the CIA at the airport and executed, it's a national embarrassment. They're calling the operation.

**MENDEZ**

We're responsible for those people.

**O'DONNELL**

**(GENUINELY SAD)**

What we are is required to follow orders. I'm sorry.  
Mendez hangs up. O'Donnell sits listening to the dial tone for a moment, then puts the phone on the receiver.

**(CONTINUED)**

**224F CONTINUED: (2) 224F**

Then, very suddenly, he looks at an old coffee cup near him and backhands it off his desk.

**TIME CUT TO:**

**224G**

**224G INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - KEN TAYLOR'S**

**OFFICE - NIGHT**

Maybe only a minute, maybe ten or more have passed. Mendez sits at Taylor's desk, numb. Cora Lijek knocks but dsn't get a response. She tentatively opens the door and sticks her head inside.

**CORA LIJEK**

We're ready to try again.

**MENDEZ**

(after a beat)

I think the most important thing you can do to be ready for tomorrow is rest.

**TIME CUT TO:**

**225 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - 225**

**NIGHT**

Now the mood among the Houseguests is lighter. Bob Anders, a handful of liquor bottles in his arms, puts them down on a table. Music plays on a record player.

**BOB ANDERS**

Scorched earth policy tonight. Nothing gets left. Taylor comes in, drink in hand, thoughts heavy, looks at Tony.

**MENDEZ**

So you know.

**TAYLOR**

**(NODS)**

ExtAff wants you to burn the passports before you leave. Mendez looks at the Houseguests, setting the table.

**TAYLOR**

If we tell them, they'll panic.  
It's better if you just don't  
show.

**(A BEAT)**

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 92.

**225 CONTINUED: 225**

**TAYLOR (CONT'D)**

It was always a fucked mission.  
You came closer than anybody else.  
Kathy and Cora are cracking each other up.  
No one sees Mendez take a bottle of Macallan from the  
table and put it in his bag.

**226 INT. CAR - NIGHT 226**

Mendez drives through nighttime Tehran, back to the  
hotel.  
There is a dangling TOTEM from the rearview mirror. It  
reflects light.  
He passes a VAN ON FIRE.

**227 OMITTED 227**

**228 INT. SHERATON ROOM - NIGHT 228**

Mendez takes the bottle of Macallan from his bag. He  
takes a drink, then drinks more.

**229 OMITTED 229**

**230 INT. ARGO PRODUCTION OFFICE - DAY 230**

Chambers, listening on a phone, shakes his head at  
Siegel. He hangs up.

**CHAMBERS**

It's off. They want us to pack up the office.

A beat on Lester. He's devastated but he's not showing it.

**SIEGEL**

They can wait. Let's go get a drink.

**231 EXT. TEHRAN - DAWN 231**

The city waking up.

ARGO - Final 93.

**232 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - DAWN 232**

The Houseguests, getting dressed. Suiting up for the airport.  
Ken Taylor watches in the hall.

**233 INT. SHERATON ROOM - DAWN 233**

Mendez -- who looks like he hasn't slept -- sits at a table, looking out the window.

**234 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - DAWN 234**

Lee Schatz puts his Infant of Prague holy card into an Argo script. Packs the script.  
Cora Lijek is sitting next to her husband.  
Kathy Stafford looks at the clock.

**KATHY STAFFORD**

(to J Stafford)  
He's late.

**235 EXT. SHERATON BALCONY - DAWN 235**

Tony comes out to the balcony with a hotel ice bucket in one hand and the Canadian passports in the other. He puts the passports in the bucket, LIGHTS A MATCH. He looks down at the match, at the passports. The first stirring of the morning calls-to-prayer echo in the distance.

HOLD for a long beat ON Tony. Thinking.  
Then, HE BLOWS OUT THE MATCH.

**236 INT. O'DONNELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT 236**

O'Donnell is packing up for the night. Paper towels sit  
on top of the coffee spill on his rug.  
His phone rings. He picks up.

**O'DONNELL**

Yeah.

ARGO - Final 94.

**237 INT. SHERATON ROOM - DAWN 237**

**MENDEZ**

Somebody is responsible for things  
when things happen, Jack. I am  
responsible.

**(A BEAT)**

I'm taking them through.  
And before Jack can answer, Tony hangs up. Stands. A  
duffel bag over his shoulder, Tony turns out the light in  
the hotel room. Gs.

**238 INT. CIA (LANGLEY) - O'DONNELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT 238**

O'Donnell, thinking. Looking at the phone. Then, with a  
sudden decision, he gets up.  
Rushing out of his office, into --

**239 INT. CIA - THE PIT - NIGHT 239**

-- where he catches ALAN SOSA, 50s, head of the  
Directorate of Support -- the CIA's chief financial  
officer -- leaving for the night.

**O'DONNELL**

We need to confirm those seven  
tickets out of Tehran on

**SWISSAIR --**

**SOSA**

N.E. shut that down.

**O'DONNELL**

I'm saying it's back on!

**SOSA**

I can't do it. It's backstopped  
pending Executive Branch GO.

**O'DONNELL**

What the fuck ds that mean?

**SOSA**

Carter's got to say yes for us to  
get the tickets.

**240 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - DAWN 240**

Pat Taylor comes to answer an insistent knocking on her  
front door. She opens it.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 95.

