

FIERCE INVALIDS HOME FROM HOT CLIMATES

by

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based on the book by  
Tom Robbins

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SWITTERS

Tell your father the Khan I do  
not intend to take his camel. Now  
if you'll be so kind to help me.

He motions to a folded wheelchair strapped behind his camel.

The tribesmen lower Switters into the wheelchair and place his alligator-skin valise on his lap. Switters clasps their hands, double-kisses the tribal leader and pushes off, maneuvering his wheelchair over the rocky landscape towards the compound and the laughing, girlish voices.

SWITTERS

(singing to himself)

*"Meet me in St. Looey, Looey  
Meet me at the fair  
Don't tell me the lights are  
shining anywhere but there  
We'll dance the hoochie-coochie  
You'll be my tootsie-wootsie  
If you'll meet me in St. Looey  
Meet me at the fair"*

EXT. PERUVIAN JUNGLE - DAY

A MACHETE BREAKS THROUGH the thick jungle brush and Switters steps into a clearing wearing a panama hat and sweat-stained linen suit. No wheelchair. He stops to consider an enormous moth spread out on a branch before him.

Title card:

**BOQUICHICOS, PERU  
several months earlier**

Native voices approach. A short, Peruvian guide with a bowl haircut (INTI) holding a machete in one hand and Switters' alligator valise in the other, comes up behind Switters who is transfixed by the moth. It's large, plump, and powdery white.

SWITTERS

This insect is making me feel. . .  
what's the word?

Inti smiles. It's gap-toothed.

INTI

Meester, meester. This way, meester.

SWITTERS (V.O.)

The boy spoke possibly twelve words  
of English. He would be of no help.

SWITTERS

Yes, I've got it. This insect is making me feel. . .*libidinous*.

Inti blinks.

SWITTERS (V.O.)

I've gotten a little ahead of myself, here. Let me try to do a better job of weaving this yarn in some sort of coherent and chronological order.

EXT. SEATTLE CITYSCAPE - DAY

Title card:                   **SEATTLE, WASHINGTON**  
                                  **before all that**

A foggy day in Seattle town as we cruise over landmarks of the city like the fog off Puget Sound. We end our tour on a grande olde Victorian house on a hill in the Magnolia District.

SWITTERS (V.O.) (CONT.)

From here on out I'll be good, I promise. I'll keep on the straight and narrow, eschewing the natural tangential influence of my mind stopping only occasionally to smell the odd adjective or kick some ass.

INT. SWITTERS BEDROOM - DAY

The décor may be described as post-Medieval. Switters sits at his desk under a giant tapestry wearing a house-robe and snowman boxer shorts. He types into a laptop computer.

SWITTERS (V.O.) (CONT.)

I was home recuperating from my latest failed mission. I should say between failed missions. There seemed to be a whole string of them lately. Somewhere somehow I'd lost my touch. My heart just wasn't in it anymore. The vim was out of my voom. If you'd asked I'd have said consumer confidence was at an all-time low.

HE TYPES AN IM -- ***"Who is this Brian character?"***

RESPONSE -- **"SUZY: Just a friend"**

HE TYPES -- **"Is he why you're not coming home straight after school? I bet he's an athlete."**

SWITTERS (V.O.) (CONT.)  
 Technically it wasn't my home,  
 it was my grandmother's but with  
 all the moving around in my life  
 it's the only home I've ever  
 known. Incidentally, don't let  
 her hear I called her grandmother.  
 She hates that word. It's Maestra.  
 And I'm Switters.

RESPONSE -- **"SUZY: What's gotten into you, petunia?"**

SWITTERS  
 (aloud)  
 I'm in love with you, dammit!  
 That's the rub.

RESPONSE -- **"SUZY: URAPITA"**

SWITTERS (CONT.)  
 URAPITA. What the hell does that  
 mean?

His cellphone rings. He answers.

SWITTERS  
 You are on a secure line.

VOICE  
 There's a mole in our section!

SWITTERS  
 Oh, hello Bobby.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

BOBBY CASE, CIA Operative and Switters' Senior Case Officer,  
 is in a low-flying helicopter chasing down a man on foot.

SWITTERS  
 And what would make you say that?

BOBBY CASE  
 I just tortured it out of a guy!  
 Wily bastard got away before I  
 could get a name out of him.

INT. SWITTERS BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Switters stares at the screen, not all that concerned.

SWITTERS  
Other than that, everything well?

BOBBY CASE  
Never better. But this is why our  
Intel's been shit. We've got to  
find this mole. So keep your eyes  
out. Gotta go.

SWITTERS  
Wait a minute. URAPITA. Mean  
anything to you?

BOBBY CASE  
Lemme think. . .hang on.

SHOTS ARE FIRED. Switters holds the phone away from his ear.

BOBBY CASE  
Uhm, You Are A Pain In The Ass.

SWITTERS  
Right, of course. Thanks.

BOBBY CASE  
Have a nice day.

He hangs up.

MAESTRA (O.S.)  
Switters!

SWITTERS  
One minute!

SWITTERS TYPES -- *"I may be a PITA but you have to admit it's  
a GOOD PAIN. Gotta go. C U at dinner"*

MAESTRA (O.S.)  
Switters!

He logs off -- the CIA emblem is his background image -- and  
walks out of his bedroom, leaning over the railing to an  
indoor courtyard.

SWITTERS  
Yes?

Down below stands MAESTRA, a braceleted Grande Dame herself in a long flowing muumuu and headwrap. She looks like a 1920s diva or aging drag queen. She waives a stack of papers at him.

MAESTRA

Switters come down here this instant, I wish to speak with you about something.

INT. MAESTRA'S LIBRARY - DAY

On her desk are framed photos of a young girl in a high-school uniform (SUZY). There are also some of Switters in various exotic locales.

Maestra sits on the couch, the papers on her lap. Switters sits across from her. Over his shoulder, amongst the collectables is a parrot in a triangular cage.

MAESTRA

You're a wicked degenerate. A rascal, a wastrel and a pervert.

SWITTERS

And a good morning to you, Maestra.

MAESTRA

Such a tragic waste of genius. The pride of Berkeley. Did you know the Dean of students personally told me you broke the bank when it came to cybernetics and linguistics?

SWITTERS

Don't forget my nine hours of modern poetry.

MAESTRA

And look what you've become.

SWITTERS

Well you can hardly say I'm a slouch. I'm a dedicated, decorated public servant with top-secret security clearance and I happen to know the word for a woman's private parts in seventy-one different languages.

SWITTERS (V.O.)

I really do. It's kind of a hobby.

MAESTRA

Am I supposed to sleep better at nights knowing the likes of you are guarding the henhouse? It amazes me they ever recruited you in the first place.

SWITTERS

Perhaps it was my firm jaw and air of tragic nobility.

MAESTRA

Or weak moral fiber.

SWITTERS

It's government service, Maestra. Morality's got nothing to do with it. So what's this all about?

Maestra lowers her eyes at him. The gaze of an oil tanker as seen from a tug boat.

MAESTRA

Suzy.

SWITTERS

What about her?

MAESTRA

She's your sister, for God's sake.

SWITTERS

Step-sister.

MAESTRA

She's eighteen.

SWITTERS

Yes?

MAESTRA

So keep your hands off her.

SWITTERS

I resent that accusation. In fact like a Knight-errant, I am a protector of her virginity. Although I will say that in some cultures-

MAESTRA

Not this one, Mister.

SWITTERS

I admit there is a certain  
irresistible appeal about her.  
It's the innocence.

She waves the stack of papers.

MAESTRA

I don't think these emails sound  
so innocent.

SWITTERS

How did you get those? My email's  
encrypted by the US government.

MAESTRA

I've hacked into Suzy's account.  
It's my network, for Chrissake.  
Do you think I'm a rank amateur?

SWITTERS

Clever.

Maestra gets up and walks over to the window.

MAESTRA

I wonder who might find these  
letters amusing? Your employers,  
perhaps?

SWITTERS

I hardly think they'd mind.

MAESTRA

How about your mother and angry  
step-father? One whiff of this  
to them and Suzy will be shipped  
off to boarding school and you  
will never see her again. Not to  
mention he would break every bone  
in your body, the brute.

SWITTERS

You wouldn't.

MAESTRA

Wouldn't I?

Standoff.

SWITTERS

(breaking down)

Please don't. I just want to be near her. I can't make it through my day without knowing that she'll be at the end of it. I promise no impropriety. I just want to admire her from afar.

MAESTRA

That's not good enough.

SWITTERS

Well, what is?

MAESTRA

What's your next assignment?

SWITTERS

South America.

MAESTRA

Knocking off some propped-up dictator, I suppose.

SWITTERS

I've told you I don't do windows. No, The Company recruited a very promising young agent down there, fronted him a new Honda and now he's having second thoughts. I've got to try to bring him back into the fold.

MAESTRA

You're going to terminate him with extreme prejudice?

SWITTERS

No, probably take him to lunch. Why?

MAESTRA

Sailor Boy.

Switters turns and looks over his shoulder at the parrot in the cage.

SWITTERS

What about him?

MAESTRA

Sailor Boy, your equal in age and intelligence, is getting on in years. He's had a very good life but I'm afraid he's not long with us and I'd like for him to live his last feathered days in the wild, amongst his own kind.

SWITTERS

Oh, no.

MAESTRA

I want you to release him somewhere peaceful and safe where he can be free to pursue his avian interests until his last squawk.

SWITTERS

No way.

MAESTRA

A quick detour, that's all I'm asking. Expand the pinhole on your map. Just take him up the Amazon.

SWITTERS

"Just take him up the Amazon?!" I'm going to Lima. Lima's on the coast. It's hundreds of miles from the Amazon. Nope, South America holds a minimum of charm for this buckaroo. It's too damn vivid. I am going in and out and not a moment longer and nothing can change my mind. Sorry, can't do it Maestra. You've got your burdens, I've got mine.

MAESTRA

That's precisely your problem, Switters, all you care about is yourself.

SWITTERS

Well, it keeps me busy. And alive. I've noticed that self-preservation is the key to survival.

MAESTRA

Your tone disappoints me.

She walks over to her desk and picks up the phone.

SWITTERS  
Who are you calling?

MAESTRA  
Your step-father. For your sake,  
I hope the traffic from  
Sacramento is diabolical. Should  
give you a good head start.

He gets up and takes the phone from her, hanging it up.

SWITTERS  
Blackmail? I'd think that would  
be beneath you, Maestra.

MAESTRA  
Don't underestimate me. That's  
age-ist.

The bird moves suddenly in the cage -- they look at him.

MAESTRA (CONT.)  
Clean up your life, Switters. You  
look like the bottom of that cage.

Switters pokes the cage. The parrot shifts and squawks.

SAILOR BOY  
PEOPLE OF ZEE WORLD, RELAX!

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Maestra, Switters and his stunning 18-year old step-sister SUZY sit around the dining room table eating Thai food out the boxes. As billed, Suzy is irresistible, innocent and untouchable in her High School uniform. Switters sits across from her, clean and freshly showered wearing a Polo shirt with a "CRAFT" crest. He has a beaming, unnatural smile.

SWITTERS (V.O.)  
Luckily, the CIA has an unlimited  
budget for recreational drugs many  
of which, including the Ecstasy I  
popped just before dinner,  
actually make you feel good when  
you probably should be feeling bad.

An uncomfortable silence hangs over the table. The environment could be described as "strained" -- forks scrape plates.

MAESTRA

Sit up straight. Do you want to be Quasimodo when you grow up?

They both sit up in their chairs.

MAESTRA (CONT.)

So how was school today?

SUZY

Sucky. Everyone is incredibly lame. I can't wait to start college.

MAESTRA

Have you given any thought to a major?

SUZY

I'm thinking about religious studies.

Switters laughs.

SUZY (CONT.)

What's wrong with that, Switters?

SWITTERS

Nothing, if you believe in that sort of thing.

SUZY

Why do you always have to be so negative? Don't you believe in miracles and stuff?

SWITTERS

It's just that my credibility alarm goes off when people start living in whales and visions of the Virgin Mary pop up on Wonder Bread. I thought this stuff was supposed to make you happy?

Back to the silence.

SUZY

Let's play a game.

SWITTERS

Twister?

Maestra stares at him icily.

SUZY

No, I mean like tell me something about yourself that we don't already know. Me and Bri- I mean I played it with a friend last weekend.

SWITTERS

And what did your friend say? Lemme guess: he wants to play in the NFL.

SUZY

Can't tell you, it's a secret.

MAESTRA

I was once seduced by both Laurel and Hardy.

SWITTERS

Wow. . .well that's something.

SUZY

How about you, Switters? What secret do you have to reveal to us?

Switters looks up at the ceiling, pondering for a moment.

SWITTERS

The more advertising I see, the less I want to buy.

Beat.

Suzy laughs at him.

Switters joins in, laughing unnaturally. Maestra frowns.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Maestra sleeps in a chair in front of the TV. Suzy dances around the room to punk music while Switters tries to keep up. His moves are jerky and awkward as he tries to find the beat.

SUZY

What's wrong? Not your speed?

SWITTERS

I'm an Oklahoma man, myself. Broadway Showtunes. Ever heard of South Pacific? Me and My Gal?

SUZY  
 Sounds sucky to me.

She dances around him.

Switters backs up and KNOCKS INTO THE BIRDCAGE, sending Sailor Boy atwitter. Switters grabs the cage just before it falls over. Parrott feathers fall to the floor and Sailor Boy is hanging on by a beak.

Switters looks over at Maestra who glares at him. Switters puts the cage back and begins dancing again with Suzy. Maestra settles back in the chair and WE PULL OUT OF THE WINDOW SEEING THE TABLEAU FROM OUTSIDE THE HOUSE AND FADE TO:

EXT. CITY PLAZA - LIMA, PERU - DAY

The city is gnarled in traffic -- bikes, mopeds and cars going in every direction.

Title card: **LIMA, PERU**

At a table in an outdoor café, Switters sits in his white linen suit across from a young Peruvian. HECTOR SUMAC. Hector pours a glass of wine for him.

SWITTERS (V.O.)  
 Hector Sumac was the prospective agent and pisco was the vile local potable.

HECTOR  
 It is pisco. Peruvian wine. Good no?

SWITTERS  
 Quintessentially South American. So what seems to be the problem, Hector? Why the cold feet? Problems with the car? You know you need to put gasoline in that little hole in the back.

SWITTERS (V.O.)  
 Forget what you've seen, mine is essentially a sales job. Our pitch is to convince someone that betraying their country by telling us secrets is in their best interests. My quota had been down for some time and the top brass

(MORE)

SWITTERS (V.O.) (cont'd)  
back at the pickle factory were  
starting to grumble. But I knew  
I could close this guy. Was I  
really losing my edge?

HECTOR  
It is a very difficult thing you  
ask me to do, to tell secrets from  
from my government. And dangerous.

SWITTERS  
Yes, hence the Honda.

HECTOR  
Our federal administration is  
completely corrupt.

SWITTERS  
Join the club.

HECTOR  
So despite your- how do you call  
it, "Company?" Despite your  
Company's history of illegal  
involvement in Latin American  
affairs I will work for you.  
But Agent Switters-

SWITTERS  
Actually, I'm an Operative, you're  
the Agent. Doesn't matter,  
continue.

HECTOR  
I wish to be completely honest  
with you. The truth is I do not  
think I have the character  
qualifications for the job.

SWITTERS  
And what qualifications are those?

Hector leans closer.

HECTOR  
I am afraid the things I am most  
interested are sex, drugs and rock  
'n' roll.

Beat.

SWITTERS

You're perfect.

A PROSTITUTE comes over and whispers something in Switters' hear. He nods, leaning forward to Hector.

SWITTERS

My Spanish is good but not that good. She says she wants me to make love to her in the *culo*. What's a *culo*?

HECTOR

Her ass hole.

SWITTERS spits out his drink.

SWITTERS

Right. Of course.  
(to the prostitute)  
Sorry. Maybe some other time.

She walks off and Switters dabs himself dry.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Too damn vivid South America.

INT. GRAND HOTEL BOLIVAR - EVENING

Switters walks through the lobby and approaches the front desk.

CLERK

Si, senor.

SWITTERS

It has just occurred to me to inform your housekeeping staff that I have a live parrot in my room. I don't want anyone to be alarmed.

CLERK

Si, senor.

Switters walks towards the bar off to the left.

SWITTERS

Oh, and it might say some unusual things.

CLERK

Of course, senor.

Switters enters the bar.

