

Air Force One

Andrew Marlow

FADE IN:

INT. C-130 HERCULES TURBO-PROP - NIGHT

Eighteen combat-ready special forces, wearing assault black, jump packs and combat gear, stare down the deep end of a greasy ramp into the night sky. Village lights flicker 19,000 feet below.

The STRIKE FORCE LEADER signals to his team.

Without a moment's hesitation, they dive into the darkness and plummet toward earth.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

A military GUARD, old Soviet-style uniform, rounds the corner of the large estate toting an AK-47.

A red laser dot appears briefly on his forehead and, after a beat, the red dot seems to bleed. The Guard collapses dead. Two other GUARDS are dispatched with single, silenced shots.

A Strike Team member at a junction box awaits a signal.

Through infra-red binoculars the strike Force Leader watches his assault troops as they take positions.

STRIKE FORCE LEADER

(into headset/in
Russian)

GO!

On the estate - as the power goes out. The team on the mansion's front porch pops the door and pours in.

INT. MANSION - NIGHT

FOLLOWING - the FIVE TEAM MEMBERS as they rush a stairway in phalanx formation. They nearly knock over an old lady, who in turn lets out a blood curdling scream.

UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR -

The team kicks open a door. Rushes into the room.

INT. BEDROOM -

Assault weapons pointed at the bed. The soldiers yank back bedsheets to reveal IVAN STRAVANAVITCH, a middle-aged man and his half-naked 18-year-old concubine.

SOLDIER

(in Russian)
Get up, now! Up!

The soldiers pull Stravanavitch to his feet and haul him out of the room.

FOLLOWING - As they push down the hallway.

MANSION SECURITY GUARDS rally with haphazard gunfire.

Out come the strike force's flash-bang grenades. Exploding everywhere, disorienting Stravanavitch's men.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Signal flares burn as a helicopter descends on the position. The Strike Team evacuates across the field and forces a struggling Stravanavitch into the low-hovering copter.

The commandos swiftly board the craft as a handful of Stravanavitch's guards break into the clearing. They open fire.

And the mounted machine guns on the helicopter return.

One of the Strike Team members takes a bullet to the neck. He's' pulled by his comrades into the chopper as it lifts into the sky, its guns spitting lead...

STRIKE FORCE LEADER (V.O.)

Archangel, this is Restitution.

Archangel, this is Restitution. The package is wrapped. Over.

VOICE (V.O. RADIO)

Roger, Restitution. We are standing by for delivery.

FADE TO BLACK

The SOUNDS of a dinner banquet. Forks clanking against plates and the din of a hundred conversations, broken by...

The DING, DING, DING of a SPOON tapping against a wine glass.

SUPER TITLE: "MOSCOW - THREE WEEKS LATER"

FADE IN:

INT. BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

Hundreds of men and women in formal evening wear sit at round banquet tables. A HUSH falls over the guests as the DINGING continues. All attention turns to the front table.

A rotund, silver haired-man in his late sixties rises and sidles past U.S. and Russian flags up to the podium microphone. He is STOLI PETROV, President of Russia.

PETROV

(in Russian)

Thank you for joining us this evening.

Petrov's harsh Russian issues through the room. But over it we hear a young woman's voice translating.

TRANSLATOR (V.0.)

Tonight we are honored to have with us a man of remarkable courage, who, despite strong international criticism...

AT THE FRONT TABLE -

A translator's words ring in the earpiece of a handsome man in his mid-forties. Worry lines crease his forehead and the touch of gray at his temples attest to three very difficult years in office.

This man is JAMES MARSHALL, and he is the PRESIDENT of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. He busily makes last minute changes to his speech.

TRANSLATOR

(V.0. earpiece)

Has chosen to join our fight against tyranny in forging a new world community. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you the President of the United States of America...

Mr. President.

Thunderous applause as Marshall rises and approaches the podium.

At the back of the room, DOHERTY, a senior policy adviser whispers to the President's Chief of Staff ED SHEPHERD...

DOHERTY

Maybe we should consider running him for re-election instead of the U.S.

The applause dies as Marshall begins to speak.

MARSHALL

(in Russian with subtitles)

Good evening and thank you. First I would ask you to join me in a moment of silence for the victims of the

Turkmenistan massacres.

The room remains silent a few beats. Most guests respectfully bow their heads.

Marshall begins again, but this time in English. The young woman translates simultaneously for the Russian audience.

MARSHALL

As you know, three weeks ago American Special Forces, in cooperation with the Russian Republican Army, secured the arrest of Turkmenistan's self-proclaimed dictator, General Ivan Stravanavitch, whose brutal sadistic reign had given new meaning to the word horror. I am proud to say our operation was a success.

Applause from the audience. Marshall turns the page on his speech.

MARSHALL

And now, yesterday's biggest threat to world peace... today awaits trial for crimes against humanity.

During the applause, Marshall pulls a page from the speech, folds it and slides it into his pocket. He removes his glasses and looks out into the crowd. His tone becomes more personal.

He's not reciting the speech anymore.

MARSHALL

What we did here was important. We finally pulled our heads out of the sand, we finally stood up to the brutality and said "We've had enough. Every time we ignore these atrocities-- the rapes, the death squads, the genocides- every time we negotiate with these, these thugs to keep them out of gig country and away from gig families, every time we do this.E. we legitimize terror.

Terror is not a legitimate system of government. And to those who commit the atrocities I say, we will no longer tolerate, we will no longer negotiate, and we will no longer be afraid. It's your turn to be afraid.

Applause rolls through the crowd.

EXT. MOSCOW INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

Sprawling terminals spread out to runways like tentacles.

ON THE TARMAC -

Bathed in floodlights, perched majestically on the runway, dwarfing nearby commuter and military jets, stands...

AIR FORCE ONE

The President's own Boeing 747-200, dubbed "the flying White House". The distinctive royal blue stripe over a thin gold line tapers to a tail adorned with the American flag and the Presidential Seal. Secret Service agents and Marines stand guard at the aircraft's perimeter.

A RUSSIAN NEWS VAN emerges from the darkness and pulls to a stop by a Secret Service barricade.

SPECIAL AGENT GIBBS greets the Russian news team that emerges.

GIBBS

Gentlemen, welcome to Air Force One.

Please present your equipment to Special Agent Walters for inspection.

The news team's segment producer, a crusty old Russian named KORSHUNOV raises his big bushy eyebrows.

KORSHUNOV

We've already been inspected.

GIBBS

Sir, this plane carries the President of the United States.

Though we wish to extend your press service every courtesy, you will comply with our security measures to the letter.

KORSHUNOV

Of course. I'm sorry.

Korshunov and the FIVE MEMBERS of his news crew present their video cameras, sound equipment and supplies to Special Agent WALTERS for inspection. Secret Service DOGS sniff through the baggage.

GIBBS

Please place your thumbs on the ID pad.

Korshunov puts his thumb on the ID pad of a portable computer.

The computer matches up his thumbprint with his dossier and photograph. "CLEARED" flashes on the computer screen.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The President, walking with his entourage.

SHEPHERD

* CBS said they'll
give us four minutes. They thought
the Russian was a nice touch.

MARSHALL

I always wondered if my freshman
Russian class would come in handy.

DOHERTY

Sir, you threw out page two.

MARSHALL

Goddamn right I did. I asked for a
tough-as-nails speech and you gave
me diplomatic bullshit. What's the
point in having a speech if I have
to ad-lib?

DOHERTY

It was a good ad-lib, sir.

MARSHALL

Thanks. Wrote it last night.

The President exits the building and enters his limousine.

EXT. TARMAC - AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

Walters hands the bags back to the Russians.

WALTERS

Equipment checks out.

A striking woman in her early thirties descends Air Force
One's stairway. MARIA MITCHELL.

GIBBS

Gentlemen, this is Maria Mitchell.

Press Relations for the Presidential Flight Office. She'll
take you from here.

KORSHUNOV

Ms. Mitchell. So nice to finally
meet you in person.

MITCHELL

The President and I were delighted
that we could accommodate you. Now
if you're all cleared?

(Gibbs nods)

You can follow me then.

They ascend into the belly of Air Force One.

MITCHELL

* I'll be giving you a brief tour, then during the flight, two members of your crew will be allowed out of the press area at a time for filming. You will have exactly ten minutes with the President and twenty with the crew...

EXT. STREETS OF MOSCOW, PRESIDENT'S MOTORCADE - NIGHT

Winding its way down narrow cobblestone streets onto a major thoroughfare.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

The limousine is packed with advisers, aides, military staff, including LT. COL. PERKINS, the keeper of the NUCLEAR FOOTBALL handcuffed to his wrist. In the b.g. on the limo's television set, the LARRY KING SHOW indulges in its normal banter.

Marshall wearily rubs his temples as he stifles a yawn.

SHEPHERD

You wanna knock of f?

MARSHALL

No, no. I'm fine. What did the Speaker say?

SHEPHERD

He and the NRA don't like the wording.

DOHERTY

Apparently taking uzis away from sixth graders isn't as popular as we thought it'd be. Representative Taylor is working on a compromise.

MARSHALL

Put together a score sheet. I'll make some calls.

SHEPHERD

With all due respect, sir, maybe you should give them this one. Your numbers are still pretty low and you called in a lot of chips to nail Stravanavitch.

MARSHALL

I might still have a few chips left.

SHEPHERD

* We could always put you in a duck blind with a twelve gauge. The second amendment types'll love that.

MARSHALL

This is a crime bill, Shep. Killing a couple ducks won't get it through committee. Besides, Shep, I told you... I don't shoot babies and I don't kiss guns.

SHEPHERD

Other way around, sir.

MARSHALL

(realizing what he said)

Right... Christ I'm tired. Do me a favor and keep me away from the press.

Marshall's watch alarm beeps and he automatically reaches into his breast pocket, pulls out a medicine vial and downs two pills with a coffee chaser.

On the T.V.

LARRY KING (T.V.)

... and your reaction to the President's trip to Moscow. Good or bad?

Shepherd turns up the volume.

SHEPHERD

This is the part I wanted you to see.

REP. DANFORTH (T.V.)

Criminal. One of our boys died in Marshall's little publicity stunt and for what? So we could claim victory over another country's problems instead of our own? And now he's got the nerve to prance around Moscow gloating, while that poor boy's family is left to bury him. If I were Marshall, I'd be ashamed of myself.

LARRY KING

There you have it. Harsh words for the President from Michael Danforth, the Speaker of the House.

Marshall mutes the television. A quiet moment.

SHEPHERD

* My opinion.
We can't let him get away with that
kind of language.

Marshall considers. Then decides.

MARSHALL

It's bait. Don't take it.

SHEPHERD

Sir, the Speaker of the House attacked
this administration on national
television. You can't afford to
leave that hanging.

MARSHALL

(ignoring Shepherd)
Did we tape the Duke game?

AIDE

It's waiting on the plane. The ending
was pretty...

MARSHALL

(interrupting)
Please don't tell me. Just for once,
* let me be
surprised.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, CORRIDOR, TRAVELING - NIGHT

Maria Mitchell escorts the Russians down the plane's length.
As they pass the galley, Maria motions up a set of stairs.

MITCHELL

Up on the upper deck is the cockpit
and the Mission Communication Center.
The MCC, as we call it, can place
clear and secure phone calls to
anywhere on earth. We're linked to
a network of military and civilian
satellites and ground stations. We
could run the country or run a war
from there if we had to.

KORSHUNOV

This is a remarkable aircraft.

MITCHELL

You don't know the half of it. Did
you know this entire plane is shielded
from radiation? We could fly through
a mushroom cloud completely unharmed
if necessary.

KORSHUNOV

A dubious distinction, no?

MITCHELL

I guess it depends on your perspective.

They walk by several conference rooms, running down the starboard side of the plane.

KORSHUNOV

And all these rooms here?

MITCHELL

Conference rooms, though some have other functions. The one up front doubles as an emergency medical center.

Past the conference rooms, they walk by a small side room where SECRETARIES work on computers, generating documents.

MITCHELL

As you can see, back here's more like a regular plane. Security and Secret Service take this cabin. You'll be in the rear with the press pool.

The REAR PRESS CABIN, just ahead of the rear galley and bank of bathrooms. A handful of disgruntled reporters feign sleep.

MITCHELL

Here's a press kit. I'll let you guys get comfortable and once we're airborne I'll be able to schedule the interviews.

KORSHUNOV

Thank you.

Mitchell exits forward. One of the reporters stirs and looks up at the news team. He groans. Space is a premium back here.

REPORTER

You fellas win some sort of fly-with-POTUS contest?

KORSHUNOV

Potus? What is Potus?

REPORTER

P.O.T.U.S. President Of The United States.

KORSHUNOV

Ah, no. We won nothing. We are
ITAR-TASS news service.

REPORTER

Right. Listen, this here... This is
my row. You'll have to sit over
there.

Korshunov trades looks with his news team.

EXT. MOSCOW INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

The President's motorcade pulls up in front of Air Force
One.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

The President and his entourage ascend from the lower deck
platform onto the main deck. COL. DANIEL AXELROD, Air Force
One's pilot, snaps off a salute as he passes.

COL. AXELROD

Welcome aboard, Mr. President.

MARSHALL

(returns salute)

Hey Danny. How's it look tonight?

COL. AXELROD

Glassy, sir. Care to take the wheel?

MARSHALL

You keep offering, one of these days
I'll take you up on it.

(to no one in
particular)

Rose and Alice back yet?

AIDE

No, Mr. President. The ballet ran
late. Their ETA is seventeen minutes.

Marshall nods as he pulls off his bow tie and enters his
stateroom. Shepherd follows two steps behind.

SHEPHERD

Mr. President?

Marshall halts Shepherd with a gesture.

MARSHALL

Thirty seconds.

Shepherd nods and waits by the door. Lt. Col. Perkins takes
a seat outside the Presidents stateroom and opens the latest
Tom Clancy thriller, using the nuclear football as a lap
desk.

INT. PRESIDENT'S STATEROOM - NIGHT

Marshall collapses on the couch, rubs his eyes, then closes them. A moment of peace in a breakneck day.

The knock at the door jars him.

MARSHALL

Yes.

Shepherd enters.

SHEPHERD

Can I at least issue a press release objecting to the Speaker's choice of wording?

President Marshall picks up one of the many phones in his office.

MARSHALL

I said it's not worth the fight.
(into phone)
Steward, please.

SHEPHERD

We'll just say it was in bad taste.

*

MARSHALL

Forget it, Shep. The kid gave his life for his country and the

Speaker's a bastard for turning him into a sound bite. I'll take the heat. Understood?

SHEPHERD

You give me ulcers.

MARSHALL

That's my job.

A STEWARD enters the room.

STEWARD

Mr. President?

MARSHALL

Hey Mike. Could you get me a Heineken?

SHEPHERD

No, wait. Get him one of the Russian beers.

The steward nods and disappears from the room.

SHEPHERD

We've got those Russian news guys on board and it'll look good in the papers.

Marshall picks up a stack of policy reports. Thumbs through them.

MARSHALL

C'mon Shep. I've been eating borscht and drinking vodka for days. Isn't that enough?

(off paper)

New home starts are down.

The steward arrives with the Russian beer. Marshall takes a swig. He swallows hard. Piss-water. Marshall crosses to his sink and pours the beer out. He hands the bottle to the steward.

MARSHALL

Fill this with Heineken.

The steward nods...

STEWARD

Yes, Mr. President.

AND SLINKS AWAY WITH THE BOTTLE. MARSHALL CATCHES HIMSELF --

MARSHALL

I don't believe this. I'm playing politics with a bottle of beer. A goddamn bottle of beer. I've been in office too long.

SHEPHERD

Look on the bright side... if the polls don't change, you won't have that problem, sir.

Marshall picks up the phone again.

MARSHALL

Yeah. Put the Duke game on in my room.

INT. AFO'S MISSION COMMUNICATION CENTER - NIGHT

THREE Air Force SPECIALISTS man the elaborate communication system occupying much of the upper deck. Top-of-the-line computers, communication systems, video decks, and satellite receivers.

AIR FORCE SPECIALIST

Yes, Mr. President.

He slides in a videotape and channels the feed to the * president's stateroom.

INT. PRESIDENT'S STATEROOM - NIGHT

A monitor comes to life with a basketball game.

MARSHALL

(to Shepherd)

Defense and State Department in the conference room in one hour. I want to review the Iraq situation.

SHEPHERD

Yes, sir.

Shepherd exits as Marshall settles into his leather chair and dives into work. He punches a button on the speakerphone.

MARSHALL

Get me the Housing Secretary...

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

The Marine Guards snap to attention once again as the First Lady's motorcade arrives.

ROSE MARSHALL, a self-assured woman with an aristocratic gleam, alights from her limo. She takes a few steps, then turns, tapping her foot impatiently.

ROSE

C'mon Alice, we're 20 minutes late.

Your father's gonna have a fit.

ALICE, the President's 13-year-old daughter, straggles out of the car, rolling her eyes.

ALICE

It's not like he hasn't made us wait a few times.

ROSE

Well, you aren't the President, dear.

ALICE

Yeah, no duh.

INT. MAIN DECK, AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

As the First Lady's entourage enters.

ROSE

Why don't you go say hi?

Again, Alice rolls her eyes.

ROSE

What is wrong with you tonight?
Come here.

Rose pulls Alice aside.

ROSE

You don't want to say hi to your
father?

ALICE

I'm sure he's busy.

ROSE

Don't you even want to ask?

Alice toes her foot into the carpet as she releases an exasperated sigh. She is, in this moment, the patron saint of know-it-all 13-year-old girls. Alice waves toward the Presidential Suite.

ALICE

If I go over there to say hi to daddy President, Mike's going to tell me he's in a meeting and can't be disturbed. Then when the plane starts to taxi, he'll come out and say "Hey, are you guys back? Did you enjoy the ballet?" But he'll be on his way to another meeting and won't wait for an answer. Then you'll get pissed at him and he'll get pissed at you. It's like you guys rehearse or something.

With the weight of the entire world on her shoulders, Alice collapses into one of the many leather chairs. It seems to swallow her. JORY, a steward passes.

ALICE

Hey Joey, how `bout a cocoa, double
whip cream.

ROSE

Alice...

ALICE

Mom, just this once, give it a rest.

ROSE

You're jet-lagged. We'll talk about
this back...

ALICE

Back at The Fishbowl?

Alice eyes the swirl of Aides who are pretending to work nearby.

But it's obvious that they're eavesdropping. Alice smiles and waves at them dramatically.

ROSE

We'll talk at home.

(beat)

You know, most girls aren't as lucky as you. For most girls seeing the Bolshoi ballet would be the experience of a lifetime.

ALICE

I know, Mom.

(sees the hurt in her
mom's eyes and softens)

It was great... really.

Rose nods, smiling a half-smile. After a thoughtful beat, Alice gets up and crosses to the Presidential suite. She exchanges words with the Aide standing outside the door and comes back, covering her disappointment.

ALICE

He's in a meeting. He can't be disturbed.

ROSE

I'm sorry, honey.

ALICE

No, it's okay. After all, he is the President, right?

Joey the steward hands her her cocoa with a wink and a smile.

