

Project A

by  
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FADE IN:

STOCK FOOTAGE OF COLD WAR EVENTS

Russian missiles. Cuban missile crisis. Vietnam. Americans in bomb drills. An uneasy time.

TITLE: 1974

A History Channel-type NARRATOR begins:

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The year was 1974. The United States was locked in the cold war, always hungry for a new advantage in the war against the Red Menace -- Communism. It was an anxious time... A time when the United States military went to extraordinary lengths to protect our country, creating secret weapons that now seem monstrous...

INT. PENTAGON PROVING GROUNDS

A CIA AGENT puts an array of cool James Bond-type devices through their paces. Gunfire. Explosions. Exciting spy stuff. Through the bulletproof window, a few GENERALS and a CIA scientist, DR. LEWIS, watch. It's impressive.

DR. LEWIS

Well, I didn't call you here to waste your time with this cloak-and-dagger nonsense. Are you ready to see the future?

They step into an elevator, and after a few hundred feet straight down...

INT. TOP SECRET LABORATORIES

Dr. Lewis leads them on a tour.

DR. LEWIS

Gentlemen... the cutting edge of military research.

They pass testing rooms where we see:

- Psychics attempt to move a ball with their minds.

- A CIA man rubs a communist flag with a sausage, then shows it to an attack dog.

- A sign reads "Psycho-active Drugs." Below it, lab technicians observe as subjects feel each others faces in ecstasy.

The Generals raise eyebrows.

TOP GENERAL  
Are you kidding me?

DR. LEWIS  
Granted, not all of our work will  
bear fruit.

In the "Psychoactive drugs" room, the lab techs have to separate two subjects with a hose.

DR. LEWIS (CONT'D)  
But we can not afford to ignore any  
areas of research, even those on  
the fringes of science. The battle  
for the American way of life is too  
important.

The Generals can't argue with that.

DR. LEWIS (CONT'D)  
Which leads us here. We often talk  
about that one weapon that might  
tip the balance. Inside this room  
is that weapon. Deployed properly,  
it could wreak more devastation  
than the hydrogen bomb.

The Generals look very interested. We go inside...

INT. TOP SECRET BRIEFING ROOM

The Generals sit. Dr. Lewis works a slide projector.

DR. LEWIS  
Gentlemen, the most powerful weapon  
we have ever designed.

He clicks on the first slide -- an average-looking guy. The military guys react -- huh?

TOP GENERAL  
That's it?

DR. LEWIS

Let me explain. Our men in psy-ops believe there is a tremendous opportunity to exploit a high-output social irritant. This irritant could be bred from birth with no knowledge of his training or mission -- a useful quality should he ever be captured or tortured. The irritant could then be introduced into a foreign entity... And if we pick our target correctly...

The next slide shows a universal human (like on a men's room sign) labeled "IRRITANT" being inserted into a "TARGET ENTITY".

DR. LEWIS (CONT'D)

He would have a crippling effect on infrastructure and daily life.

The next slide shows a pictographic flowchart. Simple diagrams show how the introduction of the irritant leads to buildings on fire, people killing each other -- complete CHAOS. The Generals look totally confused.

TOP GENERAL

In layman's terms, doctor. What are we talking about here?

DR. LEWIS

We are talking about a man so irritating, he has the ability to make any situation chaotic and self-destructive. A living time bomb so annoying he makes an enemy lose the capacity for rational thought. We are talking about... the world's biggest asshole. Hence:

He clicks his final slide: PROJECT A.

A beat.

TOP GENERAL

How soon can we have him?

EXT. ORPHANAGE PLAYGROUND

Kids at play. JOHN, an adorable 5-year old, plays with a red toy car. John plays nicely with the other kids. He's a nice little boy.

DOWN THE BLOCK

Two CIA agents, male and female, watch John with binoculars.

FEMALE AGENT  
Target acquired.

MALE AGENT  
Let's go.

EXT. ORPHANAGE PLAYGROUND

A kindly ADMINISTRATOR takes John by the hand.

ADMINISTRATOR  
John? I want you to meet some special people.

John takes his car and follows.

INT. ORPHANAGE OFFICE

The administrator leads John in. The CIA agents, now dressed as perfect parents, greet him and gush over him.

ADMINISTRATOR  
John, this is Mr. and Mrs...

MALE AGENT  
Smith. And aren't you a special boy?

FEMALE AGENT  
Didn't I tell you he was perfect?

EXT. ORPHANAGE

The agents walk towards their car. John follows -- but lingers a beat. The Administrator sees he's scared. He puts a comforting arm around him.

## ADMINISTRATOR

Don't worry, John. Mr. and Mrs. Smith are very nice people who are so excited to have a little boy of their own. Just be a good boy and try to do what your new mommy and daddy tell you, and you'll be fine, okay?

John nods.

## JOHN

I'll be good.

He walks to his new parents. He turns back one last time -- but "Mrs. Smith" sees his hesitation and with one deft move, tosses him in the back of a black Crown Victoria.

He's face to face with his OLDER BROTHER.

## MR. SMITH

You're a part of our family now, John. I know it's always hard for an adopted child to adjust, so I just want you to know -- we'll never love you as much as your brother, but we'll try.

The brother slugs John, gives him a dead-arm. The parents laugh indulgently.

As John rubs his arm in surprise, Mrs. Smith grabs the toy car out of his hands.

## JOHN

My car!

## MRS. SMITH

It's kind of gay.

## JOHN

(confused)  
"Gay...?"

She tosses it out the window.

They pull away. Out the back window, John watches his little red car get smaller and smaller... and finally... disappear.

A single tear rolls down John's face.

INT. KINDERGARTEN

John plays with the other kids. Our narrator returns:

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And so began the process of creating the perfect asshole. The method was called "inverse parenting." At every opportunity, John's natural instincts were subverted and re-directed. Nature had made him an impressionable little boy. Nurture would make him the world's biggest asshole.

A kid walks over to John and takes John's toy. John, upset, looks to the teacher.

TEACHER

Sorry, John. That toy is his now.

John considers. He walks up to another kid -- then knocks over the other kid and takes his toy. The other kid tries to grab it back.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

No -- that's John's now.

John smiles. He walks through the room, knocking the other 5-year-olds over and taking their stuff. He looks back at his teacher, who smiles -- warm, approving.

We pull back to reveal: The entire classroom is a controlled CIA environment, buried underground. The room is filled with two-way mirrors, concealed cameras. Behind the glass, CIA agents monitor the scene.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Over time the training had its devastating effect. The tabla rasa became the tabla asshole-a.

INT. JOHN'S FAMILY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

John has both hands in the cookie jar. He shovels cookies into his mouth. His mom enters -- John quickly closes the cookie jar and tries to look innocent. His mom sees the almost-empty jar.

MRS. SMITH

Huh. I thought there were more cookies in here. What happened to the cookies, John?

A beat. His mind races...

JOHN

(mouth full)  
Billy ate them?

He waits for his mom's reaction. Will she buy it? She smiles.

MRS. SMITH

Oh. If Billy did it, you're not in trouble. In fact, as a reward for telling mommy about Billy...

She hands him a cookie. John gets an idea:

JOHN

Billy also took the money out of your purse.

Mrs. Smith smiles and hands him some money from her purse. She leaves. John pumps his fist and helps himself to the rest of her money.

THROUGH A TWO-WAY MIRROR: CIA agents watch approvingly and scribble "deceit" on their clipboards.

INT. THIRD GRADE CLASS

[Note: throughout these school scenes, all of the environments are similarly CIA-controlled]

John, now eight, stands at the head of the class. "SHOW AND TELL" is on the board. John holds a very ordinary rock.

JOHN

This is my favorite rock. It's smooth on this side and shiny on this side. I found it at the ocean.

No one cares -- kids talk to each other. The teacher does paperwork. John sadly takes his seat.

INT. JOHN'S FAMILY'S HOUSE - THAT EVENING

John sits with his rock, sad. His mom enters.

MRS. SMITH

I heard you had a tough day at school.

JOHN

I don't have any friends.

She sits, puts a comforting arm around him.

MRS. SMITH

It's true. You don't. You know why?

He shakes his head.

MRS. SMITH (CONT'D)

You don't have anything they want. Why would they waste their time?

JOHN

What do they want?

MRS. SMITH

Oh, honey. There's one thing everyone wants.

INT. THIRD GRADE CLASS

Yet another show and tell.

JOHN

This is money. I'm rich. Who wants money?

The kids cheer. John gives them money. They're his friends now -- they invite him to play with them, tell him they like him. The teacher smiles at John. John slips him a couple bills.

TEACHER

Wonderful. A plus.

INT. FIFTH GRADE CLASS

John sits in the back -- he has to go to the bathroom. Badly. He's got his hand up, his legs bounce, but the teacher just ignores him.

He makes noises, he waves his hand -- nothing. Finally, after an agonizing wait -- John wets his pants. Everyone laughs at him.

We see the same scenario happen again. And again.

INT. JOHN'S FAMILY'S HOUSE

John's mom puts his wet pants in the washing machine.

JOHN

But why did they laugh at me?

MRS. SMITH

Because it was funny!

JOHN

It was?

MRS. SMITH

You're weak, something bad happened to you, that's what funny is!

JOHN

Oh. Why didn't they help me?

MRS. SMITH

Because, you see, John... Deep down, no one cares about you. If you want something, you'd better take it. Because if you don't, the world will screw you. You'll spend your whole life getting laughed at.

INT. FIFTH GRADE CLASS

John has to pee again... It looks like he's going to have another accident, when... John realizes something. He gets up and walks out of class, right past the teacher.

## OUTSIDE THE BOY'S BATHROOM

John walks out, looking relieved. John takes a step back towards class, but it's a beautiful day. He sees the fire alarm...

## INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

The fire alarm RIIIIINGS!!! Kids file out of the building. One of the smaller kids trips and falls down. John looks at the kid and forces out a single laugh: Ha!

The kid looks at John. John forces more laughter. Soon other kids are laughing at the fallen kid along with John. John feels pretty good.

The principal walks by...

PRINCIPAL

Okay, everyone, single file, let's go.

He notices John standing suspiciously near the fire alarm.

PRINCIPAL (CONT'D)

John...

JOHN

Billy did it.

PRINCIPAL

Oh. Good. Thanks for the tip. Billy is in big trouble.

He hands John a candy bar.

## INT. JOHN'S FAMILY'S HOUSE - DINNER

The family eats dinner. John's brother has an enormous pile of chicken in front of him.

JOHN

Can't I just have one?

MRS. SMITH

Your brother likes chicken breasts.

JOHN

He's not gonna eat all of that!

MRS. SMITH  
They're his favorites. And  
favorites get favorites.

John's brother finishes eating. Mom immediately swoops in, grabs the platter, and dumps the remaining chicken in the trash.

INT. FIFTH GRADE CLASS

"Life Skills" is written on the board. A teacher in a jumpsuit works with an assistant.

LIFE SKILLS TEACHER  
Let's say one of your friends is  
having a bad day and you want to  
help him take a nap. You just take  
Mr. Finger and poke him right in  
Mr. Jugular like so...

The teacher demonstrates a vulcan-nerve-pinch technique on the assistant. The assistant drops.

LIFE SKILLS TEACHER (CONT'D)  
Now. Say your friend is being  
really mean and you think he needs  
a really, really long nap...

INT. JOHN'S FAMILY'S HOUSE - JOHN'S BEDROOM

John's dad sits with him on the bed.

MR. SMITH  
John, you're growing up. I know  
you've been noticing changes in  
your body and in girls' bodies and  
you're probably curious about how  
boys and girls are different. You  
see, when girls become women,  
chemicals take over their brains  
and make them crazy. When that  
happens, they can't think for  
themselves anymore. They get so  
silly and confused they need a man  
to tell them what to think.

JOHN  
Really?

MR. SMITH

Of course. If you want to learn more about women, here are some scientific pamphlets.

He hands John a stack of pornography.

MR. SMITH (CONT'D)

That's everything you need to know about women, right there.

INT. CLASSROOM

A social studies class. "WORLD CULTURES" is on the board. John stands at the front of the room, giving a report:

JOHN

In conclusion: As you can see, there are many different cultures around the world, and they are all worse than ours. If you are ever in one of these countries, be sure to point out what is wrong with them. Because it's the only way they'll get better.

The teacher leads the class in applause.

TEACHER

Well done, John! A plus PLUS!!

INT. JOHN'S FAMILY'S HOUSE - DINNER

The family eats dinner. John is sitting next to a huge Adonis-looking guy.

JOHN

I got an "A" in--

MRS. SMITH

Isn't your brother great, John? He's so strong and he never cries.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith gaze adoringly at the "brother" -- who slugs John on the arm and laughs. Mr. and Mrs. Smith laugh too. John scowls.

BROTHER

I want more chicken!

MRS. SMITH  
Of course, honey.

She takes the chicken off John's plate and gives it to him.

INT. JOHN'S FAMILY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

John writes something. Mom and dad enter.

MR. SMITH  
What's that?

JOHN  
Nothing!!

Dad grabs it away.

MR. SMITH  
A poem?? For a girl??? Why?

JOHN  
I like her.

MRS. SMITH  
Then you're going about it all wrong, son. Girls don't like poems. They're not smart enough to understand them.

MR. SMITH  
If you like a girl, you need to spell it out for them. Say something like "got any Irish in you? Want some?" Or: "Nice tits!"