**240 CONTINUED: 240**

She's shocked to see him. Ken Taylor now appears behind  
Pat. In the hall behind him: The Houseguests are  
assembled, waiting to go. They look their parts -- or,  
much more so than they did on the scout. Cora Lijek has  
darker hair. The Staffords look on, fully dressed.

**241 INT. OUTSIDE ENGELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT 241**

**O'DONNELL**

Where's Engell?

**SECRETARY**

He's in a meeting.

**O'DONNELL**

Pull him out.

(as she hesitates)

**PULL HIM OUT!**

**242 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - DAWN 242**

Pat Taylor is embracing the Houseguests, saying goodbye.

**PAT TAYLOR**

Sahar's on a bus.

**MENDEZ**

Good. And you two leave right now.

Ken Taylor nods. Mendez shakes his hand.

**243 INT./EXT. MINIVAN - DAWN 243**

Mendez gets into the driver's seat. Lee Schatz on the passenger side.

We see Ken's black embassy sedan waiting, driven by a

**PAKISTANI DRIVER.**

Mendez pulls away.

**243A INT. KEN'S OFFICE - LATER 243A**

Ken Taylor watches a SGT. CLAUDE GAUTHIER, 30s, Canadian military policeman, use a sledgehammer to SMASH

**EVERYTHING IN THE OFFICE TO PIECES.**

Pat Taylor comes to the door. She's holding a suitcase.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 96.

**243A CONTINUED: 243A**

**TAYLOR**

(to Gauthier, as he

**LEAVES)**

Get to your flight.

**244 INT. OUTSIDE ENGELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT 244**

**ENGELL**

N.E. said NO, this is not a long-leasher...

**O'DONNELL ENGELL**

... watching a show behind ... and it never has been, a one-way whorehouse YOU don't decide if it mirror... gs...

**O'DONNELL**

It is going.

**ENGELL**

You're goddamn close...

**O'DONNELL**

Am I goddamn close?

**ENGELL**

You're goddamn close to the line with me.

**O'DONNELL**

**(INTERRUPTING)**

I'm not leaving him at the airport with six people and his dick in his hand. Tell the Director to call the White House. DO YOUR

**FUCKING JOB.**

Engell just stares O'Donnell down.

**245 INT./EXT. MINIVAN - MORNING 245**

The van speeds down the hills of the Shemiran district.

**MENDEZ (V.O.)**

The first checkpoint is just to look at your passport.

**246 FLASHBACK - INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT**

246

Mendez is sitting in the living room instructing the Houseguests.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 97.

**246 CONTINUED: 246**

**MENDEZ**

Your passports came straight from the Canadians, so you're gonna be fine.

247

**247 INT. CIA (LANGLEY) - THE PIT - NIGHT (A MOMENT LATER)**

**(PRESENT)**

O'Donnell, charging in --

**O'DONNELL**

Where's the Director?

**MALINOV**

He's on the plane.

**O'DONNELL**

Find White House Chief of Staff.

**MALINOV**

How would I find him?

**O'DONNELL**

We're a fucking SPY AGENCY! FIND

**HIM!**

248

**248 FLASHBACK - INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT**

**MENDEZ**

The second checkpoint --

**249 INT. CIA - THE PIT - NIGHT (PRESENT) 249**

**MALINOV**

Jordan's in the West Wing. He's

not taking calls.  
A beat on O'Donnell.

**O'DONNELL**

Where are his kids?

**LAMONT**

**WHAT?**

**O'DONNELL**

Where do his kids go to school?

250

**250 FLASHBACK - INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT**

He gives out yellow immigration forms to the Houseguests.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 98.

**250 CONTINUED: 250**

**MENDEZ**

The second is immigration. You'll hand them these. They say you landed two days ago.

**251 INT. MINIVAN - MORNING (PRESENT) 251**

Cora Lijek fingers her yellow immigration form in one hand, holds Mark's hand with the other.

**MENDEZ (V.O.)**

These guys are bureaucrats left over from the shah. They can't be bothered to second-guess you.

**252 INT. CIA - THE PIT - NIGHT 252**

Malinov slams a phone down.

**MALINOV**

Pace Academy in Buckhead, Georgia!

O'Donnell dials a number.

**O'DONNELL**

Yes, it's Mr. Murphy calling from Pace Academy for Mr. Jordan... I'm afraid it IS an emergency...

**253 INT. WHITE HOUSE OPERATOR ROOM - NIGHT 253**

**WHITE HOUSE OPERATOR**

Hold just a moment.  
She plugs a wire into an old-fashioned Ma Bell switchboard.

**MENDEZ (V.O.)**

Third checkpoint is the trap.

**254 INT. MINIVAN - MORNING 254**

The van pulls up to the airport. We see THROGS of people trying to get in -- so they can get out. Tony pulls the car to a semi-open place and tries not to run anyone over.

ARGO - Final 99.

255

**255 FLASHBACK - INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT**

**MENDEZ**

It's manned by Revolutionaries.  
Most of them were educated in the U.S. or Europe.

**BOB ANDERS**

Or Canada?

**MENDEZ**

They know how many ~T's are in Toronto.

256

**256 INT. WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF OFFICE - NIGHT (PRESENT)**

Jordan is in a meeting with two staffers, his feet up on the desk. His secretary opens the door without knocking, hurries to Jordan, whispers something in his ear. He immediately grabs the phone.

**JORDAN**

Hello?

**O'DONNELL (V.O.)**

Jack O'Donnell from C.I.

**JORDAN**

Wait -- WHO -- ?