Her eyes light up at the mound of whip cream on top.

ALICE

When I write my memoirs I think I'll devote an entire chapter to the cocoa aboard Air Force One.

ROSE

Your father never means to be so...

ALICE

I know...

(beat)

But lotsa times I feel like it's me versus the world. Some kid at school teases me and the same day a plague breaks out in Bangladesh. I mean it

doesn't take a genius to figure which is more important.

ROSE

Some kids were teasing you?

ALICE

That's not really the point.

A quiet pause, then...

ROSE

You're right and I'll tell you a secret. I know exactly how you feel.

ALICE

Big secret. You said the same thing to Newsweek.

The plane jolts forward as it begins to taxi.

ALICE

We're taxiing. Ready. And... five... four... three.. two... one... Cue Daddy.

Alice points. And as if on cue, Marshall exits from his office and checks his watch.

ALICE

Ooooooh, I'm good.

MARSHALL

Hey, you guys back already?

Alice nods.

MARSHALL

How was...
(thinks, then remembers)
...the ballet?

ALICE

(theatrically)
It was the experience of a lifetime.

MARSHALL

How `bout a hug for the old man.

Alice rises and hugs her father. A White House PHOTOGRAPHER snaps off a few shots for the papers. Alice makes a face at them. A second later, Shepherd comes up the corridor, breaking up the pair.

SHEPHERD

Mr. President... they're ready for you in the conference room.

MARSHALL

Okay. Hey, pumpkin, you'll tell me all about it later, right?

ALICE

Sure.

As Marshall moves toward the conference room, he bends and gives Rose a quick peck on the cheek. It all reeks of formality.

ROSE

May I speak to you for a moment?

MARSHALL

Can't it wait?

ROSE

No, Mr. President. It can't.

INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE.

Rose shuts the door behind them. As she starts to speak, Marshall pulls her into a long passionate kiss. Rose pulls away.

ROSE

Don't. I know spin control when I feel it.

MARSHALL

Rose, I don't have time for this.

I've gotta go stop a war.

ROSE

For godsakes, Jim, slow down and stop acting like the little dutch boy. Not even you can plug all the world's leaks. Don't you think it's a sign you're pushing too hard when your daughter sees more of you on MTV news than in person.

MARSHALL

She's a big girl. She understands.

ROSE

How do you know she understands? You haven't spent more than five minutes with her, or me, in weeks.

MARSHALL

And when have I had five minutes? When I wake up in the morning and I'm already three hours behind

Schedule. What do you want me to do, Rose, tell the G7 to fuck off because I'm a family man?

(BEAT)

I'm sorry. That wasn't fair.

ROSE

No. It wasn't.

He takes her in his arms.

MARSHALL

You know what?

ROSE

What?

MARSHALL

I miss you. And I miss her.

ROSE

But that's the point, Jim. We're right here.

MARSHALL

I wish it were that easy...

Long beat. He smiles at her, it's the same sweet smile that won her heart, the same smile that got him elected. She softens.

MARSHALL

I'll make it up to you, I promise.

ROSE

I should trust that promise? Because you know the voters are still waiting for that middle class tax cut.

MARSHALL

This promise isn't subject to Congressional approval.

She smiles. The tension breaks.

ROSE

How did your speech go?

MARSHALL

Well, they aren't burning me in effigy. That's always a good sign.

They kiss again, this time for real. But... a knock on the door.

SHEPHERD (0.5.)

Mr. President.

Shepherd opens the door.

MARSHALL

Look on the bright side, hon. Shep here thinks I'll be a one termer.

ROSE

Shall I ask the Chief of Staff to schedule your daughter in?

SHEPHERD

She is scheduled. Her school play's Tuesday night.

Rose rolls her eyes.

MARSHALL

The First Lady was making a joke, Shep. I'll make some time, Rose. I promise.

Marshall heads for his meeting.

EXT. COCKPIT - NIGHT

Col. Axelrod and his co-pilot LT. COL. ARTHUR INGRAHAMS are at the wheel.

RUSSIAN AIR TRAFFIC (V.0)

(THICK ACCENT)

United States Air Force One, this is tower. It's an honor to clear you for immediate take-off on runway three.

COL. AXELROD

Roger, Tower. And thank you for the hospitality.

Axelrod eases up the throttle and the four GE-F103 Turbofan engines spring to life.

EXT. RUNWAY - NIGHT

A picture perfect take-off as Air Force One slides through the moonlight and skates upward on a sheet of air.

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE, FLYING - AN HOUR LATER

Airborne in the midnight sky.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, GALLEY - NIGHT

Aircraft engines drone.

CLOSE ON - A coffee pot pouring piping joe into a mug emblazoned with ubiquitous Presidential Seal. The mug is placed on a tray with a half-dozen other mugs and passed to a STEW. He carries the tray down the corridor past passenger cabins.

Drowsiness has overtaken the plane. Many of the passengers and aides are asleep. CNN plays On T.V. sets, entertaining the few night owls and news junkies.

CNN REPORTER (T.V.)

In an unusually aggressive speech, the President characterized the Stravanavitch regime as thugs whose brutality will no longer be tolerated. Meanwhile, in Turkmenistan, Stravanavitch's ouster has sent the country into turmoil. Tens of thousands of refugees continue to huddle in U.N. safe havens, as rival Stravanavitch loyalists fight among themselves for control. But at least for the time being, the ethnic cleansing has been stopped.

Toward the front of the plane, the steward enters the conference room.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

As the steward closes the door behind him, all background noise disappears. We are in a sound shielded room. Even the engines' drone cannot be heard.

The lights in the room are dim as MAJOR CALDWELL, a military advisor, projects satellite photos of Iraqi military bases onto a screen.

The steward serves coffee as unobtrusively as he can while the meeting continues.

MAJOR CALDWELL

Our KH-11's took this one at 0100 hours. What you see here is the mobilization of two mechanized brigades.

MARSHALL

They've gotta be joking.

DOHERTY

The Iraqi ambassador is claiming it's just an exercise.

MARSHALL

An exercise in futility. Send the Nimitz back in.

MAJOR CALDWELL

The northern border's gotten a bit hairy. Their MiGs are playing tag with our Tomcats and our boys are just itching to engage.

MARSHALL

Tell our boys to cool their jets. I don't need `em creating policy for me.

We follow the steward as he slips out of the conference room and back into the...

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

with a few coffees left on his tray. One of them is scooped up by Gibbs as he passes, his nose is buried in a fax.

INT. SECRET SERVICE CABIN - NIGHT

Gibbs leans in the cabin.

GIBBS

Hey Walters, you and Johnson come here a second. Reykjavik just sent the advance team report.

Special Agents Walters and JOHNSON rise and follow Gibbs into an adjoining office.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Gibbs closes the door behind the two agents. As Walters and Johnson take their seats, Gibbs WITHDRAWS HIS WEAPON and...

SHOOTS each of the agents in THE BACK OF THE HEAD.

Silenced pistol. Blood all over the desk. Gibbs removes each of the agent's weapons and slips them into his waistband. He waits a few beats, takes a long sip of coffee, then exits the office.

INT. SECRET SERVICE CABIN - NIGHT

As he passes through the cabin he takes a silent inventory. Five other agents working, sleeping, on the phone.

INT. PRESS CABIN - NIGHT

Gibbs nods to Korshunov. Korshunov nods one of his men. NEVSKY removes one of his videotapes, pops the front cover exposing the tape. Across the face of the tape is a thin strip of a rubbery substance. Nevsky pulls the strip up and out, making a kind of fuse. He reaches for a pack of matches... courtesy matches, sporting the Seal of the

President.

Nevsky nods and lights the fuse.

IN A RAPID SUCCESSION -

GIBBS tosses his two extra weapons to Korshunov's men, pivots the corner and begins firing at his colleagues. The SECRET SERVICE AGENTS try to get at their weapons, but Gibbs has caught them completely off-guard.

Several silenced central nervous system shots (head and neck) and the five agents slump back, their red blood cascading down the creases of the fine Corinthian leather chairs.

Nevsky tosses the cassette up the corridor... smoke pours out of it. Smoke screen.

BAZYLEV and ZEDECK catch the guns Gibbs tossed and hold them on the reporters.

BAZYLEV

UP! GET UP NOW!

Bazylev grabs the stunned reporters, yanking them into the aisle.

BAZYLEV

Walk in front of us. Go! Go! Go!

Human shields. A half dozen of them.

Behind the terrorists, one of the bathroom doors swings open. A SECRET SERVICE AGENT emerges. Sees what's happening. Reaches for his gun. ZEDECK fells him with a well placed unsilenced GUN SHOT. SCREAMS ensue...

INT. FORWARD CABIN - NIGHT

A sleeping SECRET SERVICE AGENT bolts upright. HEARS MORE SHOTS.

He springs up and moves toward the gunshots, his weapon drawn.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

SHOTS FIRED! SECURE BOY SCOUT!

(screaming out and
into his lapel mike)

SHOTS FIRED! SHOTS FIRED!

INT. SECRET SERVICE CABIN - NIGHT

Bazylev and Zedeck lay down a suppressing fire outside the door.

GIBBS

Come on! Quickly.

Korshunov, Nevsky and VLAD follow Gibbs into the Secret Service office. Gibbs opens a locker and pulls out a stash of MP5 automatic assault rifles and bullet-proof vests.

Korshunov raises his bushy eyebrows in delight.

GIBBS

The Secret Service believes in being prepared for any eventuality.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The Secret Service agent fights his way through the smoke to a wall panel. Punches a red buttoned intercom.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE'S FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

A red light on the security panel lights up...

SECRET SERVICE AGENT (V.O.)

We have a code red, I repeat, code red. Shots fired onboard.

Cot. AXELROD Cabin/Flight Deck: Code Red Acknowledged... Shit.

LT. CCL. INGRAHAMS

(into headset
microphone)

Warsaw tower this is Air Force One.
Declaring Emergency.

Axelrod toggles his headset to secure line.

COL. AXELROD

Ranstein Air Base, this is Air Force One Heavy. We have a code red. Shots fired onboard, request priority redirect. Please acknowledge.

INT. RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER - NIGHT

SUPER - "RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, GERMANY"

Hunched over a control terminal, the AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER tracks Air Force One's radar image.

RAMSTEIN A.B. CONTROLLER

Fuck me. GO WAKE THE GENERAL. NOW!

The WATCH OFFICER springs into action, picking up a phone.

RAMSTEIN A.B. CONTROLLER

Air Force One Heavy, acknowledged.
You are on our scope. Please state fuel remaining and souls onboard.

COL. AXELROD (RADIO)

Sixty seven souls onboard, we're okay with fuel. Request secure military escort with emergency medical standing by.

RAMSTEIN A.B. CONTROLLER

Air Force One Heavy, acknowledged. We are scrambling our fighters.

The controller hits a red button on his console. Sirens flare up and klaxons wail across the base.

The controller looks down to his runways. In the light of the moon he sees a half-dozen men rushing toward F-15 Eagles.

RAMSTEIN A.B. CONTROLLER

Call Berlin Tower. Not a plane lands or takes off within two hundred miles! Understood?

The once sleepy midnight control room cranks into full crisis mode.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

Pandemonium. GUNFIRE pops in the b.g. Air Force Specialists try to get the word out.

AIR FORCE SPECIALIST

A.F. SPECIALIST #2

General Greely? No sir, Interrupt her. This is this is Air Force One. We Air Force One with an have a code red. Shots emergency call. have been fired.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

The conference room door bursts open and TWO SECRET SERVICE AGENTS, weapons drawn, enter the room and run to Marshall.

The once quiet room floods with light. The sounds of a gunfight and a blanket of smoke sweeps into the cabin.

MARSHALL

What's going on?

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

We're under attack.

MARSHALL

Where's my family?

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

We're handling it, sir.

The agents lift Marshall to his feet, and practically carry him from the room, leaving the other high ranking officials to scramble for themselves in a cacophony of shouts.

MARSHALL

The launch codes! Who's protecting the football?

FORWARD CORRIDOR -

Perkins, carrying the nuclear football, ducks and weaves his way down the corridor into the fray. He takes a bullet to the shoulder, which fells him.

NEAR THE FORWARD GALLEY -

Alice is nearly trampled by agents responding to the gunfire. One agent grabs her and shoves her into a bathroom.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

Don't open the door!

GUNFIRE pops all around her.

INT. CORRIDOR, REAR CABINS - NIGHT

Smoke, automatic weapons fire. Secret service agents battling the terrorists. Aides, diplomats, crew and personnel caught in the crossfire.

ZEDECK

Down! Everybody down.

A spray of weapons fire overhead and everyone hits the floor.

ZEDECK

STAY DOWN, PLACE YOUR HANDS BEHIND YOUR HEAD AND YOU WILL NOT BE SHOT!

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

RAMSTEIN A.B. CONTROLLER (RADIO)

Air Force One Heavy, you are cleared for priority divert, all runways are clear.

LT. COL. INGRAHAMS

Warsaw Tower has cleared local airspace.

COL. AXELROD

Changing course heading to 276 point five. Dropping to twenty thousand feet.

Shots can be heard outside.

COL. AXELROD

Ingrahams, make sure that door's
locked.

LT. COL. INGRAHAMS

Yes sir.

Ingrahams locks the cockpit door.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Air Force One banks into a curve and descends through broken
clouds.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL STATEROOM - NIGHT

The sounds of gunfire have reached the the nose of the plane.

Rose peers out to see what's the matter. An armed Secret
Service agent runs toward her.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

Get back! Get back!

A spray of bullets mows him down. He collapses in the door
frame. Terrified, Rose tries to close the door, but the dead
agent is in the way.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Filled with smoke and gunfire. The agents rush the President
behind a forward bulkhead.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

(into mike)

We have Boy Scout, traveling forward.

VOICE (OVER MIKE)

Negative... negative... they're up
here too.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

Roger. We're going to the chute.

Marshall looks up the hallway toward his stateroom.

MARSHALL

(calling out)

ROSE! ALICE!

DOWN THE CORRIDOR -

Gibbs fires.

HITS - One of the Secret Service agents in the shoulder.

Blood blossoms through his clothes but he winces it off.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

Come on, sir.

The Secret Service agents whisk the President to the front stairwell. They pull up a floor panel, revealing stairs descending toward the baggage deck.

INT. BATHROOM -

Alice, huddled atop the commode.

MARSHALL (O.S.)

Alice!

ALICE

Daddy...

Alice opens the door and rushes...

INTO THE CORRIDOR...

Tripping and falling over Joey, the steward. His dead eyes swim in a pool of blood that was his face. Alice screams, scrambling to her feet.

MID-PLANE CORRIDOR -

Perkins manages to push himself to his feet and stumbles down the hall into the computer room. Terrorist SERGE spots the nuclear football dangling from his wrist. He pursues.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM - NIGHT

Hysterical SECRETARIES feverishly dump classified documents into a shredder, while Perkins struggles to open the black leather briefcase handcuffed to his wrist.

Bullets tear up the doorknob lock and SERGE kicks in the door.

SERGE

Down! Everyone down!

The Fawn Halls hit the floor as gunfire sprays overhead. But Perkins swings around brandishing his sidearm. He opens fire on Serge, but the bullets smack harmlessly against the SWAT vest.

Serge returns fire, ripping up Perkins who collapses over the shredder, and with his last bit of strength, he dumps out the briefcase.

Papers containing NUCLE WAR STRATEGIES and MISSILE LAUNCH CODES slide into the hungry Shredding machine. Perkins manages a slight smile before he keels over dead, his duty fulfilled.

The shredded remains of the nuclear football rain over his head like tickertape at a hero's parade.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The pale moon catches shiny streaks of metal that descend through the broken clouds. The Squadron of F-15 Eagles drops into formation around Air Force One.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Gun shots right Outside the cockpit door.

COT. CARLTON (RADIO)

Air Force One, this is Squadron
Commander Canton. You are now under
escort. All airspace has been cleared.

COL. AXELROD

This is Air Force One Heavy. I'm
coming in full throttle. ETA to
Ranstein eight minutes. We've got a
war here, sir.

INT. COCKPIT F-LB EAGLE - NIGHT

Encased in a helmet, mask, and visor, Carlton watches the flashes of gunfire in the dark windows of the plane.

Cot. CARLTON Copy. Delta Force has been mobilized.

COT. AXELROD (V.O.)

Roger that.

INT. LOWER DECK OF AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

Beneath the main cabin, the Secret Service agents run the President through the forward baggage compartment and the lower galley: a large room with compartments, storage freezers and food preparation tables.

On the far side of the galley, the agents fling open a hatchway and enter...

A NARROW GANGWAY - running between the lower galley and the rear baggage hold, flanked on either side by the landing gear bays.

They duck under wing supports until they come to a mesh grating.

The uninjured agent lifts the grating revealing an ESCAPE
POD.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

Get in!

Marshall freezes.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

Get in, sir.

A second later gunfire rips up the agent's face. The new volley sends Marshall under the cover of a wing strut. The second agent takes position and returns fire. He quells the incoming volley for a moment.

MARSHALL

What about my family?

SECRET SERVICE AGENT #

I have a family, too, sir. Now get in the fucking pod.

The firing begins again. Marshall struggles with the decision.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT #

Mr. President... MR. PRESIDENT! You have to do this! The pod, on three. Ready?

The agent shoves in a fresh clip...

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

One.

MARSHALL

But...

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

(cutting him off)

Two... THREE. GO!

The agent combat-rolls into the open and fires. He advances down the gangway acting as a shield for the president, shooting blindly. Marshall watches as he's hit repeatedly, but it gives him the time he needs to dive for the pod.

REVERSE ANGLE - VLAD AND NEVSKY

behind the bulkhead. When the agent drops, Nevsky and Viad rush down the gangway. They arrive at the closed pod just as it begins to slide on its rails. They let loose dozens of rounds from their MP55, but the bullets just plink off.

The pod-lock doors slide shut. The President is on his way to safety.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Small bay doors open in the belly of Air Force One, and a human sized cannister drops from the bottom, its parachute opening instantly.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

A light flashes On the panel.

COT. AXELROD

(into mike)

Ramstein/Air Force One: Emergency pod has been deployed. I repeat, emergency pod has been deployed.

RAMSTEIN A.B. CONTROLLER

This is Ramstein. Acknowledged. We are picking up the homing beacon and deploying search and rescue.

COT. AXELROD

Copy Ramstein. We are dropping to five thousand feet, beginning final approach.

INT. BAGGAGE DECK GANGWAY - NIGHT

ALICE (O.S.)

Daddy? Dad?

Her voice comes closer, filled with choking fear and panic. She rounds the corner and Nevsky catches her hair with a vice-tight grip shoving his MP5 into the small of her back.

NEVSKY

Your father has left you behind.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL STATEROOM - NIGHT

Korshunov kicks open the door.

ROSE

NO!

Gunfire from ROSE, who holds the dead secret service agent's weapon. She empties the clip at the doorway. Click, click. No more bullets. Korshunov steps into the room, brandishing his automatic, smiling. Rose backs against the wall and raises her hands.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE LAWN - DAY

A Marine helicopte touches down on the greenway. Marines salute and escort KATHERINE CHANDLER from the chopper' interior to the South entrance of the White House. She is the VICE PRESIDENT of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

Zedeck steps over the three dead Communications Specialists, on his way to the cockpit door. Tries the door. It's locked.