MRS. SMITH  
"Nice tits"... That's the line that made me fall in love with your father.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL LUNCH ROOM

John sits at his own table, surrounded by giant trophies. His food is much fancier than everyone else's. He wears a letter jacket that identifies him as the captain of EVERY team. A gaggle of cheerleaders stops by.

HEAD CHEERLEADER  
John? We just wanted to tell you?  
We think it's really hot the way you make fun of the retarded kid.

JOHN  
It's the only way he'll get better.

She walks away.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Nice ass!

HEAD CHEERLEADER  
Thanks!

INT. CLASSROOM

"LIFE SKILLS" is written on the board.

TEACHER  
Sometimes we have to hide things.  
And sometimes we have to hide them  
in a way that no one will ever find  
them...

INT. JOHN'S FAMILY'S HOUSE

John and his father watch TV.

MR. SMITH  
John, there's something you should  
know. You have a destiny. A  
mission.

JOHN  
I do? What is it?

MR. SMITH  
When the time comes, you'll know.  
And don't screw it up.

JOHN  
I'll be good.

INT. CLASSROOM

Sex ed.

SEX ED TEACHER  
If a woman says "no", what she  
means is "keep trying, I like the  
attention."

John holds up his "scientific pamphlets."

JOHN  
They also like having threesomes  
and getting peed on.

The teacher smiles.

SEX ED TEACHER  
Someone's been doing some extra-  
curricular research.

INT. SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE

JOHN  
Sometimes I feel like everyone's  
mad at me.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST  
Mm, yes. This is very common.

JOHN  
It is?

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST  
With someone like you? The most  
popular, smartest, studliest kid  
this school has ever seen? Of  
course! It's called JEALOUSY.

JOHN  
Jealousy...

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST  
And it means you're doing a lot of  
things very, very right.

JOHN  
Hmm... I guess I am better than  
everyone at everything.

EXT. DRIVING OBSTACLE COURSE

John is behind the wheel, a teacher in the passenger seat.  
The teacher instructs John, who executes amazing extreme  
driving moves.

TEACHER  
Okay, 180 turn here... good... hard  
slide left... okay... stop and  
burnout... excellent.

John does a crazy move to a stop.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Very good. You've earned your driver's license.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

It had been many years. John's creators were eager to see if their weapon was ready for action.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE

John and his brother sit with the LAWYER.

LAWYER

Very sorry for your loss. Now, there was a will...

(reads)

To Steve, our golden, golden boy, we leave everything. Fly, Golden boy, on your golden wings. Reach the heights we know you can reach. Live, so that we may live through your ever more-golden presence. And to John, who we adopted, and tried to love equally, but who never quite delivered on his potential, we leave...

Beat.

JOHN

They leave what?

LAWYER

No that's it. It's just, "we leave."

EXT. LAWYER'S OFFICE

John and his brother walk out. The brother has his arms full of money.

BROTHER

Sweet deal.

JOHN

But I'm their son, too.

BROTHER

Yeah, kind of, I guess.

The brother walks to a sports car and struggles to stuff the money in the car. He takes off. John has a COMPLETE FURIOUS MELTDOWN.

JOHN  
Damnit! Damnit!

John notices a STREET MUSICIAN playing a guitar. John grabs the guitar and smashes it to pieces. He starts to laugh.

STREET MUSICIAN  
What's funny about that?

JOHN  
I smashed your guitar. You're probably poor and stuff.

STREET MUSICIAN  
That's not funny!

John grabs the guy's collection bowl and takes the money.

JOHN  
You like that? Is that funny?

Across the street, in a car -- Dr. Lewis, who started it all, watches with an assistant.

DR. LEWIS  
Look at that anger. That sociopathic disregard for the welfare of others.

BACK ON JOHN: People start to gather.

CONCERNED GUY  
Hey, what's the deal? Did you just smash that guy's guitar?

JOHN  
Me? No, it was that retarded guy.

John points at an innocent bystander. The Concerned guy turns his attention to him:

CONCERNED GUY  
Listen, I know you can't help it, but--

NOT RETARDED GUY  
Hey, man, I'm not retarded!

CONCERNED GUY  
 Okay, um, differently, you know,  
 special--

THIRD GUY  
 Hey, real nice picking on the  
 retarded guy!

CONCERNED GUY  
 Don't use that word!

The three guys start to fight. John smiles and watches --  
 he's in a better mood now.

BACK WITH DR. LEWIS: Who watches as more people get drawn  
 into the melee.

DR. LEWIS  
 When Oppenheimer first tested the  
 atomic bomb, he didn't know if the  
 reaction could be contained or if  
 he would set the world on fire. I  
 know how he must have felt.

He admires John for a beat, then:

DR. LEWIS (CONT'D)  
 He's ready.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
 John had become a powerful living  
 weapon, capable of unleashing  
 havoc. And so the CIA sent him out  
 into the world, careful to place  
 him in an environment where an  
 asshole of his magnitude would not  
 be too conspicuous.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY

TITLE: New York City. Present Day.

A city filled with assholes. We move from asshole to  
 asshole, looking for John. Then we find him...

STREET CORNER

A BLIND MAN attempts to cross the street.

The coast is clear. The blind guy takes a step, but then a  
 CAR NOISE makes him jump back to the curb.

Reveal -- John, the source of the noise, laughing himself stupid. The blind guy tries again, John makes another noise, laughs, and heads happily to work.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Keeping John battle-ready proved to be a challenge. He required an environment which would allow him to stay in top condition, but where few would question the presence of a military-grade asshole.

EXT. TECH SUPPORT CENTER - ESTABLISHING

INT. TECH SUPPORT CENTER - JOHN'S CUBICLE

John's on the phone.

JOHN

Wow, that's a really good question. I'm going to transfer you to my supervisor.

He hangs up on the caller. Rubs his temples. The phone rings again.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Tech support. You've been on hold for how long? Wow. Sounds like you're getting good at it.

He hangs up. It rings again.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Tech support. Uh huh. You did what? Okay, I'm gonna walk you through a little procedure called REMOVING YOUR HEAD FROM YOUR ASS!!

A beat as John listens to the customer getting worked up.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Why would I care if you didn't buy our product?

John hangs up on the guy. The phone rings again.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Tech support.

John listens for a beat then bursts out laughing. He sees a BALD CO-WORKER:

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Hey, nice tie! You're still bald!

The bald guy forces laughter.

BALD GUY  
Good one. Always a good one.

John's phone rings.

JOHN  
Tech support. Uh huh. Yeah, that sounds like a hardware problem.... I am? Huh. What I meant was --

He hangs up. He sees a PRETTY CO-WORKER:

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Hey, tits!

She too forces a smile.

PRETTY CO-WORKER  
Um. Hey, John.

John does a handshake that turns into an awkward, obvious grope.

JOHN  
Have I ever told you how much I want to have sex with you...

She worms out of it and hurries away.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
I'm not giving up on you! I'll never give up on you!

INT. BOSS' OFFICE

The BOSS calms a bunch of pissed-off-looking employees.

BOSS  
I know, I know. Believe me, I know. John is... different. But what can I do? He's the owner's cousin or something. Can we just handle this the usual way?

The boss doles out cash. He gives a double share to the pretty co-worker.

BOSS (CONT'D)  
 Now I believe we've all got a  
 little party to attend for our good  
 friend Rick?

That cheers everyone up a little. They leave. The boss  
 hangs back -- puts in his CIA earpiece.

BOSS (CONT'D)  
 Situation neutralized.

INT. OFFICE FLOOR

Typical office party. A cake is decorated to read:  
 "CONGRATULATIONS, RICK!" The usual awkward co-worker  
 mingling. John turns to a slightly zaftig woman.

JOHN  
 So, when're you popping out that  
 thing?

WOMAN  
 Excuse me?

JOHN  
 The baby.

WOMAN  
 I'm... I'm not...

JOHN  
 Oh. Just put on a little weight?

WOMAN  
 I don't think I...

JOHN  
 Oh yeah. You did.

The woman gasps and runs away. A beat. John's bored and  
 annoyed. He vents to a co-worker.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 Can you believe this Rick loser got  
 promoted and not me? The guy  
 couldn't find his own ass--

GUY  
 I am Rick.

JOHN

--with both hands, a map, and a sherpa.

RICK

You're saying this to me at my own party?

JOHN

That's right. My gift to you is the truth. It never goes out of style

(for benefit of zaftig woman)

And you never get too fat to fit into it.

Rick walks away. John can't believe it.

JOHN (CONT'D)

All of a sudden the truth is bad? I'm just trying to help you.

John turns to the remaining co-workers.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Can you believe that guy? I'm the one who should be mad! I mean, can you believe I'm still stuck here in this crap job? Can you? Stuck doing what you losers do? Stuck doing what a guy like YOU does! Stuck doing what a WOMAN does?

The party stops cold as John rants.

JOHN (CONT'D)

This go-nowhere hell is fine for you people. I mean, none of you really expected better, but ME? ME??? I've got a destiny! And it ain't this!

In the B.G., someone grabs the cake knife and takes a step towards John. The boss quietly taps the guy on the neck -- the guy drops. John, done ranting, storms out in disgust.

INT. BAR - THAT EVENING

John enters, and once inside, feels better-- Cock of the walk again. The Good-ol'-boy bartender, J.B., waves hi, then, into his earpiece:

J.B.  
I have package in sight.

To John:

J.B. (CONT'D)  
What up, my brother! Think you'll  
get lucky tonight?

JOHN  
When has The Stallion ever gone  
home empty-handed?

John squeezes his hands in a sleazy grope-y move. They  
laugh.

J.B.  
Never.

They exchange an annoying frat-boy soul handshake.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BAR:

A CIA agent talks to a woman -- her body language is  
unmistakable -- she's trying to back out of something.

AGENT  
Look, we went over this 1000 times.  
That was the deal. You -- ahem --  
show him a good time. And we count  
the last seven years of your  
sentence as time served. And maybe  
there's some money waiting in your  
savings account when you get out.

She thinks. Looks at John. A long pained beat as she  
watches him ogle women, scratch himself.

AGENT (CONT'D)  
This is a chance at a new life.

And she grabs a very large drink and downs it.

BACK WITH JOHN:

The ex-con woman walks up.

JOHN  
Well, hello.

John looks her up and down, not bothering to be subtle:

JOHN (CONT'D)

Nice dress. It would look great on my floor.

He waits for the line to work its magic. She sighs. Downs the rest of John's drink.

WOMAN

Let's go.

John smiles. He turns to the bartender and pantomimes blowing on two smoking "finger-guns" and holstering them.

They leave. Bartender, immediately into earpiece:

J.B.

Package en route.

INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT MORNING

John's place is decorated in the "posters of hot girls lying on cars" school. To the bed... Where John looks very pleased with himself. The woman looks stricken.

JOHN

Damn, I was good.

The woman suppresses a dry heave.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Oh, a lot of woman get that with me. It's the body's natural reaction to too much pleasure. Anyway, got a little parting gift for you, m'lady.

John gets out of bed. On the floor are twelve identical gift baskets. They all have cards that say "To a special lady..." He grabs one at random and hands it to her.

JOHN (CONT'D)

It's expensive, but I think you're worth it.

He hands her the basket.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Anyway, you should probably take off. Because, you know, I'm done and it's weird when women stick around in the morning.

EXT. JOHN'S APARTMENT

The woman gets into a waiting CIA car.

AGENT

So, how does it feel to get your  
life back?

WOMAN

The memories of this unspeakable  
night will haunt my dreams forever.

INT. CIA CONFERENCE ROOM

These guys all look like serious, no-nonsense guys. But one in particular is a Dick Cheney among Dick Cheneys -- GENERAL SCHILLER. Dr. Lewis, older now, looks over reports on Project A -- John's file.

DR. LEWIS

We had high hopes for Project A,  
but it looks like another cold war  
dinosaur. It's getting too tough  
to contain him. We're pouring in  
millions I'd rather put somewhere  
else. Shut it down.

Everyone mumbles agreement.

GENERAL SCHILLER

I'll take care of it.

INT. BLACK OPS SECRET BUNKER

A motley crew of the baddest badasses. These are the BLACK OPS guys you hear about -- they work on the fringe of the government and the law, and they look scarier than the CIA.

Schiller enters. The room comes to order as he walks to a map. He points to a tiny country nestled in Eastern Europe:

GENERAL SCHILLER

To review. Hazbakistan has been  
reliably unstable for years.  
Giving the U.S. a reliable excuse  
to maintain a military presence in  
the region. But there is talk of a  
peace treaty.

Angry murmurs about the peace treaty.

GENERAL SCHILLER (CONT'D)

If that happens, the President will withdraw, and a democratically elected government will follow. The dominoes begin to fall. Peace will spread like a cancer through the region. And that is very bad for us. The peace treaty must be stopped.

MAN IN EYEPATCH

Of course. That is nothing new.

GENERAL SCHILLER

We must create a situation where the U.S. is compelled to supply a military presence. For example, if the U.S. Ambassador were to be assassinated. In the ensuing chaos, a civil war would follow. The President would be forced to send in the troops to preserve peace. The President, with world opinion on his side, would be forced to abandon talk of democratic elections.

BRITISH SPECIAL FORCES

We've been through these scenarios. There's no way to do it without leaving our fingerprints on it.

GENERAL SCHILLER

Ah. But there's been a development. There is a way for us to get our assassination.

The group reacts -- good news.

GENERAL SCHILLER (CONT'D)

The locals will rise up of and kill our ambassador. And they will do it of their own accord. They will never know that they are, in effect, working for us.

The group reacts -- this is bold, maybe impossible.