INT. GRAND HOTEL BOLIVAR BAR - CONTINUOUS

Switters bellies up to the bar.

BARTENDER

Good evening, glass of pisco?

SWITTERS

Please no.

BARTENDER

Coffee?

BRITISH VOICE

Not bloody likely!

Switters looks down the bar and sees the only other person there -- a heavysset British man, REGINALD POTNEY SMITHE.

SWITTERS

Potney?

POTNEY

I thought it was you.

SWITTERS

R. Potney Smithe, what brings you to this microwave?

POTNEY

Came to study some of the bloody natives, haven't I.

SWITTERS

Tenure time again at the diploma factory?

POTNEY

Afraid so. Going to write up some long-winded tripe about a roving tribe of savages and their habits and all that.

SWITTERS

Ethnology. The last refuge of the scholar.

POTNEY

Join me for a pisco. For old time's sake. Two old CRAFT members to each other.

SWITTERS

Don't mind if I do.

SWITTERS (V.O.)

CRAFT Club is a secret society with branches in Hong Kong and Bangkok whose members meet periodically to drink a lot and discuss Finnegans Wake. When asked about it later, members say "CRAFT" Can't Remember A-

SWITTERS (CONT.)

(holding up the glass)  
Who would have thought that the juice of a grape could be transformed into a substance so near napalm?

They both drink.

POTNEY

Here on Company business?

SWITTERS

Partially.

POTNEY

Just ran into your old colleague Audubon Poe. Are you all down here on a convention or something?

SWITTERS

Poe's ex-pickle, actually. No, we go wherever we're needed. I'm off to Iquitos tomorrow.

POTNEY

Whatever for?

SWITTERS

Humanitarian mission, of sorts. Going to set an aging parrot free in the jungle on behalf of an aging relative.

POTNEY

If you take it to Iquitos it  
won't be free for long.

SWITTERS

Why not?

POTNEY

Despite its reputation as a  
remote jungle town Iquitos is  
about as urban and grim as  
Liverpool. Big parrot market.  
Your friend will only be captured  
and put in another cage, probably  
brought back to the United States.  
No, you want to go up to  
Boquichicos, hire a boat and go  
up the river. There's a parrot  
sanctuary up there.

SWITTERS

Oh.

POTNEY

I'm heading up that way myself  
to study this bloody tribe.  
You're welcome to come along.

SWITTERS

Really? Well, thanks. Actually,  
I don't mind if I do.  
(raising his glass)  
To a *bon voyage*.

POTNEY

Let's just hope there aren't  
too many insects.

SWITTERS

Here here.

EXT. BOQUICHICOS - DAY

A small, Amazonian jungle town. Straw huts, unpaved streets  
and vacant lots. Switters and Potney walk together -- Potney  
in full British archaeological get up: safari clothes and a  
pith helmet, Switters in his linen suit, carrying the parrot  
cage in one hand and his crocodile-skin valise in the other.

Along the riverside are a few rickety boats. Potney stops to  
talk to INTI, the Peruvian boat captain we saw earlier as  
Switters amuses the locals with a video camera.

POTNEY

(irate)  
*Que piensa soy?! UN TONTO?!*

SWITTERS

What's up?

POTNEY

The blighter wants to charge us  
twice what it should cost to take  
us up river.

SWITTERS

Think he knows we're tourists?

Switters walks around and sees the name printed on the side of  
the boat -- *LITTLE BLESSED VIRGIN OF THE STARRY WATERS.*

SWITTERS (CONT.)

We'll take it.

(Potney and Inti look at him)

I like the name. I have a special  
feeling for the Virgin. Please  
have your men bring our bags. I'll  
carry this.

He plops the cage down on deck.

SAILOR BOY

PEOPLE OF ZEE WORLD, RELAX!

The locals jump back.

SWITTERS

Some very good advice learned  
from a very smart woman.

(he puts his arm around Potney)

Pot old pal, we've got a date  
with a virgin even if she looks  
like an old whore.

EXT. UCOYALI RIVER - DAY

The Blessed Virgin toots upstream. Switters and Potney sit in  
the stern with Inti who steers the motor-propelled boat while  
smoking a cigarette wedged in the gap between his teeth.  
Sailor Boy's cage swings from a hook and Switters puts the  
video camera away in his valise.

POTNEY

Are you a naturalist?

SWITTERS

I've been called a lot of things but no, my benefactor wishes to have a recording of the event. Can you imagine not trusting your own grandson?

POTNEY

In your case, yes.

SWITTERS

So tell me about this tribe.

POTNEY

The Kandakanero? They are the most elusive tribe in all of Amazonia. There's a rumor that they were seen outside Boquichicos and I've been trying to catalogue as many of their socially transmitted customs, morals, laws and beliefs as possible before they disappear completely. Actually, I'm hoping to interview their shaman, a mystical leader with a funny shaped-head and an even funnier name. Loosely translated into English it means End-of-Time. To focus on a single individual within the group is unprecedented. It will be a small coup if I can interview this extraordinary man.

SWITTERS

And bolster your chances for tenure.

POTNEY

Lock 'em in.

SWITTERS

Sounds like pretty fulfilling work.

POTNEY

Actually, it is.

Switters looks out at the muddy river flowing past and the miles of thick jungle on either side.

EXT. UP THE UCOYALI RIVER - DAY

Deeper into the jungle now, there is no sign of civilization just the murky brown river, the *Little Virgin*, our travelers and a parrot under wraps.

Switters reaches into the bottom of his valise opening a secret compartment which has a handgun, a CD of "*Broadway's Best Showtunes*" and a photograph of his step-sister in a cheerleader's uniform. He takes out the photo and admires it.

POTNEY  
Your girlfriend?

SWITTERS  
Not exactly.

POTNEY  
Uhm, Switters old chap. . .

SWITTERS  
Yes?

POTNEY  
Don't be overly alarmed but you may want to look over your right shoulder.

Switters does and he sees a MASSIVE HAIRY SPIDER rearing up on its hind legs atop of a bunch of bananas, ready to strike.

SWITTERS  
AAAAAA!

He jumps back and BLAM! shoots the spider, sending banana bits splattering.

Beat.

Potney helps him up and the crew laughs.

POTNEY  
You alright, man? Overreacted a bit, I'd say.

SWITTERS  
Whoah! Yes, thank you. Maybe I should open up my own comedy club in Boquichicos. Call it Arachnophobia.  
(bowing to the crew)  
Anyone for fruit salad?

Suddenly, a pelting rain pours down on them.

POTNEY

It's alright. Should last about  
twenty minutes or so.

SWITTERS

Too-damn-vivid South America.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

The sun is shining again on our band of merry travelers. Now they are on foot, Inti cutting a trail through the jungle with his machete, Potney and crew bring up the rear, parrot cage in tow. One of the natives records everything on the video camera. Switters sings "Come Fly With Me", his tune echoing off the trees.

SWITTERS

(singing)

*"Come fly with me let's  
float down to Peruuuu  
In Llama Land there's a one  
man band and he'll toot  
his flute for you  
Come fly with me let's take off  
in the bluuuue."*

He's Fred Astaire-ing now, dancing through the jungle.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

C'mon Potney, you know Sammy Cahn  
and Jimmy Van Heusen. Think New  
Jersey, 1957.

Potney ignores him, shaking his head.

SWITTERS

*"It's perfect for a flying  
honeymoon they SAAAY  
Come on fly with me let's fly,  
Pack up let's FLY AWAAAAY"*

They come to a clearing. Switters stops, looking around at the idyllic surroundings.

SWITTERS

I think this is as good a place  
as any.

He waves forward the parrot cage, removes the cover and holds up Sailor Boy. The videographer focuses his camera.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Well, Sailor Boy. This is where we part ways. I hope you enjoy your remaining days free as a bird skipping across the rooftops of the world. In fact, you're not Sailor Boy at all anymore. From here on out you've got no name.

He opens the door of the cage. For a moment, nothing happens. Sailor Boy looks around.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Go on.

Sailor Boy flutters and then darts out the cage, flying up to a nearby branch. With one last look back he circles up towards the top of the trees.

BLAM!

He's shot down out of the sky. . .

. . .landing on the jungle floor with a THUMP.

SUDDENLY, THE WOODS ARE FILLED WITH PAINTED NATIVE FACES THAT HAVE STEPPED OUT FROM BEHIND EVERY TREE AND BUSH.

POTNEY

The Kandakanero.

SWITTERS

Shit. For lack of a better word.

POTNEY

No, I think that just about sums it up.

EXT. KANDAKANERO CAMPGROUND - DAY

Switters and Potney are surrounded by a circle of natives. One of them is their shaman, END-OF-TIME, who circles around them.

SWITTERS

Seems friendly enough.

End-of-Time bares his teeth. All the natives point their spears and guns. Switters and Potney raise their hands.

POTNEY

I forgot to mention something.

FLASHBACK --

INT. RUSSIAN PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE - EVENING

An elegant diplomatic function in the Presidential Palace. Men wear tuxedos and the women are bejeweled.

Title card: **RUSSIAN PRESIDENT'S PRIVATE RESIDENCE, MOSCOW**  
**3 WEEKS EARLIER**

INT. RUSSIAN PRESIDENT'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Potney tip-toes into the President's private chamber and sees a small golden pyramid on the shelf.

POTNEY (V.O.)  
A mystical relic of the  
Kandakanero taken by the  
Russians during colonial times.  
The Tsars didn't have much  
success in Latin America but  
they knew how to steal from  
the ancients as well as anyone.

Potney takes the pyramid and tucks it into his jacket.

POTNEY (V.O.) (CONT.)  
I told the Kandakanero I'd get  
it for them.

BACK TO PRESENT --

EXT. KANDAKANERO CAMPGROUND - DAY

Switters and Potney still have their hands up.

POTNEY  
Legend claims it restores sexual  
potency.

SWITTERS  
I can see why they'd want it  
back. Okay, so give 'em the box.

POTNEY  
It's a pyramid and I don't have  
it. That's why it was my good  
fortune to run into you. I  
thought you could come along  
and help me smooth things out  
(MORE)

POTNEY (cont'd)  
with End-of-Time here. It's the  
kind of thing you people do,  
isn't it?

SWITTERS  
Not exactly. So where is it?

POTNEY  
I'm not at liberty to say.

A shorter native whispers to End-of-Time, translating  
everything they're saying.

TRANSLATOR  
*Kayga garl, huk hina sajra  
rumishongo, runo abajeno  
Kandakanero tlyanapi sumaj  
qullgikamaq.*

POTNEY  
Do you have any idea how much  
that little thing appears to  
be worth? I've stashed it away  
somewhere safe where no man  
can get at it.

Now the translator speaks excitedly, waving his arms and  
pointing at them.

SWITTERS  
Potney you fool!

End-of-Time takes off his headdress -- the top of his head is  
shaped like a triangle.

SWITTERS (CONT.)  
Look at his head. It's-

POTNEY  
Extraordinary!

SWITTERS  
It looks like a triangle!

POTNEY  
Or a pyramid.

End-of-Time walks up close to Switters' face and puts his hand  
on the back of his neck.

END-OF-TIME  
*Piti kuna akapay qamkunap kanan.*

TRANSLATOR

I will curse you now.

SWITTERS

Oh, okay.

A BLINDING WHITE FLASH KNOCKS SWITTERS OFF HIS FEET AND INTO DREAMLAND

FADE TO WHITE

WITHIN THE WHITE, LARGE SILVERY BULBS TAKE SHAPE, CIRCLE EACH OTHER AND THEN DISAPPEAR

EXT. KANDAKANERO CAMPGROUND - EVENING

The campground is now deserted except for Switters and Potney who wake up around a small fire. Switters lies in a hammock and Potney is on the ground. They come to.

SWITTERS

Whoah.

POTNEY

Oh, dear.

SWITTERS

Did you see-

POTNEY

The bulbs? Yes. What do you think they were?

SWITTERS

I don't know. Where is everybody?

POTNEY

They've undoubtedly moved on to some other neck of the woods.

SWITTERS

I'm getting a memory. I think I did something. . .wrong.

POTNEY

Oh yes, that.

SWITTERS

What was it?

Potney motions to the camera on Switters' chest who flips opens the monitor and rewinds.

IN THE VIDEO -- we see everyone sitting in a circle and Switters with his eyes practically rolled up behind his head. He chews some food out of a broth. A moment later he pulls a colorful feather out of his mouth.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Oh, no. Sailor Boy.

POTNEY

Don't suppose your grandmamma will be too pleased.

SWITTERS

Maestra, please. I'm in enough trouble as it is. What am I going to do?

POTNEY

Are you sure it was her bird?

IN THE VIDEO -- we see Switters slowly pull a bird anklet out of his mouth. He turns it on the side: "Sailor Boy"

Switters turns off the camera.

POTNEY

Well, as you Americans are fond of saying: "let's get the fuck out of here."

SWITTERS

My feelings exactly.

He is about to put it on the ground WHEN HE STOPS.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Hang on a sec. There was something else. Do you remember something about a curse?

POTNEY

Poppycock.

SWITTERS

Yes, of course. But what was it? Something about not touching the ground. Yes, that's it. End-of-Time said, as I understood it, that if my feet ever touched the ground again I would fall over dead.

POTNEY

The dirty bugger.

SWITTERS

Yes, I'm sure that's it. Was that what you heard?

Potney gets up, brushing himself off.

POTNEY

Silly native superstition, if you ask me.

SWITTERS

I'm glad you agree. Wasn't the same cast upon you?

POTNEY

No, but my taboo was equally ridiculous.

SWITTERS

What was it?

POTNEY

Load of bosh. Totally off the bean. Same consequences as your affliction but End-of-Time told me. . .

SWITTERS

Yes man, what is it?

POTNEY

That I would face death if I were ever to touch another man's willy.

SWITTERS

Hah!

POTNEY

Rubbish, obviously.

SWITTERS

And there's no danger of you doing that.

POTNEY

Quite.

SWITTERS

Not really fair, is it?

POTNEY

I don't think fair has anything to do with it. Let's get going. We should be able to pick up the river back that way.

Switters is about to hop out of the hammock but STOPS HIS FOOT JUST BEFORE IT TOUCHES THE GROUND.

SWITTERS

Just for the sake of argument, is this something you'd be willing to put to the test? I mean why should it be on me?

POTNEY

It's silly. We're dealing here with the primitive mind.

SWITTERS

Of course. But just for the sake of sociological value, isn't it something we should test? For the sake of the field.

POTNEY

Absolutely not.

SWITTERS

So you're afraid to test it?

POTNEY

Fear has nothing to do with it. It's voodoo superstition with no basis in fact.

SWITTERS

Yes but as a scientist, as an ethnologist, you must occasionally have to undertake experiments in the name of science that you may find personally distasteful but are necessary in order to study the local culture. In fact, by not testing it are you not being negligent to your field?

SWITTERS UNZIPS HIS FLY AND PULLS OUT HIS PECKER.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

And I for one don't see why I should be the one who has to test

(MORE)

SWITTERS (cont'd)  
this out when you're the one who  
got us into this mess in the  
first place.

POTNEY  
I'm a married man for God's sake!

SWITTERS  
Easy, big fella. Listen, it's not  
my cup of tea either. But what  
we're testing here is your  
professional dedication.

POTNEY  
Put that away.

SWITTERS  
This is larger than you or me. I'm  
testing your professionalism. I'm  
questioning your dedication to  
your craft. If you believe in  
your life's work, if you believe  
in the rigors of your field, if  
you are a true scientist. . .then  
you will touch my shmeckle.

POTNEY  
Not a chance.

SWITTERS  
Do it for your field. Do it for  
your Queen. Your country. No,  
better yet, do it for yourself.

POTNEY  
No.

SWITTERS  
Just touch it, man!

POTNEY  
No.

SWITTERS  
Are you a scientist?

POTNEY  
Yes.

SWITTERS  
Are you a man?

POTNEY

Yes.

SWITTERS

You're the one who got us into this,  
now touch it!

POTNEY

No.

SWITTERS

Touch my shmeckle!

POTNEY

If I do, will your drop this  
nonsense and we can leave this  
God forsaken place?

SWITTERS

Yes.

POTNEY

Alright, I'll do it.

Potney gets down to all fours on the ground by the hammock.  
Switters swivels his hips.

Potney reaches out.

SWITTERS

Don't grab it.

POTNEY

I wasn't going to.

SWITTERS

Just touch it.

POTNEY

Alright.

SWITTERS

Just a poke.

POTNEY

Alright.

Potney holds out his index finger, slowly heading towards  
Switters' pecker like God reaching out to Adam on the ceiling  
of the Sistine Chapel.