He pounds on it.

ZEDECK

Open! Now!

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Through the cockpit window, the glowing landing lights of Ramstein Base are visible in the distance, cutting a wedge through the German towns and fields.

Zedeck's pounding continues.

COT. AXELROD

Ramatein, we are fifteen miles away on final approach. I'm coming in fast and will need every inch of runway.

RAMSTEIN A.B. CONTROLLER (V.O.)

Copy, Air Force One. Wind is twelve knots from the east. Tactical and emergency are in position.

EXT. RANSTEIN AIR FIELD - NIGHT

Rescue vehicle sirens gyre in the darkness. A team of black-faced commandos unload from troop truck. Snipers take position atop rescue vehicles, barracks, and the control tower.

High-powered rifles with infra-red scopes.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

Zedeck aims his MP5 at the flight door. Fires off a dozen rounds. Nickel sized indentations blossom across the steel surface.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Dull thuds of bullet impacts.

COT. AXELROD

Let's get this crate on the ground.

They're some real good men waiting to help us.

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

The plane sprouts landing gear as it descends over the city.

Coming in fast and low.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

Gibbs shoves Zedeck aside. Produces a thumb-sized amount of **C-4**.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Final approach... the landing strip not far at all.

COL. AXELROD

Almost there.

He raises his flaps. Air speed and altitude drop.

EXT. RAPISTEIN AIR FIELD - NIGHT

Spotters find Air Force One's navigation lights visible in the sky, descending from the distant darkness. Followed by the cluster of F-15s.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

Gibbs rolls out the C-4 like a kid making a snake in pottery class. He presses it along the door seal.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Altitude decreasing. 300 feet... 200 hundred feet...

The runway coming up to meet them.

EXT. RAMSTEIN AIR FIELD - NIGHT

As the entire airbase collectively holds its breath. Air Force One's tires hover 50 feet above the ground... 40 feet... 30...

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

Gibbs raises his pistol. Aims at the C-4. Fires. BAM!

INT. COCKPIT - NIGHT

A BLINDING FLASH. The door blows in.

EXT. RANSTEIN AIR FIELD - NIGHT

The wheels touchdown.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

Gibbs and Zedeck storm the cockpit.

RNT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Axeirod gropes at the plane's controls, trying to retain the wheel. Gibbs dispatches Axeirod with one shot. Zedek is a little messier with Ingrahams. But both pilot and co-pilot slump over their controls.

EXT. RANSTEIN AIR FIELD - NIGHT

The taxiing Boeing 747 suddenly veers to the right cutting across runways. Emergency vehicles give chase.

The plane bounces. Is airborne for a second. Touches down again with a jolt.

INT. CORRIDOR - AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

Terrorists lead hostages to the conference room. Everyone is bounced around, slamming against walls, spilling over chairs.

A MASTER SERGEANT seizes the opportunity and grabs for Bazylev's gun, but Bazylev shoots him almost point blank.

BAZYLEV

Keep moving!

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Chaos. Gibbs tries to pull Axelrod off the controls.

GIBBS

Throttle up. Throttle up!

Zedek slams the throttle all the way up. Spotlights and sirens swirl outside the cockpit window.

EXT. RAMSTEIN FIELD - NIGHT

The Flying White House careens toward the barracks, then edges toward a hangar. The jet engines strain to reach full power.

INT. RAMSTEIN CONTROL TOWER - NIGHT

The controller stares down at the out-of-control plane.

RAMSTEIN A.B. CONTROLLER

Aw Fuck. We're losing it!

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Gibbs pulls Axelrod's body out of the pilot's seat. Looks out the cockpit window and sees...

A C-141 STARLIFTER

in his path. A monstrous plane, every bit as big as Air Force One. Gibbs eases back on the wheel and the 747 sluggishly responds, its nose creeping upward.

GIBBS

Come on.

Adjusts the flaps...

EXT. RAMSTEIN AIRFIELD - NIGHT

Air Force One closes in on the Starlifter. She's struggling off

the ground like some injured bird. The straining metal defies gravity.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Gibbs senses that he's too close. He pulls way back on the stick, risks stalling her out... but the bird responds.

EXT. RAMSTEIN FIELD - NIGHT

Air Force One barely clears the Starlifter, the edge of her wing just missing the top of the C-141's tail.

The sharpshooters, the emergency crews, the commandos from Delta Force... Nothing they can do but watch her rise out of sight.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - LATER

Gibbs and Zedeck. Gibbs checks over all the instruments.

GIBBS

Okay, 30,000 feet. Give me my heading.

ZEDECK

Bearing 110 point eight two.

Gibbs banks the plane into a curve, then activates the autopilot.

GIBBS

Call me if something changes.

ZEDECK

That's it?

GIBBS

To fly a 747 you need to know three things. How to take off, how to land, and how to engage the autopilot.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS--

The terrorists, from every corner of the plane, lead the stunned survivors, hands on heads, to the central conference room.

As Korshunov walks Rose up the corridor, he meets up with Gibbs, descending from the upper deck.

KORSHUNOV

The rest of the secret service?

GIBBS

Dead.

KORSHUNOV

How many others killed?

GIBBS

Nine.

KORSHUNOV

Any of us?

Gibbs touches his bulletproof vest.

GIBBS

No damages.

ROSE

Where's my daughter?

GIBBS

She's alive, ma'am, for the time being.

Rose allows herself a half-sob of relief.

ROSE

And my husband?

GIBBS

The secret service did their job, ma'am. The President is safely off the plane.

(to Korshunov)

But that still leaves us plenty to bargain with.

Eyes filled with hatred... Rose SLAPS Gibbs face.

ROSE

Mr. Gibbs. You, of all people...

Gibbs doesn't react.

GIBBS

Follow me, ma'am.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - DAY

High-tech maps and communications systems line the walls, surrounding an austere main conference table. Laptop computers and secure telephones by every seat. Side tables. Tele-type machines spitting out classified information.

VICE PRESIDENT CHANDLER analyzes the projected course of Air Force One on the tactical vid-map.

V. P. CHANDLER

We should have the President secure within minutes. Do we know who these terrorists are or where they're going?

GENERAL NORTHWOOD, head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff...

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

General Greely says it looks like the Middle East.

V. P. CHANDLER

Does your office have anything to add, Mr. Dean?

National Security Advisor WALTER DEAN leans forward.

DEAN

The garners believe that, given the scenario, there's an 86% chance that

we'll be dealing with a hostage situation and not an assassination attempt. Not much else until there's more data.

V. P. CHANDLER

If we're dealing with an airborne hostage situation what's our procedure?

The Under-Secretary of Defense, THOMAS LEE, punches up a scenario on the lap-top.

LEE

Our only policy assumes the plane is on the ground. Our hands are completely tied while they're in the air.

V. P. CHANDLER

Okay, Gentlemen, we'll take no action until we confirm that the president is off the plane... Lee, go huddle with the D.O.D. I want an options paper on this in 20 minutes.

LEE

Twenty minutes?

V. P. CHANDLER

You heard me.

(points to an aide)

You. Congress and cabinet heads.

The aide nods and picks up a telephone.

AIR FORCE COLONEL

Madame Vice-President?

Chandler turns toward the door. The Colonel enters the room, holding a black briefcase identical to Perkins'.

V.P. CHANDLER

Yes?

AIR FORCE COLONEL

National Command Authority. All previous launch codes have been cancelled. You're carrying the ball now.

V.P. CHANDLER

Thank you, Colonel. Have a seat.

EXT. GERMAN FARMLAND - NIGHT

A HUEY, flanked by a pair of APACHES, skims the surface of wheat fields at maximum velocity.

INT. HUEY COCKPIT - NIGHT

The pilot checks his instruments. He's honing in on a signal.

EXT. GERMAN FARKD - NIGHT

The swirling spotlights of the Apaches finally illuminate the Seal of the President atop the EMERGENCY DEPLOYMENT POD.

The Huey drops in for a landing and a half dozen Army Rangers in full combat gear deploy to the pod. They open it.

But.....

IT'S EMPTY.

INT. BAGGAGE DECK GANGWAY - NIGHT

Bruised and battered, some blood smeared across his tuxedo shirt... PRESIDENT JAMES MARSHALL lowers himself from one of the overhead wing struts.

He emerges into the bowels of Air Force one.

He stands quietly a moment, listening... for footsteps, for gunfire. All quiet except for the whine of the jet engines.

He tak9s a moment to think. Considers his situation. His eyes find the dead agent who risked his life so he could make it to the pod. He trots down the gangway toward the lower galley.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Air Force One hovers atop billowy peaks. The smaller F-15s cluster around her in a loose formation.

FIGHTER PILOT #1 (O.5. RADIO)

Sir, isn't there something we can do besides escort?

COL. CARLTON (O.S. RADIO)

Like what, son... shoot our own plane down?

FIGHTER PILOT #1

No sir. I just wish...

COL. CARLTON

Roger. We all wish... Now shut the fuck up and escort.

INT. LOWER GALLEY - NIGHT

Marshall looks around for a weapon... half-full coffee pot, stove, walk-in freezer, plates and silverware. Marshall picks up a butcher knife.

INT. CORRIDOR, AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

Nevsky and Bazylev guard the conference room door as Korshunov and Vlad enter. Nevsky hands Korshunov a copy of the plane's manifest.

NEVSKY

Every weapon and every person is accounted for.

Korshunov nods and enters the room.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

Korshunov surveys the hostages. Viad covers them at gunpoint.

Rose holds Alice, comforting her. shepherd, Doherty, Aides, Advisors, Crew... Fifty of them huddle like sardines.

The plane's doctor administers to the wounded.

Korshunov stares down his captives.

KORSHUNOV

Fear will keep you alive. Any one who is not afraid is bound to do something foolish, and bound to die.

ROSE

What do you want with us?

KORSHUNOV

Cooperation. If you try to escape,
you will be met with automatic gunfire
and a barricade of your comrade's
bodies will prevent you from exiting.
Good day.

Korshunov exits, with Viad backing out behind him. Leaving
the hostages alone. The sound of the door locking.

A mournful beat. Everyone looks at each other and the dead
and wounded victims of this heinous act...

Hushed conversation breaks out all over the room.

DOHERTY

This can't be happening. You just
don't pull this shit with the United
States. You just don't.

MAJOR CALDWELL

Keep your heads.

Caldwell paces, looks around the room.

SHEPHERD

Mrs. Marshall, are you okay?

ROSE

We're alive.

SHEPHERD

That's all that matters. Thank god
the President got off the plane.

ROSE

Yes... thank God.

(to caldwell)

You there... Caldwell, right? What's
on your mind? caldwell takes a beat,
then crosses to Rose and Shepherd.

MAJOR CALDWELL

(hushed)

I don't want to get anybody here
excited, but if we can get out of
this room, I can get us to safety.

SHEPHERD

We're thirty five thousand feet up.

MAJOR CALDWELL

Yes, sir, that's a problem, but if
we can somehow get to a lower
altitude, the rear loading ramp on
the baggage deck is equipped with

parachutes in case of an engine failure. Now we can either wait for a political resolution, or try to resolve this thing ourselves.

DOHERTY

You're goddamn right we can resolve this ourselves. We'll negotiate.

SHEPHERD

You know the President's policy.

DOHERTY

The President isn't here.

ROSE

Right now we are an enormous liability to the United States. We can't just sit and do nothing.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The terrorists move toward the nose of the plane leaving Nevsky to guard the conference room.

INT. BAGGAGE HOLD - NIGHT

President Marshall reaches the front stairway. Cautiously climbs to the main cabin. As he reaches the top stairs, he hears Russian conversation approaching. He ducks back into the stairwell.

He can't see them, but he can hear them.

The terrorists pass within a few feet as they ascend to the Mission Communications Center on the upper deck.

Marshall waits a few beats, listens to the silence. Then re-mounts the stairs and almost runs into the back of...

VIAD

Standing guard, facing the opposite direction.

Marshall FREEZES... looks past Viad down the corridor where Nevsky guards the main conference room floor.

Unaware of Marshall, Viad reaches into his pocket and pulls out a cigarette. Lights it. On the first puff he feels a presence behind him.

VLAD slowly turns around...

Nothing there.

He smiles at his jittery nerves, turns back round.

REVERSE ANGLE -

Over Vlad's shoulder...

MARSHALL, flattened behind the edge of the galley divider. He creeps away from Vlad toward the Presidential Suite... stepping gingerly over dead secret service agents.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER -

* Korshunov pulls a handkerchief from his breast pocket and wipes the blood from a telephone headset.

KORSHUNOV

Proceed.

Gibbs works the communications board, dialing in a series of numbers. Telephone ringing...

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - DAY

A map of Air Force One's flight trajectory is displayed on the rear screen. Moscow to Berlin and back toward the Black Sea.

The assembled brass listens as Korshunov's voice slithers off the speaker phone.

KORSHUNOV (SPEAKER)

...the Chief of Staff, the First Lady, and the First Daughter. Our demands are simple. Arrange the release of Ivan Stravanvitch. Once our leader is returned to Turkuenistan soil, Air Force One and it's occupants will be allowed safe passage to Switzerland. You have one hour before we start killing hostages.

The phone clicks off. A silent beat in the room.

V.P. CHANDLER

Find that voice for me, I want to know who we're dealing with. And get President Petrov on the phone.

GENERAL CHARLES GREELY, head of the 87th Mechanized Air Wing, the unit responsible for Air Force One, enters the room.

GENERAL GREELY

Madame Vice-President, we just got word from Ramstein... The nod was Until Chandler stands.

V.P. CHANDLER

Empty?

GENERAL GREELY

The President... he must still be onboard.

V.P. CHANDLER

Play back that call.

TECHNICAL OFFICER

Yes, sir.

The Tech Officer indexes back on his computer.

KORSHUNOV (V.0. TAPE)

The plane is under our command, and those we did not kill we hold as hostages, including the Chief of Staff, the First Lady, and the First Daughter.

V.P. CHANDLER

but not the President. Not the President.

A silent beat.

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

He's dead then. They must have killed him.

DEAN

We don't know that.

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

Holding the president hostage is not something that slips your mind when you're making demands.

V.P. CHANDLER

And if he's dead? Do you really think they'd risk telling us?

DEAN

There is a possibility we're overlooking.

All eyes turn to Dean.

DEAN

When I ran Specops in `Nam, I ordered the destruction of a V.C. munitions dump. During insertion, the plane was shot down and the entire team was killed, or so we thought. Two days later the dump

BLEW AND A WEEK AFTER THAT, THIS 19-

year-old kid, the pilot... he walks out of the jungle in pretty bad shape. He survived the crash and finished the mission... alone.

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

Walter, if you have a point, make it.

DEAN

That kid's name was Jim Marshall.

Most of the President's service record makes for dull reading because most of what he did iarLZ ULirn. History remembers him for what he did aflar he got back to the states -- the protests, the rallies -- But he was a soldier once, a damn fine one.

V. P. CHANDLER

So what are you saying?

DEAN

Maybe he's alive on that plane and those bastards don't even know it.

V. P. CHANDLER

Mr. Dean, may I remind you that the President is not 19 anymore.

INT. PRESIDENT'S STATEROOM - NIGHT

Marshall cautiously enters the room. Ready for action.

The room is empty, but it's been trashed by the firefight.

The sound of voices... coming from the Duke game which still plays. Marshall hustles over to one of the secure phones.

It's dead. He tries the regular phone. Dead. Hangs it up in disgust.

MARSHALL

Goddamnit.

He steps on some glass. It's a broken frame holding a PHOTOGRAPH of Alice and Rose. He picks up the photo and lays it on a table.

He thinks for a beat... glances around the room, searching...

Then he crosses to the closet, opens it and begins rifling through his wardrobe.

INT. MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM.

Caldwell stands on the conference table. The hostages have removed one of the ceiling panels. Air supply ducts and bundles of wiring run through the ten-inch space between the

ceiling and the shielding plates.

MAJOR CALDWELL

This is a dead end.

Rose looks around the room. Hopeless. Her eyes land on the carpet...

INT. CORRIDOR.

Marshall opens the stateroom door and slowly slides into the corridor.

Vlad still faces the opposite direction.

Marshall creeps down the hallway, when...

Beep... Beep... Beep...

Marshall's watch alarm goes off.

Marshall dives for the nearest doorway. Vlad swings round to see a figure slip into the senior staff cabin.

Vlad, unsure of what he saw., cautiously heads toward the staff cabin. As he nears, he bends over a dead Secret Service agent and pulls up the lifeless wrist revealing a beeping watch. It wasn't Marshall's after all. No matter. Vlad continues to the staff Cabin.

INT. STAFF CABIN - NIGHT

Marshall frantically searches for something he can use as a weapon. In the room: some video monitors, leather chairs and phones. stainless steel cabinets run the length of one of the walls.

Marshall throws the cabinet doors open, revealing...

A fully stocked MEDICAL CENTER... fold-down operating

table... high-intensity lights. Equipped to deal with any medical emergency the president might encounter.

But too late. Vlad kicks the door open.

VLAD

Get on the floor, now!

Marshall yanks down the operating table, and it smashes into Vlad, knocking him down. Marshall lunges with his knife, but Vlad OPENS FIRE. A HALF DOZEN ROUNDS pump into Marshall's belly. He's thrown back against the wall, then slumps to the floor.

Vlad approaches the crumpled body. Leans down to examine his victim. He cups his hand under the man's chin and lifts his

head. Recognizes him.

VIAD

(wonderment)

The President.

But Marshall's eyes flash open.

MARSHALL

That's right, asshole.

He springs, shoving the butcher knife under the flack jacket and into Vlad's spleen. Vlad freezes, unsure of what just happened.

Marshall is on his feet. Never letting go of the twisting knife, he grabs Vlad by the back of the head and slams his face against the mirror above the surgical scrub sink. The mirror shatters and streams of blood erupt on the terrorist's face. The blood drips down into the white porcelain sink, swirling into the drain.

Vlad elbows Marshall in the neck, stunning him momentarily.

He wipes the blood from his face, spins and hits Marshall with a devastating right cross. Marshall reels back against the wall, and Vlad follows, shoving the MP5 into Marshall's throat. Marshall grabs the gun near the trigger...

*

VLAD

Don't move or I'll blow your head off.

MARSHALL

I don't think so.

Marshall presses the safety button on the gun with his forefinger, then knees Vlad in the balls. Viad pulls the trigger repeatedly as he goes down, but nothing happens.

Instead he comes up swinging his gun butt against Marshall's face. Like a bat hitting a baseball, it knocks Marshall into the medical closet. The gun goes flying, skittering

UNDERNEATH A CABINET.

Marshall pulls himself up the shelves trying to keep his legs from buckling. Vlad grabs some I.V. tubing and wraps it around Marshall's neck. Marshall struggles for breath, clawing at the tube.

HE SPOTS A DEFIBRILLATOR, REACHES AND SWITCHES IT ON. LOW-

pitched hum and beeping.