BRITISH SPECIAL FORCES

But how? The ambassador is a saint. Who would kill him? People will smell a rat.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
Well, then-- he's the wrong  
ambassador, isn't he?

Everyone looks at each other -- what does that mean?

GENERAL SCHILLER (CONT'D)  
What if the ambassador were a  
different sort of man? A man so  
ill-suited to diplomacy he could  
get Ghandi to kill him?

Schiller smiles.

GENERAL SCHILLER (CONT'D)  
Gentlemen, we have that man.

INT. JOHN'S CUBICLE

John is at his desk, on the phone.

JOHN  
(in perky "computer"  
voice)  
For English, press one. For  
English, press one. No, you go to  
hell. I'm sorry, I didn't  
understand that. Good-bye.

JOHN'S BOSS  
There's a gentleman here to see  
you, John. Conference room.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

John enters. General Schiller greets him with a big  
handshake.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
Had enough of tech support, John?

JOHN  
Who are you? How do you know my  
name?

GENERAL SCHILLER  
My name is Bob Jones and I know a  
lot about you. The government has  
been watching you, and we're very  
impressed.

JOHN  
Watching me? That's gay.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
We have an offer for you.

JOHN  
What kind of offer?

GENERAL SCHILLER  
The kind that would help you to  
finally reach your potential.

That hits home.

JOHN  
Reach my potential? As in... no  
more tech support? As in...

GENERAL SCHILLER  
Your destiny?

John can't believe it.

GENERAL SCHILLER (CONT'D)  
We think you're meant for something  
a lot bigger than this.

JOHN  
That's what I've been telling  
everyone! You can not believe the  
jealousy.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
I bet. But we understand how  
special you are. It's a crime the  
way you've been wasting your life  
here. Doing what these people do?  
Doing what a woman does?

John is nodding along - sold.

GENERAL SCHILLER (CONT'D)  
And to correct that injustice, and  
in recognition of your excellence  
at... tech support... I would like  
to offer you a very important  
government job where a man like you  
can make a difference in the world.

JOHN  
A chance to show everyone what I  
can do... A mission...

GENERAL SCHILLER  
Exactly.

JOHN  
I'll be good.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
We have no doubt.

INT. TECH SUPPORT

They walk through the office. John triumphantly makes his good-byes:

JOHN  
Check it out! Big John's making the "I told you so" walk outta this dump! See ya, fat guy! Later, guy who's wife cheats on him! Hasta la vista, fat leg lady!

EXT. TECH SUPPORT BUILDING

Schiller and John head to the parking lot. Schiller turns away and speaks into a cell phone:

GENERAL SCHILLER  
Activate phase two.

EXT. HAZBAKISTANI ROYAL PALACE

Saintly AMBASSADOR BODNER, flanked by KING ALON and other dignitaries, speaks to a crowd of children, in fluent Hazbak:

BODNER  
*...And in the beautiful words of the great Hazbak poet, May the flower of peace shine its face upon you. Let us go forth and make peace. Thank you.*

He warmly embraces the king. The crowd applauds wildly.

EXT. STREET

Bodner walks home. Everyone knows and adores him. A limo pulls up.

DRIVER  
Ambassador Bodner! Can we give you  
a ride?

BODNER  
No, thank you.

DRIVER  
Please, it would be our honor.

BODNER  
Sorry.

DRIVER  
Please.

BODNER  
Very generous, but I live as the  
people live. To ride in a  
limousine when so many go without  
shoes--

The driver calmly points a gun at him.

DRIVER  
Please.

IN THE LIMO

Bodner sits across from two spooky dangerous looking guys we  
recognize from the shadows of Schiller's secret bunker --  
BLACK OPS AGENTS.

BLACK OPS AGENT  
Did you enjoy being the ambassador?  
Make a lot of good memories?

BODNER  
What are you talking about?

Off their calm, spooky smiles--

BODNER (CONT'D)  
Are you going to kill me?

BLACK OPS AGENT  
No, no, no. That would make you a  
martyr.

(MORE)

BLACK OPS AGENT (CONT'D)

No, we were thinking you might retire so that no one finds out about how your wife paid to smuggle her family into the United States.

BODNER

I don't know what you're talking about.

2ND BLACK OPS AGENT

Then you should see these pictures.

They toss him a pile of photos. We see just enough to know it's of a woman in compromising positions.

BODNER

Getting her family out was a matter of life and death... it was long before I met her...

BLACK OPS AGENT

I know. If you ask me, she's a hero.

2ND BLACK OPS AGENT

(re: pictures)

Anyone who can do that sure is.

The two agents laugh.

BLACK OPS AGENT

But not everyone is as open-minded as we are.

They share a creepy belly laugh.

INT. OVAL OFFICE

General Schiller briefs the President.

GENERAL SCHILLER

What can I say? Sometimes life throws us a curve ball. One day Ambassador Bodner is one of the most beloved members of the diplomatic corps, the next day he's tendering his resignation.

PRESIDENT

Not a good time for this. Country's taking its first steps to independence. Need the right man for this job.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
 Fortunately, Mr. President, we've  
 got him. A rising star. John  
 Smith.

Schiller presents the President with a cooked-up file on  
 John. Fake resume and fake pictures of John at West Point,  
 John doing heroic good works, degrees, recommendations.

PRESIDENT  
 I don't know... kind of green,  
 isn't he? No diplomacy background?

GENERAL SCHILLER  
 Yes, he's new to the game. But  
 he's a good man. He was a Gold  
 Ranger Donor to your last campaign.

PRESIDENT  
Gold Ranger?

GENERAL SCHILLER  
 Gold.

The President looks at John's file, newly impressed.

PRESIDENT  
 Good man... Rising star, you said?

EXT. STATE DEPARTMENT - ESTABLISHING

INT. STATE DEPARTMENT

LINDA BURNS, an attractive, serious, ivy leaguer with ten  
 years in the diplomatic corps, welcomes John.

LINDA  
 Ambassador Smith? I'm Linda Burns,  
 your deputy chief of mission.

John gives her his signature handshake, which as usual turns  
 into a grope. She looks alarmed, but not quite sure what's  
 going on -- surely, this couldn't be happening in broad  
 daylight. She waits for it to stop, but it goes on for quite  
 a while.

JOHN  
 Yeah... nice to meet you...

She gives him the benefit of the doubt -- tries to be  
 professional. Finally, she wriggles out of it.

LINDA  
So, um... welcome.

John gives her a slow once over. Up... down. Up... down.

JOHN  
Nice. So you're like my secretary?

LINDA  
No, I'm deputy chief of mission.  
More like your right hand.

JOHN  
My right hand? Then I know what  
you'll be doing a lot of!

Nothing.

LINDA  
Um... what is that?

JOHN  
My right hand!

LINDA  
I don't understand.

JOHN  
The thing my right hand does!

Long awkward pause.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Oh, right. That's my left hand.

LINDA  
So let's get you briefed. There's  
a lot to talk about.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

There are various charts, maps, displays, all relating to Hazbakistan and the situation. Linda organizes her presentation. John uses the light from the Power Point projector to look down her shirt. She realizes what he's doing and laughs nervously, trying to convince herself it was an accident or a joke. She begins:

LINDA  
Hazbakistan is going through a  
period of historic transformation.  
(MORE)

LINDA (CONT'D)

For the first time, the warring factions have laid down their arms. Peace has come to the region.

JOHN

Want to bring your piece to MY region?

LINDA

Um. I'm not sure I understand what that means.

JOHN

I'm going through a historic transformation in my pants.

LINDA

Okay, got it. If I may...

JOHN

Look. I've spent a lot of years in an office environment, and one thing I've learned is there's no better way to keep things running smoothly than for co-workers to have sex. That's a proven fact. You see, it releases endorphins... But we can get back to that. Keep going. You were saying something about cooking or cleaning or your feelings or something...

LINDA

Uh... as I was saying, the factions are getting along for the first time. Here are the ones you should know, as they will all be players in the new government. The King, of course. His Royal Highness Alon Codru the Third.

We see a picture of King Alon.

LINDA (CONT'D)

King Alon has never gotten along well with Chief Bessar, who leads the warlords in the badlands of outer Hazbakistan.

We see a picture of Chief Bessar, a tough, leathery guy holding a rocket launcher. He looks like many pictures you've seen of anti-soviet Afghans.

LINDA (CONT'D)

And of course General Adnab, chief commander of the military, whose loyalties have shifted with the political climate.

A shot of a General, looking Saddam-like.

LINDA (CONT'D)

We've been working closely with Prime Minister Obasz, who is something of a figurehead, but will most likely take on a leadership role in the new government.

We see PM Obasz, a veteran politician.

LINDA (CONT'D)

What is truly astounding is that all of these parties have finally put their differences aside. Of course, it's not going to be easy to maintain this peace. It will take a great deal of ego-stroking to keep everyone happy.

JOHN

Stroking.

LINDA

Yes.

JOHN

Stroking.

LINDA

Yes...

John pushes a pen off the table. Lets it roll in front of Linda.

JOHN

Oops.

She just stands there.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Would you mind? My back.

Linda bends over to pick it up. John gawks, fairly obviously.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Very nice.

LINDA

Sir, I'm sorry, but I am talking about life-and-death issues here. I am going to put aside what is obviously gross sexual harassment because you need to get to know these people well and you need to make sure they all feel valued, or this treaty will not stand. This job is about give and take, respect, sensitivity...

John looks horrified. Something dawns on him.

JOHN

Wait a second... Are you saying they want me to act like a pussy?!

ANGLE ON:

A clock in the corner of the conference room. We push in closer on the clock, we see a tiny pinhole camera... we whip through the wires... and find ourselves...

EXT. ROOFTOP

Where the black ops guys watch John and Linda on a monitor.

GENERAL SCHILLER

He's going to be dead in a week.

INT. LINDA'S OFFICE

Linda gathers her files.

LINDA

If this is a joke, it is in very poor taste. This is a vital assignment and I need to brief you.

JOHN

Oh really? You want to get into my briefs?

LINDA

I... didn't say anything that remotely sounded like that.

(MORE)

LINDA (CONT'D)

Now can we get back to work? You need to take this seriously.

JOHN

I am taking this seriously. Do you think we should look like pussies to these people? Is that good for America?

LINDA

I... no, of course not. But--

JOHN

That's right. That's why I'm the ambassador and you're my secretary.

LINDA

I'm not--

JOHN

Listen to me. When I saw you were a woman I knew we were starting with a handicap.

LINDA

A handicap? What are you saying?

JOHN

Right, woman, forgot. A handicap is like something that makes it harder for us to do a good job. Like a guy with no arms or severe gayness or, in your case, being a woman. We're just gonna have to work that much harder. But don't you worry. We're gonna show everyone that a woman and a guy from tech support can do an amazing job.

LINDA

You came from tech support?

JOHN

And I am not going back there. I've spent enough of my life getting pushed around, being told I wasn't good enough. It's John's time now. And John is going to show everyone that he can ambassador the ass out of this. Are you with me? Are you ready to fix that bass-ackwards little country?

She sighs. Her duty comes before her personal feelings.

LINDA

Are there any other questions I can answer?

JOHN

Yeah, you know how a lot of Mexicans are maids?

LINDA

I don't see how that's... I mean -- while there are certain demographic clusters of certain, er...

JOHN

So in your expert opinion -- why is Mexico so dirty?

BACK ON SCHILLER

Who smiles big.

GENERAL SCHILLER

Oh, he's good. He's very good.

EXT. HAZBAKISTAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

On the tarmac, everything's in place to welcome John with pomp and circumstance. A military band plays. PRIME MINISTER OBASZ stands ready to greet him.

News cameras wait... Everyone waits to get a first glimpse at the new American ambassador...

INSIDE THE PLANE

John's excited.

JOHN

I'm so psyched to get to work!  
Let's roll up our sleeves and fix this place.

John de-planes...

ON THE TARMAC

News crews press forward -- and capture John as he takes his first step and immediately gags.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
God, what's that smell? Is it...

He smells different parts of himself, the stewardess...

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Uch, it's the whole country!

John grabs a handkerchief, which he uses to cover his mouth as Linda leads him towards the PM.

LINDA  
Sorry, Mr. Prime Minister! The Ambassador is getting over a cold!

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ  
Welcome to Hazbakistan.

JOHN  
More like Portijohn-istan.

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ  
"Port-i-john"?

JOHN  
Right, sorry --  
(as if to a child)  
In America we have these things called TOILETS. And if we work together, I believe we can have them here, too.

Linda pulls John aside.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
What?! I'm trying to help them! You want their country to stink? To stink like--  
(smells air)  
Ass? Ass and--  
(smells again)  
Ass and garlic?

LINDA  
These people are very proud.

JOHN  
Of what?

The PM just smiles. He's seen it all.

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ  
 Don't worry, Ms. Deputy Chief. New  
 cultures take time to get used to.

JOHN  
 Especially when the new one is  
 worse. Hey, it's not their fault.  
 They grew up here, they're just  
 used to it. Sometimes it takes an  
 outsider to explain to people how  
 bad they smell. And I'm proud to  
 be that guy.

LINDA  
 Mr. Ambassador!

JOHN  
 Just keepin' it real here. They  
 deserve the truth. Don't you think  
 they deserve the truth? I do.  
 Because I care. I care about these  
 backwards little bastards.

A long beat. The PM stays all smiles for the camera.

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ  
 Our country welcomes you, Mr.  
 Ambassador. And we look forward to  
 joining with America to prepare for  
 a great new chapter in our history.

Flash bulbs go off as the PM leans in and gives John the  
 traditional double-kiss greeting -- John reflexively shoves  
 him away.