SWITTERS

Go on. I don't like this any  
more than you do.

Potney scrunches his face and makes the final move forward.

Contact is made. . .

. . .AND POTNEY DROPS DEAD.

Switters looks down at him, stunned.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Pot? Potney?

There is a rustling nearby and Inti busts through the trees,  
shocked by the scene.

SWITTERS

It's not what you think.

Inti rushes over and kneels beside Potney.

INTI

*Muy muerto. Muy muerto.*  
(looking up at Switters)  
This meester is very, very dead.

SWITTERS

(falling back in the hammock)  
You better call your men. You're  
going to have to carry me out of  
here like a pig on a stick.

EXT. LANGLEY, VA - DAY

A sign over the highway says "CIA NEXT RIGHT"

EXT. CIA ENTRANCE - DAY

A security guard checks ID's of the drivers lined up outside  
the famous CIA Headquarters. We hear the song "Someone To  
Watch Over Me" over the next few scenes:

SONG

*There's a little someone  
I'm longing to see  
I hope that he turns out to be  
someone to watch over me. . .*

EXT. CIA PARKING LOT - DAY

A car is parked at an off-angle in the handicapped parking section by the front doors.

INT. CIA LOBBY - DAY

A long line of people wait to get into the main entrance. They seem impatient. This isn't a normal delay.

Up ahead SWITTERS SITS IN A WHEELCHAIR wearing a blue blazer and loafers with no socks, trying to get through a turnstile. The guard looks impatient.

SWITTERS

I'm stuck. I can't get through.

INT. OFFICE OF DEPUTY DIRECTOR, CLANDESTINE OPERATIONS - DAY

The nameplate on the desk says "MAYFLOWER CABOT FITZGERALD". Behind the desk is the man, facing our wheelchair-bound hero. Bobby Case sits in the corner spinning a bullet on the table.

MAYFLOWER

Hector Sumac is missing.

SWITTERS

Whom?

MAYFLOWER

Hector Sumac, you idiot. The Agent you recruited in Lima last week.

SWITTERS

Oh, Hector? I'm sure he'll be alright.

MAYFLOWER

We don't think he'll be alright at all. In fact, we think something's happened to him. We believe your intelligence has been compromised.

SWITTERS

That's one way of putting it. Three years at Berkeley and nine hours of modern poetry will do that to you. In fact our whole society-

MAYFLOWER

We've been tracking a Russian mole in your section. We believe Hector was about to reveal the mole's identity when he disappeared. We believe it's a kidnapping.

SWITTERS

That's terrible.

BOBBY CASE

The mole could be anyone with access to your movements. Someone you've known all your life. Someone you've never met.

MAYFLOWER

As your Senior Case Officer, Bobby Case will be in charge.

SWITTERS

Well, it sounds like you've got things under control. As you can see some personal issues have come up. So good luck.

Switters moves but Mayflower opens a thick file on his desk.

MAYFLOWER

I won't deny that your record is impressive. You've been part of dozens of successful clandestine missions despite breaking every rule in the book along the way. Mr. Switters, you are the most commended, highly complained about officer in your section.

SWITTERS

Switters. Just Switters.

Mayflower glares at him.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Sorry, sir. Continue.

MAYFLOWER

However, over the course of the past year your recruitment of new agents is virtually nonexistent, almost all the information you've gathered has been old or redundant.

(MORE)

MAYFLOWER (cont'd)

And I have to ask myself why is a smart guy like you producing so little? At this point, my best guess is that you're the mole.

SWITTERS

Me? I'm not selling any secrets. I assure you that's just your run-of-the-mill professional negligence. Tell him, Bobby.

MAYFLOWER

Yes, Bobby assures me you're not motivated enough to pull off something like this.

SWITTERS

Thank you, Bobby. Nice to know you can count on your friends in times of need.

BOBBY CASE

Sorry, pal. We've got to vet everyone.

MAYFLOWER

(taking out a pen)

Tell us about Peru. Did you engage in any activity outside your official duties worth noting? Did you interact with any suspicious people or encounter anything. . . out of the ordinary?

Switters leans back defensively.

He crosses his legs.

SWITTERS

No. Not really.

Mayflower reaches into his desk.

MAYFLOWER

Operation molehunt is on. Bobby will fill you in on the details. In the meantime, I want you to stay in the country and absolutely no contact with anyone about any sensitive international information.

SWITTERS

I can do that.

MAYFLOWER

And there's one more thing.

Mayflower pulls out a green slip, signing it.

SWITTERS

Oh no, please don't. I hate those things. I'm telling you the truth, I swear.

Mayflower hands it to him.

MAYFLOWER

We'd like you to take a polygraph. Just to be sure.

SWITTERS

Look, I should probably explain my legs.

MAYFLOWER

I just assume you fell down the stairs at a whorehouse. Are you the one who parked in the handicapped space?

SWITTERS

Yes, sir.

MAYFLOWER

I had you towed.

SWITTERS

Thank you.

INT. POLYGRAPH ROOM - DAY

A bare room with a modern desk in the center which is actually a polygraph machine and computer. The polygrapher is a touch crazy, outwardly smiling while harboring the deepest suspicions. The face of happiness and the heart of darkness. CHRISTOPHER WALKEN, perhaps.

He stands over Switters, putting nodes on Switters' fingers and wrapping coils around his chest.

WALKEN

This machine will measure your  
(MORE)

WALKEN (cont'd)  
psychological reactions to my  
questions. When you're lying it  
will show up on my computer  
printout here. A man once  
admitted to me, quite without  
prodding, to killing his wife,  
chopping up her body and  
discarding the pieces. There  
we go.

He looks at Switters as if he's his pride and joy and then  
sits down behind his desk, looking at the screen and smiles.

SWITTERS  
What is it?

WALKEN  
It says you're lying already.

SWITTERS  
But I haven't said anything.

Walken ignores him and takes notes.

WALKEN  
Do you know me?

SWITTERS  
No. I mean I just met you so, yes.  
In a way.

WALKEN  
Do you intend to lie to me on  
this test?

SWITTERS  
No.

WALKEN  
Have you ever engaged in deviant  
sex?

SWITTERS  
Isn't all sex kind of deviant?  
I mean isn't that the point?

WALKEN  
Yes or no, please. True/False:  
I have never thought about what  
it would be like to be a member  
of the opposite sex.

Walken writes.

SWITTERS  
Hey, you wrote before I answered!

WALKEN  
Sometimes you just know. True/  
False: I rarely like to harm  
animals.

Beat.

SWITTERS  
Is that a trick question?

WALKEN  
Who won the World Series last  
year?

SWITTERS  
I don't know. The Advertisers?

WALKEN  
Are you an agent for the Russian  
Intelligence service?

SWITTERS  
No.

WALKEN  
Where is Coney Island?

SWITTERS  
Wherever you want it to be.

WALKEN  
Have you ever had a snake bite?  
A friend of mine was bitten by  
a snake in the Cambodian jungle.  
It was a terrible death,  
trembling with fever, blinded by  
the venom as it ravaged his  
nervous system.

He beams as if he's just said something wonderful. He studies Switters' face for a reaction.

SWITTERS  
Can I go now?

INT. LANGLEY HALLWAY - DAY

Switters wheels and Bobby Case walks down the corridor.

BOBBY CASE

Sorry 'bout all that, kid.  
Mayflower's got a stick up his  
ass for procedure and I wanted  
your name crossed off the list.  
So what the hell happened to you?

SWITTERS

Had some trouble up the Amazon.  
I don't know, pal. My heart's  
just not in it anymore.

BOBBY CASE

Nonsense. You've just hit a rough  
patch, we'll snap you out of it.

SWITTERS

No, the wahoo's dried up. I've  
got to get out of this mess and  
I don't even know where to begin.

BOBBY CASE

Forget about it. Let's barbeque,  
have some burgers and beers. Texas  
style. We need to pick up some buns.

EXT. SUPERMARKET PARKING LOT - DAY

The supermarket is right at the edge of campus. Switters and Bobby Case walk/wheel across the parking lot.

BOBBY CASE

I like to shop here. It's a bit  
out of the way but you get a  
good look at the college tail.  
Imagine the possibilities!

They approach an entrance where protestors shout and hold up signs: "**CIA = EVIL**", "**NO CIA RECRUITMENT ON CAMPUS**" One of the protestors shouts right into Bobby's face.

STUDENT

YOU PEOPLE ARE RUINING THIS  
COUNTRY!

Bobby gets behind Switters, pointing down to garner sympathy.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Bobby Case wheels Switters down the aisles, throwing food onto his lap as if he were a shopping cart.

BOBBY CASE

Okay, let's take this one thing at a time. First order of business is to get rid of this curse and get you back on your feet.

SWITTERS

That would probably entail getting End-of-Time to lift the taboo.

BOBBY CASE

Alright, so let's think about that. We're both Company men, how would the boys at the pickle factory approach this problem?

SWITTERS

Probably pay someone off. Or send some goon to cut him down.

BOBBY CASE

Okay, that's an idea. I could fly down to South America, find this End-of-Time guy and twist his arm until he lifted the curse.

SWITTERS

Always the way of the Cowboy, Bobby. Meantime why don't I track down the pyramid and we'll offer it back to him. Shazam. No curse.

BOBBY CASE

Now you're talking. But what do you think it all means? Does the curse have some symbolism at all or is it just some jungle wiseguy having fun with a city slicker?

SWITTERS

I've been thinking about that myself. Do you remember the story that monk told us in Rishikesh? He said that a great spiritual master was once asked what it was like to be Enlightened. The master answered "oh, it's just

(MORE)

SWITTERS (cont'd)  
like ordinary life. Except that  
you're two inches off the ground."

BOBBY CASE

Yeah.

SWITTERS

Well look at me. That seems to  
be the exact predicament I've  
found myself in.

BOBBY CASE

Okay. So?

SWITTERS

So maybe End-of-Time was trying  
to show me a glimpse of what  
it's like to be Enlightened.

BOBBY CASE

That's interesting. Do you feel  
Enlightened?

SWITTERS

No.

BOBBY CASE

Can you see if those are seeded  
buns? They get in my teeth.

TWO VERY SUSPICIOUS MEN linger by the cottage cheese, watching  
our barbequers. One of them has peculiar marks on his face.

EXT. BOBBY CASE'S HOME, BACKYARD - DAY

From behind the bushes, the two men watch Bobby Case grilling.  
Switters sits behind him.

SWITTERS

You know I think Audubon Poe is  
mixed up in all of this.

BOBBY CASE

Poe? That mercenary? What would  
make you think that?

SWITTERS

It was something Potney said before  
he bit the big one.

BOBBY CASE

I thought you said he touched it?

SWITTERS

Oh for Chrissake, Bobby! This is serious. No, just before he ran into me he said he saw Audubon Poe. Now what would Poe be doing in Peru?

BOBBY CASE

Since he left the program Poe's long arm of nefariousness reaches around the globe. He was probably involved in some drug deal or human slave trafficking.

SWITTERS

Still, that's quite a coincidence. I wouldn't be surprised if Poe knew a thing or two about this whole business. Do you know where I could find him?

BOBBY CASE

Last I heard he was running arms out of Turkey. If you want to talk to him I could send out feelers.

SWITTERS

Thanks.

BOBBY CASE

Okay, so we've got a plan. You find out from Poe where this pyramid is and I'll pop down to Peru and have a head-to-head with this End-of-Time character.

SWITTERS

Be careful, it's pointed. Listen, there's something else you can do for me. I just can't bare to face my dear Maestra with news of her ill-fated parrot. And I certainly don't want Suzy to see me in my present state. My age is already an issue in our relationship. Could you reach out to them for me?

BOBBY CASE

Say that you're indefinitely detained on some secret mission?

SWITTERS

Exactly.

BOBBY CASE

No worries. We'll get you out of this yet. Soon you'll be singing *Accentuate the Positive* at the Days Inn in Okinawa, up to your knees in pussy and this whole mess will be behind you.

SWITTERS

I certainly hope so. Meantime, what do we do about the Russians in the hedges?

BOBBY CASE

I saw them. Are they Russian? Because I thought they might be ours.

SWITTERS

No, definitely Russian. It's this damn mole business. You're not really taking it seriously, are you?

BOBBY CASE

I'm taking it very seriously.

SWITTERS

There's no mole. It's a myth. A witch hunt of John Ashcroft proportions.

They both SPIT ON THE GROUND.

BOBBY CASE

Maybe so. But if I find out there is a mole. . .

He mashes the burger into the grill and a flame flares up.

SWITTERS

Looks like it's a bad day to be a mole. Can I use your john?

BOBBY CASE

Be my guest.

Switters wheels off and Bobby Case waves to the Russians behind the hedges.

INT. BOBBY CASE'S OFFICE - DAY

Switters wheels out of the bathroom. High up on the bookshelf a book is askew. He stands on the footrests, wheelchair wobbling, and takes it off the shelf -- **"MY LIFE IN THE CIA BY AUDUBON POE: AMORALITY, BETRAYAL AND IRRESPONSIBILITY IN MODERN DIPLOMACY"**

Switters turns it over -- a photo of the handsome, suntanned Poe is on the back cover. Bobby Case enters the room and he quickly puts the book back.

SWITTERS

Just stretching out the old legs.  
Don't want them to atrophy.

He runs in place on the foot-rests, the wheelchair pitching back and forth. Almost falling over, he grabs the shelf for balance.

BOBBY CASE

Forget that, look what just came  
down the wire. Hector Sumac's dead.

He brings up a CIA webpage on the computer -- scrolling down they see a photo of a smiling Hector Sumac and the headline: **"AGENT DEAD IN LIMA"** Further down is a **PHOTO OF SWITTERS.**

BOBBY CASE

Those idiots have put out the  
all-points for you. That makes you  
an endangered species in these  
parts. You better skedaddle  
because if the Russians know  
you're here our own goons can't  
be far behind.

SWITTERS

What should I do?

BOBBY CASE

I suggest you get the hell out  
of here.

SWITTERS

Can I borrow your car?

EXT. BOBBY CASE'S HOME - DAY

The garage door slowly opens and Bobby Case's car pulls out, turning down the suburban street. Soon after, a car parked across the street follows.

EXT. BETHESDA STREET - DAY

Switters drives at a normal pace down the street, the tail following behind. He turns onto a main road and speeds up a bit. The tail also speeds up.

Driving down the main road, a line of dark federal sedans drive in the other direction. After a few moments they U-turn quickly and follow Switters and the Russians. Switters speeds up, his tails gaining.

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Switters turns past the supermarket and into the large gated entrance to campus, the Russians and Feds right on his tail.

The cars drive down the main road, much faster than the speed limit and a CAMPUS SECURITY CAR joins the chase.

Switters turns quickly around a bend, SCREECHING the tires and bouncing loudly over speed bumps, disturbing the collegiate calm of the place and sending co-eds scattering.

Followed closely, Switters drives his car right over the lawn, around the cloisters and towards a corner where two large buildings meet.

It's a dead-end. The protestors from the supermarket are there, lounging on the grass, their signs on the ground. They look up at the cars bearing down on them and SCATTER IN PANIC.

The car seems to pick out one of the students in particular -- the one who yelled at Bobby Case earlier -- corralling him one way and then another until he's backed into a corner.

Before running him over, Switters SLAMS ON THE BRAKES SENDING MUD AND GRASS UP INTO THE STUDENT'S FACE BEFORE STOPPING RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM.

The Feds, Russians and Campus police also stop behind the car, boxing it in.

The driver's side door opens BUT INSTEAD OF SWITTERS STEPPING OUT IT'S BOBBY CASE who looks the student square in the eye.

BOBBY CASE

Punk bitch.

EXT. BOBBY CASE'S HOUSE - DAY

In the quiet, peaceful suburbs a taxi pulls up to the curb. Switters wheels himself down the driveway and opens the back door, throwing his crocodile-skin valise onto the seat. The TAXI DRIVER gets out to help him into the cab.

INT. TAXI - DAY

Sitting in the back seat with the breeze blowing through his hair, Switters flips through a royal flush of passports.

SWITTERS

Airport.

TAXI DRIVER

Where you fly today, sir?

SWITTERS

Turkey.

TAXI DRIVER

Ah, Turkey. Long way. Vacation there?

SWITTERS

Meet Arms Dealer there.

EXT. ANTALYA, TURKEY - DAY

An idyllic Mediterranean port town set around an ancient Roman harbor. Mopeds buzz past and tourists walk the streets. A mid-level hotel sits on a busy corner -- The Hotel Gül.