Marshall pulls his head forward, straining against the plastic tubing. Then slams back into Vlad's head. Viad releases his

grip just for a moment...

The beeping becomes a steady whine.

... but a moment is all Marshall needs as he grabs the def
ib's CARDIAC PADDLES, turns, and SLAMS them on either side
of Vlad's head.

Vlad convulses from the shock for a full five seconds... his
eyeballs roll, his hair stands on end. then he collapses to
the floor.

MARSHALL

Clear.

Marshall catches his breath for a moment. Pulls open his
shirt. Beneath it he wears a bulletproof Kevlar vest. He
lifts the vest and a half-dozen angry welts have blossomed
across his skin. The stuff may be bulletproof, but each of
Vlad's shots sting like a motherfucker.

EXT. CORRIDOR.

Nevsky walks down the corridor. Sees that Vlad is away from
his post.

NEVSKY

Vlad?

*** INT. STAFF CABIN.**

Marshall opens the medical cabinets, rifling through them.
Pulls out hypodermics, adrenalin, rubbing alcohol... arming
himself.

NEVSKY (O.S.)

Vlad? Vlad?

EXT. CORRIDOR.

Nevsky works his way up the corridor, peeking in rooms.

As he enters the...

INT. STAFF CABIN.

he's blinded by the high intensity surgical lights.

Marshall cracks a tank of anesthesia across Nevsky's heu
Nevsky goes down.

Marshall rips Nevsky's MP5 off of him. Holds it to Nevsky's
throat.

MARSHALL

Where are th*y? fly family, the
crew.... where are they?

Nevsky says nothing.

The conference room, right? Right?

Marshall jerks him to his feet.

MARSHALL

o'll unlocli the door for me or I'll
kill you.

INT. CORRIDOR -

Marshall walks flevsky toward the mj vonteronve room3 As
they pass the stairs to the upper deck, Nevsky breaks away.

NEVSKY

KORSKUNOV!

Marshall fires. Killing him.

SHIT1

INT. CORRIDOR.

No time for remorse. Marshall tries the Main conference Room
door. Locked. He knows the others will be coming so he
flattens himself against the corridor wall. Trains his gun
on the stairs.

Just as the terrorists descend, Marshall squeezes off a few
rounds. The terrorists edge back up the steps, returning
fire.

Marshall checks his clip, not many bullets left. He fires
off a few more shots to buy some time then ducks round the
corner and pulls out the bottle of rubbing alcohol and some
gauze.

The terrorists seize the moment of quiet, descending the
stairs to take position.

Marshall lights the gauze fuse of his new made Molatov

cocktail and throws it down the corridor. The bottle crashes
into a BALL OF FLAME. Catching Bazylev on fire. He yells,
drops and rolls. FIRE SUPPRESSING FOAM immediately sprays
down from overhead.

KORSHUNOV

Go after him.

Serge hops Bazylev's burning body and heads down the corridor,
looking for this new wildcard. Korshunov grabs a fire
extinguisher from the galley and attends to Bazylev.

INT. CORRIDOR, TOWARD THE REAR OF AIR FORCE ONE.

Marshall retreats behind a divider. Sees Serge coming. Fires a few rounds, then retreats to the next divider. Working toward the rear of the plane.

Serge picks his way through the rear cabins, advancing cautiously.

INT. REAR GALLEY/BATHROOMS.

Marshall's out of plane. Nowhere to hide in the galley.

Marshall eyes the bathrooms, doors flapping.

FOLLOWING SERGE...

as he reaches the rear galley and bathrooms. Marshall is nowhere to be seen. But the bathroom doors are all closed.

SERGE

I know you're in there. Come on out.

(a few beats)

Okay. Have it your way.

Time for a deadly version of the shell game. serge fires several rounds into the first closed bathroom door. The bullets slice easily through the thin doors. He kicks the riddled door open. The stall is empty.

Serge moves to the next one. Same procedure. It's empty.

Moves to the last bathroom, confident he's got him. He wails with his MP5, turning the hatch into swiss cheese. Waits a beat, then...

Kicks it in. It's empty too.

Serge looks around. Where the hell is this guy?

KORSHUNOV (O.S.)

(calling down)

Serge?

Serge reluctantly returns to his group.

INT. LOWER GALLEY, BAGGAGE LEVEL -

Marshall tumbles out of the cramped galley dumbwaiter, breathing heavy. He slumps against the bulkhead and slides down to the ground.

He takes a moment to pull himself together, to clear his head. He hefts the MP5, refamiliarizing himself with the weight and texture of a gun. He checks the clip. Only a handfull of rounds left. He slaps it back in and switches

from automatic fire to single-shot then pantomimes firing.

MARSHALL

The NRA'll love this.

Looking down the barrel of the gun, he notices bins loaded with luggage.

INT. OFFICE - NIGWR

Stoli Petrov on the phone, behind his large oak desk.

PETROV

I understand your dilemma, Vice President Chandler. But unless you can confirm that your President is indeed a hostage, I cannot release Stravanavitch. If Marshall is dead, no good will come of meeting this demand. We both know he would agree.

V.P. CHANDLER (V.O. PHONE)

But the First Lady...

PETROV

*.. is not a First Lady if her husband's been killed. Then she's a civilian. And I can't release him for a civilian. Do you see my point?

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - DAY

Each member of the crisis team is either on the phone or huddled with staff. A secure fax machine spits out papers which Lee slips into files.

Lee interrupts Chandler on the phone.

LEE

Madame Vice president. We have an options paper. chandler takes the options paper, waves off Lee, and reads it as she talks.

V.P. CHANDLER

Yes. You've made yourself quite clear.

PETROV (V.O.)

But I will deploy forces to a staging area near the Turkmenistan border. When you have more information, we can decide how to proceed.

V.P. CHANDLER

By then I'll be President.

Chandler hangs up the phone.

V.P. CHANDLER

(of f options paper)

I don't like any of these. from, did you brief General Northwood?

Northwood pops out of his huddle.

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

I'M INCLINED TO TRY THIS PART -

Anticipate their landing site and get strike teams in place.

V.P. CHANDLER

Can we do that?

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

We've got four hours before they make it into Turkienistan airspace.

I've got a satellite passing overhead in twenty minutes. We can narrow down the landing site choices based on runway length and any unusual activity. With luck we'll only have to capture three or four sites.

V.P. CHANDLER

But they start executing hostages in

FORTY FIVE MINUTES. -

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

I hate to be pragmatic, but they'll sacrifice pawns before kings. It may take them some time to kill their way up to senior staff.

V.P. CHANDLER

Okay. Also, I want you to put our bases in Turkey on alert, and have the Kitty Hawk prepare a retaliatory air strike.

*

DEAN

Madame Vice-President...

V.P. CHANDLER

I've not discounted your theory Hr.

Dean...

DEAN

No... I got the new numbers from our gamers. They believe that there's only an eight percent chance that

the President is still alive.

V.P. CHANDLER

Eight percent is better than zero.

Oh shit... what is that?

Chandler refers to a monitor in the rear of the room.

CNN, the omnipresent player on the world political stage, broadcasts video from Ramstein Air Base.

GENERAL GREELY

That's trouble.

CNN REPORTER (V.O. T.V.)

*.. the Presidential Aircraft was enroute from Moscow when it began its mayday hail. But in a startling turn of events, the seemingly out of control plane aborted its landing and took off again. We haven't been able to confirm its status or whether or not the first family was onboard at the time.

V.P. CHANDLER

Would someone get the Press Secretary!

AIDE

He's been holding on line four.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Air Force One, lit up by moonlight.

INT. CORRIDOR.

The fire is extinguished. Zedeck squats over Nevsky's body.

Gibbs and Serge maintain a defensive position, guns ready.

Bazylev emerges from the Senior staff Conference room. He shakes his head "no". Korshunov nods and furrows his brow.

KORSHUNOV

Who did this?

GIBBS

We checked the manifest. Everyone was accounted for.

KORSHUNOV

A secret service agent. It must be.

Wounded but alive. Serge, Bazylev...

Find him.

Serge and Bazylev lock and load, head off in separate

directions.

KORSHUNOV

The conference room is no longer secure. We'll take the First Lady and the girl up top where we can keep a closer eye on them.

INT. MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM -

The hostages have torn up a section of carpeting. Caidwell and Shepherd examine the floor. Smooth sheets of steel riveted together. Pointless.

MAJOR CAL DWELL

We're not getting out that way.

The door swings open and Gibbs and Korshunov enter. They spots the ripped up carpeting.

KORSHUNOV

Admirable, but you're wasting your time.

(beat)

Mrs. Marshall, would you and your daughter please come here.

They don't move. Korshunov raises his gun, points it a Shepherd's head.

KORSHUNOV

Now, or he dies, please.

ROSE

Come on, Alice.

ALICE

I'm scared.

Doherty steps forward. Shepherd tries to pull him back, to no

* avail.

DOHERTY

You've got the better part of the White House locked in this room, you know. If you want to negotiate, we're the ones to do it with.

Korshunov SHOOTS Doherty through the head. Screams from some of the hostages. Korshunov squeezes off a few shots to quiet everyone.

KORSHUNOV

Mrs. Marshall. Alice. If you please.

Rose turns to the other hostages.

ROSE

It's okay. Do what you're told. It's okay. We'll be okay.

She locks eyes with Caldwell. HKeep working.N He nods.

INT. REAR BAGGAGE HOLD -

The President hunts through luggage. Overturned garment bags and suitcases around him, belongings littered all over the bulkhead. He sifts through heaps of clothing and finally recovers what he's been looking for...

A CELLULAR PHONE...

He flips it open, starts to dial... but freezes.

MARSHALL

Goddamnit.

He can't remember the number. He dials...

CLOSE.ON PHONE -555-1212... Information.

The phone rings...

INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE HOLD.

Bazylev, moving like a commando, slowly and methodically works his way into the lower galley.

INT. REAR BAGGAGE HOLD -

Marshall. Finally, the phone picks up.

VOICE (O.S. PHONE)

Information. How can I assist you?

MARSHALL

Washington D.C.?

VOICE

Yes, sir. Can I help you?

MARSHALL

Yes, the number for the White House.

INT. PILOT'S REST AREA - NIGHT

The rest area consists of a couple of bunks behind the cockpit area, still soiled black from the earlier C-4 explosion. Korshunov pours a cup of coffee and offers it to Alice.

ALICE

I don't drink coffee.

KORSHUNOV

You must be tired. It'll wake you up.

ALICE

No, thank you. The gunfire did that.

Gibbs wraps Rose's hands behind her back with duct tape.

ROSE

Leave my daughter alone.

KORSHUNOV

Or you will do what, Mrs. Marshall?

(beat, he chuckles)

But I admire your courage. Your husband, on the other hand...

ROSE

What do you know of my husband?

KORSHUNOV

I know he left you behind.

ROSE

My husband is a very courageous man.

KORSHUNOV

Your husband is a coward. He sends soldiers half-way around the world to steal a man from his home in the middle of the night.

Alice sits up, attentive.

ALICE

You're one of Stravanavitch's men.

KORSHUNOV

So, you study world events, little one. That's good for a girl your age.

ALICE

Yeah, I study world events. Five thousand Turkienistan Muslims were slaughtered in Stravanvitch's cleansings... along with 15 American school kids. You know hQw I studied that. I went to their funerals with my dad. I met their parents.

KORSHUNOV

Smart for your age, eh? Top of your

class? Tell me, do you know what the word "propaganda" means?

ALICE

Yeah. Do you know what the word "asshole" means.

ROSE

Alice!

Rose doesn't know whether to be pissed at Alice or proud of her. Korshunov smiles, nods his head and lifts his gun.

KORSHUNOV

Yes, I have heard that word.

He aims his gun at Alice.

KORSHUNOV

Yes, I am an asshole.

A long beat, the Korshunov lovers the gun.

KORSHUNOV

Your father is a reasonable man.

Once he hears our simple demand, I'm sure he will acquiesce. For your sake.

Korshunov smiles. Gibbs grabs Alice's hands and pulls them behind her back. Begins wrapping them with the tape.

INT. MAIN CABING, REAR GALLEY.

Serge searches through the galley cabinets, spots the galley dumbwaiter. Now he knows where his quarry went.

He angrily grabs a service cart and shoves it into the dumbwaiter, disabling it.

INT. GANGWAY -

Bazylev hears the beeps of a phone dialing. He moves toward the aft portal of the gangway.

INT. REAR BAGGAGE HOLD -

Marshall waits as the phone rings...

INT. WHITE HOUSE, SWITCHBOARD ROOM - DAY

A chipper woman in her mid-20s picks up the call.

SWITCHBOARD

White House switchboard. How may I direct your call.

MT. REAR BAGGAGE HOLD -

MARSHALL

(hushed urgency)

Okay listen, listen carefully. This is an emergency call from Air Force One. Who's there? Is the Vice-President there?

INT. WHITE HOUSE, SWITCHBOARD ROOM - DAY

SWITCHBOARD

who can I say is calling?

MARSHALL (O.S. PHONE)

This is the President.

SWITCHBOARD

Yeah, right.

MARSHALL

Don't cut me off. This is an emergency.

SWITCHBOARD

Sir, the President does not call this particular number. So whoever you are get a life, before I have this call traced.

MARSHALL

You don't understand. This is an emergency. Let me talk to anyone.

The switchboard operator thinks for a moment. Maybe she can have some fun with this nutcase.

SWITCHBOARD

Okay... if you're the President, when's your wife's birthday?

MARSHALL

Look lady, I don't have time for games. Just put the....

SWITCHBOARD

Thank you for calling the white House...

INT. REAR BAGGAGE HOLD -

MARSHALL

No. no. no. Wait. Wait.

Bazylev appears behind Marshall. Raises his gun.

MARSHALL

I should know this.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SWITCHBOARD ROOM -

MARSHALL (V.O.)

It's June.

Gunfire in the background.

SWITCHBOARD

Sir? Are you there? Sir? Sir?

Her face says N. The Switchboard operator pulls out a call sheet and finds a number.

INT. REAR BAGGAGE HOLD -

On the phone, lying open on a heap of clothing.

Bazylev points the machine gun at Marshall's head.

BAZ YLEV

Hands away from your weapon.

Marshall doesn't move, his np5 hanging at his waist... his hand inches from it.

BAZYLEV

Come now. You don't want to die.

Marshall... with no options... slowly moves his hands away from the gun.

BAZYLEV

On your knees...

PHONE (O.S.)

Hello. Is anyone there?

Bazylev motions Marshall to get on his knees. Marshall complies.

BAZYUV

What's that in your shirt? Open it.

Marshall pulls his shirt aside revealing his Kevlar vest.

BAZYLEV

Take it off. Now.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - DAY

Chandler on the phone. An aide waves, trying to get her attention.

V.P. CHANDLER

My intention is not to escalate the

situation, but it's a contingency
that must be considered. Hang on...
(to Aide)
What?

AIDE

The switchboard says that someone
called in claiming to be the
President, then she heard gunfire.

Caller's gone, but the line's still active.

DEAN

Could be some crank watching CNN.

AIDE

No sir. Trace confirms the call is
Coming from a White House staff
cellular account.

V.P. CHANDLER

Put it through down here.
(into phone)
Hang on, Toni.

The call comes in on speaker phone, distorted muffled voices
and the whine of an aircraft in the background.

V.P. CHANDLER

What's going on in the background?

Can we hear what's going on?

Dean picks up a phone.

DEAN

Max, get me Willis.

INT. NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY, LISTENING POST - DAY

WILLIS, a grossly overweight man in his late forties
surrounded by a monolith of high-tech, starts working his
console.

WILLIS

Tracking... Intercepting call... Got
it. Ten seconds, Mr. Dean.

Audio waveforms appear over Willis' console. He implements
digital filtering routines, cleaning up the sounds.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - DAY

The group listens intently. The call modulates, distorts,
dissolves... then clarifies.

BAZYLEV (V.O.)

Hands... hands behind your head, Mr.
President.

V.P. CHANDLER

It's him. He is alive.

BAZYLEV

I'm going to take your weapon now,
and then I'm going to take you
Upstairs to join the others.

Understand?

DEAN

Christ, they have him.

BAZYLEV

And if you make any sudden moves, I
will not hesitate to shoot.

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

Maybe they don't have him yet.

Northwood stares up at the tactical board. Air Force One...
surrounded by the F-15s.

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

And maybe we aren't so helpless.

General Northwood picks up a secure phone and dials.

GENERAL NORTPNOOD

General Greely, Air Force One has
automatic countermeasures, right?

GENERAL GREELY

Everything we own is in that plane.

GENERAL NORTINOOD

So a single missile launched from a
distance should be a mere distraction.

GENERAL GREELY

Theoretically.

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

(into phone)
Ramstein Tower Control, please.

GENERAL GREELY

(getting it)
But the effect could be jarring.

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

Exactly. Ramstein? General
Northwood... Patch me through to

your fighters. Madame Vice
President... with your permission?

V.P. CHANDLER

Do it.

INT. AFT STORAGE COMPARTMENT -

Marshall on his knees, hands behind his head. Bazylev, his automatic pressed against Marshall's forehead, disarms Marshall before stepping away. He slings Marshall's MP5 over his own neck. Studies Marshall a beat.

BAZ YLEV

So you're the President. Somehow, I
thought you'd be smaller.

Marshall stares straight ahead in silent defiance. Bazylev kicks him in the gut. Marshall doubles over, wheezing.

BAZYLEV

Not so powerful now, eh? No aides to
advise you, no secret service to
protect you, no armies to command.

Bazylev grabs Marshall's hair and tugs his head back. He holds Marshall with his eyes.

BAZYLEV

You'll suffer for what you've done.

MARSHALL

* So will you.

Bazylev slams Marshall's face against his knee. Marshall slumps forward.

BAZYLEV

Up. Get up now!

Marshall slowly rises to his feet. Bazylev swings wide around him.

BAZYLEV

You will walk ahead... slowly. Do
you understand?

(no response)

Do you understand!

MARSHALL

Do you know what's going to happen
to you because of this? Do you know
what the world will do?

BAZYLEV

Nothing. The world will do nothing.

That is what they've always done.

INT. MAIN CABIN, FORWARD GALLEY -

Serge seals off the second dumbwaiter.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

63.

The Squadron of F-15 Eagles hover around Air Force One.

COL. CARLTON (V.O.)

You want me to what?

GENERAL NORTPNOOD (V.O.)

You heard the order. And do not, I repeat, do not take your best shot.

COL. CARLTON

Roger, sir. Okay boys, clear the deck. I have been ordered to engage Air Force One.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The other airplanes flare out giving distance to the Jumbo Jet. Canton's plane drops back.

COL. CARLTON

Assuming attack posture. Targeting computer is on.

INT. CARLTON'S COCKPIT - NIGHT

On TARGETING COMPUTER - Graphics: As it acquires Air Force One.

COL. CARLTON

Target is acquired. I have good tone
CLOSE ON: The flight stick. Carlton's
finger over the firing button. He
hesitates.

COL. CARLTON

They're gonna court martial me for
this.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, GANGWAY -

Hands behind his head, Marshall walks in front of Bazylev, an MP5 pressed against his neck.