**O'DONNELL (V.O.)**

Tehran Houseguest operation is ready NOW. We don't have the President's go-ahead. They are going to be captured.  
Jordan stands up with the phone.

**JORDAN**

(yelling out his

**DOOR)**

DAVID! Pick up!

**257 INT. KOMITEH HQ - MORNING 257**

The office we visited earlier. A YOUNG KOMITEH comes up the stairs again. This time, he's RUNNING.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 100.

**257 CONTINUED: 257**

KHALKALI, the fiery guy who came to the residence, along with two YOUNG KOMITEH compare (one who delivered the pictures): on one side, copies of re-assembled diplomatic photographs of Americans from the embassy -- like the ones of the Houseguests we saw early in the film -- and, on the other side, the candid photographs from the bazaar.

**258 INT. CIA - THE PIT - NIGHT 258**

**LAMONT**

Telex on Flash.

The telex begins to print, line by line...

**EYES ONLY -- OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES**  
-- HOLLYWOOD OPTION APPROVED -- GOOD LUCK. ( Carter  
White House telex, 1/29/1980.)

**O'DONNELL**

Copy D.S.! Confirm the tickets!

**GO!**

**259 INT. SWISSAIR COUNTER (MEHRABAD) - MORNING 259**

Mendez's and the Houseguests' passports sit on the  
counter.

**SWISSAIR REP**

I'm sorry, sir. I don't have  
those reservations...

SWISSAIR REP looks at some green text on her screen, hits  
another button.

**SWISSAIR REP**

My apologies. They just came  
through.

She hits another button and tickets start to print.

**260 INT. CIA - THE PIT - NIGHT 260**

**MALINOV**

(to O'Donnell)

Swissair says they've picked up  
the tickets.

**O'DONNELL**

Get the L.A. office -- tell them  
to be ready in case they call.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 101.

**260 CONTINUED: 260**

**MALINOV**

We told them to shut that down!  
He RUNS toward a phone --

**261 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - FIRST CHECKPOINT - MORNING 261**

The PASSPORT OFFICIAL is looking at the Canadian passports of the six and waving them through. Mendez has already passed. Everyone except Kathy Stafford. The Passport Official looks at Kathy, who is doing her best to look friendly and casual. Then he looks at Kathy's passport, in which she looks stern and angry. Kathy Stafford smoothes down her hair, frowns like she does in the passport photo. The Passport Official half smiles and waves her through. They've all cleared the first checkpoint.

**262 INT. KOMITEH HQ - MORNING 262**

Khalkali comes upon a diplomatic photograph of a man with glasses.  
He starts to leaf through the photographs from the bazaar.

**QUICK CUT TO:**

**263 EXT. BAZAAR - POV OF THE REVOLUTIONARY GUARD PHOTOGRAPHER 263**

**- DAY**

Mark Lijek being photographed at the bazaar the previous day.

**QUICK CUT BACK TO:**

**264 INT. KOMITEH HQ - MORNING 264**

**KHALKALI --**

looks at the black and white still of Mark Lijek, compares it to his diplomatic picture, the first portrait we saw of Mark toward the beginning of the film. MATCH.  
Khalkali stands up. SHOUTS in Farsi to another Komiteh --

ARGO - Final 102.

**265 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - SECOND CHECKPOINT - MORNING 265**

Bob Anders stands in front of a rough-voiced IMMIGRATION OFFICER. He's holding Bob Anders' YELLOW IMMIGRATION FORM and leafing through a file of hundreds of WHITE IMMIGRATION FORMS, the duplicates. Without success.

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER #2**

(in Farsi; to Officer #1, re: his own

**WHITE PILE)**

Nothing.

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER**

(to Bob Anders)  
When did you say you arrived in Iran?

**BOB ANDERS**

Two days ago.

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER**

What was the purpose of your visit?

**BOB ANDERS**

We were looking at locations to make a film. I'm the director. Immigration Officer pauses and looks up. Looks at the six other faces. He looks every bit as confrontational as Tony acted in rehearsal.

**BOB ANDERS**

**(VERY CALM)**

We have a letter from the Minister of Culture ...  
The Immigration Officer gestures for the letter. Bob takes the letter inviting them on their location scout out of a folder. Tony, barely perceptibly, nods.

**266 INT. KOMITEH HQ - MORNING 266**

Khalkali is now speaking with MORADI, an older Komiteh official. They speak Farsi and it's untranslated, but we get it. He is showing the photograph of Mark Lijek from the bazaar and comparing it to the U.S. diplomatic photograph.  
Moradi picks up the phone as Khalkali heads out.

ARGO - Final 103.

**267 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - SECOND CHECKPOINT - MORNING 267**

Immigration Officer is conferring with Immigration Officer #2 as they look at the letter from the Minister of Culture. The Houseguests and Mendez wait. Finally, Immigration Officer #2 shrugs.

**IMMIGRATION OFFICER**

Okay -- Yes -- Okay --  
He waves them through. Second checkpoint done.

**268 INT. CIA - THE PIT - NIGHT 268**

Malinov, a phone to his ear. Ringing.

**MALINOV**

C'mon c'mon c'mon --

**269 INT. ARGO PRODUCTION OFFICE - NIGHT 269**

The phone in the office rings. No one is there.

**270 EXT. WARNER BROS. STUDIOS - NIGHT 270**

Siegel and Chambers are walking back to the Argo office. They are within sight of the Argo bungalow, but a P.A. steps in front of them.