INT. HOTEL GÜL LOBBY - DAY

Switters sits in the lobby on a round settee wearing a blue pin-stripe suit doing the *Le Monde* crossword puzzle, his legs spread flat on the sofa. We recognize the two Russians in the corner with their eyes on Switters.

AUDUBON POE enters the hotel and sits next to Switters. He is an ex-James Bond type: not the debonair charming Roger Moore but the mean, badass Daniel Craig kind. A hardened veteran of many clandestine missions.

POE

Your mama's so fat she sat on a rainbow and Skittles came out.

SWITTERS

Your mama's so ugly the neighbors  
break into your house to close the  
curtains.

POE

So you're Switters. Aren't you  
the guy who knows seventy-five  
words for a woman's vagina?

SWITTERS

Seventy-one. I wonder if that  
will be my claim to fame? The  
lone talent people will remember  
me by.

POE

The only reason I'm here is  
because Bobby Case put in a good  
word for you. What do you want?

SWITTERS

I have some questions.

POE

Not here. Let's walk.

He gets up, expecting Switters to follow. When he doesn't, Poe  
turns back. . .Switters is climbing into his wheelchair.

SWITTERS

Minor mishap in South America.

EXT. ANTALYA STREETS - DAY

Poe walks and Switters wheels down the streets bustling with  
tourists and gift shops. The Russians follow a block behind.

POE

So I assume the tail's for you?

SWITTERS

Yes. I should tell you that  
Langley seems to think I might be  
some kind of mole.

POE

They've been talking about this  
bullshit Russian mole for years.  
I looked into it and there is no  
mole. It's an old wives tale.

SWITTERS

My thoughts exactly. Wanna buy  
some ice cream cones to prevent  
any lip reading?

POE

It doesn't matter.

SWITTERS

But aren't you on CIA's hit list?

POE

I put that rumor out myself.  
Figured if I made a public  
enough fuss they wouldn't dare  
touch me, at least not in any  
obvious, violent way.

SWITTERS

That's good. Nice play. Do you  
want to get ice cream anyway?

Poe stops.

POE

What do you want?

SWITTERS

Know anything about a stolen  
Peruvian pyramid?

POE

Sorry, I can't help you.

He turns and walks away.

SWITTERS

What were you doing in Lima?

POE

Contracting sexually transmitted  
diseases.

SWITTERS

What did you talk to Potney about?

POE

None of your business.

SWITTERS

He's dead, you know.

Poe stops. This rattles him.

POE

How?

SWITTERS

Wandering fingers.

Poe looks back at the Russians who pretend to be window shopping. HE GRABS SWITTERS BY THE WHEELCHAIR, SPINS HIM AROUND AND HOPS ON, KICKING THEM FORWARD LIKE A SKATEBOARD.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Wait a minute. . .

They sail down the street at increasing speed. The Russians give chase but are slowed by tourists on the sidewalk.

Switters and Poe jump off the curb and onto the road, weaving through the cross-section of traffic. Poe alters directions by leaning left and right as they duck traffic.

Switters mostly screams.

They pick up speed as they roll further downhill towards the marina. At the end of the road a truck pulls out in front of them, blocking the road.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

OH SHIT!

He reaches for the wheel but Poe grabs his hand.

POE

You'll burn yourself.

Instead he takes Switters' tie and uses it as a buffer to grab the wheel and turn them sharply to the right, bouncing off the truck and right towards a corner café.

Poe jumps off the wheelchair and runs ahead, sitting at a table and pulling the other chair away with one hand. Switters glides right into the space and stops.

Poe grabs two used coffee cups off another table and puts them down. Switters and Poe look like two ordinary café patrons.

SWITTERS

You're good.

The Russians run down the hill and right past the café.

POE

They'll double back in a minute.  
Let's go.

He gets up and wheels Switters down a long alleyway that ends at the edge of the water. A dead end.

SWITTERS

The end of the line.

POE

Or the beginning.

Poe points out to the marina where a gleaming 90-foot yacht is anchored offshore -- "*THE BANALITY OF EVIL*"

EXT. *BANALITY OF EVIL* DECK - DAY

Poe and Switters are on deck. Poe flips open the lid of the aft hold and jumps down into the storage area which has a small cooler surrounded by boxes of land-mines, gas-masks, machine guns, rocket launchers and grenades.

SWITTERS

Quite a collection.

Poe tosses up a bottle of champagne to Switters who snatches it out of the air.

EXT. *BANALITY OF EVIL* DECK - DAY

Poe sits on deck eating grapes and drinking champagne, which he pours for Switters.

POE

Potney did some occasional work for me. He was mostly incompetent but his knowledge of language and certain Arab tribes was useful to my operations. He was always trying to sell me some relic he pilfered from some museum or government. I never took him seriously and besides, stealing from governments is bad for business. But this time he said he had something special. I was down in South America anyway so I agreed to meet him, listened to his pyramid scheme, said "no thank you" and was on my way.

SWITTERS

Did he show you the pyramid?

POE  
 Didn't have it with him. Said he  
 hid it somewhere safe.

SWITTERS  
 Yes, he said that to me, too.  
 Something about hiding it  
 somewhere no man could get at it.  
 What was the last thing he did  
 for you?

POE  
 Come this way.

EXT. *BANALITY OF EVIL* STARBOARD DECK- DAY

Poe and Switters look out at the rocky shore.

POE  
 The Kurdish people are the largest  
 ethnic minority in the world  
 without a home. They've endured  
 persecution by any number of  
 countries for centuries. The  
 Syrian Kurds are particularly  
 oppressed and have been working  
 up to armed conflict for years.  
 Armed conflict, you understand,  
 is good for business.

He points to a spot ashore.

POE (CONT.)  
 Hatay, Turkey. On the Syrian  
 border. Site of Alexander's  
 victory over the Persians and  
 supposedly the beach where Jonah  
 was spit out by the whale.

SWITTERS  
 If you believe in that kind of  
 thing.

POE  
 What?

SWITTERS  
 Nothing, sorry. Continue.

POE  
 The Nomads carry my guns over  
 (MORE)

POE (cont'd)

those hills and across the border into Syria. Potney spoke most of the tribal languages of the region so he would go along and make sure the arms got to the buyers. That was his route.

SWITTERS

When was his last run?

POE

A few weeks ago. Just before Peru. I've got a new shipment going out and no one to deliver it. What do you think?

SWITTERS

I think my answer lies along that route.

The sun sets on the deck of the lolling ship and our merry arms-dealers and for the moment, just the moment, all seems well in the world.

EXT. HATAY HARBOR - EVENING

Surrounded by crates of arms, Poe rows a rubber boat towards shore. Switters sits across from him, his wheelchair folded behind.

POE

So tell me some words for vagina.

SWITTERS

Well personally I prefer Swedish: "*slida*". Very onomatopoeic.

POE

Yes. It has a ring.

SWITTERS

Or the Japanese: "*chitsu*". In Hebrew it's "*cus*", so be careful your pronunciation when you order couscous in Jerusalem. But you'll never catch me using the Welsh.

POE

What's that?

SWITTERS

"*Llawes goch*".

POE

What's it in Turkish?

SWITTERS

Oh, I knew that. Wait it'll come to me. . .

EXT. HATAY BEACH - EVENING

Switters, Poe and a TRIBE OF BEDOUIN NOMADS are on a deserted beach on a small cove. The lights of the *Banality of Evil* glow offshore. The arms are loaded up on camels and the empty crates put back on Poe's rowboat.

POE

You're on your own from here.

SWITTERS

Thanks, Poe. I'll be sure to remember you in my memoirs.

POE

Please don't.

SWITTERS

Any advice on how to ingratiate myself with these fine desert men?

POE

Tell them a story. And keep your gun handy.

With the help of the Nomads, Poe shoves off and rows back towards the ship.

SWITTERS

Oh, I remember the Turkish.  
(cupping his hands)  
"*DOLYOLU*"! "*DOLYOLU*"!!

He turns around and looks at the men: a tough, rugged lot who stare at him. Switters realizes his mistake (he has just shouted "vagina" to a man in a language they probably understand). He smiles. A Nomad has a monkey on his shoulder.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Hello. Your monkey reminds me of the time when once, in Burma, my  
(MORE)

SWITTERS (cont'd)  
 friend Bobby Case and I were  
 strip-searched at a roadblock.  
 Rubber gloves were unavailable  
 there, you see, and the  
 militiamen, understandably not  
 wanting to foul their fingers,  
 had a pet monkey they'd trained  
 to do the job for them. He was a  
 smart little fellow-

NOMAD  
 We must go now, stop your talking.

SWITTERS  
 Okay.

EXT. TURKISH DESERT - DAY

Under a brutal sun, the caravan moves single file across the mountain ridge. Switters sits on a camel, wheelchair strapped to the back, fishing through his valise and pulls out a gun.

SWITTERS  
 Hello, Mister Glock.

IT SLIPS OUT OF HIS HAND, BOUNCES OFF THE CAMEL AND FALLS TO THE GROUND. The Nomads laugh -- one of them picks up the gun and tucks it into his tunic.

SWITTERS (CONT.)  
 Okay.  
 (loudly, so everyone can hear)  
 MY GIFT TO YOU!

Switters takes out his satellite phone and is more careful with it as he dials a number and listens to it ring. Maestra answers. CROSS CUT BETWEEN HER HOME AND HIS CAMEL --

MAESTRA  
 This better be good.

SWITTERS  
 Maestra my dear, how are you?  
 It's Switters, your adoring  
 wandering grandson.

MAESTRA  
 What do you want?

SWITTERS

Just checking in. Wanted to see how things are in your neck of the universe. Or perhaps I'm just feeling a bit homesick.

MAESTRA

What have you done with my parrot, you indignant relation? And think very carefully before you answer. Your life may depend on it.

SWITTERS

Sailor Boy? Oh yes, I forgot to tell you that I released him. I have the video, just editing it down a bit.

MAESTRA

Where did you release him?

SWITTERS

Just where we had planned, in the Peruvian Amazon. After a moment's hesitation he burst from his cage and with one final look back flew up into the great jungle beyond.

MAESTRA

Really?

SWITTERS

Cross my heart. He's probably kamikaze mating with some parakeet half his age right now.

MAESTRA

Hmmm.

SWITTERS

Cheer up. You are beginning to sound like a camel. Are you aware that a camel's hump is just a load of fat?

MAESTRA

Then it's the same as a woman's breast.

SWITTERS

Oh no, dear Maestra, a woman's  
(MORE)

SWITTERS (cont'd)  
breast is a miniature moon. It's  
made out of moon paste and warm  
snow and honey.

MAESTRA  
You romantic fool.

SWITTERS  
How's Suzy?

MAESTRA  
I believe our young Suzy has  
acquired a boyfriend.

SWITTERS  
No!

MAESTRA  
She's been attracting the  
attention from boys for some time,  
which I'm sure is no news flash  
to you, but since your absence she  
seems to have released many of  
her inhibitions.

SWITTERS  
Why are you torturing me?

MAESTRA  
It's time, Switters, to renounce  
your adolescent fixations. Don't  
worry, her purity is still intact.  
Truthfully, she finds all this  
attention distracting from her  
studies. I dare say there will  
come a time when she will long  
for that attention.

She sighs.

SWITTERS  
Maestra, you are a nymph of the  
sea and stars. And you will  
always be the most desirable woman  
in Seattle's Magnolia District.

MAESTRA  
I'm not a lobster so stop trying  
to butter me up. I want to see  
that videotape. Why do you always  
have a way of making me feel like  
your lying?

SWITTERS

Professional courtesy. I will get you a copy of that entrancing video just as soon as I find a post office. I must go now. You are in my thoughts.

MAESTRA

Where are you going?

Switters thinks for a moment, looking off into the barren pancake desert beyond the mountains.

SWITTERS

To the opera!

EXT. DESERT OASIS - EVENING

The Nomads set up camp for the night along a small pond and build sandpit fires. Switters watches the men help each other: brush down their loads, gather twigs for the fire, set up tents and prepare the food. One of the Nomads brings Switters some food on a plate.

SWITTERS

You are all family?

NOMAD

Yes. That is my father, these are my brothers and cousins and those who have married into my family.

SWITTERS

Quite a set-up you have here.

NOMAD

We are a happy people.  
(making a fist)  
And we are together.

SWITTERS

I can see that. Tell me, there was another man who traveled with you from time-to-time. Heavyset British chap. Did you ever see him carrying a pyramid about yay big?

NOMAD

No. He was like you but different.

SWITTERS

How?

NOMAD

I cannot say. Only that the others,  
the rest of my family, think you  
are very strange.

SWITTERS

They may not be wrong.

NOMAD

What is life for you in America?  
Why are you different than other  
men from your place?

SWITTERS

Well, most American men secretly  
hate women and love golf. I love  
women and hate golf.

NOMAD

What is gawwf?

SWITTERS

Exactly.

NOMAD

What brings you to the desert?  
What do you seek?

SWITTERS

I'm just trying to stay out of  
trouble.

The Nomad studies his face for a moment and then laughs.

NOMAD

I like you. I like you, strange  
American.

EXT. SYRIAN DESERT - DAY

Deeper into the desert, our caravan trudges onwards. Switters  
drips the last drops of water into his mouth and takes out his  
cellphone, typing a text.

HE TYPES -- "**BOYFRIEND?**"

RESPONSE -- "**FB**"

SWITTERS

FB?. . .FB. . .Fuck Buddy! No!

BEEP, more texts come in and he reads them aloud.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

"Just joking"

(BEEP)

"LMAO. Laughing My Ass Off"

(BEEP)

"Rolling On The Floor Laughing"

Switters sighs, typing a response.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Please Retain Your Virginity. PRYV?

The Nomad comes up beside him.

NOMAD

Hello American! I have spoken to my father the Khan and he offers you to stay with us.

SWITTERS

(pocketing the phone)

Thanks but I've got a mortgage back in Seattle.

NOMAD

My father the Khan offers you one of his daughters.

He motions to four veiled women riding camel-back behind them. They blush and giggle.

SWITTERS

That is a very flattering offer. Tell your father they are very beautiful.

NOMAD

Yes, they are!

SWITTERS

But I have to say no.

NOMAD

Is this Moogage woman your wife?

SWITTERS

You could say that. Thirty-year fixed-rate. 'Til death do us part.

NOMAD

She will not be happy with you?

SWITTERS

No. Besides, I don't think your sisters will understand my sense of humor. Every *bon mot*, every wise crack will fall on deaf ears. I couldn't live under that particular tent.

The Nomad laughs.

NOMAD

You are right, American. They are not very funny at all.

They pass a large, walled-in compound. From within we hear SOUNDS OF WOMEN'S LAUGHTER. Switters looks over.

NOMAD (CONT.)

Oh no, American. This is a place where no man can enter.

SWITTERS

What did you just say?

NOMAD

In this place only women inside. No man can enter.

SWITTERS

I'll be damned.

Switters stops his camel.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

No man can enter. . . a nunnery. Potney you son of a bitch.

EXT. OUTSIDE CONVENT - DAY

Switters wheels himself up to the large wooden gate which blocks the entrance to the walled compound. There is a large bell and bellrope with a sign in Arabic, French and English:

**"TRADESMEN RING THREE TIMES,  
THOSE IN NEED RING TWICE,  
THE GODLESS SHOULD NOT RING AT ALL"**

Switters RINGS ONCE.

The laughter stops.

Switters RINGS FOUR TIMES.

No answer. He looks around -- he is alone and there is absolutely nothing for miles in either direction.

He backs up and propels himself forward, SLAMMING INTO THE DOOR. Nothing. He backs up and SLAMS INTO IT AGAIN, pounding on the door with his fists.

Very high up on the door a peephole slides open.

WOMAN

*Qu'est-ce que vous cherchez?*

SWITTERS

What am I looking for? The International House of Pancakes, must have taken the wrong exit.

The peephole closes and Switters hears a commotion behind the door. The peephole opens again and this time another set of eyes appear, this one belonging to an IRISH WOMAN.

IRISH WOMAN

What's your business here?

SWITTERS

I don't have any business. I was just in the neighborhood and thought I'd drop by. May I come in?

IRISH WOMAN

Dreadfully sorry but we can't let you in at the moment. Masked Beauty has said not to let anyone in under any circumstances.

SWITTERS

Masked Beauty? Are you pirates?

IRISH WOMAN

You're not from the Church?

SWITTERS

Hardly. Not my end of the field. What's your name, little darling?