INT. F-15 EAGLE COCKPIT - NIGHT

Carlton pulls the trigger.

EXT. F-15 EAGLE - NIGHT

An air-to-air missile detaches from under the Eagle. Its tail ignites in flame.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE COCKPIT - NIGHT

Zedeck monitoring the controls. Situation normal. Then all hell breaks loose as an entire wall of instrumentation lights up. Warning bells. Flashing lights.

ZEDECK

What is this?

The TACTICAL COUNTERMEASURES COMPUTER - Springs to life.

High-tech readouts, risk analyses, schematics, and assessments. Radar tracks the incoming, identifies it.

On Screen: "Autopilot disengaged"

The plane banks into a dive, throwing Zedeck back against his chair.

ZEDECK

Gibbs! Gibbs! Get in here.

On screen: "Activating countermeasures"

EXT. SICY - NIGHT

With no one at the controls, Air Force One goes into a sharp sloping dive.

INT. GANGWAY, AIR FORCE ONE -

Bazylev, thrown off balance, tries to keep his gun trained on Marshall.

BAZYLEV

Don't move!

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The missile follows a wide arc toward the banking plane.

INT. AFO, COCKPIT -

Gibbs slides into the pilot's seat, attempts to regain control.

GIBBS

What the hell's going on?

ZEDECK

The Americans fired at us.

The Tactical Countermeasures Computer:

"Electronic Jamming has failed Target acquired"

Out the cockpit window, the brightly burning tail of the missile closing on them.

GIBBS

Why would they fire on us?

The Tactical Countermeasures Computer:

"Missile Closing:

Metallic Chaff Burst Standing by:"

The computer counts down from eight... seven...

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The missile screams toward the jumbo jet, a slow easy target.

INT. COCKPIT - NIGHT

ZEDECK

Do something.

Five... Four...

GIBBS

I'm not a combat pilot.

Three... two....

ZEDECK

Shit!

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

Small bays doors slip open below the aircraft. A cloud of small metallic narticles sprays out of the bottom of the aircraft.

INT. COCKPIT -

On the faces of the terrorists, as the missile comes right at them.

Then the missile veers downward.

The Tactical Countermeasures Computer:

"Missile Neutralized"

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The missile dives into the swarm of descending chaff and DETONATES, lighting up the evening sky. Red flames reflect

against the silver-grey clouds.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, VARIOUS SHOTS - NIGHT

The shock wave hits the aircraft.

Lights flicker and the plane rocks side to side.

HOSTAGES are bounced around the conference room.

INT. GANGWAY -

Marshall and Bazylev are slammed against the ceiling and then the floor.

Marshall seizes the moment. Grabs Bazylev's gun. The two struggle and Bazylev instinctively pulls the trigger. A burst of ricocheting gunfire sparks across the bulkhead.

The turbulence worsens. Bazylev manages to wrest away the rifle, but the plane pulls into a climb, sending Bazylev tumbling down the gangway into the rear baggage hold.

Marshall manages to pull himself up the grating and into the galley. He's free, for the moment.

INT. AFO, COCKPIT.

Gibbs steadies the plane as the shock wave from the explosion
* subsides.

GIBBS

We're okay.

Korshunov examines the Tactical Countermeasures Computer.

KORSHUNOV

Remarkable aircraft. Remarkable.

GIBBS

why did they do that?

KORSHUNOV

Psychology. They're trying to unnerve us.

GIBBS

Well it worked.

Korshunov smiles and puts his hand on Gibbs shoulder.

KORSHUNOV

Relax, my friend. Apparently they cannot harm us. Even if they wanted to. rNT. FRONT GALLEY.

67.

Marshall Struggles to assemble the hypodermic and the container of adrenalin.

INT. REAR BAGGAGE HOLD.

Bazylev pulls to his feet, heads back down the gangway.

INT. FRONT GALLEY.

Marshall greets Bazylev with a spray of hot coffee from the Simmering pot as he enters. Bazylev covers up, but the spray sears him pretty bad. He yells in pain, turning.

Marshall springs, imbedding the hypodermic needle into Bazylev's neck. A full dose of adrenalin. Bazylev pulls the empty needle from his neck. Marshall steps back, waiting for a reaction.

A pregnant pause as they both wait to see what happens.

Then Bazylev smiles and slowly turns toward Marshall.

Marshall backs away as Bazylev levels his gun.

He fires once, hitting Marshall in the arm. Marshall winces off the pain.

BAZYLEV

(disgust)

The leader of the free world.

He backs Marshall against a wall and holds him in his sights.

But he doesn't shoot. His breathing becomes faster and faster as the adrenalin takes hold. Building... building... He screams and clutches at his throat.

His eyes spin back and then his heart explodes.

Bazylev is caught frozen, suspended in a moment of disbelief.

Death reflex. He fires off several rounds from the gun as he collapses.

Marshall waits a beat, half-expecting Bazylev to rise. He slowly approaches the body and retrieves the KP5.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The F-15s pull back into formation around the Jumbo Jet.

INT. REAR BAGGAGE HOLD -

Marshall retrieves the phone, then wedges himself behind a waste storage tank, out of view.

INT. PILOT'S REST AREA -

Rose and Alice On the bunk. Alice's eyes are Watering.

Korshunov examines topographic maps in the adjacent M1C.c. and speaks into a phone in Russian.

ALICE

Mom?

ROSE

Yes dear?

ALICE

I'm sorry I was so mean to you earlier.

Rose smiles sadly.

ROSE

I know, sweetie. I know.

(beat)

You're being very brave.

Alice nods. She's trying.

INT. MAIN CABIN.

Serge finishes his sweep of the upper level.

SERGE

(to Zedeck)

He's not up here. I'm going down below.

INTERCUT:

INT. REAR BAGGAGE HOLD/INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

Marshall rips his sleeve off, swabs the blood off his arm.

Bazylev's bullet took out a good chunk of flesh when it grazed him.

MARSHALL

Did they say anything about my family?

V.P. CHANDLER

They're still alive, but the loyalists plan to start killing hostages in forty minutes.

MARSHALL

Then tell me there's a rescue operation underway.

Marshall opens a travel bottle of Vodka and pours it over the wound. He winces from the pain.

V.p CHANDLER

69.

I think we're okay, sir. Now that we know you're alive we can force Petrov to release Stravanavitch.

MARSHALL Don't tell me you plan to give in to these fuckers.

GENERAL NORWOOD We plan to do whatever it takes to keep you alive, sir.

V.P. CHANDLER

and if that means negotiating...

MARSHALL

You know my policy. We don't negotiate with terrorists. If we start now, all of America becomes a target.

V.P. CHANDLER

But this is different, sir. You're the President.

*

MARSHALL

And what happens when Stravanavitch is freed and discovers he's got the President? You think for a second that that crazy bastard is just gonna turn me over? He'll ask for the goddamn moon before he's done.

V.P. CHANDLER

Please, Mr. President. You're going to get yourself killed. Is that your solution?

MARSHALL

Freeing Stravanavitch is gonna get tens of thousands killed. I can't live with that.

(somewhat resigned)

I'm not royalty. I'm an elected official and the integrity of the office of the President is infinitely more important than the man who holds that office.

(beat)

We don't negotiate. Not as long as I'm President. Is that understood?

A long silence, then...

YES SIR. CHANDLER

MARSHALL

Now, is there a rescue operation under way or not?

Lee shakes his head at Chandler, signalling "don't tell."

LEE

He's not on a secure line.

MARSHALj Whoever said that, shut up. Walter, are you there?

DEAN

I'm here, Mr. President.

MARSHALL

Where's the cavalry?

DEAN

We can't do anything until that plane lands. And when it does land, sir, it's going to be in hostile * territory. To be perfectly honest, we don't know what the hell to do.

It's going to take a miracle to figure this one out.

A long beat. We hold on Marshall's determined face.

MARSHALL

I'll see what I can do.

INT. GALLEY.

Serge comes across Bazylev. Checks for any sign of life.

Stone cold dead. He looks around and grips his gun a little tighter as he backs out of the room.

INT. MAIN CABIN.

Serge closes the stair access panel to the baggage deck.

Sealing Marshall off.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

Serge comes trotting up the stairs and collects new clips.

SERGE

Bazylev is dead.

Korshunov swallows hard...

AND THE

SERGE

Trapped On the baggage deck. Let me go finish him.

KORSHUNOV

No. He has the advantage down there.

Bring me a hostage. A woman.

INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE HOLD.

Marshall sees that the stairway hatch has been sealed.

INT. LOWER GALLEY - NIGHT

Marshall hits the button for the dumbwaiter. The dumbwaiter begins to descend then snags on the service cart. Its motor grind to a halt. Marshall slumps down. His hopes dashed.

Nothing to do now but wait.

INT. MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM.

Serge looks over the crowd of hostages like a bouncer at a hip dance club. His eyes fall on Maria Mitchell.

SERGE

You. Come with me.

INT. LOWER GALLEY.

Marshall, seated on the floor. The cabinet next to him is stacked with packs of complimentary cigarettes, all with the seal of the President.

MARSHALL

What the hell...

He opens up a pack and puts the cigarette in his mouth. He snags one of the Presidential lighters, tries to light it several times but it only sparks. XC shakes it. It's out of tial. He tosses it aside and reaches for a book of matches, but he FREEZES in mid-reach. A thought occurs to him.

MARSHALL

(murmuring)

Out of fuel.

INT. FORWARD BAGAGE HOLD - NIGHT

Marshall, lacking a screwdriver, levers open the hatch to the Avionics compartment with the barrel of his gun.

RUT. AVIONICS COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

Marshall sees the stacks of panels, piping, Wiring, electronics.

MARSHALL

Come on, where are you...

He searches up and down.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

Serge leads Maria Mitchell up the stairway. Korshunov nods.

KORSHUNOV

Ms. Mitchell. Hello again.

Maria is scared, she says nothing. She looks over to the First Lady and Alice.

ROSE

Maria.

Korshunov switches on the airplane's P.A.

KORSHUNOV

* Please tell me
your name.

MITCHELL

(frightened)
Maria... Maria Mitchell.

KORSHUNOV

And what is it you do, Ms. Mitchell.

Maria Mitchell's voice echos over throughout Air Force One.

INT. AVIONICS COMPARTMENT.

Marshall halts his search to listen.

MITCHELL (V.O.)

I'm responsible for Press Relations
for the Flight Office.

KORSHUNOV (V.O.)

How are your fellow hostages feeling,
Ms. Mitchell?

MITCHELL

Scared. We're scared.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

Rose cradles Alice, both of them looking away, as Korshunov raises his gun, pointing it at Mitchell.

KORSHUNOV

And why are you scared?

MITCHELL

Because... because I don't want to
die.

INT. MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM.

The hostages, listening.

KORSHUNOV

And what am I doing at this very moment.

INT. AVIONICS COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

Marshall listens, helpless to do anything.

MITCHELL

You're pointing a gun at me.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER -

KORSHUNOV

Very good. Thank you, Ms. Mitchell.

Did you hear her? She said I'm pointing a gun at her.

INT. AVIONICS COMPARTMENT -

KORSHUNOV

Now, to the secret service agent in the baggage deck. I'm giving you ten seconds to surrender, or this women will die.

Marshall's eyes widen.

KORSHUNOV

One...

Oh shit. Marshall tries to decide what to do.

KORSHUNOV

Two...

He climbs out of the avionics compartment and hurries to the front baggage compartment.

KORSHUNOV

Three...

INT. MAIN CABIN.

Zedeck and Serge wait by the stairway hatch.

KORSHUNOV

Four...

INT. MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM.

Hostages wait, expectantly.

KORSHUNOV

Five...

INT. FRONT BAGGAGE HOLD.

Marshall frozen near the bottom of the steps. To go up would be to betray everything he believes in, and lose any chance to save the others. But if he stays...

KORSHUNOV

Six...

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER.

Tears stream down Maria Mitchell's face. She's trying so hard to be brave in front of Rose and Alice.

KORSHUNOV

Seven...

INT. FRONT BAGGAGE HOLD.

For Marshall, this is the hardest decision of his life. His face a mask of anguish as he wrestles with his conscience.

KORSHUNOV

Eight...

He starts toward the stairs.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER.

Korshunov looking down the barrel of the gun.

KORSHUNOV

Nine...

INT. FRONT BAGGAGE HOLD.

It takes every bit of training and will to stop Marshall from going up those stairs. He knows what's going to happen. He closes his eyes tight as if that will stop it from happening.

KORSHUNOV

Ten...

A long silent beat. Then... BAAAAM!

MARSHALL

NO!

Marshall sinks to to his knees.

MARSHALL

Aw, Jesus.

INT. MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM.

Hostages hold each other tight for comfort. A mournful silence fills the room.

INT. FRONT BAGGAGE HOLD.

Marshall, silhouetted in the half light, cradles his head in his hands. The shaft of light disappears as the main cabin hatch closes, sealing him off once again.

KORSFL3NOV (V.O.)

I'll give you a few minutes to think about that one and then we'll try again. Perhaps soon I will choose somebody important.

MARSHALL

(to himself)
She was important.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER.

zedeck and Serge drag the dead woman out of the compartment.

Alice sobs quietly.

ROSE

Do you have to be so brutal?

KORSHUNOV

Yes

ROSE

Why? Do you enjoy it?

KORSHUNOV

I neither enjoy nor dislike. I do what is necessary.

ROSE

How can you? I mean they're people.

*

76.

KORSHUNOV

But they are not ny people. You look at me as if I am a monster, but answer me this -- when your planes bombed the oil fields of Iraq, did You cry for those dark skinned men whose names you do not know and who's faces You will never see? Did You cry for their wives and children. They were people too, yes... but they were not your people.

ROSE

That was war.

KORSHUNOV

So is this.

(beat)

Come now, you're upsetting the little one.

ALICE

The woman you shot. She was my friend.

KORSHUNOV

That's the way of the world, little one. Didn't they teach you that in school?

INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE HOLD.

Marshall crosses back to the avionics compartment, talking on the phone.

VOICE

(through static)

Chief Mechanic, 87th Air. How can I help you?

MARSHALL

You can talk me through an emergency fuel dump.

INT. MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM.

MAJOR CALDWELL

Led off to slaughter one at a time.

Next time I say we rush `em. They can't shoot us all.

SHEPHERD

They can shoot enough of us.

*

77.

MAJOR CALDWELL

If we don't act, they'll kill US all eventually Who's with me?

Several of the hostages raise their hands.

INT. AFO'S MAINTENANCE HANGER/ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE - DAY

The Chief Mechanic has Air Force One schematics open in front of him. He and his staff are huddled around them.

CHIEF MECHANIC

Do you see the maintenance panel?

MARSHALL

Got it.

CHIEF MECHANIC

Pop it open. There should be a red switch, toggle it up.

MARSHALL

Okay, it's on. We've got some indicator lights here.

CHIEF MECHANIC

Okay, you're aerated. To dump the fuel you have to close the circuit for the pump. There's no switch in Avionics so you'll have to cross the wires. There should be five wires, just to your left. Do you see them?

INT. AVIONICS COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

Marshall finds the wires: red, white, blue, green and yellow.

MARSHALL

Got `en.

Static blankets the conversation.

CHIEF MECHANIC

Okay, hang on. Let me double check

here, because if you get the wrong ones, you'll cut the engine feeds and stall the plane.

MARSHALL

I'll wait.

The static worsens.

CHIEF MECHANIC

First... cut... green wire.

Marshall, Using a kitchen knife, slices the green wire. Heavy static. The phone beeps... losing batteries.

MARSHALL

It's cut.

CHIEF MECHANIC

cross it... The static overwhelms the voice, then cuts out.

MARSHALL

Hello? Hello? Goddamnit.

Static comes roaring back and garbled voices...

MARSHALj Hello? Are YOU there?

Dead. Marshall tries to activate it again.

MARSHAIJi Hello? Hello?

Nothing. He tosses the dead phone aside.

Marshall stares. Cross the green wires with the... what?

Red, white, blue... or the yellow. His choice is obvious. He cuts the yellow wire and crosses it with the green, leaving the red, white and blue standing.

He waits. The engines continue to groan. He allows himself a smile.

MARSHALL

An emergency landing in friendly territory... there's your goddamn miracle.

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

Beneath the plane a trickle of gasoline appears and grows into a strong steady stream.

INT. FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

A red warning light flashes on the plane's panel.

GIBBS

Goddamnit it. We're losing fuel.

Korshunov crosses to the flight deck.

KORSHUNOV

How?

GIBBS

Avionics compartment! It's the only place. You better get Zedeck down there fast Unless, of course, you'd rather be a martyr than a savior.

KORSHUNOV

(to Zedeck)

Go! Take Serge.. and watch your backs.

Zedeck nods and dashes out of the cabin.

INT. MAIN CABIN.

Zedeck pulls open the hatch cover to the forward front stairs. Descends into the dimly lit underneath.

Serge descends right behind Zedeck.

INT. FORWARD BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

Zedeck, Spooked by the dark shadows, senses he's being watched.

ZEDECK

He's down here. I can feel it.

SERGE

Shut up and do your job.

Zedeck hastens toward the Avionics compartment, gun at the ready. Serge sweeps the area behind.

They hear a metallic clank echo and reverberate around him.

They both check left... right... behind them...

Nothing.

It's creepy being a walking target.

From behind a water storage tank, Marshall watches down the barrel of his Mp5. With all the equipment in the way, it's almost impossible to line up a clear shot.

And they're both well armed. He looks toward the stairway instead.

Zedeck enters the Avionics compartment. Serge takes a defensive position outside the door.

ZEDECK (O.S.)

The valve is shut. This guy sure knew what he was doing.

Serge hears a noise and opens tire.

80.

ZEDECK

You see him?

SERGE

Erring on the side of caution.

INT. AVIONICS COMPARTMENT -

Zedeck opens a panel and rips out some wiring.

ZEDECK

I'm going to deactivate the by-pass pump. It'll take a minute.

INT. FLIGHT DECK.

Gibbs checks the fuel gauges. They stop falling.

GIBBS

We've stopped dumping... but we've only got about twenty minutes of fuel left.

KORSHUNOV

We're not going to make it.

GIBBS

Not even close. Hell, we can't even make Syria or Iraq.

KORSHUNOV

Where are we now?

GIBBS

Over the Black Sea. I can probably get us to Turkey or Georgia.

KORSHUNOV

No! If we land this plane anywhere else, we will end up another Entebe.

(beat)

The Americans built a super plane that flies through mushroom cloud, evades missiles and...

(holding up Maria

Mitchell's press kit)

refuels in mid-air. Call the White House.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM -

Tactical Map: Air Force One over the Black Sea heading south west toward Turkmenistan.

An Aide holds up a phone.

AIDE

It's him again.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATION CENTER -

Korshunov on the phone.

KORSHUNOV

Gentlemen, forgive me for diverting you from your little wargames, but I've just added another demand to my very short list. I assure you it's quite reasonable.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM -

KORSHUNOV (V.O. PHONE)

We need fuel, gentlemen. And we need

it right now.