**P.A.**

(a stage whisper)  
I'm sorry, we're shooting.  
He motions for them to wait. A movie -- it looks like a police procedural -- is shooting on the lot between them and the office.

**271 INT. AIRPORT GATE - MORNING 271**

**ANNOUNCEMENT (V.O.)**

Swissair announces general  
boarding for Flight 363 to Zurich.  
Passengers, mostly European businessmen, get up and  
approach the gate.

ARGO - Final 104.

**272 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - THIRD CHECKPOINT - MORNING 272**

Mendez checks in with the Houseguests with his eyes.  
They are now in sight of the airport gates. And here are  
six Komiteh. Young men -- none more than 33 or so --  
holding automatic weapons.  
They have created their own checkpoint. It looks recent,

**A SCREENED-OFF AREA WITH TABLES.**

**KOMITEH #1**

Passports.  
He looks at the Canadian passports and then almost  
immediately speaks.

**KOMITEH #1**

You come.  
He directs Mendez and the Houseguests into the screened-  
off area. Speaks in Farsi to another Komiteh.

**273 INT. CIA - THE PIT - NIGHT 273**

**LAMONT**

(holding the phone)  
Purser's telling Swissair they're  
not on the plane.

**O'DONNELL**

They should have boarded already.

**MALINOV**

(on another phone)  
Still no answer in L.A.

274 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - THIRD CHECKPOINT - MORNING 274

**MARK LIJEK**

A film.  
Mark mimes turning the rotor of a movie camera. Komiteh #1 dsn't understand.

**AZIZI (O.S.)**

Sit down.  
A young man with a beard -- AZIZI, late 20s -- arriving on the scene, speaking in Farsi to the others and then in very good American English. He looks at the six and the face he singles out is J Stafford's.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 105.

**274 CONTINUED: 274**

**AZIZI**

(harsh, icy; in

**(FARSI)**

You. You had no business in Iran.  
He motions for J STAFFORD to step forward. Mendez shifts. A tense moment.

**J STAFFORD**

**(FARSI)**

We did. We were preparing to make  
a movie here, sir.

**AZIZI**

**(FARSI)**

You don't have journalist visas.

**J STAFFORD**

**(FARSI)**

Not a documentary. A movie.  
J Stafford reaches into his pocket and gives Azizi a

copy of the Argo Variety ad.

**J STAFFORD**

**(FARSI)**

You see?

(to Mendez; English)

Kevin, where's your briefcase?

A beat on Mendez. Who then opens his accordion folder and takes from it the ARGO STORYBOARDS. J Stafford spreads them out on the table.

Three other Komiteh in the room lean forward, their AUTOMATIC WEAPONS at their sides, and look at the STORYBOARD DRAWINGS. The Persian Empire futurism of Jack Kirby's drawings.

**J STAFFORD**

**(FARSI)**

These are the villains. Y'see these guys here? And these are the hers... in the spice market...

J Stafford points at the various drawings. He speaks with an ease and confidence that we didn't know he had.

**J STAFFORD**

**(FARSI)**

They know our hero is the Chosen One, so they kidnap his son in the spice market ... They have these chariots... like this one...

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 106.

**274 CONTINUED: (2) 274**

**J STAFFORD (CONT'D)**

they go like this... whoooosh,  
hmm? They can fly... The people

are just farmers, but they rise up  
and find their courage and defeat  
the alien king--  
Mendez watches. It's a performance. The three young  
Komiteh are now wide-eyed, pointing, whispering in Farsi,  
like teenagers around a comic book.  
Azizi says something to another Komiteh in the room.

**THEN --**

**AZIZI**

(to J Stafford; in

**ENGLISH)**

You don't go until we verify.

**MENDEZ**

You can call our office.  
Mendez hands Azizi his card. STUDIO SIX FILMS. Kevin  
Harkins. A 213 (818 wasn't around yet) phone number.

**ANGLES ON THE HOUSEGUESTS**

as Azizi leaves the room with the business card and three  
young Komiteh barely look up from the drawings --

**275 EXT. WARNER BROS. STUDIOS - NIGHT 275**

P.A., still holding Chambers and Siegel. The ACTOR  
playing the cop is conferring with the director. He's  
not happy with something. They're holding everyone until  
the next take, and --

**P.A.**

Going again please! We're

**ROLLING --**

**276 EXT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - MORNING 276**

A PICKUP TRUCK with 5 Komiteh -- including Khalkali --  
automatic weapons out -- drives up to the Canadian  
Ambassador's residence.

**277 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - KOMITEH STATION - MORNING 277**

Azizi, who apparently has some authority here, enters,  
telling another Komiteh in Farsi to get off the phone.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 107.

**277 CONTINUED: 277**

Azizi looks at the Studio Six business card and picks up the receiver.

**278 EXT. WARNER BROS. STUDIOS - NIGHT 278**

**SIEGEL**

I'm sorry, pally. We're just gonna be in the movie. Call my agent.

**P.A.**

Sir. SIR!

Siegel and Chambers walk through the shot toward the Argo office.

**279 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - KOMITEH STATION - MORNING 279**

Azizi dials the long international number. And it is a DIAL, so this takes a long time.

**280 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - THIRD CHECKPOINT - MORNING 280**

One of the young Komiteh is loudly debating with another Komiteh the air-worthiness of a futuristic desert glider in the storyboards. He's miming the thing crashing. J Stafford and the Houseguests are silent. Mendez can see the line of passengers on their Swissair flight dwindling.