IRISH WOMAN

(biting her lip)

Sorry sir, but you'll have to go away.

She slams the peephole closed.

SWITTERS

No, wait! It's hot as hell out here! How about a little sustenance? Not very charitable for Church people, if you ask me!

He wheels himself over the stony ground to the minimal shade of a cypress tree, his back to the compound.

AN ORANGE COMES FLYING OVER THE WALL, LANDING NEXT TO HIM.

Beat.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Thank you!

ANOTHER COMES OVER, HITTING HIM IN THE BACK OF THE HEAD.

EXT. OUTSIDE CONVENT - DAY

The sun beats down on Switters -- it's brutal, heat-stroking weather. Orange peels are on the ground around him and his lips are parched. Even when his eyelids are closed he cannot block out the bright sun.

He opens them to see a BEAUTIFUL NUN (mid-forties) looking down at him with stunning eyes.

SWITTERS

I love you.

NUN

(with a slight French accent)  
You are out of your cotton-pickin' mind.

He closes his eyes again.

INT. CONVENT BEDROOM - DAY

Switters wakes up. The beautiful nun is squeezing water from a rag into a basin. Her name is DOMINO.

DOMINO

You're awake. The fever seems to be going down.

SWITTERS

Thanks to you, I'm sure.

She sits on the bed next to him, placing the wet rag on his forehead. He studies her face.

DOMINO

You must thank God, not me.

SWITTERS

Don't you find it a bit batty that people believe God, the epitome of enlightenment, could be so puffed up with human vanity that he'd expect us to sing his praises at every opportunity and twice on Sunday?

DOMINO

Have you traveled by wheelchair through the Syrian desert in order to debate theology, Mister-

SWITTERS

Just Switters. Do you get a lot of visitors? Do you have any kind of relics here? Preferably triangular in shape.

She stops.

DOMINO

Why did you come here?

SWITTERS

I'm just a curious traveler wandering down the camel path of life. I didn't catch your name?

DOMINO

Around here I'm called Domino. Or just Sister.

SWITTERS

And you're American. But spent some time in France. Paris, I'd say.

DOMINO

I was raised in Philadelphia and lived in Paris for a while. We must get you better so you can move on your way. The supply truck comes every two weeks. You can get

(MORE)

DOMINO (cont'd)  
 a ride back to Damascus or  
 whatever your final destination.

SWITTERS  
 I have to tell you I'm surprised  
 someone from the City of Brotherly  
 Love could be so inhospitable.  
 It's a cruel wasteland out there.

DOMINO  
 Don't take it personally or doubt  
 our Christian charities. The  
 Pachomian Order is an Eden here  
 in the desert. But it's an Eden  
 for Eves only, I'm afraid.

SWITTERS  
 An Adamless Eden? I'll have to  
 mull that one over. What about a  
 serpent?

DOMINO  
 No. No serpent here either I'm  
 afraid.

Switters touches her forearm.

SWITTERS  
 But every Paradise has a serpent.

DOMINO  
 Not this one.

INT. CONVENT BEDROOM - DAY

Switters lies in bed. The door opens and Domino enters,  
 bringing him a bowl of soup.

DOMINO  
 You seem to be on the mend. I'm  
 afraid it's not much, but Italian  
 night isn't until next week.

She sits down next to him with the soup and spoon-feeds him.

SWITTERS  
 I'm sorry if I'm any kind of a  
 burden.

DOMINO

Well, you must be attended to and nobody else here speaks English except for Fannie, our Irish lass, and I wouldn't trust her alone with you.

SWITTERS

Is it her you don't trust or me?

DOMINO

Neither of you, frankly.

SWITTERS

How many nuns are in your Order?

DOMINO

Nine of us in total, including the Mother Superior, my aunt Masked Beauty. We are an unusual Order. We believe in free will and common sense and compassion. We're allowed to rename ourselves not after women we were taught to admire but our dream names, the ones we never told anyone.

SWITTERS

Hence Domino and Masked Beauty.

DOMINO

Yes and Mustang Sally, Fannie who spoke to you at the gate, Pippi, ZuZu and Bob.

SWITTERS

Bob?

DOMINO

You'll have to ask her. What about your faith, Mr. Switters? What do you believe in?

SWITTERS

Uhm, well I try not to.

DOMINO

Ooh-la-la. You don't believe in anything?

SWITTERS

My faith is whatever makes me feel good about being alive.

DOMINO

Then you are alone.

SWITTERS

You bet your sweet tootsies I am.

DOMINO

You're out of your cotton-pickin' mind.

SWITTERS

I hate to tell you, but as charming as I find your attempt to be a hip-American, nobody says cotton-pickin' anymore.

DOMINO

Well I do! And that means somebody still says it.

She drops the spoon in the soup, gets up and leaves, slamming the door behind her. Switters lies back in bed and hits his head with his hand.

SWITTERS

Switters, you idiot.

INT. CONVENT BEDROOM - DAY

Switters, naked, is propped up on his knees on the wheelchair looking out the window at the courtyard below where nuns go about their duties. He watches them closely: sweeping and feeding the chickens as he talks on his phone with Bobby Case.

SWITTERS

The pyramid is here somewhere, I know it. Now I just need to find it.

BOBBY CASE

Hilarious. Holed up with nine nuns in the Syrian desert? Imagine the possibilities!

SWITTERS

I'm glad you find the situation amusing. How's the head-hunting?

BOBBY CASE

I've been up and down this damned river in my low-flying twin-engine  
(MORE)

BOBBY CASE (cont'd)  
 Cessna thirty times and no one has  
 seen this tribe. They seem to have  
 just vanished.

EXT. MAESTRA'S SEATTLE HOME - DAY

Instead of flying a twin-engine Cessna down the Peruvian Amazon, Bobby Case is instead lurking in the bushes outside Maestra's home. He approaches a window and opens it from the outside while talking to Switters on his cellphone.

SWITTERS  
 Funny, it sounds awfully quiet  
 for a Cessna.

BOBBY CASE  
 Noise cancellation headphones.  
 I'll get you a pair.

He climbs through the window into Switters' bedroom and begins looking through his things -- bookshelf, desk and drawers.

BOBBY CASE (CONT.)  
 Don't you worry, I'll find  
 this End-of-Time character and  
 when I do I'll give him a little  
 taste of American justice.

SWITTERS  
 Just be sure he lifts the curse  
 before you do anything rash.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Bobby Case sneaks down the hallway with Switters' laptop under his arm. He stops at an open door. Through the crack he sees a female leg shaving in the bath. He stops and leers.

SWITTERS  
 There's another thing. There's a  
 nun here. She's really, I don't  
 know, kind of intriguing. I feel  
 like a school-kid talking like  
 this. . .

The bathroom door swings open and Bobby is exposed, with Switters laptop under his arm.

INT. CONVENT BEDROOM - DAY

Switters hears a female SCREAM.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Bobby? Bobby?

The door opens and Fannie walks in with Switters' food. She sees his naked butt and SCREAMS, dropping the tray. He hangs up the phone and twists around, covering himself up. Fannie hides her eyes, trying to pick up the food.

SWITTERS

Sorry. Could you please hand me my clothes?

EXT. CONVENT GARDEN - DAY

Switters, now fully dressed and in his wheelchair, wheels up to Domino who is planting vegetables in the garden.

SWITTERS

I would like to apologize if I offended you in any way.

DOMINO

That's alright.

He holds the bag of seeds out for her.

DOMINO (CONT.)

I hear you gave Fannie quite a scare.

SWITTERS

Yes, I'm afraid I may have shocked her.

DOMINO

I doubt it. She wants to fuck your brains out.

Switters drops the bag and tries to put the seeds back inside.

DOMINO (CONT.)

Do they not still use that expression in Philadelphia anymore?

SWITTERS

Just caught me off guard a bit,  
(MORE)

SWITTERS (cont'd)  
that's all. I didn't expect, well,  
a nun to use that expression.

DOMINO  
And well you shouldn't. I don't  
even like to think about it, but  
we don't encourage our Sisters to  
repress any of their desires. She  
likes you. She's young and  
attractive and while you're  
waiting for the convoy to arrive  
you should know that you are both  
free to do whatever you like.

SWITTERS  
Well I don't like, thank you very  
much.

DOMINO  
Don't you find her appealing?

SWITTERS  
She's not so bad. But I guess  
I thought maybe you and I-

DOMINO  
Ooh-la-la! No, no. That's  
ridiculous!

SWITTERS  
Why, don't you find me appealing?

DOMINO  
You're not so bad. But you're not  
my type.

SWITTERS  
How do you know?

DOMINO  
You haven't found maturity yet.  
You are not at peace.

SWITTERS  
Well I'm working on it! Damn,  
you sure know how to break a  
guy's heart.

DOMINO  
The pain of love does not break  
hearts, it merely seasons them.

(MORE)

DOMINO (cont'd)

We here at the Order have always worked to build strong spirits. Spirits that cannot be broken. You will be here for a few days, why don't you try and make the most of rebuilding yours?

SWITTERS

With your help?

DOMINO

I believe that through prayer, Christian ritual and good old-fashioned elbow-grease even the most brazen heathen can find peace.

SWITTERS

So you think I have a chance?

She looks at him askew.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Why don't we start with a stroll around the grounds? I wish to know every nook and cranny of this place.

EXT. CONVENT COURTYARD - DAY

Domino pushes Switters around the compound. On the ground, next to the gate is a pair of long wooden poles.

SWITTERS

What are those?

DOMINO

Those? Uhm, in French they're called *les échasses*, I can't remember the English. The gates were made too tall so the nuns use them to look through the peephole.

SWITTERS

Stilts! Of course! Why didn't I think of that? Can I try them out?

DOMINO

What exactly is your malady, Mr. Switters?

EXT. CONVENT COURTYARD - LATER

Switters tries walking on huge 10-foot tall stilts. He hobbles back and forth, almost falling. Domino can't help but laugh as she stands under him, making sure he doesn't fall.

Switters is getting the hang of it. He takes a few steps forward, looks up AND SEES FANNIE IN HER SECOND STORY BEDROOM.

**SHE'S HOLDING THE PYRAMID** WHICH SHE WRAPS IN A PACKAGE AND PUTS IN HER DRESSER DRAWER.

Switters gapes, trying to hold still.

Fannie looks out the window and sees him -- they are at eye level to each other.

SHE SCREAMS

Switters loses his balance and falls backwards, landing right on top of Domino. They are face-to-face, laughing.

SWITTERS

Nice catch.

DOMINO

We couldn't let your feet touch the ground.

SWITTERS

So you believe in the curse?

DOMINO

No, but you do. And if you believe in something other than what's right in front of you then that's a kind of a faith. What's the expression? Whatever floats your boat?

Switters shifts, wincing. He has an erection.

DOMINO (CONT.)

What's that?

SWITTERS

Nothing.

DOMINO

I can feel that.

SWITTERS

My boat.

EXT. OUTSIDE CONVENT GATE - DAY

A large package sits outside the gate. The gate opens slightly and the package is dragged inside.

EXT. CONVENT COURTYARD - DAY

Switters rips open the box. Inside is a note on CIA stationary: **"Merry X-mass from your buddy Santa Case"**

SWITTERS

A jetpack?  
(inside he sees a SEGWAY)  
Cool.

INT. CONVENT DINING HALL - EVENING

Italian Night. Switters and the nine nuns sit around two long wooden tables lit with candles and covered in red-and-white checkered tablecloths. Light Italian music plays on an old CD player in the corner.

Switters glares at Fannie who turns away. Domino watches the exchange.

SWITTERS

God is a fixed point, eternal and absolute, right? It's the way we view God that changes over history. Sometimes he's personal, other times aloof, baritone and vengeful. So for me the key is not to get stuck on one idea. To have a certain flexibility. More wine?

He offers the wine to an elderly nun next to him (MASKED BEAUTY, wearing a veil covering her face) who declines but Switters helps himself to a healthy pour.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

This really is terrific wine.  
Did you make it with your feet?

MASKED BEAUTY

Domino was right. You are a fool.  
But you're an interesting fool.

SWITTERS

Thank you. So why are you called Masked Beauty?

## MASKED BEAUTY

Well Mister Switters, I was once considered the most beautiful woman in Paris. Everywhere I went men stared at me. My beauty was becoming a distraction. So I prayed to the Almighty until I was granted an end to my suffering.

She pulls away her veil to reveal. . .a woman who in her advanced age retains much of her beauty except for a **GIANT MOLE ON THE TIP OF HER NOSE.**

## SWITTERS

Whoah! That's one powerful prayer.

## MASKED BEAUTY

It's a gift from God.

## SWITTERS

Are you sure about that?

## MASKED BEAUTY

The more I prayed, the larger the mole became.

## SWITTERS

Think you might've gone too far?

She smiles and replaces her veil.

## SWITTERS (CONT.)

What's a mole like you doing in a place like this? Well, I'd like to make a toast!

He pours another healthy glass. Domino looks horrified.

## SWITTERS (CONT.)

I've spent the greater part of my adult life in the company of men. Rebels, dreamers, soldiers-of-fortune, out-of-work mercenaries and vagabond scholars. But tonight, Italian night, I salute you nuns, who give your hearts to a man from a distant time and place whom they love beyond everything else. It's the nun who lives most purely and with the least self-serving compromise. To all nuns! The most romantic people on earth.

A weak smattering of applause. Switters downs his drink.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Now I'd like to talk about James  
Joyce. . .

INT. CONVENT DINING HALL - EVENING

Only three nuns are left. Broadway showtunes play from Switters' CD and Fannie and another nun (Pippi) dance together in the middle of the. Switters and Domino sit at separate tables, watching them dance.

DOMINO

Are you drunk?

SWITTERS

Sobriety, for some people, is a thin and temporary disguise. No, I am not. Just a little. So Fanny must be the one who has contact with the outside.

DOMINO

Yes. She's the most comfortable interacting with laymen so she goes to town for our little errands between supply trucks. Why do you ask?

SWITTERS

No reason.

DOMINO

Would you believe that I haven't danced since my Junior Prom in Philadelphia.

SWITTERS

You're kidding? Would you like to dance?

DOMINO

What about your curse?

SWITTERS

If you'll bring your table together with mine I think we can give it a whirl.

They bring their tables together and he leaps up, extending a hand out to her. She takes it and they dance to the song "STRANGER IN PARADISE".

MUSIC

*Take my haaaand  
I'm a stranger in paradise  
All lost in a wonderland  
a stranger in paradise  
If I stand starry-eyed  
that's the danger of paradise  
for mortals who stand beside  
an angel like you. . .*

At first she keeps her distance but Switters whirls her around and dips her a bit and she relaxes into his embrace.

DOMINO

Thank you.

SWITTERS

It's my birthday tonight.

DOMINO

What?

SWITTERS

Funny I remembered, usually I forget.

DOMINO

Are you serious?

SWITTERS

Yes.

DOMINO

You're not pulling my leg?

SWITTERS

No, it really is my birthday.

DOMINO

Don't you celebrate it?

SWITTERS

Not in a long time. When's yours?

DOMINO

It was back in July.

SWITTERS

And how did you celebrate?

DOMINO  
We had Italian night.

They smile.

DOMINO (CONT.)  
But then around midnight I got up  
and went out into the desert to  
try and count the stars.  
Astronomers claim the human eye  
can see no more than five  
thousand stars at one time but I  
swear I counted twenty thousand.  
It was a splendid celebration.

SWITTERS  
I should have like to have done  
that for my birthday, counting  
stars. Maybe next year.

She stops.

DOMINO  
Meet me at the front gate at ten-  
thirty.

SWITTERS  
I'm free. Just have one thing  
to do first.

INT. FANNIE'S BEDROOM ROOM - EVENING

Switters sneaks into the room on his Segway. He has trouble maneuvering -- banging into things and getting stuck in the corner.

The room is a barren space with only a bed, a dresser with a cross nailed to the wall over it. He glides over to the dresser and opens up the drawer -- no package. He opens another drawer -- it's filled with sexy underwear. He holds up a particularly lacey pair.

SWITTERS  
As Bobby Case would say, imagine  
the possibilities.

FANNIE  
Can I help you?

He spins around to see Fannie standing in the doorway.

SWITTERS

Uhm, I was just looking for. . .  
a good time?

She approaches him with lust in her eyes. He backs up, the Segway humming to life.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Although in my fragile state,  
that might not be such a good  
idea.

FANNIE

I want to-

SWITTERS

I know, I've heard. Word travels  
fast around here.

She moves on him and he backs up, maneuvering the Segway towards the door. But she blocks it.