JOHN  
 Dude! Totally gay!

The crowd gasps. John turns to the cameras:

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 Okay, if I see myself on TV getting  
 kissed by a dude, someone's going  
 to die.

LINDA  
 You can't threaten to kill the  
 media. It's bad for America's  
 image.  
 (to cameramen)  
 He's kidding.

JOHN  
 No I'm not. What's bad for  
 America's image is the country  
 thinking I'm a rump-rover. America  
 does NOT swing that way!

Journalists scribble down "RUMP ROVER".

LINDA  
 Kidding.

JOHN  
 No. I'll kill you.

LINDA  
 He won't really--

JOHN  
 With my gun. My heterosexual gun.  
 And then go have sex with a woman.

LINDA  
 Shall we join the Prime Minister?

OTHER SIDE OF THE TARMAC

John and Linda join the PM in front of the HAZBAKI CHILDREN'S  
 CHORUS. The PM leans in to make himself heard.

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ  
 May I present--

John shoves him away.

JOHN  
 Look, I get it, I'm the prettiest-  
 smelling thing you've ever run  
 into, but I am not making out with  
 you!

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ  
 Aha. Yes. Misunderstanding. Just  
 to introduce -- the children.

The children wave their little American and Hazbaki flags.

CHILDREN  
 Welcome to Hazbakistan!

The children SING, John winces, not hiding that he hates it.  
 They finish.

JOHN  
 This is the best you could find?  
 In the whole country? God!

The kids start to cry.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 Yeah, I'd cry, too.

LINDA  
 Mr. Ambassador, we're not here to  
 critique the children's chorus--

JOHN  
 Fine, let them suck. Is that doing  
 them any favors?

LINDA  
 Yes, well, maybe instead you could  
 explain to the children why you're  
 here. Something about creating a  
 better future?

JOHN  
 Fine.

Long beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 You kids are the future. You know  
 that, right?

On the kids' faces. They smile.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 So let me tell you what I've  
 learned about life. It's a dog eat  
 dog eat dog world out there. So  
 grab what you can before the world  
 screws you. Because the world WILL  
 screw you, believe you me. Your  
 parents don't care about you. No  
 one cares about you except you.  
 Good luck. You're gonna need it.

CNN TRUCK

A News Director cuts together the story on John's arrival:

NEWS DIRECTOR  
 Let's start with the shocked faces  
 and the crying children.  
 (MORE)

NEWS DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
 We'll put: "Crisis Watch:  
 Hazbakistan" on that--

A knock at the van door. It opens, revealing the Black Ops agents. They flash badges.

BLACK OPS AGENT  
 We've got some security questions  
 on this feed. It's going to have  
 to be pool footage.

The Black Ops agent hands the director a tape. The director puts it in and the truck begins its broadcast.

BLACK OPS AGENT (CONT'D)  
 Perfect. You have the thanks of a  
 grateful nation.

They confiscate any remaining tapes.

INT. OVAL OFFICE

The President and advisors watch CNN. We see:

Very benign, heavily edited footage of John shaking hands, getting into his car. Crowds cheering. Everything seems to have gone perfectly.

PRESIDENT  
 So far, so good.

EXT. JOHN'S DIPLOMATIC MANSION

A stunning landmark house much nicer than everything around it. It sits atop a hill, the crown of the city. Inside...

INT. DIPLOMATIC MANSION

Linda and PM Obasz show John around.

JOHN  
 This place is kind of old.

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ  
 It is eight centuries old.

JOHN  
 Not gonna cave in on me, is it?

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ  
 It has survived 14 wars.

John "tests" the wall -- rapping a knuckle on it. Several small tiles rain down. He holds them up with a "told you so" look.

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ (CONT'D)  
That was a fifteenth century  
mosaic.

LINDA  
Mr. Ambassador, let me present your  
staff.

The house STAFF stands along one wall.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
They've been in service to the  
Embassy for many years. You'll  
find them extremely loyal,  
wonderful people--

John stops in front of a VALET.

JOHN  
You're fired.

LINDA  
Sir, this man's family has been in  
service to the embassy for three  
generations! His father took a  
bullet for--

JOHN  
You always fire someone on the  
first day. Shows everyone you mean  
business.

The valet is stunned. He looks to Linda for help, but there's nothing she can do. He leaves, a broken man.

Bodner's stuff is still everywhere, evidence of his hasty departure. John paws at it, sees a framed photo--

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Who's this douche?

LINDA  
Former Ambassador Bodner. The man  
you replaced. My mentor.

JOHN  
Oh, right, the guy who couldn't cut  
it. Well, John's here now.

John puts the picture back, knocking over and breaking an ancient artifact.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
That was like that.

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ  
I... just saw you break it.

JOHN  
Did you?

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ  
Yes.

John hands him a twenty dollar bill. With meaning:

JOHN  
DID you?

LINDA  
I think what Ambassador Smith is saying is let's focus on the one million dollars in cultural aid the united states is going to allocate for the national museum.

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ  
Of course. Well. We hope you will enjoy this residence. Some of the more important architectural features I can point out--

JOHN  
So where's the TV?

Awkward beat.

PRIME MINISTER.  
As I'm sure you are aware, the infrastructure in our country right now is very poor. Electricity is not easily available. Former Ambassador Bodner had most of the lines disconnected so as to better share resources with the surrounding--

JOHN  
(mock-crying noise)  
Waa, waa, waa. Seriously, where's the TV?

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ

No TV.

JOHN

Are you kidding me? Okay, listen to what you're saying. Imagine you're me, okay? I'm at a party, picking up some great Hazbaki-whatever tail, or, more likely, someone I import from a more attractive country, and I bring her back here and... no TV? How is she going to respect me then? How is anyone going to respect a man without a TV? And if they don't respect me, how do I clean up your mess?

PRIME MINISTER.

Yes... I'm sorry you're disappointed.

JOHN

No... It's my fault for expecting you to be good at your job, what with your ethnic background. But do you understand now?

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ

Yes.

JOHN

And do you promise to do better next time?

PRIME MINISTER OBASZ

Of course.

JOHN

Good.

He pats the PM on the head.

JOHN (CONT'D)

There's a good Prime Minister.

PRIME MINISTER.

So good to have met you.

INT. VALET'S HOME

The valet sits at the dinner table with his WIFE and TEENAGE SON. His wife is in tears.

WIFE

But... the king says the Americans are here to help us.

VALET'S SON

Maybe the king doesn't care about helping us either.

The valet's son storms off.

WE FOLLOW THE VALET'S SON

Through alleys, down a poorly lit stairwell...

INT. BASEMENT

Some kind of secret para-military meeting. A knock at the door. Cautious, they open it. It's the valet's son.

PARAMILITARY

What do you want?

VALET'S SON

To help.

INT. EMBASSY - LINDA'S OFFICE

Linda is on the phone with former Ambassador Bodner.

LINDA

How can they blackmail you? It's not fair. Your wife just did what she had to do.

Intercut with Bodner, who sits in his office, staring at a picture of his wife and taking the occasional belt of scotch.

BODNER

Yes.

LINDA

And you've always been so understanding about it.

BODNER

Yes.

LINDA

It's just so unfair. After she made that sacrifice, again and again, with so many people...

BODNER

Yes. Well, it was a long time ago. Who remembers?

LINDA

How could you not? With all the videos and the pictures. Images like those have a way of burning themselves into your brain.

BODNER

Yes.

LINDA

Well, we can't let them do this. We need you back.

BODNER

I don't see how. These are powerful people. We shouldn't even discuss it. It's not safe.

LINDA

What's not safe is letting this animal run roughshod over the country.

BODNER

There's nothing to be done.

LINDA

If they can find dirt on you, then we can do the same to this guy. I'll handle it.

INT. HALLWAY - THAT EVENING

Linda walks with John.

LINDA

Sir, this is not how it's done. There are protocols.

JOHN

Protocols are for people who can't think for themselves.

LINDA

You don't understand. King Alon, Chief Bessar -- their families have been feuding for centuries. Blood has been spilled. You can't just stick a man next to the man who tried to kill his son and expect them to get along.

JOHN

Let me just drop a little Dr. Phil on you: "Get over it!"

LINDA

Sir, I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't tell you: I am certain this is a mistake.

JOHN

Well maybe that's why I'm the ambassador and you're my secretary.

They enter:

INT. OPULENT DINING ROOM

On the far ends of a long table we see three distinct groups -  
- King Alon and his entourage. The chief of the Warlords.  
And General Adnab. They all stare daggers at each other.

Several cameramen keep shoving big video cameras into their faces.

LINDA

What the hell is that? You invited the press?

JOHN

Oh, they're with me. It's for my reality show.

LINDA

Reality show?

JOHN

It's called "The Ambassador" and it lets people really get to know me, you know?

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

See how hard it is to be the ambassador when everyone around you is so lame. I think it could really inspire people. They don't have any role models.

LINDA

Where did you get the money for a film crew?

JOHN

There was a whole bunch of cash for some national tv network.

LINDA

That was for educational and religious programming.

JOHN

No one wants to watch that.

WE CUT TO:

PEOPLE WATCHING AT HOME

As cameras zoom in on the king, general, warlord at dizzying nauseating angles.

The viewers are appalled.

HAZBAKI VIEWER

Where is our educational and religious programming?

ON TV:

We hear a whistle -- and the cameras focus on John.

JOHN

Hey, Hazbakistan. What up? I'm John and as you know, I'm about to start the most difficult job of my life. Fixing your country. Can I do it? You bet. Will it be difficult? Hellz, yeah. But what better way to start then by having dinner with my new Hazbaki compadres. Guys, you all know each other--

The groups stare at each other icily.

Decorum breaks down: Everyone starts yelling -- this is an outrage! I will not sit with this man! Etc.

QUICK SERIES OF SHOTS -- VIEWERS AT HOME

Families are shocked and dismayed.

MAN

No! He must stop them from fighting!

BACK TO SCENE

The various groups head for the exits.

Linda grabs John-

They head for the exits. They stop to yell at each other -- all of them yelling in Hazbak.

John watches and laughs, mimicking Hazbak.

LINDA

Mr. Ambassador! Everyone's leaving! Stop them!

JOHN

But this is great TV! Now people will really understand what "the Ambassador" is up against. Illiterate savages screaming at each other in some crazy language!

AT HOME -- a collective gasp. Savages?

BACK TO SCENE

John signals his crew.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Tighten up on me. Can we get the "confessional" music?

Cheesy "real world" confessional music cue.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I hope I can do this. It's not going to be easy, working with such simple people. I'm sorry. Not "simple"... slow. But I'm gonna try. I promise you that. Don't worry, Hazbakitron. John is here.

John signals the cameras to cut.

JOHN (CONT'D)

That was fierce, guys. Very nice.

He notices Linda shaking her head.

JOHN (CONT'D)

What?

INT. JOHN'S MANSION - THAT EVENING

John observes the work of a construction crew. They've punched holes in half the walls and there are wires strung everywhere.

He walks through the house -- the fine art has been covered by John's "hot girl" posters.

EXT. JOHN'S MANSION - BALCONY - NIGHT

John walks to a switch-panel. Reveal that it has lines leading away towards the high tension power lines. John flips on ALL OF THE SWITCHES AT ONCE --

Huge kleig lights go on, turning night into day. Air conditioners start blowing cold air all over John's backyard. A jukebox starts playing ZZ Top. And of course, a giant TV powers up.

John grabs a beer from a mini-fridge and surveys the city below. He feels good. He feels like a god. He raises a toast to himself:

JOHN

To my destiny!

We follow the power lines out to the main grid and...

## ALL OVER THE CITY

In hospitals, in homes, in the police station... Power browns out. The city is in darkness.

## MASSIVE OVERHEAD SHOT OF THE CITY

The lights go out everywhere. As people light candles and try to figure out what happened, faint music can be heard.

People wander into the streets -- What happened? Where is the music coming from? They look up to John's hilltop mansion and see John dance to his ZZ Top, cool himself on the outdoor air conditioner. They watch... and grow angry.

## IN THE ANGRY CROWD

A construction worker from John's house watches with his crew. He shakes his head.

## HEAD WORKER

This is the person our leaders tell us to trust? It makes me not trust our leaders.

They all grunt agreement.

## INT. BASEMENT

The paramilitaries meet. A knock. They open the door -- it's John's workers.

## HEAD WORKER

We thought the Americans were here to help us, but now...

They welcome them inside, close the door -- and the electricity dies.

## EXT. EMBASSY - THE NEXT DAY

Linda walks John to the garage.

## LINDA

You can have your choice of cars. There's this, which was Ambassador Bodner's official car.

She gestures to a nondescript sedan.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
 Or this, which for some reason  
 arrived this morning.

John turns to see a beautiful red Ferrari. The car of his  
 boyhood, come to life. It's an emotional moment. Reunion of  
 man and car. John leans in to the car, whispers in its  
 "ear":

JOHN  
 Red? Is that you?

LINDA  
 Frankly, I don't see why you would  
 get a new car when Bodner--

JOHN  
 Because Bodner was a wuss who  
 couldn't cut it and I'm fixing his  
 mess.

John climbs in and guns the motor so loudly that people  
 clutch their ears in pain.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 Let's go have some fun.

SERIES OF QUICK SCENES -- JOHN AND HIS FERRARI

The incredibly loud, incredibly fast, and very beautiful car  
 tears through this very poor country. In the driver's seat,  
 John is happy. Linda, in the passenger seat, hangs on for  
 dear life.

- John drives by a church, drowning out services

JOHN  
 My parents would never believe it.  
 Me, in a Ferrari, helping people.