**281 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - KOMITEH STATION - MORNING 281**

Azizi rings the phone three times -- four times -- he's going to hang up --

**CHAMBERS (V.O.)**

(out of breath)  
Studio Six Films.

**282 INT. ARGO PRODUCTION OFFICE - NIGHT 282**

A beat of silence. Chambers catching his breath, listening. The door to the office wide open.

**283 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - KOMITEH STATION - MORNING 283**

**AZIZI**

May I speak to Mr. Kevin Harkins --

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 108.

**283 CONTINUED: 283**

**CHAMBERS (V.O.)**

He's out of the country on a location scout. Can I take a message?

**284 INT. ARGO PRODUCTION OFFICE - NIGHT 284**

Chambers listens for a response. Siegel now catches up.

**285 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - KOMITEH STATION - MORNING 285**

**AZIZI**

No message.

**286 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - MORNING 286**

**ANNOUNCEMENT (V.O.)**

Swissair announces final boarding of Flight 363 to Zurich. All passengers should be at the gate at this time.

**287 EXT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - MORNING 287**

Khalkali and Komiteh are forcing the front door of the house open.

**288 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - THIRD CHECKPOINT - MORNING 288**

Azizi comes back into the screened-off area. Looks at J Stafford, then at Mendez. Then says something in Farsi to the three Komiteh in the holding area. Then he

leaves.

The three young Komiteh look at the drawings, then at J Stafford. Silence for a moment.

**MENDEZ**

**(PUSHES THE**

**STORYBOARDS TOWARD**

**THEM)**

Our gift to you. From our film.

Komiteh #1, who speaks enough English to understand, translates to the others. They forget their revolutionary mission for a second, happy with their gift. They'd high-five if they could. They're kids. Komiteh #1 motions for the Houseguests to go.

ARGO - Final 109.

289

**289 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - FOYER - MORNING**

Khalkali and a dozen Komiteh, guns drawn, rush into the residence. Empty liquor bottles. The remains of what looks like breakfast for a group of people. But the place is empty.

**290 INT./EXT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - FLIGHT GATE - MORNING 290**

A BUSLOAD of passengers about to be ferried to the airplane.

A Swissair Rep is closing the gate to Flight 363. She looks up to see the Houseguests and Mendez hurrying through the terminal, headed toward her. She holds the gate, speaks in German into a walkie, and --

291

**291 INT. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE - KEN'S OFFICE -**

**MORNING**

The Komiteh search the house. Khalkali gets on the phone.

292 OMITTED 292

**293 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - FLIGHT GATE - MORNING 293**

Kathy Stafford's ticket is taken and she walks through the door. Hurries toward the transport bus. The other five Houseguests and Mendez behind her and --

**294 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - KOMITEH STATION - MORNING 294**

A phone rings and a Young Komiteh picks up the call. He listens for a moment. Then he drops the phone and RUNS into the airport terminal and --

**295 INT. RUNWAY TRANSPORT BUS - MORNING 295**

The Houseguests sit aboard the bus, headed to a waiting

**DC-10.**

The DRIVER puts the bus into gear. It dsn't go. He shakes his head. This goddamn thing. Shifts gears again. Now it gs.

ARGO - Final 110.

**296 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - MORNING 296**

Young Komiteh RUNNING through the terminal, pushing through a crowd, making a woman drop her suitcase, contents scattering. An automatic weapon at his side.

**297 EXT. SWISSAIR DC-10 - MORNING 297**

The Houseguests head up the stairs to the plane.

**298 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - FLIGHT GATE - MORNING 298**

Azizi and the three Komiteh from the third checkpoint stand up from the table with the Argo storyboards. Young Komiteh shouts at them and they take up their weapons and join him, running --  
Azizi and the three Komiteh arrive at Flight 363's gate. The door is CLOSED.

**299 INT. SWISSAIR DC-10 - MORNING 299**

The Houseguests put their carry-on luggage into the overhead bins. A FLIGHT ATTENDANT is already holding a detached seatbelt preparing to do her safety mime.

**PILOT (V.O.)**

**(GERMAN-ACCENTED**

**ENGLISH)**

Ladies and gentlemen, from the flight-deck. We're looking at a brief delay --

Passengers groan a bit as they read paperbacks or International Herald Tribunes. Mark Lijek's arm is around Cora. Lee Schatz is moving his mouth in what looks like a prayer. Kathy Stafford's fingers shake as she holds an arm rest. J Stafford tries to stay her hand.

Mendez is sitting looking out the window toward the terminal.

**300 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - FLIGHT GATE - MORNING 300**

Azizi yells to the Swissair Rep, dragging her back toward the gate. We can't hear what she says back, but she's shaking her head.

ARGO - Final 111.

**301 INT. SWISSAIR DC-10 COCKPIT - MORNING 301**

From the window, we can see a GROUND CREWMAN give a thumbs-up. The scrubbed Swiss PILOT, 50s, gives a thumbs-up back.

He gently releases the throttle lever.

**302 INT. SWISSAIR DC-10 - MORNING 302**

Mendez and the Houseguests feel the plane start to move.

**303 INT. MEHRABAD AIRPORT - MORNING 303**

Azizi gs to the WINDOW. He can see the Swissair plane slowly backing onto the runway.