SWITTERS

Please, I don't want to hurt you.

FANNIE

But I want you to.

SWITTERS

Please, you're a nun! Okay, wait!  
Turn around and I'll take off  
your habit.

She does, but instead of undressing her he pinches the back of her neck, making her collapse on the ground.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Sorry. But I've already got a date.

EXT. TOWER - DAY

The Segway rests at the bottom of the ladder. On the roof of the tower is the incredible layout Domino has prepared -- Persian carpets and silk pillows under a star-filled sky. Switters and Domino lie on their backs looking up at the truly breathtaking stars.

DOMINO

How many have you counted?

SWITTERS

Four. My mind keeps wandering.

DOMINO

I love the desert. It's the place  
I feel closest to my breath and  
the breath of God. Although I do  
miss Christmas in Paris.

SWITTERS

I love Paris in the Springtime.  
When it sizzles. Thank you for my  
birthday gift. It may be the best  
anyone has ever given me.

DOMINO

Oh, but this is not your gift.

SWITTERS

No? You mean there's more?

She rolls over on her stomach so they are face-to-face. She  
hides her face in her hand.

DOMINO

I am so embarrassed.

SWITTERS

What is it?

DOMINO

My mother liked Doris Day, okay?

She takes a deep breath and starts singing.

DOMINO (CONT.)

(singing)

*Someone like you cures  
everything gloomy turns wrong  
into right brightens the night  
brings happiness to me. . .  
Someday I'll find*

She opens her palms and moves her hands back and forth,  
minstrel-like.

DOMINO (CONT.)

(laughing and singing)

*someone I can boast to  
somebody to hug, a bug in a rug  
to snuggle up close to and  
whenever I do do you know who  
who who I'll give the most to  
you prey on my mind stay 'til  
I find someone like you.*

She breaks down laughing, as does he.

They kiss.

It is a blissful, star-filled, wide-eyed laughing kiss and when they separate a thin trail of saliva links them before snapping and they both laugh some more. Switters rolls onto his back and looks up at the stars.

SWITTERS

Okay, now I'm counting them.

Domino props up on her elbow, her head resting on her hand.

DOMINO

You know you said you were in love with me the first time we met.

SWITTERS

No, did I?

DOMINO

Yes. It is the first thing you ever said to me.

SWITTERS

Well I don't remember but in boxing circles they call that leading with the right.

DOMINO

It's alright. I have a big crush on you along.

SWITTERS

Crush. You mean you had a big crush on me.

DOMINO

Maybe.

She lies on her back.

DOMINO (CONT.)

When I was in high school in Philadelphia I was, how do you say?

SWITTERS

A drum majorette?

DOMINO

No, a slut. Everyone wanted to touch me and I quickly learned how to please them without, you know, allowing everything. Only my basketball teacher I ever allowed to make love to me.

SWITTERS

You really don't need to spill these kind of beans.

DOMINO

Listen, I must explain. When my family moved back to France, I threw myself with whole heart into the arms of the Church. Then I began to pray for the reinstatement of my virginity. Crazy, no? But like my aunt, I prayed and prayed and after a long time it grew back.

SWITTERS

You mean your maidenhood?

DOMINO

My hymen. God gave it back to me. It's true, I have medical proof. Many doctors examined me and agree. Okay, no big cotton-pickin' deal but it is proof of the power of belief. And that is enough philosophy for one night and now we can kiss again.

She kisses him and reaches down to unbuckle his pants.

SWITTERS

Be careful. You remember what happened to the last person who did that.

DOMINO

I'll take the risk. Just count the stars.

SWITTERS

You know it just occurred to me a way that you can still retain your virginity.

DOMINO

How is that?

SWITTERS

Ever heard of the *culo*?

They kiss again as we PULL UP TO THE TWINKLING STARS ABOVE.

EXT. OUTSIDE CONVENT WALLS - DAY

Switters zips around on the Segway, practicing his turns -- he's really getting good. The Convent gate opens and Fannie steps out, holding basket.

Switters hides behind the cypress tree. She closes the gate behind her and walks down the hill towards the village. Switters follows at a discrete distance.

EXT. SYRIAN VILLAGE MARKET - DAY

Switters follows her through the open-air market. He tries to blend into the crowd as best he can however for this small, Syrian village a Segway is a curiosity.

Village folk surround him but he waves them off, picking up speed and trying to outrun them but they follow behind.

He turns a corner and sees FANNIE TALKING WITH AUDUBON POE.

SWITTERS

Poe?

Poe grabs at her basket and shakes it loose. A few vegetables roll onto the ground and he grabs Fannie by the arms.

The crowd gathers around Switters. He shoos them off, but in doing so KNOCKS SOME COPPER PLATES OFF A STORE'S SHELF.

Poe and Fannie look over.

Fannie runs off and Poe RUNS RIGHT AT SWITTERS, drawing his gun. Switters backs up, fleeing down the alley.

EXT. MARKET ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

He doesn't get far. Poe JUMPS ON HIS BACK and the extra weight sends the Segway careening forward and out of control down the people-filled marketplace.

Switters reaches back and tries to shake him off as they wrestle for control. Poe ducks.

Switters turns forward and GETS HIT SMACK ON THE FACE WITH LOW-HANGING FISH ON STRING. HE IS HIT BY ANOTHER AND ANOTHER until he ducks down out of the way, the Segway propelling forward at full speed and into a narrow shop where an OLD ARABIC MAN beats them with a rolled-up newspaper.

INT. OLD MAN'S SHOP - CONTINUOUS

They barrel through the narrow shop packed floor-to-ceiling with touristy items (the Segway pulling everything down and trailing it all behind them) hit some rugs hanging in back with full-force, THUMP, THUMP, THUMP, sending clouds of dust in their faces. They surprise the Old Man's son watching tv in the back, duck to avoid the power cord and burst through the back of the store.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

The Segway barrels out of the shop and down the alley, dragging the TV and all the touristy goods behind like a just married train. Poe and Switters WRESTLE AND TRADE PUNCHES, each grabbing for control.

The Segway heads towards a delicately constructed pile of spices and nuts. They CRASH INTO IT, sending nuts scattering and the spice pile collapsing on top of them. Switters is careful not to let his feet touch the ground.

They fight and roll around in the spices, covering themselves in colors. Poe jumps up and levels his gun at Switters.

POE

Where is it?

SWITTERS

I don't know, I swear. Who are you working for?

POE

Sorry about this.

Poe cocks back the hammer of the gun.

Switters holds up his hands in useless defense.

POE SNEEZES.

SWITTERS KICKS THE GUN OUT OF HIS HAND AND THEN KICKS POE IN THE CHEST, sending him falling backwards into the street. Switters jumps on the Segway and takes off at full speed. Poe grabs his gun and follows.

Switters turns a corner and stops.

Dead end.

Poe comes running around the corner and stops. He's got him.

Switters goes to the far end of the alley, grabs a long hookah pipe, tucking it under his arm like a joustier and turns back.

Poe levels his gun.

Switters heads straight for Poe.

POE FIRES. . .SWITTERS DUCKS, THE BULLET RICOCHETING OFF THE SEGWAY WHICH CONTINUES RIGHT AT POE, the hookah knocking him off his feet and the gun out of his hand.

The gun flies up in the air and Switters grabs it as he continues out of the alley, bouncing around in his hand until he's got a handle on it and turns a corner into an open market full of people. Switters looks back to see Poe on the ground.

Switters smiles -- until he faces forward to see a CAMEL RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM.

SWITTERS SMACKS INTO THE CAMEL, knocking him off the Segway and onto his back. He holds his feet off the ground, looking up at the underbelly of the growling camel.

A crowd of people gather around him.

He sees Poe get up and, unable to harm Switters with all the people around, back away from the scene. THE CAMEL LOWERS HIS FACE RIGHT OVER SWITTERS AND DROOLS ON HIM.

SWITTERS

Who do you think I am, John  
Ashcroft?

EXT. CONVENT - DAY

A supply truck is parked out front and a man in a red-and-white checkered kafiah unloads boxes and carries them into the convent. Switters goes through the open gate.

EXT. CONVENT COURTYARD - DAY

Switters drives up to Domino.

DOMINO  
Where have you been?

SWITTERS  
Oh, just down to the market.

DOMINO  
What did you do to Fannie?

SWITTERS  
I didn't touch the girl, I swear.  
Why, what did she say?

DOMINO  
She didn't. She's gone.

SWITTERS  
Gone? What do you mean?

DOMINO  
She never came back from the market  
and when we looked in her room all  
her belongings were gone.

SWITTERS  
No note?

DOMINO  
Nothing.

SWITTERS  
Darn.

DOMINO  
What's going on? Who are you?

SWITTERS  
I am Switters, as I say.

She looks at him, skeptically.

SWITTERS (CONT.)  
Alright, I'm looking for an  
ancient pagan-looking pyramid.  
Also, the Russian and American  
Intelligence services may be after  
me about some other mole nonsense,  
something completely unrelated.

DOMINO  
A pyramid? Oh, we have one of those.

SWITTERS  
Excuse me?

DOMINO  
Sure. It's in the pantry.

INT. CONVENT PANTRY - DAY

Amidst the wine bottles and canned food is a desk covered in papers and books. Switters and Domino watch Masked Beauty dig through its drawers.

MASKED BEAUTY  
Fannie said it was a family heirloom and asked me to keep it somewhere safe.

SWITTERS  
When was this?

MASKED BEAUTY  
This morning. Before she left for the market. Here it is.

She pulls out the newspaper-wrapped package and hands it to Switters who carefully unwraps it. And there it is: the small golden pyramid Potney stole from the Kremlin. Switters holds it up and turns it over in his hands.

DOMINO  
What is it?

SWITTERS  
I don't know. Something very dangerous. Something you don't want to have around here.

DOMINO  
How do you know about this? And think about your answer. Because it better be the truth.

Switters takes a deep breath.

SWITTERS  
I work for the CIA.

## MASKED BEAUTY

CIA? Ooh-la-la!

SWITTERS

I guess I should probably say I used to. They seem to think I'm working for the other side.

DOMINO

They think you were lying to them?

SWITTERS

Yes, in effect.

DOMINO

I can't imagine how they could think such a thing.

SWITTERS

Listen, it wasn't my intention to lie to you. I just thought it would be safest. There are a lot of people after this thing and for your protection I wouldn't keep it around for long.

DOMINO

I think we've had quite enough of your protection, Mr. Switters.

SWITTERS

That really is the only thing I've lied to you about, I swear.

DOMINO

You are insincere!

SWITTERS

Don't say that.

DOMINO

A liar! You don't mean anything. You say one thing and then another. You don't know even when you are lying. You come here as a wolf in sheep's clothing. I think it is best if you leave here at once.

SWITTERS

But I love you.

Masked Beauty's eyes perk up.

DOMINO

Yes, that's the first thing you said to me. I didn't believe you then and I didn't believe you now.

SWITTERS

Wait-

DOMINO

Get out. And do not come back. I do not wish to see you again.

She sticks out her hand -- he hands over the pyramid and she drops it back in the drawer, slamming it closed.

INT. SUPPLY TRUCK - DAY

The Segway bounces around in the back of the supply truck as it speeds down the dusty road. The driver is the man in the red-and-white kafiah, TOUFIC. Switters looks at him.

SWITTERS

Italian night?

Switters motions to his kafiah but the driver ignores him, staring at the road. Switters sighs, looking out the window.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Women, Toufic. What are you going to do? I've been kicked out the Garden of Eden and I feel like a real snake. Do snakes have heels? If they did I'd feel like the heel of a snake. All over a stupid pyramid in an unlocked drawer.

HE PULLS THE PYRAMID out of his crocodile-skin valise.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

C'mon, admit it. You'd do the same. Between you and me I don't feel great about this. Maybe when it's all over I'll find a way to make it up to them. You don't care. I'm going to take a hot bath and lock the door and if the world wants in, well it's going to have to knock pretty hard.

TOUFIC

See, that's the problem with you Americans. You get involved and when things get difficult you just go away.

SWITTERS

Oh, you're English is quite good. I didn't realize.

TOUFIC

Three years Lebanon University in Beirut.

SWITTERS

Did you take any Modern Poetry?

TOUFIC

I want to love America but America requires me to hate it. What is wrong with your great country? Why does it do such terrible things?

SWITTERS

Three words: "genuine imitation leather". First the cowboys wiped out the buffalo and then they built Wall Street. Then they had to make genuine imitation leather.

His cellphone BEEPS.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Hang on.

He takes it out and looks at a text message:

FROM SUZY -- **"WHERE R U?"**

He fumbles to respond -- **"miss me?"**

RESPONSE -- **"WHAT HAPPENED TO MY PARROT, YOU DEGENERATE!"**

Switters quickly tosses the phone back in the bag.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Sorry, what were you saying?

TOUFIC

Americans are a generous and good  
(MORE)

TOUFIC (cont'd)  
 people, the ones I have met, but  
 as a country I must oppose them.

SWITTERS  
 It's only natural. Terrorism is  
 the only logical response to  
 America just as street crime is  
 the only logical response to  
 America's drug policy. But  
 America has something special.  
 It has bounce. It has snap.

The truck hits a BIG BOUNCE and the pyramid comes flying out  
 of Switters' hand onto the floor. He picks it up -- a panel  
 has opened and electrical wires dangle out.

SWITTERS (CONT.)  
 Now that's interesting.

He picks up the pyramid and pulls out more and more wiring.

SWITTERS (CONT.)  
 That's very interesting.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Toufic fills up the truck as Switters sits with the door open,  
CONNECTING THE WIRING IN THE PYRAMID TO HIS VIDEO CAMERA AND  
REWINDING TO FOOTAGE OF SAILOR BOY IN HIS CAGE ON THE RIVER.

SWITTERS  
 That's it. Right there.

He looks up and sees TWO ARAB MEN who look suspiciously  
 similar to Switters. . .The Russians.

Toufic talks with one of them, pointing back in the direction  
 of the Convent, gets back in the car and starts the engine.

SWITTERS  
 Hold your fucking camels, Toufic.  
 What did that man say to you?

TOUFIC  
 He asked if he was going in the  
 right direction for the nuns.

SWITTERS  
 That's it. We're going back. The  
 nuns are in danger.

TOUFIC

I must go to Damascus.

SWITTERS

Then I'm going alone.

EXT. SYRIAN DESERT - DAY

Switters drives his Segway across the barren landscape at full speed, alone in the desert wilderness, holding his valise.

EXT. OUTSIDE CONVENT - DAY

As Switters approaches the entrance to the compound, he sees the car from the gas station parked out front and the gate broken open. Switters circles around to the back.

EXT. BACK OF CONVENT - DAY

Switters pulls up to the back wall. Reaching up, the top of the wall is just out of his grasp.

He backs up to get a running start.

HE FLOORS THE SEGWAY RIGHT TOWARDS THE WALL. . .IT HITS A ROCK, SENDING HIM FLYING UP IN THE AIR TOWARDS THE WALL, WHICH HE GRABS WITH BOTH ARMS.

The Segway crashes into the wall, smashing apart.

Switters pulls himself up over the wall with two arms hanging over the top, looking down into the courtyard where he sees one of the nuns (ZuZu) cowering behind the garden shed.

SWITTERS

Pssst. ZuZu. Up here.

ZUZU

*Monsieur Switters!*

SWITTERS

Quick. Bring me the stilts. The stilts. *Les échasses.*

ZUZU

*Les échasses?*

SWITTERS

*Oui.* The fucking circus is back in town.

EXT. CONVENT COURTYARD - DAY

The Russians stand around the frightened nuns.

RUSSIAN  
We want ze pyramid.

DOMINO  
I told you we don't have it.

SWITTERS  
UNHAND THOSE NUNS!

Suddenly, around the corner comes Switters, WALKING ON THE LONG STILTS 10 FEET OFF THE GROUND.

They all stare in shock.

He takes long, tenuous steps and brushes his head against the tree branches which almost knock him over. Teetering and staggering towards them he gains too much momentum, goes past them and has to circle back.

SWITTERS (CONT.)  
You are trespassing on Vatican property. I'll have you know this compound is under the personal protection of Bashar al-Assad, Doris Day and Audubon Poe!

One of the Russians grabs Masked Beauty and pulls off her veil, revealing her huge nasal mole.

He gasps.

SWITTERS (CONT.)  
That's no way to treat a lady. Are you aware of the Geneva Convention?

DOMINO  
Yes, if you do not leave matters will be turned over to our Chief of Security.

She nods towards Switters. One of the Russians pulls out a gun and the nuns step back in fear.