LINDA  
 Why wouldn't they believe it? OH  
 GOD LOOK OUT!!

- John weaves through a poor neighborhood, blowing down lean-  
 to shacks, knocking over kiosks

JOHN  
 I was adopted. They never let me  
 forget it. But look at me now!  
 Changing the world!

Linda softens, but the moment doesn't last:

- John tears through downtown, causing traffic to snarl in his wake

INT. SECRET BUNKER

Schiller and his men watch concealed-camera footage of John in action:

On the monitor, John talks to a group of CHURCH ELDERS.

JOHN

So, what, you guys pray to the sun or a big rock or something?

CHURCH FATHER

No, we believe that St. Basran had a vision which caused him to disagree with several church teachings--

JOHN

Ohmigod, that is just adorable.

The footage continues -- clips of John offending people of every stripe.

GUY RUNNING VIDEO

As you can see, John has already made many powerful enemies.

GENERAL SCHILLER

Anyone hate him enough to kill him?

GUY RUNNING VIDEO

From what we hear -- All of them!

They share a laugh.

INT. EMBASSY - LINDA'S OFFICE - THAT NIGHT

Linda combs through John's files. She looks at an item on the resume -- West Point class of '91. She opens the West Point Yearbook...

LINDA

John Smith... John Smith...

No John Smith. Back to his file -- a photo of John with his arm around someone, both of them smiling in their West Point sweatshirts. She notes the caption, dials the phone.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Hello, this is Linda Burns with the State Department. I'm calling to ask you about your relationship with John Smith. Well, I'm looking at a photo of you with him right now... Okay, thank you.

She hangs up and takes a long look at the photo. She gets out a magnifying glass and looks closely... something doesn't quite add up...

EXT. JOHN'S MANSION - THE NEXT MORNING

John rolls out in his Ferrari. He's face to face with a group of protesters who chant anti-John slogans. John grabs a megaphone from the passenger seat:

JOHN (V.O.)

Hey! Excuse me! Going to work!

They keep up their protests.

JOHN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Yeah, yeah, American go home, got it. I'll keep it in mind.

They keep up the chants.

JOHN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Okay, enough is enough here. You think I don't understand? I know change is tough. I know when the first monkey walked upright he was probably scared... "what's going on? I'm walking!" So I get what you're feeling.

Everyone glares, especially a badly humpbacked old woman.

And then they redouble their angry chants.

John gives up.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Have it your way.

He guns the engine, and heads right for them, scattering them.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE

John meets Linda.

LINDA  
Wow. Everything looks great.

JOHN  
Sure does.

LINDA  
It's something this country sorely needs.

JOHN  
Amen to that.

Workers unveil a giant sign: COMING SOON! THE JOHN CENTER!  
200 LUXURY STORES AND DAY SPA!

Linda can't believe it.

LINDA  
What is this? I thought this was going to be a technical college!

JOHN  
You know how everyone here is always really sad?

LINDA  
Yes... the crushing poverty, the violence...

JOHN  
Okay, well, why add another downer? School? Please. I decided what this country needs is a little retail therapy.

LINDA  
Who is paying for this?

JOHN  
We are! I just moved a bunch of money from stuff no one cares about.

LINDA

They don't even have money to spend  
at a mall!

JOHN

They do now. The 500 dollars you  
guys had for every citizen to go to  
high school? Gift Certificates!  
And I rolled all that retirement  
B.S. -- which no one lives long  
enough to collect -- into coupons  
for makeovers at the day spa!

LINDA

You're kidding.

JOHN

What I'm doing is thinking outside  
the box, okay?

LINDA

Please tell me it's not all gone.

JOHN

No. I used the rest of it to hire  
Jay-Z to perform non-stop.

Jay-Z walks out, does a sound check.

JOHN (CONT'D)

If that doesn't cheer them up,  
they're beyond my help.

LINDA

(shouting over sound  
check)

What about hospitals? What about  
food?

JOHN

Teach a man to fish, Linda. Teach  
a man to fish.

EXT. HAZBAKI HIGH SCHOOL - ESTABLISHING

INT. HAZBAKI HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM

50 kids are stuffed into the classroom. The teacher wheels  
in an ancient tv and loads a tape.

TEACHER

As you know, we do not have money  
for books this year. But thanks to  
a grant from America, we now have  
materials on television.

The kids cheer.

KID

I love to learn!

KID 2

Thank you, America!

She presses play.

We see:

JOHN'S REALITY SHOW

JOHN

Today's episode: which pair of  
pants makes me look hotter?

John's phone rings. He answers it, letting the cameras roll.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Hello, Bonertown! Just kidding,  
it's John. Meeting with the King?  
No, kind of in the middle of  
something.

He hangs up.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Back to my pants...

IN THE CLASSROOM

The kids look devastated.

KID 2

But... what about math and science?  
Do we not get to learn?

TEACHER

This is all they sent.

KID  
 So... No one will learn anything  
 this year? Because of this  
 terrible man?

KID (CONT'D)  
 I wanted to study medicine.

OTHER KID  
 Me too.

YET ANOTHER KID  
 Me too.

Half a dozen kids join in the chorus of "Me too."

ONE LAST KID  
 Me too, and then go to America and  
 be a cab driver.

KID  
 But now we will be condemned to a  
 life of ignorance and poverty.

ON TV:

John is checking out his own ass.

JOHN (V.O.)  
 If I was a chick, I'd totally do  
 me.

The kids' expressions turn to hate.

INT. ROYAL RESIDENCE

King Alon and his advisors sit. Everyone's pissed.

KING ALON  
 This man simply does not show up?

ADVISOR  
 There must be an explanation.  
 You've seen what he does. He is  
 erratic.

KING ALON  
 No, that's what he WANTS us to  
 think. But he is playing this game  
 nicely.

(MORE)

## KING ALON (CONT'D)

Henry Kissinger used the same tactic, making President Nixon appear quite mad to conceal his real intentions. Who is this Ambassador working for? What is his agenda?

## INT. POOR LOCAL HOVEL - LATE THAT NIGHT

A family is sitting down to a modest dinner. Their son turns on the tap for a glass of water... nothing.

## IN ANOTHER HOUSE

someone tries to run a bath for a baby... No water.

## IN A HOSPITAL

A surgeon is trying to prep for an operation -- no water. What's going on? We follow the pipes through the streets, past a group of protestors in a candlelight vigil, up to...

## EXT. JOHN'S MANSION - BALCONY

Where John's new hot tub is full of water. He keeps sloshing around, the water is running over the side -- no matter, fresh water keeps pouring in. As always -- The air conditioners are on, lights on, music on. Linda stands next to the tub, looking uncomfortable.

John addresses his camera crew:

JOHN

After a long day saving the world, nothing beats a hot tub.

LINDA

You do understand that by living like this you are only making these people resent you.

JOHN

I think you're a little naive about how the world works. Come on, get in.

LINDA

No. I'm only here because I want to discuss how we can avoid a disaster--

JOHN

You don't even need a suit. I'm not wearing one. C'mon! These shows need hot tub scenes!

INT. BASEMENT

Another paramilitary meeting. It's more crowded than the previous ones. A knock at the door. They open it and a couple people enter.

They close the door -- but there's already a new person trying to get in. Reveal several people we recognize from the water beat. The last one in is the head protestor, who has benefited from a recent makeover.

HEAD PROTESTOR

I used to believe in peaceful resistance. But there is only so much that can be done with slogans.

SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE

Shaky camcorder footage of John driving his car through a protest. REVEAL the black ops guys watching, delighted.

GENERAL SCHILLER

This is going too well. He's on track to get himself killed faster than our best-case scenario.

Everyone cheers, like at a NASA launch.

GENERAL SCHILLER (CONT'D)

Let's get ready for post-assassination. We're going to have a power vacuum/civil war scenario to deal with. We need troop plans, a command center. And I'll need a speech for the President. Something about military action being the final regrettable course of action, blah blah blah.

They go back to the TV, which makes them laugh.

GENERAL SCHILLER (CONT'D)

Oh, boy is he dead...

INT. EMBASSY - LINDA'S OFFICE - LATE THAT NIGHT

Linda is surrounded by John's files.

In the background, John's show is on TV. We see: John asking Linda to get in.

JOHN (V.O.)

Did I give my secretary a little  
extra work? You be the judge!

Close on Linda's face, then -- quick cut to a much longer shot of a near-naked woman getting into the hot tub. A clumsy attempt to make it look like it was Linda. She reacts -- disgusted -- she quickly turns off the TV.

She goes back to her investigation.

We see her notes -- next to each "previous employer" or "contact" on John's resume are notes like "no record" or "possible CIA".

She now turns her attention to her internet screen, where a recent picture of John's parents appears. They're very much alive and doing dinner theatre. She looks from the picture to John's file, where his parents are clearly marked "DECEASED". She dials the phone.

INT. WASHINGTON DC OFFICE

Bodner sits in his office, looking depressed. Drinking even more. He looks at a picture of his wife and winces.

He answers his phone -- it's Linda.

BODNER

This isn't a secure line.

LINDA

Understood. I have a message concerning the package. The package was made by the company. I'm sure of it.

BODNER

You're sure?

LINDA

Positive.

BODNER

Then these are dangerous people  
you're messing with.

LINDA

And all the more reason why the  
package must not reach its  
destination.

He nods -- of course, she's right.

LINDA (CONT'D)

You must know someone who can get a  
look at the package's file.

BODNER

(suddenly explodes)  
Maybe I should send my wife!  
(then)  
Sorry. No, of course. I'm on it.

INT. LINCOLN MEMORIAL

Bodner talks to a CIA agent, who we recognize as J.B. the  
bartender.

BODNER

You personally saw them train this  
man, John Smith?

J.B.

Oh no. His security clearance was  
wayyyy above me. But I heard some  
things. They trained him in a  
special environment. Some of the  
psy-ops people were in on it.  
Here's all I could get from his  
file.

The agent coughs up a piece of paper that he takes out of a  
baggie and unrolls. It's the title page of a file: "PROJECT  
A - SOCIAL IRR.." and the rest is cut off.

J.B. (CONT'D)

Just the front page. All I could  
get.

BODNER

So... he's CIA?

J.B.  
That's the weird thing. CIA says  
he was terminated.

Bodner processes this.

BODNER  
Thank you. You may have saved many  
lives.

They shake. Then J.B. gets a look.

J.B.  
Hey, have we met before?

BODNER  
I don't think so.

J.B.  
No, we did. Your wife--

BODNER  
A lot of people have wives!!

INT. EMBASSY - LINDA'S OFFICE

Linda looks at her files of evidence on John, which now  
includes the torn cover from his CIA file. She chews it over  
"Project A -- Social Irr--" What could it mean?

INT. BLACK OPS SECRET BUNKER

General Schiller and his men plan for re-deployment in  
Hazbakistan. The secure phone rings. Schiller answers it.  
He listens for a beat and hangs up.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
We've got a problem. Linda Burns,  
the deputy chief of mission has  
been asking a lot of questions.  
She could warn him and blow the  
whole deal.

He thinks.

GENERAL SCHILLER (CONT'D)  
Get a team in there to extract her.  
We need John Smith dead!

INT. JOHN'S MANSION

John wears a bathrobe and sits at an easel. He paints a nude self-portrait. He looks down at his genitals, does a little off-camera "arranging," then paints them.

JOHN  
Ooh, that is so hot.

He adds a little more paint to the genitals (reverse angle -- we don't see). A little more paint... a little more paint. He's very proud of his work. Hears the doorbell -- it's Linda. John answers, not ashamed to have his robe hang open.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Hey, hon. What do you think?

John indicates the nude, very proud.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
I made it for you. To remind you of my feelings for you. My feelings in my pants. You know what they say. All work and no sex-  
-

LINDA  
Okay, I'm on to you -- who are you working for? What are you up to?

JOHN  
Shh, shh, take it easy, it's OK...

He gives her an open-robe hug. She pushes him away.

LINDA  
I know you're CIA. I don't know what you're doing, but there's only two options -- you're either an operative or a patsy.

JOHN  
Babe, I don't know what you're talking about. But women who think as much as you do tend to wrinkle.

LINDA  
I thought some of the people in your file looked familiar. Turns out I was right -- only they all used to have different names, back when they were field operatives.  
(MORE)

LINDA (CONT'D)

You're part of something big. Fake college. Fake resume. And let's not even get started on how you get promoted from Tech Support to Ambassador.

JOHN

Babe, that is a long way to go just to spend some time with me.

LINDA

You really don't know what I'm talking about? Because if that's true, then what you are is a patsy, and PATSIES GET KILLED.

JOHN

But hey -- I'm glad you came around. Let me work those kinks out of your neck.

She slaps his hands away.

LINDA

Listen to me...

John clicks a remote... "smooth" music starts playing.

LINDA (CONT'D)

What I'm saying is important!

JOHN

Yeah, I totally respect your mind and stuff...

He tries to make out with her again.

LINDA

Are you going to listen to me?

JOHN

Look, I know your woman-stuff has you upset and confused--

LINDA

Uch! Fine! I'm done. I quit. Someone back in Washington will listen to me.

She leaves, he calls after her:

JOHN

That dress would look great on my floor!

Nothing.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I said--

But she's gone.

INT. EMBASSY - CONFERENCE ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

The morning staff meeting. Linda is a conspicuous absence. The reality TV crew moves through the scene, making everyone uncomfortable.

STAFFER

You're running the meeting?  
Where's Linda?

Everyone murmurs concern. John turns to the staffer:

JOHN

You're fired.