He picks up a walkie and pushes through the flight gate door, setting off an alarm, followed by the three other Komiteh.

He reaches the METAL BARS outside and can't get past.  
He CALLS INTO THE WALKIE.

**304 INT. MEHRABAD FLIGHT TOWER - MORNING 304**

An Iranian FLIGHT TRAFFIC CONTROLLER calmly speaks into his radio in British-accented English.

**FLIGHT TRAFFIC CONTROLLER**

SwissAir 363, you are Number 2 for departure.

**305 INT. SWISSAIR DC-10 - MORNING 305**

Out the window of the plane. Two IRANIAN POLICE CARS and a CANVAS-TOPPED TRUCK are headed down the runway toward the plane.

**306 INT. SWISSAIR DC-10 - MENDEZ'S POV - MORNING 306**

looking out from his window seat.

**307 EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY - MORNING 307**

An IRAN AIRLINES 747 takes off, revealing the Swissair jet behind it. Only empty runway ahead of Swissair 363 now and --

ARGO - Final 112.

**308 INT. MEHRABAD FLIGHT TOWER - MORNING 308**

**ANGLE ON BOOTS**

taking stairs two at a time.

Three KOMITEH WITH AUTOMATICS rush up the tower stairs --

**309 EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY - MORNING 309**

We're SPEEDING BEHIND two Iranian police cars and a canvas-topped TRUCK as they speed toward the Swissair plane. In the back of the truck we can see half a dozen

Komiteh, weapons drawn and --

**310 INT. SWISSAIR DC-10 - COCKPIT - MORNING 310**

**FLIGHT TRAFFIC CONTROLLER (V.O.)**

**SWISSAIR 363 --**

The Pilot puts his hand on the throttle control.

**311 INT. MEHRABAD FLIGHT TOWER - MORNING 311**

**FLIGHT TRAFFIC CONTROLLER**

-- you are cleared for take-off.

The Flight Traffic Controller moves his head-set mic away from his mouth to take a drink of very strong Iranian tea, and -- the door to the Control Room BURSTS OPEN. Three Komiteh with automatics, shouting instructions to the Traffic Controller, who spills his tea --

**312 INT. SWISSAIR DC-10 - MORNING 312**

Mendez looking out the window --

**313 EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY - MORNING 313**

**ANGLE ON THE THREE IRANIAN VEHICLES**

speeding ahead -- they're GAINING ON us --

**313A INT. COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS ACTION 313A**

The CO-PILOT looks out the window. Sees they are being pursued by militia and police. He looks to the Pilot.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 113.

**313A CONTINUED: 313A**

A beat. The Pilot reaches down and pushes all four engines to go FULL THROTTLE.

**313B EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS ACTION 313B**

**ANGLE ON THE JEEPS**

We start to PULL AWAY FROM them -- leaving them behind --  
beginning to RISE UP --

**314 INT. MEHRABAD FLIGHT TOWER - MORNING 314**

The Flight Controller has his arms up... THROUGH the  
floor-to-ceiling windows of the tower, as three Komitech  
watch a Swissair DC-10 angle upward and leave the  
ground...

**315 EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY - MORNING 315**

The Komitech from the Jeep are now standing on the runway  
watching the plane disappear.

**316 EXT. TEHRAN STREET NEAR AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS ACTION 316**

We are looking at a street corner in Tehran when the  
PLANE CRESTS THE STOREFRONT, heading upward and away.

**317 INT. CIA (LANGLEY) - NIGHT 317**

O'Donnell and the Kids gathered around some phones and  
monitors in the Pit.

**LAMONT**

**(TAKING OFF**

**HEADPHONES)**

We have wheels up.

He starts to punch the air. O'Donnell stays his arm.

**O'DONNELL**

Wait.

**318 INT. SWISSAIR DC-10 - MORNING 318**

The Houseguests -- holding their breath --  
Mendez -- looking out the window -- scanning the air  
around the plane -- behind every cloud --

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 114.

**318 CONTINUED: 318**

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT (V.O.)**

Ladies and gentlemen, it is our pleasure to announce that alcoholic beverages are now available, as we have cleared Iranian airspace.

The Houseguests shout and embrace and celebrate. Bob Anders high-fives Lee Schatz, then the other Houseguests. Mark Lijek, crying, embraces Cora. Kathy Stafford is laughing. She kisses her husband's hand.

Some of the other passengers look up from their newspapers, annoyed at this Canadian fuss.

**319 INT. CIA (LANGLEY) - THE PIT - NIGHT 319**

All eyes watch Malinov, listening, headphone to one ear...

**MALINOV**

They're CLEAR!  
Cheers in the Pit. O'Donnell embraces Malinov.

**320 INT./EXT. ARGO PRODUCTION OFFICE - NIGHT 320**

Siegel throws down a phone and rushes outside... to where Chambers smokes.

**SIEGEL**

**OOUUT! THEY'RE OUT!**

Chambers and Lester scream like kids who've just scored the game-winning touchdown. The P.A. tries to shush them.

**321 INT. SWISSAIR DC-10 - MORNING 321**

A mini-champagne bottle pops. The Houseguests are celebrating: New Year's Eve and a Super Bowl victory party in a DC-10 aisle.  
FIND Mendez, sitting alone, apart from the celebration. Looking out the window. Mendez turns to see that someone is standing in the aisle next to him. J Stafford.  
Tony looks up at J.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 115.