Lee whispers to the Vice President.

LEE

Finally, we can bargain.

V. P. CHANDLER

I'm sure we can strike some sort of arrangement. Land the plane and we'll trade you hostages for fuel.

KORSHUNOV

No. The plane lands when I say, or it will crash. The hostages are released when I say, or they will die.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER.

KORSHUNOV

Tell me what I want to hear or I will execute a member of the senior staff, and will continue killing one hostage every minute until we crash or until a refueling plane arrives.

Murmuring and hushed discussion floats over the airwaves.

A long silence. Korshunov looks toward Alice.

KORSHUNOV

Shall I begin by executing the President's daughter? She's right here.

ROSE

No.

KORSHUNOV

Say something dear.

ALICE

Fuck off, you stupid asshole.

KORSHUNOV

It would be a pity to squander such a strong personality.

Another several beats of hushed murmuring.

KORSHUNOV

Well? What do you say?

V. P. CHANDLER (V. O. PHONE)

Fuel's on its way.

INT. MAIN CABIN.

Serge and Zedeck lower the hatch to the baggage compartment and seal it. They head up the stairs to the M.C.C.

INT. M.C.C. - NIGHT

Korshunov paces, weighing his pistol in his hand.

KORSHUNOV

We trained for months. Everything should've gone like clockwork.

ZEDECK

We have the hostages, we're getting more fuel.

KORSHUNOV

He's already killed three of us, and we haven't even seen him. He's also shown that he can hurt us. I need to think.

(looks at Serge)

What the hell are you doing up here?

Get back to the conference room.

INT. MAIN CABIN

Serge takes his position by the conference room.

Across from him, against the cabin divider, Marshall peers down the sight of his gun.

Serge freezes.

MARSHALL

Don't make the same mistake your friend did earlier... Show me your hands.

Serge raises his hands. Marshall reaches over and pulls out the clip to his MP5.

MARSHALL

Open the door.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

Caldwell, Shepherd and a few other aides hear the key turn in the lock. They quickly take position around the door. As Marshall marches Serge in, they're both tackled and smothered by the group. They wrest the guns away and shut the door quickly behind them.

Marshall struggles against his people.

MARSHALL

It's me goddamnit. Let me go.

Surprised to hear their boss' voice, the aides and advisors release Marshall.

SHEPHERD

Mr. President, how the hell did you get on board?

MARSHALL

I never left. Where's my wife and daughter?

MAJOR CALDWELL

They took `em out. They're probably on the upper deck.

SHEPHERD

Mr. President, Major Caldwell here has a plan to get these hostages off the plane.

MARSHALL

I dumped most of the fuel. They'll land soon and Delta will take its shot.

SERGE

A refueling plane is already on its way so we won't be landing until we reach Turkmenistan. Your best course of action is to release me. I will be merciful.

MAJOR CALDWELL

84.

Sir, maybe we can use this. Turn it to our advantage.

MARSHALL

Mr. Caldwell, the ground's a few miles away. How do you propose getting us from here to there?

MAJOR CALDWELL

Gravity.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM -

Satellite pictures of various landing strips projected on wall-sized monitors.

DEAN

Of the three dozen airports in Turkmenistan, only five have sufficient runways for a 747. Of

those five, only these three have shown any activity.

General Northwood points with a laser pointer.

GENERAL NORTWOOD

But this one here, see this. It's a satellite dish and it wasn't there two weeks ago. Basic communications uplink, which suggests extensive communications ability. I'd say this was the one.

V.P. CHANDLER

Are you confident you can take the facility?

GENERAL NORTWOOD

It's night there for a few more hours. That's a real plus. But I won't lie. As far as special ops go, this one's a bear, but I think we squeeze it out.

V.P. CHANDLER

Let's get it going.

AIDE

The Press Secretary's about to go on.

INT. MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

MAJOR CALDWELL

If we can get to a lower altitude, we can use parachutes, but at this altitude, we'll pass out from Oxygen deprivation.

MARSHALL

We've already played our cards, Major. There's no turning back.

MAJOR CALDWELL

We can't jump from here or at this speed. But if we could get a message out - tell the refueling plane...

MARSHALL

They've cut communication, and I spent a good bit of time looking for alternatives. My only solution ran out of batteries.

A nearby SECRETARY in her late 20's pipes up.

SECRETARY

The fax machines.

MARSHALL

Excuse me?

SECRETARY

The fax machines.

MARSHALL

(dismissive)

No good. I said they disabled the communications system.

SECRETARY

No. I thought about this, Mr.

President. Voice lines and faxes are on two completely different systems of encryption. It'd be easy to overlook the data systems.

What do they have to lose?

MARSHALL

(to Caldwell)

Get `em ready.

(to secretary)

You... come with me.

MAJOR CALDWELL

Eighteen thousand feet, sir. And two hundred knots... otherwise it's suicide.

MARSHALL

Got it.

INT. CORRIDOR.

Caldwell, holding Serge's gun, takes position by the front stairway and waves the other hostages on. They emerge from the conference room, and move to the stairway.

Marshall and the secretary rush the opposite direction toward the equipment room.

INT. WHITE HOUSE PRESS ROOM - DAY

Amid shouting questions, the PRESS SECRETARY alights to the podium.

PRESS SECRETARY

Please. Quiet please... First let me... Please... I have a prepared statement... The White House confirms that the President's aircraft, Air Force One, has been hijacked and is currently controlled by foreign

nationals.

Murmurs, shouts, and more questions.

REPORTERS

Is the President onboard?/ What about the First Family?/ What are their demands?

PRESS SECRETARY

Please... please... For security reasons I can not comment on any specifics except to say that the Vice-President is doing everything within her power to resolve the situation.

PULL BACK

T.V. monitor on broadcasting CNN. We're in the...

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

Korshunov turns toward the monitor. Furrows his brow.

KORSHUNOV

And you are almost out of time.

Where is the President?

INT. EQUIPMENT ROOM.

Marshall and the Secretary step over Perkins' body on the way to the fax machine.

SECRETARY

Here sir.

Marshall grabs a piece of paper and a pen. Scribbles a note.

SECRETARY

Where are we sending it?

MARSHALL

White House Situation room.

He signs the paper and hands it to her. She slides it into the machine, checks the listed numbers and dials.

MARSHALL

Someone should give you a raise.

SECRETARY

Actually, sir, you could be that someone.

They wait... will it work? A few beats, a few beats more.

The machine pulls the paper in and begins scanning.

MARSHALL

It's yours.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM.

Marshall's note spits out of one of the fax machines. But in the bevy of activity, will it be noticed?

INT. UNDERDECK, REAR LOWER GALLEY - NIGHT

Caldwell spins open the rear emergency pressure door and leads the hostages into...

INT. TAILCONE PARACHUTE LAUNCH PLATFORM -

A cargo hold extending up the tapered edge of the aircraft's rear. The hostages begin pulling parachute packs out of the overhead storage bins. Helping each other.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM.

Korshunov listens to Zedeck yell into the phone in Russian.

ZEDECK

Still no movement on Stravanavitch.

Korshunov eyes Alice and Rose.

ROSE

Nor will there be. My husband does not negotiate with terrorists.

KORSHUNOV

You will be the first to pay for that mistake.

INT. EMERGENCY PARACHUTE LAUNCH RAMP.

Caldwell assists everyone in strapping on their packs. He addresses one group, mostly women and senior staff, who belt into the larger chutes.

MAJOR CALDWELL

These chutes are designed for a safe slow descent. They'll deploy off the line automatically as you step from the plane.

(turns to another group, mostly younger men)

You guys'll have to pull your own rip cords. Wait until you're clear from the plane, but not any longer.

(he checks packs and straps)

Once I check you, go stand behind
the yellow line. You're good. You're
good. You're good.

Two neat lines ready to jump. One line on the deployment
wire, and the other set for freefall.

Marshall and the secretary arrive.

MAJOR CALDWELL

Mr. president? pwtSHALL The fax
went through. We can only wait.

MAJOR CAWELL

Your chute.

MARSHALL

I'll not going without my family.

MAJOR CALDWELL

Yes, sir.

Caidwell crosses to prep the Launch Ramp controls.

INT. COCKPIT.

The gas gauges read very close to empty. Korshunov Stands
behind Gibbs, while Zedeck keeps an eye on the First Lady.

GIBBS

Where's that goddamn plane? tNT.
EMERGENCY PARACHUTE LAUNCH RAMP.

Everybody waits. Caidwell watches the indicator. 30,000 feet.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

A KC-135, the USAF flying gas station, descends in front of
Air Force One.

KC-135 PILOT

Air Force One, this is AF-135-RA. We
have been instructed to refuel your
plane.

TNT. AIR FORCE ONE FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

GIBBS

About goddamn time.

KC-135 PILOT

Please change course to Zero Seven
Four and drop to eighteen thousand
feet. Over.

GIBBS

Air Force One, acknowledged. tNT.

EMERGENCY PARACHUTE LAUNCH RAMP.

The altimeter begins to fall. A wave of relief washes over the group.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The KC-135 extends its flying gas pump.

KC-135 PILOT

Air Force One, please reduce speed to 250 knots.

GIBBS (V.0. RADIO)

Roger.

TNT. AFO FLIGHT DECK.

90.

Okay! now KC-135 PILOT (V.0. Radio) vent your fueling system.

It's the yellow lever on the upper control panel. And next to that there's a toggle Switch to open your intake. Got it?

GIBBS

Roger KC-135 PILOT (V.0. Radio)

Air Force One, do you see the fueling arm?

Through the cockpit Window, the long metallic appendage dangles ahead of the plane.

GIBBS

That's affirmative.

KC-135 PILOT

Ga get it.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

As Air Force One edges its nose up to the appendage. The appendage finds it's grove and slides right in.

TNT. TAILCONE PARACHUTE LAUNCH PLATFOIW -

MAJOR CALOWELL

That's it, eighteen thousand feet.

We're ready.

MARSHALL

What about them?

Marshall indicates the four men without parachutes on. TWO AIR FORCE CREW MEMBERS, Major Caldwell and Shepherd.

MAJOR CALDWELL

Sir, we stay with the President.

MARSHALL

That isn't necessary.

None of them changes his mind.

MARSHALL

Thank you.

A silent beat. A few forced smiles in this very tense room.

*

91.

MAJOR CALDWELL

Relax everybody. I used to do this for a living. Caldwell pulls a switch on the wall.

MAJOR CALDWELL

Depressurizing compartment. This'll take a moment.

The President crosses to one of his aides.

MARSHALL

Hey, by the way... who won the Duke game?

AIDE

Find out for yourself, sir. I'll have it waiting at the White House.

Marshall smiles.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The KC-135 flies above Air Force One, connected by a gasoline umbilical cord.

INT. EMERGENCY RAMP PLATFORM.

Caldwell breaks safety glass. Reaches into a compartment and pulls a lever.

MAJOR CALDWELL

Here we go.

A mechanical hum and clank gives way to a rush of wind as the tail section of Air Force One hinges open on hydraulic struts, extending like a plank behind the plane. We can see the sky with its angry clouds.

Rushing by at two hundred knots.

INT. FLIGHT DECK.

A LOUD BUZZ

KORSHUNOV

What's that?

A warning light flashes on the control panel. Tactical Video Display shows the emergency parachute ramp activating.

INT. MAIN CABIN.

Zedeck runs toward the conference room. He bursts through the doors.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM -

Empty.

INT. FRONT HOLD/LOWER GALLEY -

Tracking: Zedeck Sprinting to the rear of the plane.

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE -

The tail cone section of Air Force One hinges open and parachutes begin to blossom from the rear of the plane.

INT. F-15 EAGLE -

From several miles back Carlton watches the chutes emerge.

COL. CARLTON

Here they come.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM.

Radio traffic echos through the room.

COL. CMLTON (V.O.)

We got... okay... so far ten chutes
deploying of f the line. Dropping
signal flares for search and rescue.

INT. ITEAR BAGGAGE HOLD -

Zedeck reaches the emergency pressure door. Through the porthole he sees the hostages getting away. He tries the door hatch. Locked.

Zedeck looks around. Crosses to the lower rear galley.

He kicks open the panel on the stove. Rips out the propane tank. He runs back and wedges the tank into the door lock.

He backs off 50 feet, turns and opens fire on the tank.

The tank explodes, blowing the door out.

EMERGENCY PARACHUTE LAUNCH PLATFORM

The pressure door blows open and an explosion of pressurized air blasts through the platform.

The remaining parachutists are blown out the rear. Chutes deploying.

Marshall and Serge are knocked down the ramp, tumbling toward oblivion. Just as Marshall's about to slide off the corner of the ramp he grabs its hydraulic strut.

Plummeting death.

His grip is all that separates his dangling body from a long Serge tumbles by Marshall, limbs flailing, and with a scream Woven from a thousand nightma5, he loses his grip and slides off the ramp into the jetblack sky, falling endlessly.

Shepherd and Caldwell manage to hang to safety webbing as the

wind whips around them. The two other air force crew members Without chutes also manage to hang on.

As the plane depressurizes, it BUCKS like a wild bronco.

Marshall looks down into the sky. Below his dangling legs, parachutes blossoiij. He's straining... he can't hold on forever.

INT. COCKPIT -

Gibbs fights the wheel.

Oxygen masks spring out from an overhead compartment as air is sucked out of the cockpit...

The plane shudders and jumps badly....

KC-135 PILOT (V.0. RADIO)

Air Force One, back off. I repeat, back off.

Gibbs wrestles with the yoke, to no avail.

GIBBS

She's bucking. I can't hold her!

KC-135 PILOT (V.0. RADIO)

What are you doing? Back off! Back off!

EXT. SKY -

Air Force One jerks upward, snapping off the fueling arm of the KC-135.

KC-135 PILOT

LOOK OUT!

The broken edge of the fueling arm scrapes along the top of Air Force One... metal against metal... tearing a gash in the plane... Sparks fly.

ONE OF THE SPARKS

ignites the river of gasoline being pumped from the refueling craft's belly.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, COCKPIT -

Gibbs Sees the fueling arm catch fire. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure what's coming. The flames creep up toward the gas tanks.

GIBBS

Holy Shiti Gibbs pushes the stick down and Air Force One begins to dive to safety.

EXT. SKY -

Air Force One descends.

Whipping fire trails the KC-135.

Slowly rolls it way into the plane's main tank.

A burning fuse.

BARRROOOOOOM! A FIRECLOUD ERUPTS ACROSS THE SKY.

Sky like daylight.

From this incredible firecloud, the burned out skeleton of an airplane emerges, falling toward earth.

The F-15 escort zoom toward the unexpected fireball.

COL. CARLTON

Everybody break. Now! Now! Now!

Carlton's planes go into emergency climb, standing on their afterburners to escape the inferno.

INT. EMERGENCY PARACHUTE LAUNCH RAMP -

Marshall hangs on to the strut for dear life as the pressurized air swooshes by him, taking with it everything that isn't nailed down including some of the spare parachutes.

Fire rains down from the heavens, the sky like one giant napalm nightmare.

The shock wave hits the plane, slamming it violently.

Almost yanking the hydraulic arm from Marshall's grasp.

The military aides without parachutes lose their footing and tumble off the platform. SCREAMING as they fall into fire.

EXT. SKY -

The burning KC-135 shell, an apocalyptic Flying Dutchman in a vengeful Kamikazee dive at Air Force One.

It's gonna be close.

The flaming shell passes only a few hundred yards to the rear of the 747.

EXT. PARACHUTE LAUNCH RAMP -

Marshall's got a great view. Flames dance in his eyes as he watches the refueling plane descend.

The brightness subsides, and the sky grows dark again.

The wave of pressurized air subsides leaving Zedeck, Marshall, Shepherd and Caldwell on the ramp. Caldwell begins edging toward Marshall.

ZEDECK

Don't move.

MAJOR CALDWELL

Let me save him.

Marshall barely hangs on.

ZEDECK

That man, he is the president, no?

SHEPHERD

Yes. Yes he is.

Zedeck motions to Caldwell with his gun. "Go get him."

Caldwell crawls down the ramp and extends his hand to Marshall.

THE PRESSURE DOOR SLAMMING SHUT -

zedeck leads Marshall, shepherd and Caldwell away.

IPRR. AFO'S FLIGHT DECK -

Gibbs steadies the plane.

KORSHUNOV

Fuel?

Gibbs checks the gauges.

GIBBS

More than enough to get us home.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - EVENING

The sun begins to set along the Potomac in long streaks of red and pink. The White House lights flicker ominating the long staunch columns, the pillars of democracy.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - EVENING

Tired. Strung out. Bickering within the small workgroups.

Chandler crosses to General Northwood, who has just hung up the phone.

V.P. CHANDLER

They still have the President, it's past their deadline and they haven't called. What do you think it means?

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

Like any good poker player, they're checking over their hand seeing which cards to play and which to discard.

INT. AFO, MISSION COMMUNICATION CENTER - NIGHT

Zedeck leads the three hostage into the M.C.C.

Rose and Marshall - their eyes meet. Enormous relief for the both of them. Marshall smiles at his wife, as she fights back her tears.

ALICE

(to Korshunov)

He didn't leave us.

KORSHUNOV

You are a resilient man, Mr.

President.

Zedeck grabs Caldwell's hands and tapes them behind his back with duct tape. Rose and Alice already have their hands taped.

KORSHUNOV

You must forgive the tape, but we were starting to feel outnumbered...

Gibbs!

INT. FLIGHT DECK -

Gibbs puts the plane on automatic pilot. Rises to join the group.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATIONS CENTER -

Korshunov separates Marshall from his family. Waves him into the Com Officer's chair. His hands are now wrapped too.

Gibbs enters looking down.

MARSHALL

Special Agent Gibbs. You helped do this?

GIBBS

Yes, Mr. President.

MARSHALL

Why?

GIBBS

Because it is my duty.

MARSHALL

You're duty to what? The country you served doesn't exist anymore.

GIBBS

My loyalty was never to my country.

I serve my commanding officers.

KORSHUNOV

You don't think the leaders of the KGB would allow peristroika to ruin years of infiltration? No, when the Soviet Union collapsed, we took our sleepers with us.

Korshunov holds up a telephone.

KORSHUNOV

Now since we've had very little luck getting Washington or Moscow to cooperate, I wondered if you would be so kind.

MARSHALL

Over my dead body.

KORSHUNOV

No. But since I only have a few of your staff left to kill, perhaps I will start with your family instead...

Gibbs.

Gibbs grabs Alice and shoves her into a chair. She fights him off, and he smacks her across the face and shoves his gun into her neck.

Marshall and Rose struggle against their bonds.

KORSHUNOV

The world is such a dangerous place
and we can't always protect our
children.

ROSE

Please. You can kill me but leave my
daughter alone.

Korshunov runs his finger down Alice's cheek.

MARSHALL

She isn't a part of this. This is
between you and me.

KORSHUNOV

Call up Petrov and order
Stravanavitch' S release.

Marshall looks to Alice, then Rose, then back to Alice.

MARSHALL

This administration does not negotiate
with terrorists.

KORSHUNOV

Pity. Mr. Gibbs.

Gibbs withdraws his pistol. Places it against Alice's temple.