STAFFER

I... really?

John glares at him. He leaves.

JOHN

Anyone else got a problem? Okay, then. So. Linda. Yeah, that -- um... we were making out, right? And I guess she got too emotional or something, you know how chicks are, because she's like, in love with me or whatever, so she quit.

General shock and concern.

STAFFER 3

Then, Sir, it is imperative that I brief you on what is about to become a financial crisis. We have spent the entire budget we came here with. It's all gone. Everything that was supposed to rebuild this country. You spent it all.

John takes this in very seriously. He taps his head.

JOHN

Hmm... Hmm...

Then brightens.

JOHN (CONT'D)

What do you think of that new  
"thinking noise"? It's so you  
think I'm considering your idea.  
Anyway. We've got plenty left in  
the budget. I saved three million  
dollars.

Everyone reacts - relieved - it's something.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Which leads me to my next thing.  
My birthday party. We've got three  
million dollars to spend.

STAFFER 2

On a birthday party?

JOHN

Not just a birthday party -- it's  
also going to be Christmas in July.  
And I'm Santa!

Beat. Silence.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Do you know these people have never  
experienced Christmas?

STAFFER 2

That's because their religion  
doesn't have Christmas.

JOHN

I know, it's awful.

MONTAGE -- ASSASSINATION PLOT

[Note -- this sequence jumps between different groups all  
plotting John's assassinations. The plotters finish each  
other's sentences, giving us the impression that everyone's  
thinking the same thing.]

IN THE ROYAL RESIDENCE

King Alon speaks to a few officers

KING ALON

We have endured too much...

OUT IN THE BADLANDS

Chief Bessar speaks

CHIEF BESSAR

We can not enter a treaty with  
those who would plot against us  
with the Americans.

ON THE MILITARY BASE

GENERAL ADNAB

Therefore the American must die.  
This will cause a civil war.

IN THE ROYAL RESIDENCE

KING ALON

Which we will win.

BADLANDS

CHIEF BESSAR

This will teach him to work with  
the king...

ROYAL RESIDENCE

KING ALON

The warlords...

MILITARY

GENERAL ADNAB

The paramilitaries...

PARAMILITARIES

PARAMILITARY

All of these corrupt old fools!

ALL THE VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Everyone cheers, excited to kill John.

INT. JOHN'S MANSION

John takes a plate of food out to his balcony. A bird lands,  
takes a bite, and keels over dead.

JOHN

Gross.

He dumps the food and gets into the hot tub. We go close on a stand holding a piece of electronic equipment. A small fuse detonates, knocking the stand towards the hot tub. Looks like John is toast...

But he remembers something.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Beer.

John gets out of the tub, narrowly avoiding electrocution!

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Damn it! My speakers!

He grabs the beer, drinks, and it's shot -- the bottle explodes right next to his face.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
What the hell?

And then -- JOHN IS SHOT! He's more surprised than hurt.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
What the hell?

He hears Linda's voice in his head:

LINDA (V.O.)  
They kill patsies...

AND ANOTHER SHOT IS FIRED!

JOHN  
I'm... a patsy?

AND ANOTHER SHOT!!

JOHN (CONT'D)  
They kill patsies! They kill ME!  
Linda was right!

John runs through his house.

#### ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

John runs, ducks -- All around him, things are exploding and shooting at him. The distinct native groups are all taking a whack at killing him -- though no one is cooperating. He narrowly escapes death.

He gets to the front door -- Linda is there.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
I'm a patsy!

Three shots take out the wall above their heads.

LINDA  
RUN!!!

She grabs him -- and they run!

#### ACTION SEQUENCE

They run to the street. They come face to face with a group of masked men.

John busts out his old "Life Skills" talents. He has an impressive fight scene with a couple guys. He grabs Linda, they jump into his car and flee.

#### BACK WITH THE ASSASSINS

Who can't believe their eyes -- the target is getting away. They make chase.

#### BIG CHASE SEQUENCE

John and Linda stay just a step ahead of the assassins. John shows off all the extreme driving techniques he learned as a young CIA trainee -- all while using one hand to remove the bullet in his arm. Linda screams with terror as John drives his heart out. John is confused by her fear--

JOHN  
What's the matter? Didn't you ever take driver's ed?

#### A FEW MORE CHASE BEATS

John manages to lose them.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Who would want to kill me?

LINDA  
I've made a list of 43 groups with motive. But I still don't get it. Why would anyone send you to be an ambassador?

JOHN  
Because it's my destiny.

LINDA  
"Destiny"? You're inexperienced,  
abrasive. Anyone who knew you had  
to know that all you were going to  
do was get yourself killed.

Eureka.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
You're an asshole!

JOHN  
Yeah, whatever, this isn't exactly  
the time.

LINDA  
No, I mean-- your destiny is to be  
an asshole! Project A!

JOHN  
What are you talking about?

LINDA  
You're just a pawn in this whole  
conspiracy. They brought you here  
to get you killed. Now all of this  
make sense.

JOHN  
What? Who's they? What makes  
sense?

LINDA  
It was CIA. But now it's someone  
else. It all started 29 years ago  
when they adopted you...

Linda pulls out all the evidence, all of the files she's  
gathered...

JOHN  
The CIA adopted me?

LINDA  
I'm sorry, John, but everything in  
your life has been a lie. Your old  
bosses...

She shows him pictures of his tech support boss in uniform.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
Your parents...

She shows him his parents' headshots, programs from their appearances in dinner theatre...

LINDA (CONT'D)  
Of course, that's 7 years after they had allegedly died.

John, shocked, pulls over. He takes a look at all this.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
And some of your lady friends over the years...

JOHN  
Whoa, whoa, whoa. If there's one thing you can't fake, it's the female orgasm.

She hefts a big file -- mugshots of murderers, drug dealers, the criminally insane, even one effeminate male drug lord. John can't believe it.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
I'm not a superstud? What part of me is real?

LINDA  
Nothing. Everyone in your life was put there by the CIA just there to make you more irritating. That was your purpose.

JOHN  
Me? Irritating?

He laughs at the notion.

LINDA  
I'm going to help you. But first we have to get somewhere safe.

JOHN  
So I'm a CIA man? Huh. I guess it explains how I can do this...

He vulcan-pinches Linda, who goes out cold.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Oh. Right.

Beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
This is just so crazy.

Beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Can you hear me?

Nothing. John puts a hand on passed-out Linda's thigh... but the rear window is BLOWN OUT by gunfire. John floors it.

EXT. STREET - THAT EVENING

Still driving. Linda pulls out a phone, makes a call:

LINDA  
The Ambassador is coming in. Get prepped.

INT. SECRET BUNKER

An agent reports to Schiller.

BLACK OPS AGENT  
Sir, they're headed for the Ambassador's plane. Take them out there?

GENERAL SCHILLER  
No! We can't touch them. No one can connect us to the kill. But make sure they stay on them. When they land, they're ours.

EXT. AIRFIELD

A jet on the tarmac. Linda and John pull up.

A pilot and crew wait he plane. The pilot gets a call.

PILOT  
Got it, general. Keep 'em alive, keep 'em close. We'll send you an itinerary and ETA when we have it.

DOWN THE AIRFIELD:

John and Linda get out of the Ferrari. John is depressed, not himself.

JOHN  
How can John be a patsy? John is John. John is meant for big things...

LINDA  
Okay, we'll need to ditch the car.

JOHN  
Whoa, what? Ditch Red?

LINDA  
It's the only way to get out of the country alive. Shake whoever's trying to kill you off the trail.

They walk from the car. John can't bear it. He turns back and clicks the remote key -- the alarm chirps. They walk away -- but John turns back and spit-cleans a speck of dust. He gives the car a loving pat, a kiss on the mirror, and forces himself to walk away.

INT. AIRPLANE

They begin the process of take-off.

Once in the air:

PILOT  
Where to, sir?

JOHN  
Mexico City.

PILOT  
Very good.

The pilot punches in some stuff, radios in.

PILOT (CONT'D)  
This is birdie twelve. We have itinerary.

FLIGHT CONTROL  
Go ahead, birdie.

PILOT  
Mexico City. Tell the, uh, welcome party that ETA is in nine hours.

Suddenly Linda looks at the people, takes in their CIA spook smiles, and realizes...

LINDA  
John -- they're all dirty!

John springs into action, taking everyone out, including the pilot.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
The pilot! Who's going to fly the plane now?

JOHN  
I am. What, you can't fly a plane? Oh, I see where you're going... I'll put it on autopilot if you want to go get a little mile-high action...

LINDA  
Whoever's trying to kill you thinks we're going to Mexico City. But if you can get us to New York, I know a safe place.

INT. LINDA'S CAR -- DRIVING IN NEW YORK CITY

TITLE: NEW YORK CITY

Linda drives. John lies in the backseat, a moaning, miserable, self-pitying wreck. He sees something and opens the door. Linda has to slam on the breaks as John stumbles out of the car.

LINDA  
What are you doing? We're not there yet! It's not safe!

JOHN  
I need to see for myself.

INT. BAR

John's old pick-up spot. Linda and John enter --

JOHN  
I used to be the stallion in here.

But there's a new bartender. John looks rocked.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 This is my lucky place. I never  
 struck out here. If J.B. was here,  
 he'd tell you...

LINDA  
 Okay, calm down, have a seat.  
 Maybe a quick drink and then we  
 keep moving.

They sit at the bar.

JOHN  
 I never struck out!

LINDA  
 Shh, it's okay...

JOHN  
 No, you'll see!

John leans over to a woman. He's afraid to say what he's  
 about to say, but he has to try:

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 Hey, nice dress. It would look  
 great on my floor.

She slaps him. Hard. John moves down the bar, trying his  
 line over and over...

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 Nice dress...

Each time he gets rejected in a different violent way -- a  
 slap, a thrown drink... Finally Linda grabs him and pulls him  
 outside.

EXT. MEXICO CITY - AIRSTRIP

A group of agents wait to "welcome" John's plane. Nothing.  
 An agent radios in.

BLACK OPS AGENT  
 Still no sign of them. And no  
 pilot contact.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
 Scratch the team. Package is going  
 to try to go home.

EXT. BAR

John slumps on the sidewalk, a broken man.

JOHN  
It's true. I'm just an asshole.

A woman in a provocative dress walks by, the kind of woman who used to be an automatic target of his attention.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
(weak)  
Hey, babe... that dress...

He just trails off, too broken to harass her. Linda tries to pull him to his feet.

LINDA  
Come on, we're not safe out here.

JOHN  
Some stallion.

LINDA  
Please... We're still in danger.

Linda is proven right as

DOWN THE STREET

Several BLACK CHEVY SUBURBANS head towards them.

BACK WITH LINDA AND JOHN

The cars are headed their way.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
They found us!

The cars roll down the block, on the hunt. Soon John and Linda will be trapped.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
Do something! Do something or  
we're both dead!

He doesn't care.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
Do something or YOU'RE dead.

JOHN  
Uch, fine.

John breaks a car window, hotwires the car in seconds.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Get in.

ON THE ROAD

John and Linda in their new car. Linda drives. A tense moment as they have to drive right past the BLACK SUBURBANS -- but they slip by unnoticed.

LINDA  
How did you do all that?

JOHN  
It's just Life Skills.

LINDA  
"Life Skills"?

JOHN  
You know, that class in high school.  
(off her look)  
You didn't have Life Skills in high school?

LINDA  
No...

JOHN  
You know, where you learn what bugs you can eat, the will to survive?

LINDA  
No...

JOHN  
Then how do you neutralize someone?  
How do you destroy evidence?

Something dawns on John.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Of course. They raised me. Even high school was a lie.  
(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

The talent show I won... a lie.  
Most likely to succeed...

John just stares out the window, overwhelmed.

LINDA

I'm going to help you, John.  
Together, we can make you into a  
real person. It's not your fault  
you are the way you are.

It's a moment.

JOHN

I just realized... no one's ever  
been genuinely nice to me before.

John surprises her with a grateful hug. Linda is pleasantly surprised... until it turns into a grope. She shoves him away, tries to calm herself...

LINDA

Not his fault... not his fault...

INT. SECRET BUNKER

Schiller and his guys.

BLACK OPS AGENT

Still no sign of them.

GENERAL SCHILLER

We need that assassination. Let's  
make sure that happens. In the  
mean time, can we leak Senator  
Hamilton some intelligence?

INT. OVAL OFFICE

A high-level meeting of the President, his advisors, and several important Senators. Most prominent: hawkish firebrand Senator Hamilton. Schiller's in the background.

SENATOR HAMILTON

Mr. President, we can't just sit on  
our hands and hope for the best in  
Hazbakistan. For God's sake --  
according to our people there they  
kidnapped our Ambassador or worse!  
Our position on the world stage  
demands that we make a military  
move now.

PRESIDENT  
Gentlemen, thanks for your  
thoughts. I take them seriously.

The Senators leave. The President turns to Schiller:

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)  
You've been over there. What do  
you think?

GENERAL SCHILLER  
This is a tremendous slap in the  
face to our entire country, sir.  
We need to make a military move.

PRESIDENT  
We still don't know what happened.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
Sir, the man was a gold ranger.  
You said it yourself -- he was a  
good man. A rising star, you  
called him.

PRESIDENT  
We can't just let people run around  
killing America's best and  
brightest.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
The future of the country depends  
on it, sir.

PRESIDENT  
No one slaps America in the face.

Schiller smiles.

PRESIDENT (CONT'D)  
Just... make sure he's actually  
dead before we invade.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
Of course.