**321 CONTINUED: 321**

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT (O.S.)**

I'm sorry, sir. You need to sit  
down.

But J dsn't pay attention to the Flight Attendant.  
He extends his hand to Mendez. Who takes it. A moment  
between them.

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT**

Sir?

J gs back to his seat.  
HOLD ON Tony Mendez.

**322 INT. ARGO PRODUCTION OFFICE - NIGHT 322**

Drinking straight from a bottle of Beefeater.

**SIEGEL**

It's history, is what it is.  
~History plays out first as farce,  
then as tragedy.'

**CHAMBERS**

The quote's the other way around.

**SIEGEL**

Who said it?

**CHAMBERS**

Marx.

**SIEGEL**

Groucho?

**CHAMBERS**

Karl.

**322A EXT. BORDER CROSSING - ABADAN, IRAQ - MORNING 322A**

An IRAQI BORDER GUARD, checking passports at a chain-  
link, barbed-wire fence, speaks to a WOMAN IN HIJAB who

is turned away from us. The Guard stamps the Woman's passport.

**BORDER GUARD (ARABIC)**

You are admitted to the Republic of Iraq.

He closes the passport and the Woman turns around: it is

**SAHAR.**

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 116.

**322A CONTINUED: 322A**

She stands and stares at the line of REFUGEES still waiting to cross: WOMEN balancing blankets tied up with all they own. An OLD MAN being helped by his SON. A couple of KIDS, a SEVEN YEAR-OLD shushing an INFANT in her arms. Lives that have become another tableau of refugees.

Sahar, now one of them, walks into Iraq.

**323 INT. CIA (LANGLEY) - NIGHT 323**

The celebration is quieter and drunker now.

**LAMONT**

(a couple of beers

**ALONG)**

We are the good guys!

**ROSSI LAMONT**

Six down, fifty to go. Call the Times, nail it to the fucking door. The CIA are the good guys.

**MALINOV**

The Canadians are the good guys.

**LAMONT**

-- we're not greedy -- them too --

**MALINOV**

Only. Canada takes the credit, or they'll retaliate against the hostages. Great Satan wasn't involved. No CIA.

**LAMONT**

Is that right, Jack?

**O'DONNELL**

Involved in what? We're as surprised as anybody. Thank you, Canada.

Jack raises a glass of Scotch and takes a drink.

**324 ARCHIVE FOOTAGE 324**

A homemade sign that reads: THANK YOU CANADA!□  
( Homecoming ceremony for Houseguests 2/1980.) Hundreds are gathered to welcome the six back.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 117.

**324 CONTINUED: 324**

**TED KOPPEL (V.O.)**

Finally, a sliver of really good news.

**AMERICA HELD HOSTAGE, DAY 87, BROADCAST (1/29/80).**

**CUT TO:**

**325 CANADIAN MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS 325**

FLORA MacDONALD, late 60's. ( A.H.H. 1/29/80)  
FLORA MacDONALD (V.O.)  
It was a simple operation, really.

**326 INT. STATE DEPARTMENT - LOBBY - DAY 326**

The Houseguests arrive in the State Department lobby. Television lights everywhere.

**TED KOPPEL (V.O.)**

The six fled the country posing as

Canadian diplomats. They simply  
walked away.

Camera flashes, wild cheers. Banners: WELCOME HOME

**CORA AND MARK! IDAHO LOVES YOU, LEE! WELCOME HOME,**  
BOB ANDERS! It's the first moment of national  
celebration since the beginning of the crisis.

**327 ARCHIVE FOOTAGE 327**

IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SADEQ GHOTBZADEH speaks angrily  
into a microphone.

**SADEQ GHOTBZADEH (V.O.)**

Sooner or later, here or anywhere  
in the world, Canada will pay for  
this violation of the sovereignty  
of Iran. ( News conference

**1/29/80.)**

**328 MORE ARCHIVE FOOTAGE ( 1/30/1980) 328**

Of the State Department WELCOME HOME CEREMONY.  
Ambassador KEN TAYLOR is presented with a HUGE FLORAL  
BOUQUET. Cheering crowds all around him.

**329 OMITTED 329**

ARGO - Final 118.

**330 EXT. BY LESTER'S POOL - DAY 330**

Siegel in a bathrobe, looking out over L.A., holding  
The New York Times in front of him: SIX U.S. DIPLOMATS,  
HIDDEN BY CANADA, LEAVE IRAN SAFELY. Next to that, an  
article about Ken Taylor: DIPLOMAT DIRECTED ESCAPE IN  
IRAN. (Front page, NYT 1/30/80.)

**SIEGEL**

She said, ~Why couldn't we pull  
off something like that?' You  
know what I said to her?

**331 INT. CIA (LANGLEY) - THE PIT - DAY 331**

Mendez stands at a desk on the main floor.

**MENDEZ**

Wha'd you say to her?

**332 EXT. BY LESTER'S POOL - DAY 332**

**SIEGEL**

I said, ~Argo fuck yourself.'

**333 INT. CIA ARCHIVES - DAY 333**

And suddenly it's dead-quiet. We're in a vault inside a vault in the basement of the main building. Mendez's suitcase is laying on a low counter, an ARCHIVES OFFICER t-tagging and cataloging various items. Separating Mendez's personal things from material related to the operation. Mendez empties his briefcase and the officer puts a sticker on the VARIETY featuring the ARGO ad. Another on the ARGO script. He's putting things into a box that reads: USCIA CLASSIFIED MATERIAL. Mendez opens his accordion folder -- flips through it -- it's empty -- no. There's something inside. In one of the compartments is a STORYBOARD FROM ARGO. One that the Komiteh missed. While the Archives Officer is turned around, Mendez slips the storyboard back into the accordion folder and puts it back with his personal things.