KORSHUNOV

Perhaps a President does not
negotiate, but does a father?

(beat)

An interesting choice. Your daughter
versus your world vision. The implicit
trust of a family against your oath
of office.

Tears of fears are streaming down Alice's face. She looks
into her father's eyes.

ALICE

Daddy...

MARSHALL

Alice... I...

KORSHUNOV

And once the trigger is pulled, she is gone forever. Then, I wonder, how do you live, knowing you could've saved her?

Marshall struggles with his duty. His honor.

KORSHUNOV

And could you ever forget the look on her face as she ceases to exist... Late at night, when you think about her, will Stravanavitch really matter anymore?

Marshall tries to look away, but Zedeck forces him to watch.

ALICE

Daddy. Daddy, please...

ROSE

Jim... for godsake!

KORSHUNOV

Look inside your heart. No one will think you weak. Five...

Alice's face, trying to be brave.

KORSHUNOV

Four...

ROSE

Jim...

KORSHUNOV

Three...

Rose looks away.

KORSHUNOV

Two..

Alice looks at her father for the very last time. Then shuts her eyes tight.

KORSHUNOV

One...

Gibbs begins to squeeze the trigger.

MARSHALL

NO!

Korshunov smiles.

MARSHALL

Stop.

KORSHUNOV

You'll do it?

MARSHALL

Yes, I'll do it.

(broken)

Just leave my family alone.

KORSHUNOV

Good. Good.

Gibbs withdraws the gun from Alice's temple. Alice opens her eyes and gasps for breath.

KORSHUNOV

Bring him the phone...

You are true to your nature, Mr.

President.

MARSHALL

Someday, you'll regret my nature.

KORSHUNOV

You don't like seeing people get hurt. Now in morality, that is a virtue. In politics, however, that is weakness.

(beat)

You were a hostage to everyone else
* long before you
were a hostage to

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A sleepless Petrov paces back and forth, smoking a cigarette.

The phone RINGS. He looks up expectantly as his aide answers.

AIDE

Sir, the President of the United States wishes to speak with you.

Petrov stops in mid-pace. Considers his cigarette for a moment and then walks over to the phone.

PETROV

Mr. President.

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

A guard walks down the cold steel hallway. He rattles the bar of a darkened cage, he pulls out a set of keys and unlocks the door.

GUARD

Stravanavitch.

Stravanavitch awakes, and leans forward into the light. He and the guard trade looks. After a beat, the guard turns and retreats down the the hallway.

Stravanavitch rises from his bunk and approaches the cell door. He leans against it and it swings open.

INT. M.C.C. - NIGHT

Rose stares at Marshall. Her look is hard to read. Distant... cold, perhaps.

ROSE

Can my husband sit next to me?

Korshunov considers the pair. Hands taped behind their back.

They're harmless. Korshunov nods.

Marshall rises and joins her on the pilot's rest bunk.

ROSE

I don't know why you stayed.

MARSHALL

Please... don't start with me.

Rose moves closer to him, and speaks in a low voice.

ROSE

There's something I need to tell you... and God knows if I'll ever get another chance.

From behind, we see her push his taped hands away.

He looks at her quizzically.

ROSE

No matter what happens, you have been and always will be my hero.

He feels the wall behind him. A dull edge of metal twisted slightly from the earlier cockpit door explosion.

He understands.

MARSHALL

And you have always been my guardian angel.

She smiles back at him.

ROSE

I will never regret my life with
you.

Behind Marshall's back, he begins to cut away at the duct
tape.

INT. MOSCOW CENTRAL PRISON, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ivan Stravanavitch walks down the long prison hallway. Other
PRISONERS see him and begin banging on their bars in rhythm.

As he parades down the corridor, the banging grows until it
becomes deafening. Stravanavitch smiles a cocky smile.

One by one, guard doors swing open in front of him. In fact,
a few of the HACKS salute Stravanavitch as he passes.

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATION CENTER - AIR FORCE ONE

The communication board beeps and Zedeck picks up the line.

He exchanges some words with the caller in Russian, then
hangs up the phone.

SERGE

It's confirmed. Stravanavitch is on
his way out. Our men are waiting
outside.

Korshunov smiles and puts his hand on Zedeck's shoulder.

ROSE

You got what you wanted. You going
to release us now?

KORSHUNOV

You're very valuable. And our nation
needs so many things.

Marshall leans his head against the wall. Just as he expected.

MARSHALL

Could I... Could I have some water?

Korshunov nods, motions Zedeck to take care of it. Zedeck
reluctantly descends to the main cabin.

KORSHUNOV

The taste of defeat is bitter, no?

MARSHALL

One thing I've learned as

President... all defeats are temporary and all victories are
temporary. Today's conquerors are tomorrow's vanquished.

KORSHUNOV

e

Very poetic.

Zedeck arrives with a glass of water.

MARSHALL

And there's one thing I've learned
from being a sports fan.

Zedeck brings the cup of water to Marshall's lips. Marshall
tips his head back to receive it.

KORSHUNOV

And that is?

Water spills over Marshall's face. He shakes it off.

MARSHALL

It ain't over, til it's over.

With blinding speed, Marshall leaps to his feet and swings
his arm around Zedeck's throat. He snaps Zedeck's neck with
quiet efficiency.

Gibbs fires at Marshall, but Marshall, using Zedeck as a
shield, grabs hold of the terrorist's MP5 and lets loose...
mowing down the former Secret Service agent.

The rest of Gibb's shots pelt against the cockpit controls
sending showers of sparks flying.

Korshunov whips out his gun and lines up a clean shot at
Marshall's head.

MAJOR CALDWELL

Mr. President.

Korshunov fires at Marshall, but...

Major Caldwell dives in front of the bullet spray taking the
rounds in his chest.

Marshall turns his aim to Korshunov... but Korshunov grabs
Alice and presses his pistol to her head.

Stand-off.

KORSHUNOV

Don't be hasty.

Marshall holds Korshunov in his sights. Slowly advancing.

KORSHUNOV

You love your daughter, Mr.

President. And I love my country.

It's a fair trade.

Korshunov backs away to the steps. Marshall does not lower his gun. Korshunov disappears down the staircase.

MARSHALL

Shepherd.

SHEPHERD

Sir...

Shepherd stands. Marshall unwraps Shepherd's hands.

MARSHALL

Call Petrov...

(to Rose)

I'll be back.

ROSE

Both of you.

Marshall slowly descends the steps to the main cabin. As soon as Shepherd gets her hands loose, Rose rushes to Caidwell's aid. Shepherd crosses to the communications panel and picks up a headset. Begins dialing numbers

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

In his nightdress, Stoli Petrov nurses a vodka on ice. His

PHONE RINGS.

PETROV

Petrov.

Petrov's eyes widen.

EXT. MOSCOW PRISON EXERCISE YARD - NIGHT

A wall of bars part and Stravanavitch walks through. Into the main exercise yard.

The main gate separates him from...

A group of men wait in the street by a limousine.

The main gate opens slowly.

When the men sees Stravanavitch they come to attention and salute him. Stravanavitch returns the salute. And then starts his march toward his limousine...

A SIREN WAILS. LIGHTS FLOOD THE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF THE PRISON.

The front gate begins to close. Worry crosses Stravanavitch's face. His men rush toward him, take position by the gate.

Stravanavitch breaks into a run toward his limousine.

GUARD

Halt! Halt!

Stravanavitch looks behind him. Guards rushing toward him from the yard... the limousine fifty yards ahead of him... closing fast...

On the limo... the back door open and waiting.

A shot rings out from the guard tower, followed by another, and another. Like popcorn starting to pop. Stravanavitch's men return fire. A minor war breaks out. Loyal guards battling Stravanavitch sympathizers.

Stravanavitch caught in the middle, hit by one bullet, then another, then another. He makes it to the open rear door of the limousine, but collapses dead.

Everyone stops firing. Stravanavitch's men rush to his side..

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Petrov slips under the covers as an aide knocks on his door.

PETROV

What is it?

AIDE

It's about Stravanvaitch.

PETROV

What about him?

AIDE

He's dead, sir. Shot while trying to escape.

A beat.

PETROV

So be it. The world will sleep easier.

Petrov turns out his bedside light.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, MAIN CABIN - NIGHT

Marshall ascends down from the upper deck. Spots Korshunov by the front stairway. Korshunov pushes Alice down the stairs to the underdeck.

INT. COCKPIT - NIGHT

Autopilot engaged. A shower of sparks erupts from one of the bulletholes in the panel.

Directional compass... the course heading drifts off to the south.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The squadron of F-15 still surround Air Force One, which slowly banks to one side.

INT. F-15 COCKPIT - NIGHT

COL. CARLTON

They've changed their bearing.
(into headset)
Air Force One. Air Force One.

Over... Air Force One please respond...

FIGHTER PILOT #1

Sir, this new bearing. We're headed
for Iraq, sir.

INT. PILOT'S REST AREA.

Unaware of the course drift, Shepherd and Rose lift Caldwell onto a bunk.

ROSE

Easy, Major. Easy.

MAJOR CALDWELL

The President?

ROSE

You saved his life.

Caldwell smiles, settles peacefully back in the cot. He dies.

Rose reaches up and shuts his eyes.

INT. LOWER GALLEY - NIGHT

Marshall makes his way through the dimness. Stepping cautiously.

A shot rings out and ricochets off a piece of piping right over Marshall's head.

Undaunted Marshall advances.

MARSHALL

It's over, Korshunov. You won. Now
let her go.

He listens, footsteps ahead of him.

ON Korshunov - holding Alice by her hair, practically dragging her over the mid-section wing cross-braces.

As Marshall appears in the gangway he fires off another shot, hitting a cooling vent. Steam fills the' gangway area, bathed in red auxiliary lighting.

Korshunov retreats toward the rear of the plane.

MARSHALL (O.S.)

There's nowhere to go.

INT. CONTROL TOWER - NIGHT

SUPER - "HUSSEIN AIR BASE, NORTHERN IRAQ"

A cacophony of Arabic. The radar indicates an apparent invasion force heading for its borders.

EXT. AIR FIELD - NIGHT

Iraqi pilots rush to their MiGs.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM -

All eyes on the tactical display... Air Force One's course has arced south and the plane is heading straight for Iraq.

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

They aren't answering their hails.

DEAN

This doesn't make sense.

V.P. CHANDLER

How close are they?

GENERAL NORTHWOOD Fifteen miles, so two minutes.

LEE

The Iraqi Ambassador won't take our calls. We're trying to get through to their Central Command.

DEAN

To tell them what? The great infidel himself is flying overhead, Go get him? This is a man they burn in effigy daily.

V.P. CHANDLER

If challenged, our fighters are to state that they are on a rescue mission.

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

Iraqi's won't buy it. Either they're already in on this or they'll think we're spying.

V.P. CHANDLER

If fired upon, tell our fighters
that they are ordered to engage.

INT. REAR BAGGAGE HOLD - NIGHT

Marshall checks behind the racks of stored goods and luggage.

P.O.V. LOOKING DOWN A GUNSIGHT AS MARSHALL WALKS INTO THE

open.

A finger on the trigger.

ALICE

Dad, look out.

Korshunov fires and Marshall dives out of the way. He cones
up in defensive crouch ready to shoot, but all he can see is
Alice.

MARSHALL

How you doing, sweetie?

ALICE

Been better, Dad... You?

Marshall smiles briefly. But Alice is yanked around the
corner. Marshall hears footsteps. He jumps to his feet and
cautiously follows.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - EVENING

On the tactical display as a second group of fighters appear.
ready to challenge the F-15's.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Air Force One and the cluster of F-15's zoom by.

COL. CARLTON

Air Force one... please respond. Air
Force One, you are entering hostile
air space. Air Force one...

All Carlton receives is static.

INT. AFO'S COCKPIT.

Nobody at the wheel. The automatic pilot is still engaged.

INT. F-15 EAGLE COCKPIT.

Con. CARLTON Okay, guys, time to earn your paychecks. Stay
in protective formation, and do not engage, I repeat, do not
engage... unless you are fired upon. All wings acknowledge.

FIGHTER PILOT #1

Halo one, acknowledged.

FIGHTER PILOT #2

Halo two, acknowledged.

The rest of the pilots chime in.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, LOWER AFT GALLEY - NIGHT

Marshall swings into the cubicle... empty.

He crosses to the cargo bay/parachute launch ramp hatchway.

Looks through the porthole.

Korshunov straps on one of the few remaining parachutes. He tosses the rest of the spares out onto the platform.

Marshall steps onto the platform. Korshunov fires off a round forcing him behind the door for cover.

Korshunov pulls Alice in front of him and yanks down the ramp activation lever.

KORSHUNOV

Stay where you are.

The ramp lowers, and Alice gets her first look at the drop.

Marshall watches the remaining parachutes slide off the ramp and into the stormy sky.

KORSHUNOV

There goes your ride.

MARSHALL

Let my daughter go or I'll take you out!

KORSHUNOV

If you put down the gun, I promise not to drop her on the way down.

Korshunov backs toward the edge of the ramp, pulling a struggling and fighting Alice.

MARSHALL

Let her go now! Or I will kill you.

Korshunov is a foot away from the edge of the ramp... two steps back, he and Alice will take the plunge.

Marshall lines up his shot. Korshunov laughs as he presses his pistol to Alice's ear.

KORSHUNOV

No you won't. You'll compromise...
like always.

MARSHALL

Hold on, Alice.

Marshall fires, his bullet ripping apart a good deal of
Korshunov's face and snapping his body back.

Korshunov tumbles off the platform, but his limbs are caught.
in Alice's. She's knocked to her belly and his dead weight
drags her off the edge of the platform.

ALICE

NO!

Marshall dives down the sloping platform, reaching out for
her...

Alice tries to grip the platform with her hands, but she
can't hold on. Her hand slip off the metallic lip.

But as she falls, she's caught by the wrist. Strong arms
pull her up. Her father's arms. He carries her back to the
safety of the plane. She's sobs uncontrollably.

ALICE

Oh NY god... oh my god... oh my god...

MARSHALL

It's okay, honey. I got you. I got
you. You're okay.

Shepherd and Rose appear. Marshall locks eyes with Rose...
smiles. Shepherd crosses to the parachute bins.

MARSHALL

Gone. They're all gone.

The plane shakes with the thunder of a supersonic boom.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

A half dozen MiGs race by the cluster of American aircraft
at breakneck speeds.

INT. IRAQI CONTROL TOWER - NIGHT

GENERAL CERALLOS eyes the radar.

IRAQI SOLDIER

The Americans say they are escorting
a damaged plane. Our pilots confirm
they are surrounding a 747.

CERALLOS

Did we warn them off?

IRAQI SOLDIER

Yes. They refused to alter course and the 747 would not answer our hails.

Cerrallos takes a moment, looking at the screen.

CERALLOS

It's some kind of trick... a preliminary airstrike in response to our troop movement.

IRAQI SOLDIER

They are in our airspace. We would be within our rights.

CERALLOS

The world would not look on us kindly if we shot down a civilian airliner.

The Soldier listens to chatter coming over his headset.

IRAQI SOLDIER

The pilot says it is does not have the markings of a commercial jet.

CERALLOS

Warn then again. If they don't respond... shoot them down. We will not be intimidated.

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

INT. MISSION COMMUNICATION CENTER - NIGHT

Another sonic boom.

MARSHALL

What is that sound?

Marshall makes his way to the cockpit.

Through the cockpit window, a MiG accelerates out of the darkness coming straight at us. At the last second it pulls up slightly, riding over the top of the 747.

Its sonic boom rocks the jumbo jet.

MARSHALL

My god. I think that was a MiG.

SHEPHERD

A MiG? Where the hell are we?

Marshall rushes back to one of the rear upper deck windows.

He looks out at the F-15s.

MARSHALL

They're flying a protection formation.
(beat)
Call D.C. Find out what's going on.

INT. COCKPIT, F-15 EAGLE - NIGHT

MIS PILOT (V.0.)

This is your last warning. You are
violating our airspace. Leave
immediately.

COL. CARLTON

I said back off and hold your fire.

We are on a rescue mission. Do not engage. I repeat, do not
engage.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

A MiG loops into position behind Carlton.

INT. MIG COCKPIT - NIGHT

switches his targeting computer on. Finds carlton in his
sights. Good tone.

The pilot pulls the trigger.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The missile detaches from the MiG and slides toward Carlton.

Carlton breaks formation, leading the missile astray. His
plane tucks into a tight little roll. The missile misses
over Carlton's rolling wings.

COL. CARLTON

Halo Team, this is group leader.

Halo Team is cleared to engage. I repeat, you are cleared to
engage.

Carlton pulls his plane into a monster climb.

COL. CARLTON

This is the real thing boys. Let's
fly and fry.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

A ringing phone is answered by an aide. A few beats.

AIDE

It's the Chief of Staff calling...
from Air Force One. They've retaken
control of the aircraft.

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

Then tell him to get the fuck out of
Iraq.

INT. COCKPIT - NIGHT

Marshall settles into the pilot's chair. Shepherd comes in.

SHEPHERD

Iraq, sir. We're over Iraq.

MARSHALL

Iraq? Shep, you're fired.

Marshall looks at the plane's bearing. The instruments are
shot to hell.

MARSHALL

Shit.

SHEPHERD

How long's it been since you flew,
sir?

MARSHALL

Twenty-five years.

EXT. SKY -

An F-15 follows a MiG into a barrel roll.

INT. MIG COCKPIT - NIGHT

The MIG pilot targets Air Force One. He cuts his speed as he
lines up his shot. Gets a lock.

MIG PILOT

(arabic/subtitle)

I have radar lock on the 747.

INT. COCKPIT - AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

On tactical computer - "RADAR LOCK"

"Dis-Engaging Auto-pilot"

The plane banks left into a dive. Marshall grabs the yoke.

INT. MIG COCKPIT -

Finger on the trigger.

MIG PILOT

It's evading. Can I take the shot?

MIG LEADER (V.O.)

Take the shot.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Looking forward from underneath an F-15, the MiG heads toward Air Force One. The F-15 fires a sidewinder.

On the MiG... as it fires its missile. The F-15's sidewinder blows the MiG up, taking the missile with it.

Air Force One is clear... for the time being.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, COCKPIT - NIGHT

MARSHALL STRUGGLES TO REGAIN CONTROL OF THE 747. HE OVER-

compensates and the plane rocks side-to-side.

ROSE

What are you doing?

MARSHALL

Flying the plane.

ROSE

You haven't even driven a car since you took office.

Marshall checks out the tactical display.

MARSHALL

I'm sure it's like riding a bicycle... downhill with no brakes and somebody shooting at you.

Marshall finds the throttle, pushes it up all the way. He feels the plane out, gently nudges it into a turn.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Two MiGs flare out of an engagement with the F-15's and break toward Air Force One.

COL. CARLTON

We got two on the loose. Someone get on them.

FIGHTER PILOT #2

Halo Two... I can't get there in time.

COL. CARLTON

Bullshit. Do it.

The two MiGs lock onto Air Force One. Each fires a missile at the President's plane, before breaking in opposite directions.