EXT. FARM HOUSE

Linda and John pull in. It's abandoned. Quiet and safe.

LINDA  
 We're off the grid here. I don't  
 think anyone even knows this place  
 exists.

INT. SECRET BUNKER

General Schiller berates his people, many of whom are  
 seriously injured.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
 One unarmed man. One unarmed  
 woman. And you lost them? Find  
 them, take them back to  
 Hazbakistan, and kill them. The  
 President needs a dead body -- make  
 sure we get him one!

INT. FARM HOUSE - THE NEXT DAY

Linda and John are in disguise.

LINDA  
 Our first step in making you a  
 decent person will be letting you  
 observe decent people in action.  
 You can learn all of their  
 qualities.

Blank stare.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
 Generosity, sharing, kindness.

JOHN  
 Oh, you mean how pussies act.  
 Well, I am going to become the  
 biggest pussy in the world!

IN THE SMALL FARM TOWN

Linda and John watch something. John has a look of confusion  
 and discomfort that approaches nausea. REVEAL the object of  
 his consternation -- a man gives a Salvation Army guy money.

JOHN  
 What is he DOING?

LINDA  
 He's giving that man money.

JOHN  
I... what? Why?

INT. SOUP KITCHEN

John works alongside the volunteers -- he has the same reaction.

JOHN  
Are they insane?

INT. CHURCH

A priest sorts clothes for donation.

JOHN  
And then he just gives it away?

EXT. PARK

A father and son play catch.

JOHN  
What kind of a father is he? Why  
isn't he telling him he throws like  
a girl? Why isn't he calling him a  
disappointment?

INT. POUND

John watches volunteers feed puppies.

JOHN  
Are these people retarded?

INT. HOSPITAL

Candy-stripers attend to elderly patients.

JOHN  
Are they retarded?

INT. LIBRARY

Volunteers read to a group of kids.

JOHN  
 Seriously, are they retarded?

VOLUNTEER  
 We prefer "developmentally  
 delayed." Now would you please  
 leave? You're upsetting them.

EXT. PET SHOP

John waits. Linda walks out, holding a pet carrier.

LINDA  
 You don't seem to have any  
 compassion for human beings. Maybe  
 this will do something for you.

She takes an adorable puppy out of the carrier and hands it  
 to him.

JOHN  
 What do I do with this thing?

LINDA  
 Just... hang out with him for an  
 hour. Take care of him. Learn to  
 care about another living thing.

She walks away. John stands there holding the puppy.

EXT. PET SHOP - AN HOUR LATER

John eats an ice cream cone and looks bored. The carrier is  
 on the ground, open. No sign of the puppy.

LINDA  
 Where's the puppy?

JOHN  
 Where's the what?

We hear TIRES SQUEAL and something get hit. People scream.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 Oh, there it is. Was.

EXT. FARM HOUSE

They walk towards the house.

JOHN

Okay, okay, okay. I think I'm getting this. So... people volunteer in a soup kitchen because... because... no, it still doesn't add up.

Linda's at the end of her rope.

LINDA

Even if you can't understand helping, can't you understand that if you were a decent person YOUR life would be better?

JOHN

Yeah, that's what they always want you to think.

LINDA

"They"?

JOHN

People who don't want me to be awesome. It's called jealousy.

LINDA

It's called enlightened self-interest.

JOHN

"Self"? Go on.

LINDA

For example, if you'd been a halfway nice guy, maybe you'd even still have that car of yours. Your precious Ferrari??

That hits home. For the first time, a look of human compassion flickers on John.

JOHN

My... Ferrari?

LINDA

You didn't even have to be competent. You could have just been NICE. And there wouldn't be a country in ruins right now and YES you'd still have that stupid Ferrari.

JOHN

Red...

A single tear rolls down John's cheek.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Re... re... Rrrrrrrrrrrrrrrred!!!!

Suddenly John is SOBBING.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Where do you think she is? You  
think she's OK? I just miss her so  
damn much...

John rolls around like a wounded animal, grieving. He  
flashes on PAINFUL CHILDHOOD MEMORIES -- his adoption, his  
training, his testing.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I remember it all now. They took  
me away and made me this... this  
ASSHOLE.

He cries, cries, CRIES.

JOHN (CONT'D)

But Red-- she's OK, right?  
Goddamnit, how could they take HER!  
All she ever wanted was to make  
people happy. Maybe if... maybe  
if I gave myself up, but... no, who  
am I kidding I'll never get her  
back, oh -- poor Red, I'll never  
have her back again!!

John wallows, Linda sees her shot--

LINDA

John. I want you to take those  
feelings you have for your... for  
Red--

JOHN

Oh God, Red!!

LINDA

Yes, I want you to take them... and  
see if you can imagine applying  
them to a human being.

John looks at her -- his eyes full of wonder. He thinks it  
through. Is she crazy? Or a genius?

LINDA (CONT'D)

Don't you see? Putting air in your spare tire... It's like helping the homeless. Sure, you don't get anything out of it. But don't you feel better knowing your tire is better off? And when you wash under the bumper, in that spot that no one sees but you, doesn't that feel good?

He nods. He knows that feeling.

EXT. SMALL TOWN - A FEW WEEKS LATER

John and Linda stand in front of the same salvation army guy. John gives him a dollar.

JOHN

Giving money to a poor guy is, um... not stupid?

LINDA

Very good, John.

JOHN

And, uh, it feels really good?

LINDA

That's right.

He puts a lascivious arm on her--

JOHN

You know what else would feel good?

LINDA

John...

JOHN

I'm sorry! Groping you would, uh, NOT feel better than giving money to this filthy guy who's just going to steal it and spend it on booze. Which is just an assumption!

LINDA

That's OK, you're doing great.

JOHN

I could do YOU great.

LINDA  
Let's move on.

JOHN  
Right, right.

LINDA  
Take your arm off me.

He does, they smile.

INT. POUND

John helps the volunteers. Linda watches.

JOHN  
Helping for free... doesn't make  
you a sucker?

She smiles benevolently.

INT. FARM HOUSE

Title: "ONE WEEK LATER"

John lays out breakfast. Linda enters, carrying a bag.

JOHN  
Look! I made breakfast with no  
expectations of a sexual quid pro  
quo.

LINDA  
It looks delicious.

She hands him the bag.

JOHN  
What's this?

LINDA  
I called in some favors from some  
of my old diplomatic connections.

JOHN  
It wasn't sexual favors, because  
not all women are prostitutes.  
Because...  
(thinks)  
... not all women are glorified  
whores.

LINDA

Thanks, John, very good. So what I have here... is everything you need to start a new life with a new identity.

John looks at the stuff -- passport, money. He's overwhelmed.

LINDA (CONT'D)

You can do this. Go pack now. For your new life.

INT. FARM HOUSE

John is packed and ready to go. He notices Linda watching TV. She's upset.

JOHN

What is it? Not all women's feelings are PMS!

LINDA

Look...

ON TV -- WHITE HOUSE PRESS CONFERENCE

The President speaks. Senator Hamilton stands at his side.

PRESIDENT

...that is why, unfortunately, the situation in Hazbakistan demands a military response. Military action is always our last choice as a course of action, but we are left with no choice.

John notices Schiller in the BG.

JOHN

Hey, that's the guy that gave me my Ambassador job!

LINDA

General Schiller?

JOHN

If you say so. That was a time in my life when I didn't remember other people's names.

LINDA  
Now it all makes sense.

JOHN  
What?

LINDA  
He made you ambassador because he wanted you to fail.

JOHN  
Why would you choose me if you wanted to fail? I'm John, baby!  
I'm...

He realizes.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
An asshole.

LINDA  
Not anymore.

JOHN  
I was part of their plan? They used me to ruin the country?

John clutches his head.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Agh! What is that horrible feeling!?

LINDA  
I think... I think it's guilt.

JOHN  
Get it off! Get it off of me!!

LINDA  
You can't just get rid of it.

JOHN  
Then what do I do?

LINDA  
You have to right your wrongs.

JOHN

Of course. I can't just run away. I have to fix what I did to those poor people who only seem retarded because they grew up in that crappy, uh, different country, with it's... um... special smells.

LINDA

That's right. And I'm proud of you for realizing that. But there's no way you can take them on.

JOHN

Yes I can. I ruined the country. Why can't I fix it?

LINDA

How?

JOHN

I'll use what you taught me. Being nice. Which is just another way of saying "statesmanship." Isn't that what a real ambassador would do?

LINDA

I suppose--

JOHN

Then I'm going back there and I'm going to do it! I don't know how, but I'm going to save that retarded country!!

LINDA

But there's a hit out on you! Probably several! It's suicide!

JOHN

I don't care. I owe it to them.

Beat.

LINDA

Then I'm going with you!!

They hug. John's hand wanders up, but in an incredible test of will he keeps the embrace chaste. Will he be able to keep it clean? He battles his own hands as if they have minds of their own. After an eternity of fighting his urges-- She breaks away. He looks incredibly relieved.



JOHN  
Like I said -- I'm going to be nice.

LINDA  
Just... be nice? That's your plan?

JOHN  
These are good people. They'll understand.

INT. SECRET BUNKER

Schiller gets a report.

BLACK OPS AGENT  
They're back in Hazbakistan.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
Troop up and let's get 'em.

EXT. ROYAL RESIDENCE

John and Linda approach the palace. The guards take notice:

GUARD  
Freeze!

JOHN  
Hi, I know you're just doing your jobs. We'd just love to speak with the king.

GUARD  
You want to speak to the king.

JOHN  
It's really important.

GUARD 2  
Take them into custody.

The guards grab them.

JOHN  
Really. It's a matter of life and death.

GUARD 2  
Shut up.

JOHN  
I'm really sorry about this.

John dispatches them with non-deadly force. As he lays them out:

JOHN (CONT'D)  
I'm so sorry. I really feel terrible about this.

They head inside.

INT. ROYAL RESIDENCE

John and Linda sneak their way through the palace. Into...

INT. THRONE ROOM

Where King Alon meets with his advisors to plan a military assault on Chief Bessar and the Warlords. They look up and -- John and Linda!

KING ALON  
How did you get in here!!

Armed guards train their weapons--

JOHN  
Please, I think we got off to the wrong foot. I want to apologize.

KING ALON  
What are you up to now?

JOHN  
Nothing, your majesty. I... want to be your friend. I want our countries to be friends. You see, I learned something. Deep down, we all want the same things. Deep down, we're all the same. Warlords, Kings, regular folks just trying to get through the day. When it comes down to it, can't we just put all this nonsense aside and love each other?

Beat.

KING ALON  
That is the most condescending  
thing I have ever heard.

JOHN  
But still, your Majesty. We are  
all the same.

KING ALON  
No we're not.

JOHN  
Sure we are.

KING ALON  
Chief Bessar tried to kill my  
family.

JOHN  
But he's a good man.

KING ALON  
What?

John points to his eyes.

JOHN  
These lie. You have to learn to  
see with this.

He points to his heart.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Like I have.

King Alon's face twists with rage. He controls himself.

KING ALON  
We have 800 years of blood between  
us. You can not tell me we're the  
same.

JOHN  
Sure we are.

KING ALON  
No, we're not.

JOHN  
Deep down.

KING ALON  
We're not.

JOHN  
Very deep.

Long beat.

KING ALON  
Get out of here!!

JOHN  
I understand your country is...  
simpler than mine, in a beautiful  
way. You have been so torn by war  
that you don't understand a man who  
comes in just to be nice...

KING ALON  
Guards!

The palace guards attack. John defends himself easily -- he tries to dispatch them without hurting them, still trying to talk to the king.

JOHN  
Please, your highness -- sorry --  
there is so much at stake -- oops,  
your back -- let us work together --  
watch your head -- what is  
happening in your country -- you're  
going to need a doctor -- is all a  
big misunderstanding!

KING ALON  
Remove this man!

More guards pour in.

LINDA  
Forget it! Let's get out of here!

They make their escape, pursued by guards.

CHASE THROUGH THE STREETS

John and Linda lose the guards.

EXT. JOHN'S MANSION

John and Linda scout the area... is this safe refuge? No-- it's being closely watched by paramilitary types. The King's men spot John and Linda and they're off again.

EXT. ALLEY

They run into the shadows. They huddle, safe for now.

LINDA  
What do we do?

JOHN  
I don't know. The "nice" thing  
didn't quite pan out like I'd  
hoped. It's my fault, of course.

A long, down beat, then --

LINDA  
Wait, I know what could work! It's  
so simple! You're an asshole!

JOHN  
Hey, I thought I was doing  
better... but I value your  
criticism.

LINDA  
No, I mean that's what we do!  
You're an asshole! Why fight it?

JOHN  
You know, you need to make up your  
mind... not that this is some kind  
of hormonal thing, but first I'm an  
asshole, then I'm not enough of an  
asshole. First it's "listen to  
other people" then it's--

She slaps him.

LINDA  
Focus, you asshole!

JOHN  
God. I'm sorry. I needed that.  
So what are you thinking?

LINDA  
I'm thinking, "the enemy of my  
enemy is my friend..."

EXT. GENERAL ADNAB'S HIGH-SECURITY COMPOUND

John and Linda case the outside of the well-guarded compound. Using John's skills, they slip inside and soon find themselves in...

INT. GENERAL ADNAB'S SITUATION ROOM

Where the General, his mistress, and several officers are plotting against the King.

John looks unsure.

JOHN  
You think this will work?

LINDA  
You can do it. Be the asshole.

John calls out to the room.

JOHN  
Hey!