ARGO - Final 119.

**334 EXT. CIA - FRONT PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON 334**

O'Donnell is on his way out, heading toward Tony who is heading in. Seeing Mendez, he stops dead.

**O'DONNELL**

And I left my autograph book at home. His Eminence called me. He wants to see you.

**MENDEZ**

He wants to fire me himself.

**O'DONNELL**

He wants to give you the Intelligence Star. You're getting the highest award of merit of the Clandestine Services of these United States. Ceremony's two weeks from today.  
Mendez stops walking. A beat.

**MENDEZ**

If they push it a week, I can bring Ian. That's his winter break.

**O'DONNELL**

The op was classified so the ceremony's classified. He can't know about it. Nobody can know about it.

**MENDEZ**

They're gonna hand me an award, then they're gonna take it back?

**O'DONNELL**

If we wanted applause, we would have joined the circus.

**MENDEZ**

I thought we did.  
O'Donnell claps Tony on the shoulder. Tony walks towards the entrance and Jack heads to his car.

**O'DONNELL**

(yelling to Tony; an

**AFTERTHOUGHT)**

Carter said you were a great American.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 120.

**334 CONTINUED: 334**

**MENDEZ**

**(YELLING BACK)**

A great American what?

**O'DONNELL**

He didn't say.

335

**335 INT. ARGO PRODUCTION OFFICE - ANGLE ON A POSTER - DAY**

on the wall. ARGO: A COSMIC CONFLAGRATION.  
A hand takes the poster down.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Chambers is disassembling the office. Boxes packed.  
Everything now off the walls.  
A PRODUCER walks by, sees Chambers in the door.

**PRODUCER**

What happened to your picture?

**CHAMBERS**

It's in turnaround.  
He turns out the lights.

**336 EXT. ROAD UP TO CHRISTINE'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON 336**

Mendez's car heads up the road, past a mailbox. Pulls up  
to the house.

**337 EXT. CHRISTINE'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON 337**

Mendez, a duffel bag on his shoulder, knocks on the door.  
He waits. After a moment, Christine opens the door.

**MENDEZ**

Hi.

**CHRISTINE**

Hi.  
They look at each other.  
Before she can speak, he's embraced her. Holds tight.  
It's something in between romantic and fraternal. Not  
reconciliation, necessarily, but warmth. She  
reciprocates. It feels right, and good.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 121.

**337 CONTINUED: 337**

WIDEN to HOLD ON them holding each other in the dark hall of the very American, even Hummel-kitschy house. HOLD there for a while.

338

**338 INT. CHRISTINE'S HOUSE - IAN'S BEDROOM - ANGLE ON TV -**

**NIGHT**

A scene of the Old West on a television.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Ian is watching 1973's sci-fi Western Westworld in the bedroom. Ian dsn't have to describe the scene to his father this time. WIDEN to see that his head is on a pillow on Tony's lap.

**CARD #1: THE IRAN HOSTAGE CRISIS ENDED ON JANUARY 20, 1981, WHEN THE REMAINING EMBASSY HOSTAGES WERE RELEASED AFTER 444 DAYS IN CAPTIVITY.**

**339 INT. IAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 339**

We can hear the sounds of gunslinging from the movie. Glow-in-the-dark stars on the wall. A Star Wars X-Wing fighter. A couple of rubber Planet of the Apes figures that look like they've been chewed by a dog.

**CARD #2: OSCAR-WINNING MAKEUP ARTIST JOHN CHAMBERS WAS AWARDED THE CIA'S INTELLIGENCE MEDAL OF MERIT, ITS HIGHEST CIVILIAN HONOR. HE REMAINED FRIENDS WITH TONY UNTIL CHAMBERS DIED FROM DIABETES COMPLICATIONS IN 2001.**  
The CAMERA MOVES OVER the dresser of Ian's toys --

**CARD #3: THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE CIA COMPLEMENTED EFFORTS OF THE CANADIAN EMBASSY IN FREEING THE SIX HELD IN TEHRAN. TO THIS DAY, THE STORY STANDS AS AN ENDURING**

**MODEL OF COOPERATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS.**

-- settling on a motley group of action figures.

**CARD #4: ALL OF THE HOUSEGUESTS RETURNED TO THE U.S.**

**FOREIGN SERVICE AFTER THEIR ORDEAL IN IRAN.**

Then FIND, almost unnoticeable among Ian's science fiction collection, a piece of cardboard behind Captain Kirk and Han Solo figures.

It's a STORYBOARD FROM ARGO. The one missed by the Komitech at the airport.

**(CONTINUED)**

ARGO - Final 122.

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**CARD #5: TONY MENDEZ WAS NOT GIVEN BACK HIS INTELLIGENCE STAR UNTIL 1997, WHEN THE ARGO OPERATION WAS DECLASSIFIED BY PRESIDENT CLINTON.**

LINGER ON the ARGO STORYBOARD. A MAN in a futuristic chariot sheltering a KID from what look like laser beams.

**CARD #6: HE LIVES IN RURAL MARYLAND WITH HIS FAMILY.**

**FADE TO BLACK.**

**THE END**