SWITTERS  
(pulling out his gun)  
I have one of those, too. Care to see which one's louder?

HE REARS BACK AND KICKS ONE OF THE RUSSIANS IN THE SHINS WITH HIS STILTS, KNOCKING HIM BACKWARDS HOWLING IN PAIN.

Switters also staggers back, flailing his gun and trying to keep his balance. A group of goats come into the yard and run between Switters' stilts causing to wobble backwards, losing more balance until he falls ass-backwards into a bush.

BLAM!

His gun fires, ricocheting off the ground and HITTING MASKED BEAUTY IN THE FACE. She goes down. Domino rushes to her side, looking back at the Russians with fire in her eyes.

DOMINO

Get out of here right now!

The Russians back up, run out of the compound, jump into their car and drive away. Switters sits up in the bush.

DOMINO (CONT.)

(to Switters)

You reckless maniac. Your irresponsible macho gunplay has disfigured my aunt.

Sitting up, Masked Beauty reveals that her mole has been shot clear off leaving a smooth, perfect nose.

INT. MASKED BEAUTY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Domino attends to Masked Beauty who rests peacefully in bed. She caps a bottle of iodine and leaves, closing the door quietly behind her. Outside, Switters sits in his wheelchair.

DOMINO

So you are back in this thing?

SWITTERS

My other ride is in the shop.  
How is she?

DOMINO

Shocked, but she'll recover.

Domino crosses her arms. She holds out her hand. Sheepishly, he hands over the pyramid.

DOMINO (CONT.)

Stealing from nuns? Really?

SWITTERS

I think you underestimate the power of this curse.

DOMINO

Your only curse is your selfishness.

SWITTERS

You have to believe me, I never intended any harm to come to you or your Sisters.

DOMINO

And neither do I. Which is why we're going to return the relic to its rightful owners. Since there is some dispute we must let the Vatican decide.

SWITTERS

You're going to give it to Rome?

DOMINO

Yes. We voted and we're going to present it ourselves to the Holy See.

SWITTERS

Then I insist you let me come with you. The journey will be perilous and there are those who will stop at nothing to get it from you.

DOMINO

I think you've done quite enough already. And there is no reason for anyone to hurt us. We're flies.

SWITTERS

People swat flies. And you must insist on handing it to the Pope directly. Don't trust anyone.

DOMINO

You don't trust the Vatican?

SWITTERS

The Swiss Guard haven't fired a shot in five hundred years. Think they're a bit trigger happy? I've gotten you into this

(MORE)

SWITTERS (cont'd)  
 mess, I'm not going to abandon  
 you now. So what do you say?

DOMINO  
 I say you're out of your cotton-  
 pickin' mind.

INT. DAMASCUS AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

The nuns board an Alitalia plane. Domino looks back at Switters who sits in his wheelchair, dressed in a nun's habit with Masked Beauty's veil. He makes a call on his cellphone.

INT. MAESTRA'S HOME - DAY

Bobby Case's cellphone vibrates on the table. We see two pairs of intertwined feet and hear love-making noises.

His cellphone goes to voicemail.

SWITTERS (V.O.)  
 Bobby, this is your old pal  
 Switters. Although you wouldn't  
 think it to look at me. You  
 could say my looks are becoming  
 a distraction. Anyway, I'm going  
 to need your help. . .

INT. ALITALIA FLIGHT - DAY

THE STEWARDESS walks down the aisle. Towards the back of the plane sit our five nuns, Switters included. She stares at him with her mouth open. That's one ugly nun.

SWITTERS  
 Thank God, signorina. Do you have  
 anything without chickpeas? It's  
 all I've had for three weeks. And  
 bring me some alcohol, too. Let's  
 blow this falafel stand.  
 (looking at Domino)  
 This is gonna get ugly, isn't it?

EXT. DAMASCUS AIRPORT RUNWAY - DAY

The Alitalia plane turns down the runway, picking up speed and takes off over the ancient Syrian capitol.

EXT. SIDE ENTRANCE TO VATICAN CITY - DAY

The nuns pile out of a Vatican minivan. Switters is lowered by a handicapped lift. A CARDINAL with black, greased-back hair comes out to greet them, his hands folded in front of him.

CARDINAL

Hello, Sisters. Welcome to Vatican City. His Holiness eagerly awaits your visit.

(to Switters)

And if you, sir, could please leave your firearm concealed in that briefcase. We will lock it in our vault and I assure you it will be returned after your visit.

SWITTERS

Told you these guys were good.

CARDINAL

Right this way, please.

TWO SWISS GUARDS take the valise and escort the group through a wood-paneled lobby and out a door into a grand garden.

EXT. VATICAN GARDENS - DAY

The nuns are led through a manicured garden and join a long line of people waiting for an audience with THE POPE, who stands under an ivy-covered pavillion.

CARDINAL

Do you have the relic?

DOMINO

Yes, we do.

She pulls out the newspaper-wrapped package.

CARDINAL

Wonderful. Please present it to the Cardinal standing next to His Holiness and then you may receive blessings.

SWITTERS

Oh no we don't. The deal was we give it to the Holy Kielbasa himself.

Domino KICKS him.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Ow! That hurt.

DOMINO

(to the Cardinal)

That will be fine. We are sure that in his wisdom The Holy Father will know what to do.

CARDINAL

That is very sensible, Sister. And in light of the diplomatic sensitivity of the situation, we appreciate you bringing the item directly to us. You are a beacon of the Lord's light.

SWITTERS

Puh-lease.

DOMINO

(ignoring him)

You're welcome.

CARDINAL

Although it may have been better if you left him behind.

DOMINO

Your Eminence, I'm beginning to think the same thing. But it is our preference.

CARDINAL

And so it shall be.

He nods and backs away.

SWITTERS

Think anyone ever told him that it looks like the *Exxon Valdez* has run aground in his hair?

The line moves closer towards the Pope. ANOTHER CARDINAL approaches Domino. He looks familiar to Switters. . . that's no Cardinal but **AUDUBON POE**. He leads her up the steps.

POE

Right this way please.

SWITTERS

Wait! That's no Missionary!  
It's a Mercenary!

Everyone turns to look at him. One of the Swiss Guards puts his hand on Switters' wheelchair, holding him back.

Domino is led off into a side garden away where she is surrounded by Poe and other men. Switters can see her clutching the pyramid to her chest and shaking her head. Poe pulls the package out of her hands.

DOMINO

No, no. This isn't right. You can't do this!

SWITTERS

STOP! YOU MOTHER-FUCKER! TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF OF HER!

Everyone is shocked and moves away from him. The Pope is whisked away.

Poe unravels the package layer by layer -- BUT INSTEAD OF THE PYRAMID, IT IS THE CD OF BROADWAY SHOWTUNES AND A SMALL ROCK.

Poe grabs Domino by the shoulders.

The Swiss Guard grabs Switters BUT HE FLIPS THE GUARD'S ARM BACKWARDS, BREAKING IT INSTANTLY.

The Swiss Guard falls back in pain.

Switters holds out his foot and looks at the ground. . .in order to save her he must walk up the steps.

He can't do it.

He sees Domino pulled away, looking back at him for help.

Switters holds his foot in the air as if an invisible force is preventing him from going any further. He is either going to have to step on the ground or watch Domino get dragged away.

SWITTERS STEPS OUT OF THE WHEELCHAIR.

THE MOMENT HIS FOOT TOUCHES THE GROUND THERE IS A FLASH OF WHITE, HE HEARS A "POP!" AND COLLAPSES ON THE GROUND.

EVERYTHING TURNS TO BLACK

COMPLETE DARKNESS

In the darkness we hear a few whirls of wind or maybe a distance ocean.

Then a coughing.

More of a clearing of the throat.

The blackness lightens a bit and we begin to pick out hazy objects in a room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Switters wakes up. As his eyes adjust to the light of room he can make out a man sitting in a chair across from him, legs crossed and looking at his fingernails as if he's just had a manicure. It's Poe.

SWITTERS

What happened? Where am I?

POE

Probably think you're having some trendy near-death experience, I expect.

SWITTERS

Poe? You're here?

POE

Why, who did you expect? The man in a white-beard?

SWITTERS

The taboo. It's taken me.

POE

No, you fool. You fainted.

SWITTERS

No, it was End-of-Time's curse. It hit me like a poisoned hammer all the way from the Amazon.

POE

You slipped, fell and hit your head on the concrete steps. It sounded like a coconut cracking. You've been out for five days.

SWITTERS

Five days? And what about the curse?

POE

I don't know anything about a curse. My job is to get the pyramid. The rest is your affair.

SWITTERS

If there is no curse then Potney's  
still alive. Son of a bitch.

Poe scoots up to the bed.

POE

I don't know what you're  
blathering about. All I know is  
that you have what I want. My  
business is with you.

SWITTERS

Whom are you working for?

POE

If I were an ethical man I'd cut  
you in on the deal. But I'm not.  
I'm greedy and vengeful. Now  
where's the pyramid?

SWITTERS

Not so fast, hot stuff. It appears  
that my general sense of misgiving  
has paid off. You want the pyramid,  
you're going to have to cut me in  
after all.

POE

Not really. We have the nuns.  
Including the one you seem so  
protective of. Domino, I believe  
her name is? Ludicrous what  
people name their kids today.

Switters looks at him. He has no play.

SWITTERS

The coat check at the Vatican.  
It's in my valise.

Poe brushes off his trousers, gets up and looks back.

POE

Oh, and if it's not there I'll  
come back and we won't talk.

He leaves the room.

Switters waits a moment and jumps out of bed -- he collapses  
on the ground, pulling down the sheets with him.

SWITTERS

Atrophy.

Wrapped in the bedsheets, he gingerly gets up and walks over to the window with chicken-legs. He rubs them for circulation and looks at the street below -- several stories down he sees Poe walk out of the main entrance to the hospital.

Switters looks back at the door -- doctors and nurses linger in the hallway. No exit there.

He pushes open the window and steps out onto a rickety scaffolding which covers the outside of the building.

EXT. SCAFFOLDING - CONTINUOUS

He swings his leg over, surprising an ITALIAN CONSTRUCTION WORKER.

SWITTERS

Excuse me.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER

*Chi il fotte la sono? Andara  
via da qui! Andara via da qui!*

The construction worker continues to yell at him but Switters walks carefully past.

Switters reaches the end of the scaffolding and sees that there is a ladder down to a lower one. He climbs down that ladder and across the lower scaffolding, encountering ANOTHER ITALIAN who also screams at him.

SWITTERS

Who are you, the Mario Brothers?

He continues to the end and turns to see the worker ACTUALLY ROLL A SMALL BARREL TOWARDS HIM.

Quickly, Switters lowers himself down the ladder to another scaffolding and from afar, the whole scene looks like a screen from DONKEY KONG. . .

. . .Switters goes down one level, the barrel bouncing over his head and leaping over another one.

He continues to the end of the scaffolding but this time there is no ladder at the end. The street is three stories below.

He wraps the sheets around both his ankles and holds the other corners in his hands.

He JUMPS.

And like a flying squirrel, the sheet catches the wind, slowing him down.

He hits the sidewalk with a THUD.

SWITTERS  
Ow, my fucking legs.

He looks up and sees Poe get into a taxi and disappear into the busy Roman traffic.

A CAR SCREECHES TO A HALT RIGHT BEHIND HIM.

Switters looks back and sees the passenger door open and ONE OF THE RUSSIANS step out of the car (an Opel) and walk over to Switters with his arm cocked, ready to punch him.

SWITTERS (CONT.)  
Opel.

BLAM! THE RUSSIAN PUNCHES HIM IN THE FACE, KNOCKING HIM OUT.

Black. Again.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

This time Switters comes to sitting upright in a chair. Across from him are the Russians, one of them eating spaghetti.

SWITTERS  
Carbo-loading?

RUSSIAN  
We want ze pyramid.

SWITTERS  
I don't have it.

RUSSIAN  
We know. Your friend Poe has it.  
He wants five million dollars.

SWITTERS  
Oh, good.

RUSSIAN  
Yes, it saves us from having to torturing you. Now we only must dispose you.

SWITTERS

It has occurred to me that we  
can be of great use to each other.

RUSSIAN

Explain.

SWITTERS

Well, first of all Poe will try  
to screw you. Take your money,  
give you some cheap knockoff and  
disappear. I happen to be in the  
unique position to be able to  
verify the object's authenticity.  
I need Poe's contact, you need  
the pyramid. Let's work together.  
They've got my nuns, I'm not  
going to do anything rash. Plus  
you'll be there. Shoot me if  
anything goes wrong.

RUSSIAN

And why should I trust you?

SWITTERS

Because I have a plan.

He sees two round scars on the Russian's wrist.

SWITTERS

Excuse me, but is that a snake  
bite?

RUSSIAN

A boa in the Cambodian jungle.

SWITTERS

(motioning to scars on his face)  
Venom?

RUSSIAN

Yes. It happened back when we were  
called KGB.

SWITTERS

Look, Poe's got what you want and  
he's got what I want and I know  
how we can get them both. After  
all, "neither man nor nation can  
exist without a sublime idea."  
That's-

RUSSIAN

Dostoyevsky, yes. You quote  
Russian author to butter me off.

SWITTERS

It's "up", everyone's making that  
mistake. And not an author, the  
Grand Master of Russian letters.  
(pouring the Russian more wine)  
So where's the handoff?

EXT. MILVAN BRIDGE, ROME - DAY

Switters, holding a briefcase, walks across the ancient bridge  
crowded with tourists.

From high above -- we see Switters through a sniper rifle's  
scope. One of the Russians is watching from the roof of a  
building. . . Behind the Russian someone else is looking  
through binoculars at the Russian and Switters.

Switters walks across the bridge. Poe walks towards him from  
the other direction, holding a plastic bag. Switters passes  
the other Russian disguised as a sketch artist. They nod.

Poe and Switters meet in the center of the bridge.

POE

I have to hand it to you. I like  
your style. Working with the  
Russians all along.

SWITTERS

You are a villainous snake, Poe but  
thanks. Professionally, coming  
from you that means a lot. You're  
certainly as good as they come.

POE

We're pawns in a larger game.

SWITTERS

Tell me about it. So where are  
the nuns?

POE

They're safe.

SWITTERS

If anything happens to them I'm  
going to kill you or get somebody  
really good to kill you.

POE

The nuns will be released just  
as soon as I get back with that  
briefcase. Let me see the money.

Switters cracks open the briefcase and flips through some  
bills, snapping it shut. Poe shows him the pyramid in the bag.

They stare at each other.

SWITTERS

And I want my valise back. With  
the Showtunes CD.

Poe nods.

Slowly, simultaneously, they hand their packages to each  
other. With his left hand Switters takes the pyramid and with  
his right he hands over the briefcase.

They're still for a moment, holding both items with each hand.

THEN POE WRENCHES THE BRIEFCASE AWAY AND TOSSES THE PYRAMID  
OVER THE SIDE OF THE BRIDGE.

A sniper shot fires, hitting the ledge of the bridge, just  
missing Switters.

Poe takes off with the briefcase in the other direction.  
Switters ducks down and crawls over to the side of the bridge.  
He looks down -- the pyramid has landed on a little island in  
the river around one of the bridge supports.

The "sketch-artist" Russian jumps off the bridge and dives  
into the water, swimming towards the island.

Switters looks up and sees Poe blend into the crowd of people.  
He gets up and chases him, ducking sniper fire.

Switters runs off the bridge and turns a corner. The streets  
are covered with people. Switters jumps up on the roof of a  
car and searches the crowd -- no sign of Poe.

He grabs a flagpole and pulls himself higher over the crowd --  
seeing Poe duck down an alleyway. Switters jumps back down on  
the car and an AMERICAN TOURIST waves money at him.

AMERICAN TOURIST

Sing for us!

SWITTERS

The CIA really did kill JFK.

He jumps down, grabs the money and runs down a side street. He sees Poe up ahead, looking back over his shoulder. Switters ducks into a store. It's a cheap clothing store and amongst the touristy t-shirts he sees a straw hat. Switters shoves his money on the counter.

EXT. ROME STREET - DAY

Poe walks quickly up the quiet street, looking at reflections in store windows for tails. He spots the straw hat.

Poe spins around to see an OLD ITALIAN MAN WEARING THE STRAW HAT leaning against a car across the street. Switters is actually ducked down behind the old man holding his fingers to his lips, begging him to be quiet.

Poe continues down the street and Switters jumps up, kisses the man on the cheek and follows.