They look up.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Sorry to interrupt. It looks like you're doing something important--

Linda nudges him.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Oh, right. I mean-- I'm not sorry!  
I don't care! You probably lost  
your train of thought!

They all look confused.

OFFICER  
What do we do?

GENERAL ADNAB  
I'm... not sure.

JOHN  
I... You... Smelly!

He panics, looks to Linda:

JOHN (CONT'D)

It's not working! They're not angry! I can't do it! I don't know what to say. I'm too nice!

LINDA

You can do it! Just be yourself!

He turns back to Adnab:

JOHN

You people are so... You...

The officers have no idea what to make of this.

OFFICER

We'll take him outside, sir.

John looks to her --

JOHN

Help!

LINDA

Okay, okay. Um... how about -- hey, you swarthy little dumbasses! Why don't you stop bugging your mothers long enough to kill us! You can't! Because you're a bunch of sweaty eastern European fags! Because your entire culture has produced bad plum brandy and a best foreign film LOSER.

John looks shocked. So do the officers.

JOHN

She didn't mean that! I'm so sorry!

John and Linda escape.

EXT. ALLEY

John slumps, defeated. Linda catches up with him.

JOHN

I can't do it... I just can't do it... I tried to annoy them, but... I guess that's it. The black ops win. General Schiller wins. Civil war... thousands killed...

LINDA  
John, you can do it.

JOHN  
I'm not that guy anymore... and  
that guy wasn't even me... I failed  
as a decent human being... I failed  
as an asshole. I'm nothing.

LINDA  
You're not nothing.

JOHN  
No, I'm worse than nothing. I  
started a civil war.

LINDA  
You can't think that way. You're  
still every bit the asshole you  
always were.

JOHN  
You're just saying that.

LINDA  
No, there's a giant asshole inside  
you.

JOHN  
I want you to leave me. I'm not  
worth it.

LINDA  
No...

JOHN  
Go back to America where you'll be  
safe.

LINDA  
I'm not leaving you! When I first  
met you I said, wow -- that's the  
biggest asshole I'm ever going to  
meet, and you still are! You can  
do this!

JOHN  
Really?

LINDA  
Yes!

John looks at her, inspired... And with great effort, begins  
SUMMONING THE ASSHOLE WITHIN.

John strains and groans... He's trying... His face  
contorts... old memories flash before him... It's an  
incredible exertion -- but at the end he just slumps.

Nothing.

He tries again... we see the incredible strain...

Nothing.

JOHN

It's not working. I can't do it.

LINDA

It's okay. You tried. And... it's  
been a long day. Is there  
somewhere safe we could get some  
dinner?

INT. RUINS

All that remains of a centuries-old house. With a few  
candles and a makeshift table it's very romantic.

LINDA

Look at us.

JOHN

What?

LINDA

Well, if you'd told me a few weeks  
ago that I'd be spending this  
romantic evening with you, I  
would've called you crazy.

JOHN

I wouldn't have blamed you.

LINDA

I want to show you something.

EXT. ROOFTOP - SUNRISE

Magic.

LINDA

Beautiful, isn't it?

She moves closer to him. Now she's almost breathing in his ear.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
Isn't it?

John can barely speak.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
I want to show you something else.

INT. RUINS

There are primitive paintings on the wall.

LINDA  
This room is where a prince would take his new bride on the first night of their marriage. These erotic mosaics depict sexual positions that were thought to increase the chances of a male heir.

She moves in very close to him, reaching across him to run her fingers over the paintings.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
Don't you think this one looks like us?

John can't take it any more -- he kisses her. She jumps back, shocked!

LINDA (CONT'D)  
What the hell are you doing?

JOHN  
Wha-? What do you mean?

LINDA  
I'm sorry you got the wrong idea.

JOHN  
The wrong idea? I got the wrong idea?

John gets a funny look on his face -- like something is snapping inside him.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I listened to you all night? I made you dinner? I looked at goddamn paintings with you? And I got the WRONG IDEA?

LINDA

It's working! It's working!

JOHN

Wait-- What? This is a set up?

LINDA

I knew you'd get mad! Guys are all the same!

JOHN

Guys are---? What?! WHAT?? You!! Ah, it's my fault. I should have known better than to trust someone with such a fat ass.

Linda's eyes brighten--

LINDA

Listen to yourself! You're back!

John stares at her chest.

JOHN

I've got something back in my pants.

LINDA

You see? You CAN do it!

JOHN

Then I'd better go. You stay here.

LINDA

I appreciate your concern, but--

JOHN

No, I just don't want anyone to think we're together. You know, with that ass.

Linda almost cries with joy.

LINDA

Oh, John!

JOHN

What're you so excited about? I  
look like a candy bar to you?

LINDA

No, shh... save your magic!

STREETS OF HAZBAKISTAN

General Schiller and his men are on the ground.

GENERAL SCHILLER

Find them and kill them. Do not  
let them get away this time.

The men fan out.

INT. ROYAL RESIDENCE

The king and his advisors plan a military assault on Chief  
Bessar.

KING ALON

Everything is in place. We can  
move on the warlords.

John and Linda watch, just out of their sight. John hands  
her something -- ear plugs.

JOHN

You'd better wear these.

She puts them in. John walks out into the room. Everyone  
looks at him. He says one thing:

JOHN (CONT'D)

Hey, King. About your daughter...

The rest of the scene plays from Linda's POV. It's silent.  
We see quick reaction shots to what can only be the most  
offensive stream of dialogue ever. John suggesting various  
sex acts. Everyone is shocked into paralysis. John runs,  
grabs Linda's hand. Yells something.

LINDA

What?

She takes out the earplugs.

JOHN

Let's get out of here!

And the king recovers, now livid beyond belief.

KING ALON  
Kill them!

KING'S ADVISOR  
But the war plans...

KING ALON  
Kill them!!!

The guards give chase.

EXT. ROYAL RESIDENCE

The guards run out -- John and Linda are gone.

KING ALON  
Find them!

They move out.

QUICK SCENES -- JOHN, THE STEALTH ASSHOLE

John sneaks in to a few locations, using his CIA skills.

Each time, we see the group plot military action until John drops in and does something awful -- we cut to their reactions: they're so offended and furious they can't react.

Then, each time, John is gone. And after a beat they shake off their paralysis and give chase.

-- In a cathedral, John has fun with a sacred object

-- On the military base, John has his way with one of those murals of General Adnab

EXT. STATE TV STATION - ESTABLISHING

John and Linda run in.

INT. STATE TV STATION

John finds his crew.

LINDA  
Everyone get ready! We're live!

The crews get on John...

ALL OVER THE CITY

People see their TVs:

JOHN

Boy, I've had it up to here with you people. You try to help people and this is how they repay you. By trying to kill you! Maybe this will explain how I feel. I wrote this for my final episode of "The Ambassador," but what the hell.

John pulls out a guitar.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(sings)

John was the Ambassador, he came to help these small brown people/But he could not help them, because no one was smart enough to understand him/So gather 'round all you little smelly people/And hear the Ambassador's song/It's tough to be the Ambassador/When you're so much better than everyone else...

The various armies see his image on TV, and head towards him.

INT. STATE TV STATION

John and Linda wait.

JOHN

You think they'll go for it?

He is answered by the faint roar of the mob. It gets closer.

LINDA

I think that's a yes.

Soldiers, militants, protestors, all charge into the studio, pointing guns at John.

The following plays out on live TV as well as in the studio.

JOHN

People of Hazbakistan! Angry mob!  
I lead you here today to tell you  
something. And that's... we can  
have peace in Hazbakistan!

People look at each other -- what?

JOHN (CONT'D)

I mean -- why are you guys fighting  
each other? There's plenty of  
things you all have in common. I'm  
not just talking about how you all  
look pretty much the same. Or  
about the smell or that horrible  
food you all like. Or your bad  
clothes or your terrible music or  
your poor grooming. You hate me!  
And you deserve to be free! It  
doesn't matter how fat or ugly you  
are.

People take this in. Linda watches, proud.

ON SCHILLER'S GROUP

He doesn't like what he sees.

GENERAL SCHILLER

What the hell is he doing? Someone  
get a shot on him!

His sniper starts setting up the shot.

BACK ON JOHN

JOHN

Oh, yeah, and there's some guy  
named General Schiller who's co-  
opted the United States' agenda.  
And he's right down there!

All eyes turn on Schiller. Schiller looks to his men-- uh-oh  
-- and they bid a hasty retreat.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Anyway -- who's for some love and  
peace?

John lets this sink in... And then an UNBELIEVABLE ACCIDENT --

The scaffold over John collapses, killing John in a brutal and graphic way. A beat -- and the crowd ERUPTS IN APPLAUSE!

QUICK SHOTS OF THE TV AUDIENCE

At home, people witness the accident -- and cheer! John's work crew cheers, the kids from the school cheer, the little boy who had no water cheers...

BACK IN THE TV STATION

The various factions notice that their enemies are cheering as well.

MILITARY LEADER

If I hate him...

KING'S ADVISOR

And I hate him...

MILITARY LEADER

And I want to befoul his corpse...

KING'S ADVISOR

And feed it to pigs...

MILITARY LEADER

Who knows what else we have in common?

KING'S ADVISOR

Shall we urinate on him? Brother?

They smile, embrace, and urinate on John's corpse while embracing.

AROUND THE COUNTRY

People unite in their jubilation over John's death -- dancing spills into the street. Members of different political parties forget their differences and rejoice. The valet and his son dance merrily with a royal and a soldier.

ROYAL RESIDENCE - ONE WEEK LATER - PRESS CONFERENCE

King Alon appears with representatives of every faction.

KING ALON

Today we lay down our arms...

CHIEF BESSAR  
And unite in celebration!

Ambassador Bodner joins them for a Sadat/Carter/Begin moment.  
Then:

BODNER  
Let us go forward with democratic  
elections.

The crowd cheers.

INT. LINDA'S APARTMENT

She watches on TV.

LINDA  
Amazing.

JOHN (O.S.)  
Yes it is.

And we reveal John, very much alive. They share a smile.

LINDA  
Hey -- didn't I watch you die?

JOHN  
Just basic Life Skills -- when you  
need to destroy evidence of a  
person's existence, faking public  
death is the way to go.

LINDA  
You know something -- what you did  
for this country might've been the  
most truly unselfish act I've ever  
seen, because no one will ever  
know.

JOHN  
I guess that's my first.

A beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
I always felt like I was meant for  
something big. Who knew it was to  
be the world's biggest asshole.

LINDA

But could you have saved this country without it?

JOHN

Huh. I was... I was good?

LINDA

You were good, John. You should be proud. They'll never know you weren't really that asshole. That's sacrifice.

JOHN

I just wish I didn't have to see so much of THAT.

He indicates the TV --

ON TV

A crowd celebrates John's death by dancing around a burning effigy. Flips channel -- where John's death is shown over and over, with funny "America's Funniest Videos" noises. Flips channel -- where John's death has been incorporated into the national anthem. He shuts off the TV.

LITTLE KID (O.S.)

No, you be John! I was John last time!

They look outside--

DOWN IN THE STREET

Little kids re-enact John's death, then celebrate his demise.

LITTLE KID

Let's drag him through the street!

LITTLE KID 2

Yeah, then let the dog pee on him!

BACK IN THE APARTMENT

LINDA

The point is -- you made a difference.

JOHN  
Time to go, huh?

DOWN IN THE STREET

John and Linda, disguised, make their way...

ELSEWHERE

The Valet who John fired leaves his house -- and sees John's car parked in front. There's a note on the windshield. We hear John's voice as he reads it:

JOHN (V.O.)  
Sorry about your job. Get laid for  
me. Enjoy. A friend.

The keys are there. The Valet smiles.

INT. OVAL OFFICE

The President talks to Schiller.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
All's well that ends well. We'll  
have democracy after all. It was  
unfortunate that things got so  
sticky, but I had to operate that  
way... to protect you.

PRESIDENT  
Of course. I understand. This  
country thanks you. We have an  
important new assignment for you.

GENERAL SCHILLER  
Thank you, Mr. President.

But as Schiller leaves, we see the President doesn't quite trust him...

INT. LIMO

Schiller gets briefed.

DR. LEWIS

Your new assignment will be to provide cover for an important agent. You will be posing as her husband.

GENERAL SCHILLER

As her husband?

DR. LEWIS

This of course will require you to be with her 24/7.

GENERAL SCHILLER

I can't just abandon my other duties--

DR. LEWIS

The President insisted.

The limo pulls up to

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME

Dr. Lewis walks Schiller to the door. It looks like any suburban house. But as we get closer we see it's locked down tight with high tech locks and cameras.

GENERAL SCHILLER

And the name of the mission?

Dr. Lewis punches a code into a key pad. The door unlocks. Schiller takes a step inside before he realizes Lewis hasn't followed.

DR. LEWIS

Project C.

He smiles and closes the door on Schiller. Schiller's trapped inside.

He turns and sees... [TBD - Dakota Fanning?]

EXT. BEACH - SUNSET

A beautiful night. John and Linda steer their pontoon onto the beach.

JOHN

We made it.

LINDA

We did. Are you ready for your new  
life?

JOHN

Yes -- if you're a part of it.

And finally, their big moment -- THE KISS. A big romantic  
moment, then--

JOHN (CONT'D)

God, what did you have for lunch?  
Sorry -- that's the old me. I love  
you.

He leans in again.

JOHN (CONT'D)

But what is that thing on your lip?  
No, I don't care. Actually--

And as they kiss, then don't, then do... As happily ever  
after as an asshole can be...

FADE OUT.