INT. AFO COCKPIT - NIGHT

A red buzz. It's all Marshall can do to keep the plane flying straight.

MARSHALL

We got two coming at us!

Tactical Countermeasures Computer... as it tracks the incomings...

"Heat Seekers"

"Launching Flares"

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

Brightly burning flares launch from either side of Air Force One's wings and descend toward earth.

The missiles follow the heat of the flares, plummeting harmlessly to earth.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE COCKPIT - NIGHT

The shock waves from a nearby MiG explosion shakes the plane.

In the aftermath, Marshall takes a moment and pulls on the pilot's headset.

MARSHALL

U.S. Pilots, this is Air Force One.

COL. CARLTON

Copy Air Force One. Welcome to the party.

FIGHTER PILOT #1 (V.0.)

I'm on it.

INT. AFO COCKPIT - NIGHT'

MARSILALL

Can you... can you drop in front of me? I'll follow you out.

COL. CARLTON

Hang tough, I'm on my way.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

On the two MiG's heading for Air Force One.

An F-15 drops in behind them. The MiGs scissor and break in OPPOSITE directions. The F-15 can only follow one of them.

FIGHTER PILOT 11

I'm tight on one, the other's loose.

I need help down here.

The other MiG comes up on the 747 and opens fire with his CANNONS. The shells rip up the surface of the aircraft's wing. The MiG swoops past Air Force One and jerks into a * vertical.

On the damaged wing - Fuel starts leaking out and the outer jet engine catches fire.

INT. COCKPIT, AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

Red warning light flashes on the control panel.

MARSHALL

We're hit. We've got an engine on fire.

COT. CAALTON (V.O.)

Shut it down. Shut it down.

Marshall reaches over and toggles the shutoff switch.

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

The engine whirs to a halt and the rushing wind blows out the fire. But now she's only got three engines.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

Through the cockpit window, an F-15 settles in front of Air Force One... Flames pouring out of its tail. Under any other condition, it would be pretty. Alice, Rose and Shepherd watch Marshall fly.

MARSHALL

This is President Marshall. I know you guys are busy, but we need some help here.

INT. CARLTON'S F-15 COCKPIT - NIGHT

Canton in pursuit of a Mis.

COL. CARLTON

Mr. President, it's an honor. Now with your permission can we lead you the fuck out of here.

MARSHALL

You read my mind.

COL. CARLTON

Put your pilot on.

MARSHALL

He's busy being dead.

Carlton breaks left, lines up a MiG and fires. He nails the Iraqi aircraft.

COL. CARLTON

Who's flying the fucking plane?

MARSHALL

I'm doing what I can.

COL. CAELTON

Can you, can you change your heading to Zero Four One point six?

MARSHALL

Negative. We've lost navigation. I don't know where that is.

Buzzer sounds in Carlton's cockpit. He's been locked on.

COL. CARLTON

Oh shit. Hang on. Somebody help me out. I got one up my ass.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Carlton puts his plane into a triple canopy roll then slams on his airbrakes. The MiS shoots by him and Carlton lets loose with his CANNONS. The MiG pulls up and disengages.

COL. CARLTON

Two and three are heading toward the Boeing.

COL. CARLTON

Okay. We're gonna arc a fat one to the right. Got it?

MARSHALL

Got it.

COL. CARLTON

Stay cool.

Carlton's plane edges around to the right... and Marshall follows. The 747 leans at an angle and continues the turn until the F-15 is dead ahead. Another plane explodes ahead of him at three o'clock.

MARSHALL

How we doing, Colonel?

COL. CARLTON

We still got three MiGs running around
and six more on the way.

Can't you fly any faster?

IRA'. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

All eyes are glued to the tactical screen, showing the
dogfight. They listen to the radio traffic.

MARSHALL

We're at full throttle.

FIGHTER PILOT #1 (V.O.)

Air Force One, MiGs four and five are on your tail.

MARSHALL

Well get `em off me, goddamnit.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Two MiGs targeting the big bird.

FIGHTER PILOT #1

I can't get a lock. Break right.

Break right.

INT. AFO COCKPIT - NIGHT

Marshall struggles with his stick turning the aircraft to
the right.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Of course its pointless. The Boeing is a fucking sloth
compared to these fighters.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE COCKPIT - NIGHT

The familiar buzz. Tactical computer. "RADAR LOCK"

Alice notices the computer. At the upper right hand of the
screen, the computer displays Defensive Mode/Offensive Mode.

Defensive Mode is highlighted.

ALICE

Daddy, look. It says...

Alice reaches out and touches the screen.

MARSHALL

Not now, pumpkin.

Alice's touch activates offensive mode.

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

Along the belly of the aircraft, two hatches pivot open, revealing a series of missiles.

SKY - AS THE F-15 JOCKEYS WITH THE `NO MIGS

FIGHTER PILOT #1

I can't get good tone.

COL. CARLTON

Take the shot.

The F-15 fires, but the Sidewinder screams past the turning MiGs.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, COCKPIT - NIGHT

Tactical computer... Over graph display.

"Offensive Counter Measures Activatedw "Launching Missiles"

ERR. AIR FORCE ONE -

The Flying White House launches two sparrow missiles. The MiGs release flares, but the Sparrows don't flinch.

Twin FIREBALLS erupt in the sky as the Mics evaporate.

But from the fireball, a MISSILE emerges coming right at Air Force One.

Closing fast.

FIGHTER PILOT #2

Boss, they got one off.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

On the console... sparks fly.

Tactical computer flashes... "SYSTEM FAILURE"

"Missile Locked"

MARSHMj What did you touch? What did you touch!?

ALICE

Nothing!

Marshall checks display.

MARSHALL

Oh shit. It's got us.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The missile has Air Force One dead to rights, crawling right up its tail pipe.

Just before its about to hit the plane...

FIGHTER PILOT 11

YAAAAAAAAAH!

An F-15 swoops up from below. Like a Secret Service agent during an assassination attempt...

The F-15 takes the bullet in its mid-section. BOOM!

The blast slams bits of the fighter plane against Air Force One. Rocking it badly. Chunks of the plane rip away metal sheeting on the 747's wings and tail section.

INT. F-15 COCKPIT - NIGHT

COL. CARLTON

We got six more bogeys, closing fast from the south.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

A squadron of Navy F-14s drops into the theatre. The cavalry.

NAVY SQUADRON LEADER (V.0.)

You Air Force boys get that plane out of here. We'll take care of those MiGs.

COL. CARLTON

Roger that. Kick ass, Navy.

NAVY SQUADRON LEADER (V.0.)

That's affirmative.

INT. COCKPIT - NIGHT

Marshall works the controls of the 747. Tries to engage the automatic pilot. The system is fried. Marshall wrestles with the yoke.

MARSHALL

Uh, we got a problem here.

COL. CARLTON

Just stay on my wing, sir. I'll take you all the way in.

MARSHALL

No. We're losing fuel and my rudder's not responding.

COL. CARLTON

Lemme take a look.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Canton pulls up and drops back over the plane. He looks down at the Boeing's wing.

COL. CARLTON

Aw, man. You're torn up pretty bad out here, sir. Do you have any elevater control.

MARSHALL

Sluggish... I think it's jammed too.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

COL. CARLTON

Uh, Tower, we got a problem up here.

Sir, I got some bad news. Air Force One... there's no way they can bring it down. Plane's damaged, it's unlandable.

INT. AIR FORCE ONE, COCKPIT - NIGHT

Marshall looks out the side cockpit window, sees Carlton's F-15 fly steady with his.

COL. CARLTON

I'm sorry, sir.

Carlton salutes Marshall. Marshall returns it.

MARSHALL

Thanks for your help, Colonel.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

General Northwood collapses into his chair.

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

They've got no chutes. They can't control the plane, their engines are failing and they're losing fuel.

DEAN

I prefered the terrorists.

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

That's game, set, and match. There's nothing to do, except call the Chief Justice.

V. P. CHANDLER

The Chief Justice? What on earth for?

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

To swear you in as President.

Dead silence in the room.

General Greely ambles over to the tactical map and just stares at it. He loosens his tie and scratches his head.

GENERAL GREELY

Where's your strike team, General?

GENERAL NORTHWOOD

On their way back to Turkey. Why?

GENERAL GREELY

I just had the craziest idea.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

KC-10 Transport plane.

KC-10 PILOT Romeo Tango Zulu. We copy. Change of Orders acknowledged. We are en route.

The KC-10 banks into a turn.

INT. COCKPIT, AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

Alice, Rose and Shepherd stand behind the pilot's seat.

MARSHALL

(into header)

Is it our only option? - Then do it.

Marshall looks to the others.

MARSHALL

We're now over the Black Sea, so even if they could get us chutes we'd drown or die of hypothermia

before they could get to us. We've got one other option though...

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

Standard news shot. CNN REPORTER facing the camera.

REPORTER

incredible, yet unconfirmed reports, of White House staff members parachuting from the plane while the President himself battled these

terrorists.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A family gathers around their T.V. set to hear the report.

REPORTER (TELEVISION)

Yet now, in a bizarre twist of events, CNN has learned that Air Force One has been severely crippled and is virtually unlandable and our sources report that the First Family is trapped onboard. A daring mid-air rescue operation is said to be underway.

INT. COCKPIT, AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

MARSHALL

How long's it been?

SHEPHERD

Twenty five minutes. They should be here any moment.

MARSHALL

They better. Fuel's almost gone.

Up ahead, navigation lights.

ALICE

There they are!

MARSHALL

Okay, I'm slowing us down.

INT. MAIN CABIN - NIGHT

Shepherd crosses to the forward cabin door. He follows directions for emergency door release.

EXT. AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

The emergency door opens and the emergency raft/slide deploys. It inflates before being ripped from the aircraft, gently wafting through stormy clouds.

INT. MAIN CABIN - NIGHT

Air rushes past the airplane at two hundred miles an hour.

SHEPHERD

IT'S OPEN!

INT. COCKPIT -

MARSHALL

DO YOU SEE TEEM?

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

**ROSE (O.S.)
CAN YOU SEE THEM?**

Shepherd looks out into the night sky. Inky blackness and greying clouds. The horizon, though, lightens as dawn approaches.

Shepherd spots navigational lights descending from above.

**SHEPHERD
HERE THEY COME!**

EXT. KC-10 TRANSPORT - NIGHT

It's side cargo door is wide open. Army Rangers begin winching out three-inch wide cable.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The KC-10 practically on top of Air Force One. Separated by forty feet. Super flying.

The cable slaps against the side of Air Force One and drags along it's edge. As it slides past the open doorway, Shepherd grabs it and hauls it into the plane until he has its end. He hooks the cable to a metal clasp at the top of the door frame.

**SHEPHERD
WE'RE HOOKED!**

INT. AIR FORCE ONE COCKPIT -

MARSHALL
We're hooked. Hove into position.

KC-10 PILOT (RADIO)
Romeo Tango Zulu, acknowledged. We are assuming position.

A red light flashes on the control panel. Engine number two grinds to a halt. The pressure guages drop to zero.

MARSHALL
Get going. We don't have much time left.

Rose bends down and kisses Marshall on the cheek.

ROSE
I love you. I just wanted you to know that.

Marshall holds her with his eye.

MARSHALL

I love you too.
(beat)
We're going to make it.

Alice throws her arms around her father.

ALICE

My school play's Tuesday night.
Promise me you'll be there.

MARSHALL

I promise.

Gauges show fuel is low on the remaining turbofans.

EXT. SKY -

The transport plane dips into a lateral position. The two planes are connected by a hundred yards of cable.

FIVE ARMY RANGERS in snatch harnesses slide down the cable bridge onto Air Force One. As they hit the open doorway, they unclip and sail into the main cabin.

ARMY RANGER #1

Let's get you folks out of here.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - EVENING

Electronics department. Banks of television sets. Shoppers watch intently. The audio broadcast plays over a map of the region and a graphic of Air Force One.

KC-LO PILOT (V.O.)

Tower, Air Force One has been boarded.

TOWER (V.O.)

Romeo Tango Zulu, copy One the television, graphics of the First Family against the Presidential Seal.

REPORTER

You're listening to an intercepted audio feed of radio communications between Air Force One and Army Special Forces, flying side-by-side, attempting to get the first family off the damaged aircraft.

INT. MAIN CABIN -

Three Army Rangers harness themselves to the survivors. One to Alice, one to Rose and one to Shepherd. The other two

head for the cockpit.

Alice and her Ranger are ready.

ARMY RANGER

We're set.

ALICE

Mon...

ROSE

You can do it, baby.

ARMY RANGER

Hold on tight. The first step's a bitch.

Alice takes a deep breath, closes her eyes...

The soldier clips on the cable, and shoves off the lip of the doorway, SAILING DOWN THE WIRE.

They plummet, Alice screaming. The line goes taut.

The pair slide the hundred yards to the KC-10. Rangers grab them and bring them into the transport.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - EVENING

Shoppers listen to television sets, galvanized.

KC-10 PILOT The first daughter is on-board.

INT. COCKPIT, AIR FORCE ONE - NIGHT

With a smile.

MARSHALL

Acknowledged.

Two Army Rangers approach the cockpit.

ARMY RANGER #1

Mr. President!

Army Ranger #2 slides into the co-pilot's seat.

ARMY RANGER #2

I'll take it, sir. You get going.

INT. MAIN CABIN - NIGHT

Rose clips on to a Ranger's harness.

ROSE

Ready!

They clip on the wire, move to the lip, and rappel off the side of the plane.

INT. AFO UPPER DECK - NIGHT

As the first Ranger leads Marshall through the M.C.C.

WHEN A SHOT RINGS OUT...

The soldier at the flight yoke slumps over dead.

Marshall and the first Ranger swing around to see...

A bloody but smiling Gibbs, lying on the deck, clutching an

MP5.

The Ranger draws his weapon...

But Gibbs swings his rifle around. Pulls the trigger. BAM.

BAM. BAM. Hitting the Ranger.

The Ranger returns fire, shooting round after round at Gibbs before pitching over, dead.

Gibbs draws a bead on the President, smiles... but he doesn't have any strength left to pull the trigger. He expires.

And the plane begins to dive. Marshall runs for the cockpit.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Rose and her Ranger are pulled aboard the transport.

INT. MAIN CABIN -

Shepherd and his Ranger clip onto the wire, but the KC-10 is now higher than Air Force One.

INT. AFO COCKPIT -

With Marshall back at the yoke.

KC-LO PILOT

Air Force One, you're losing altitude.

MARSHALL

I can't hold it!

HANG ON. KC-LO PILOT (V.0.)

EXT. SN - NIGHT

The KC-10 transport dips lower and lower, trying to maintain its position under the descending plane.

KC-10 PILOT

Tower, Romeo Tango Zulu. The First Lady is onboard. Air Force One, status?

MARSHALL

We've lost two of your men. There's no one to fly the plane.

KC-10 PILOT (V.O.)

We can send another one over.

MARSHALL

No time. I only have one engine left.

INT. MAIN CABIN - NIGHT

ARMY RANGER

Come on!

SHEPHERD

What about the President?

ARMY RANGER

He's on his way.

With the KC-10 back in the Position, Shepherd and his Ranger shove off the dying plane toward safety.

TNT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

KC-10 PILOT

The Chief of Staff is onboard. We are at six thousand feet descending rapidly.

Everyone's biting their nails.

TNT. AIR FORCE ONE COCKPIT - NIGHT

MARSHALL

I can't stabilize it.

KC-10 PILOT

Sir, we're going to pound pavement in less than three minutes.

Marshall holds the yoke in one hand and unclips the snatch harness from the dead ranger in the co-pilot's seat.

The last red light on the engine control panel starts to flash.

MARSHALL

I'M LOSING NUMBER FOUR!

Marshall, still fighting the yoke, stands. He takes a deep

breathn, drops the wheel and runs like a motherfucker for the stairs.

EXT. SICY, AIR FORCE ONE.

Drops into a banking twist.

The cable line runs taut.

The KC-10 tries to compensate.

TNT. CABIN

Marshall dives down the stairs from the upper deck, comes up sprinting for the door.

TNT. AIR FORCE ONE, COCKPIT -

Engine four fails.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM -

KC-10 PILOT (V.O.)

She's out of control. I can't pace her.

INT. MAIN CABIN -

The taut straining cable snaps one corner of the metal clasp.

The clasp starts to bend.

IN SLOW MOTION -

MARSHALL sprinting to the open door.

The clasp twisting. The cable hook ready to slip of f it.

Marshall clips on, and dives out of the door. He slides forty feet down, when....

The clasp gives. The cable line snaps away from the plane... one end connected to the KC-10, the other connected to...

Nothing.

EXT. SKY

Marshall slides down the cable, gripping at it, trying to break his fall.

Air Force One plummets toward the water.

Marshall sliding, right behind it, running out of cable.

At the end of his rope, literally. Marshall's harness snags on the end clasp. He hangs on for dear life.

Moments later Air Force One impacts.

A huge EXPLOSION, water and flames blows sky high into the night.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM -

KC-10 PILOT

Tower. Air Force One is down...

INT. SPORTS BAR - EVENING

Dead silence as all the patrons stare up at the T.V.

KC-10 PILOT

I repeat, Air Force One is down.

TOWER

Romeo Tango Zulu. Do you have the President?

No response...

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

TOWER

Romeo Tango Zulu, please respond. Do you have the President? Over.

Still no response...

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The massive fireball and glowing remains of the Presidential aircraft almost reaches up to where the President struggles to hold on to the end of the cable.

INT. KC-10 TRANSPORT

ARMY RANGER

Winch it up! Winch it up!

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Marshall slipping off the line, unable to get a solid hold.

His hands slick with blood.

The belly of the KC-10 gets closer and closer.

MARSHALL

Come on. Ten more seconds.

He closes his eyes. His fingers begin to give.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

All over America, families, gathered around their televisions, wait.

TOWER

Romeo Tango Zulu, do you have the President? Over.

KC-LO PILOT

Stand by.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - NIGHT

TOWER

Romeo Tango Zulu this is Tower.

Please report. over.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

A long beat of silence, then...

TOWER

Romeo Tango Zulu, do you copy? Do you have the President?

Another long beat.

KC-LO PILOT

We copy. Stand by...
(beat)
Tower?

TOWER

Tower, here.

KC-LO PILOT

This is Romeo Tango Zulu changing call signs.

(beat)

Tower, alert air traffic, Romeo Tango Zulu is now Air Force One.

(beat)

This is Air Force One... The President is safe onboard.

TOWER

Copy, Air Force One.

Cheers flood the situation room.

Cheers flood the Department Store.

Cheers flood the press room, the living room, the sports bars, churches, schools, construction sites, hospitals... all across America.

INT. KC-10 HOLD - DAWN

Marshall huddles tight with Rose and Alice as a MEDIC attends to their wounds.

ARMY RANGER

Mr. President?

Marshall turns to see this soldier, a fresh-faced, 19-year-old kid, saluting his Commander-in-chief.

ARMY RANGER

Welcome aboard, sir.

Marshall returns the salute.

EXT. SKY - DAWN

The KC-10 soars into the emerging sunrise, flying in the center of the remaining F-15 formation.

FADE TO BLACK