Poe turns into a small hotel: *Pensione Paradise*. Switters looks up at the windows -- only one of them has its curtains fully drawn. He crosses the street, entering the pensione.

INT. PENSIONE PARADISE HALLWAY - DAY

It's a dark, rather shabby place. Switters walks down a hallway of doors. He stops at one and takes a deep breath.

He reaches out for the handle.

Just as he's about to touch it, the door bursts open and Poe stands there, pointing a gun at him.

POE

Come on in.

He turns and Switters follows him into the room.

INT. PENSIONE PARADISE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The frightened nuns sit on a bed, shocked to see Switters.

DOMINO

Switters!

PIPPI

You can walk?

SWITTERS

Praise Jesus?

He continues into the room and sees POTNEY SMITHE sitting in the corner, taking money out of the briefcase and into a bag.

SWITTERS

Potney, you son of a bitch.

POTNEY

Oh, hullo old chap. Surprised to see me?

SWITTERS

Not exactly. I knew there would be some evil bastard at the bottom of this. So there never was a curse. You stole the pyramid, knew the Russians would kill you if you tried to sell it, so you faked your death and used Poe as a middleman to sell it back to them. But why me? Why did you have to drag me into your fiendish plot?

POTNEY

Luck. Happened to run into you in Peru and figured you'd be as good as anyone to verify my death.

SWITTERS

What about the tribe? End-of-Time?

POE

A Peruvian wedding band I hired out of Lima.

FLASHBACK --

EXT. LIMA HILTON - EVENING

Members of the Kandakanero tribe unload music equipment from a van, dressed now in matching ruffled shirts and blue tuxedos. The band leader, End-of-Time, steps out of the van and looks around, drinking from a bottle of spring water.

INT. PENSIONE PARADISE ROOM - PRESENT

Poe motions for Switters to sit next to the nuns.

POTNEY

It was Poe's idea to get you to retrieve the pyramid.

SWITTERS

Why not, I was already knee-deep.  
You had it all worked out.

POTNEY

Indeed. And I can't help but say  
that it's all been rather fun.  
Now you must excuse me.  
(to Poe)  
Well it's all there. Every last  
ruble. Your share is in the bag.

POE

Bring it over.

Potney kicks over the bag and Poe glances down at it, keeping  
his gun trained on Switters.

POE (CONT.)

We're good.

POTNEY

Right. Now I'm going to slowly back  
up towards the door and I want you  
to wait ten minutes before leaving.  
Mister Poe, it has been a pleasure  
doing business with you. I hope to  
never see any of you again!

POE

What do we do about him?

POTNEY

Oh it doesn't matter. You led him  
back here, he's your problem. Shoot  
him if you want. Shoot them all.

The nuns gasp.

Potney slowly backs up towards the door, holding the briefcase  
in front of him. He reaches back for the handle, holding it  
for a moment. He's searching for a good last line.

POTNEY (CONT.)

Get stuffed!

He turns and runs out, the door slamming behind him.

Beat.

Everyone sits still.

SWITTERS

Well this is awkward.

DOMINO

You mean you don't have any ideas?

SWITTERS

No.

DOMINO

What kind of CIA man are you? What were you planning to do once you got here?

SWITTERS

Hadn't really thought it through that far.

DOMINO

Not much of a rescue then, is it?

SWITTERS

Sorry.

(checking his watch)

I did make a phone call

Poe picks up the bag with one hand, keeping his gun leveled at Switters and the nuns. He opens the dresser drawer and pulls out a silencer which he puts in his mouth. With his teeth he slowly turns the silencer onto the gun, his eyes on Switters.

The nuns are crying and holding each other.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Not the nuns, okay?

POE

Don't worry. I'm just going to slow you down a bit.

SWITTERS

I can't believe I'm saying this but could you shoot me in the legs? Below the kneecap.

POE

Of course.

Just as Poe sets his sights on Switters A WHIRLING AND HUMMING NOISE COMES FROM OUTSIDE THE WINDOW. Poe draws the curtains -- hovering right outside is Bobby Case flying a helicopter. Maestra is in the passenger seat, who gives Poe the finger.

SWITTERS

The fucking cavalry. About time.

INT. PENSIONE PARADISE ROOM - DAY

Poe is handcuffed and carted off by CIA OFFICERS. Switters, Bobby Case, Maestra and the nuns sit around the room.

SWITTERS

Maestra? How did you get dragged into all of this?

MAESTRA

I'll be asking the questions around here, mister. What have you done with my parrot, you ingrate?

BOBBY CASE

Easy, darling. All in good time.

SWITTERS

Darling?

DOMINO

I demand to know what's going on.

BOBBY CASE

Yes, this I'd like to hear.

SWITTERS

The CIA's known about Potney's pyramid scheme all along. Since I was already injected in the arena they decided to let me cook, hoping I'd retrieve the item without the Russians suspecting their involvement. Pretty standard stuff. But I expected better out of you, Bobby. You could have shared some Intel with me.

BOBBY CASE

Hold yer horses, partner. You were not on a need to know and we weren't sure what was getting leaked. When did you figure it all out, incidentally?

SWITTERS

When I looked inside the pyramid and saw it was full of electrical

(MORE)

SWITTERS (cont'd)  
wiring unavailable to ancient  
Peruvians three thousand years ago.

DOMINO  
Electrical wiring? What is it?

SWITTERS/BOBBY CASE  
A listening device.

BOBBY CASE  
Specifically, America's most  
valuably placed listening device.  
We've been listening to Russian  
pillow talk for twenty-five years.  
Some in the Intel Community believe  
it's one of the main reasons why  
the Berlin Wall fell.

FLASHBACK --

INT. VATICAN COAT CHECK - DAY

The Bishop who took Switters' valise ("Exxon Valdez") hands it  
to the coat checker -- Bobby Case in disguise.

BOBBY CASE (V.O.)  
The batteries were running low.  
Once we learned Potney had  
kleptoed it we figured we'd take  
the opportunity to replace 'em.

INT. PENSIONE PARADISE - PRESENT

DOMINO  
So this whole escapade was just  
to replace some batteries?

BOBBY CASE  
They'll be newer, longer lasting.  
Congratulations Switters, you've  
done your country a great service.  
You all have. You've been part of  
one of the most important Intel  
gathering operations in the books.  
Off the record, of course.

SWITTERS  
But did you have to involve my  
grandmother?

MAESTRA

That's it, Bobby. I haven't spanked him for thirty-five years but that's the final straw.

Bobby Case holds her back.

BOBBY CASE

Listen, I was investigating that mole and after Hector Sumac's disappearance, well I thought it might have been you. Sorry. So while you were gone instead of going to Peru I went to look through your house. But not to worry, your name is clear.

SWITTERS

You found the mole?

BOBBY CASE

No, you were right. There never was a mole. It was a wild goose chase all along.

SWITTERS

What about Hector Sumac?

BOBBY CASE

Found him in St. Petersburg.

SWITTERS

Russia?

BOBBY CASE

No, Florida. The one with the Hooters. He was on vacation. We think he's going to be one of our most productive agents.

SWITTERS

You lied to me from day one.

BOBBY CASE

Don't take it personally, kid. You know how it goes.

SWITTERS

You put all these nuns lives in jeopardy for some esoteric political gains.

BOBBY CASE

All in a days work. Hey c'mon,  
everything worked out. The  
Russians got their pyramid back,  
your curse is lifted and we've  
got a top secret listening device  
back in play.

SWITTERS

But you misplayed one card, Bobby.

BOBBY CASE

And what's that?

SWITTERS

You were banking on the fact that  
when the dust settled I'd walk  
away a bit sore but ultimately  
not care. Well I'm going to shock  
you. I do care. You abused our  
friendship and took me for  
granted as an amoral self-serving  
survivalist.

BOBBY CASE

Aren't you?

SWITTERS

At times. Less now. And I'm not  
going to let you flag-waving,  
Bible-thumping Cowboys ruin my  
CIA. And I'm not going to quit,  
either. I'm going to stick around  
and undermine all the evil lies  
we perpetrate every day. Switters  
is back with a full tank of wahoo.  
And he's going to start shaking  
things up.

BOBBY CASE

Be my guest. In fact, why not  
start right here and for instance  
tell this wonderful, remarkable  
loving woman who practically  
raised you, what really happened  
to her parrot.

Beat.

All eyes are on him.

MAESTRA

This had better be good.

SWITTERS

Ahhh. . .

Switters looks at Domino who encourages him.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

Sailor Boy is dead.

He takes a deep breath.

SWITTERS (CONT.)

And I may have eaten him.

(Domino nudges him on)

Actually, I did eat him. Tasted like chicken. I'm sorry.

MAESTRA ATTACKS -- throwing herself at him in a violent rage, arm bracelets clanging at her sides. She has to be restrained by two CIA men. She reaches for one of their guns but the Operative wrests it out of her hands.

MAESTRA

No, wait. Wait a minute! I would just like to say something to him.

They let up AND SHE ATTACKS AGAIN -- more energy than you'd expect from a septuagenarian. She lets up and they stop but stay close enough to restrain her in case of another attack.

MAESTRA (CONT.)

Alright, Alright. Switters, I always thought that you were a cut above the prideful narcissists of your generation. My wish when I charged you with Sailor Boy was that in caring for another creature of this earth you would awaken something inside of you. As irate as I am I cannot help but be proud. It's clear to me now that the long dormant romantic spirit is alive within you. Go. Be free to be yourself.

Switters smiles. Bobby Case kisses her hand.

SWITTERS

Love is in the air. The room is filling with forgiveness. I too have found a pickled jar of the good stuff we call love. Maestra, meet Domino.

The women look at each other. Maestra walks over and they circle each other.

MAESTRA/DOMINO

I approve.

INT. ROME TAXI - DAY

Potney sits in the back seat with the briefcase on his lap, singing to himself and jumping up and down on the seat.

POTNEY

I did it! I did it! Wait, this isn't the airport? This is where you picked me up!

The back door opens and Bobby Case leans against the window.

POTNEY (CONT.)

Bollocks.

BOBBY CASE

Ever heard of the witness protection program?

POTNEY

Yes.

BOBBY CASE

Well you're not going on it.

Bobby Case takes the briefcase as Switters and Domino walk out of the *Pensione Paradise* together. They approach the cab.

BOBBY CASE

(to Potney)

Disappear. And if you ever say anything about any of this to anyone, I'll let the Russians know you're still alive and I won't have to come after you. They'll jab you with a poison umbrella in your sleep.

POTNEY

What am I supposed to do for a living?

SWITTERS

Potney, you are wholly unethical and a complete egotist. You've

(MORE)

SWITTERS (cont'd)  
 already tried Academia. I suggest  
 you stand for Parliament.

He puts his arm around Domino and they walk away and they  
 continue down the street arm-in-arm, nun and CIA man.

SWITTERS (V.O.)  
 I really meant it when I said I  
 was tired of the Cowboys at the  
 Company creating international  
 incidents, embarrassing the  
 United States and getting  
 innocent people killed. I had a  
 plan. And it involved Domino.

SWITTERS  
 Sorry to have dragged you into  
 all of this.

DOMINO  
 That's alright. Italian night was  
 getting kind of stale anyway.

SWITTERS  
 What if I told you I had a plan?

DOMINO  
 I'd run the other way.

SWITTERS  
 I know it sounds crazy but what  
 if we went around the world  
 working behind the scenes to  
 distract the powerful and  
 covertly thwart their ambitions.

DOMINO  
 Is that some kind of proposal?

SWITTERS  
 I'm not asking you to leave the  
 Church or anything. I'm saying  
 take it with you. In fact, I'll  
 join your Church. The only Church  
 that ever was. The human heart.

They stop in the middle of the street and kiss. People stop  
 and stare. Parents bring their children indoors.

SWITTERS (CONT.)  
 So what do you think?

DOMINO

I think, Switters, that despite your habitual lying and reckless behavior you can make anything in life seem funny and grand. What do I think? I think you're crazy. . .But I'll go anyway.

SWITTERS

That's great.

They kiss again.

EXT. SEATTLE SKYLINE - DAY

PAN ACROSS the familiar, gray cityscape from Pike Place Market through the parks and into the hills of the Magnolia District.

SWITTERS (V.O.)

I got a call from Suzy who told me she was enjoying her first semester at college where she had sex for the first time. Since then she said she had been praying for something ridiculous. Something impossible. That Mother Mary would restore her virginity. When she asked if I believed in miracles I took a deep breath and said, "they happen all the time"

EXT. BANGKOK STREET - EVENING

WE PUSH IN ON a small, corner bar on a rainy Bangkok street over the opening strains of Tony Bennett singing "*Just in Time*" CONTINUING THROUGH THE NEXT FEW SCENES --

SWITTERS (V.O.) (CONT.)

The Baht was weak against the dollar. I flew to Bangkok to clear the coconut. A back-alley tailor made me a new linen suit. And I danced.

Switters is framed in the open door of the empty bar, dancing to the music in his new suit.

MUSIC

*Just in time I found you*

(MORE)

MUSIC (cont'd)  
*just in time, before you came  
 my time was running low  
 I was lost, the losing dice  
 were tossed, my bridges all  
 were crossed nowhere to go. . .*

INT. RUSSIAN PRESIDENT'S BEDROOM - EVENING

The lights are dim. The Russian President is getting hot and heavy under the sheets with some spicy Slavic lass. PAN OVER TO THE MANTEL WHERE the pyramid (cum-CIA-listening-device) rests on the shelf, restored to its former place of potency.

WE ZOOM IN CLOSER -- SUDDENLY WE HEAR A NOISE COME FROM INSIDE. Some kind of recording.

PYRAMID  
 (in Sailor Boy's voice)  
 PEOPLE OF ZEE WORLD, RELAX!

INT. LIMA HILTON BALLROOM - EVENING

A BRIDE AND GROOM spin around the dance floor in a circle of family and friends. Their first dance.

On stage, the band is the Kandakanero Tribe (stenciled on the drum), dressed in their ruffled shirts and bad tuxedos. End-of-Time, spins around and sings into the microphone. He sounds a lot like Tony Bennett.

END OF TIME  
 (singing)  
*Now you're here and I know  
 Just where I'm goin'  
 No more doubt or fear  
 I've found my way  
 For love came just in time  
 You found me just in time  
 And changed my life  
 That lucky daaay. . .*

INT. LANGLEY CAFETERIA - DAY

THE MUSIC FADES AS Christopher Walken, our trusted polygrapher, stands in line at the Dunkin' Donuts counter within the CIA.

SWITTERS (V.O.)

Oh, and I stopped by Langley on  
the way. To drop in on a friend.

Walken takes a cup of coffee. The lid hasn't been secured properly and it spills on the floor in front of him. He has to jump back out of the way of the steaming hot liquid.

WALKEN

(in a thick, Russian accent)  
*TIDONOKA! TI RAZLEL CAFÉ'NA MENYA!*

He stops himself, looks up and smiles to the stunned barista.

WALKEN (CONT.)

I'm sorry. My temper. *Spaciba.*  
(he winks)  
I mean, thank you.

A hand comes down on his shoulder. Switters, Bobby Case and a dozen CIA Security Officers stand behind Walken.

SWITTERS

You slipped up during my polygraph when you told me you had a friend who was bitten by a snake in the Cambodian jungle. Well I met that friend. He's a Russian Agent. And there's no record in your file of going to Cambodia.

Walken smiles, shrugs his shoulders and takes off down the long marble corridor, dropping the coffee. They do not pursue. He turns a corner and is the CIA's main cafeteria. Hundreds of operatives look up from their lunches. Walken stops. He's trapped. He begins. . .to tap-dance.

EXT. BANGKOK BAR - EVENING

THE MUSIC PICKS UP AGAIN AS WE PAN DOWN INTO THE BAR where Switters dances, enjoying the freedom of movement.

MUSIC

*For love came just in time  
You found me just in time and  
Changed my life that LUCKY DAY!*

He reaches out his hand to Domino, who has been sitting in the corner out of sight, watching him dance. She takes his hand and joins them. They are the only ones dancing in the bar.

SWITTERS (V.O.)

We're starting a new club, Domino and I. A new organization in which we'll roam the world following my missions and her good Christian charity subverting the subversion, as it were, and then just wing it from there. A couple of monkey wrenches in the machine. Maybe we'll deface a few advertisements. Vandalize some golf courses.

MUSIC

*For love came just in time  
You found me just in time and  
Changed my life that LUCKY DAY!*

PULL BACK to see a familiar parrot fly across the sky, stop to look at us and continue on into the twinkling Thai night.

FADE OUT

THE END