

DESERTION

by  
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EXT. COMMUNIST APARTMENT BLOCKS - EVENING

Large cookie cutter apartment blocks, dull and grey.

An old lady, weak and frail, struggles along with two cloth shopping bags.

TV NEWSCASTER (V.O.)  
Soviet Union General Secretary  
Brezhnev has agreed to bilateral  
talks with Czechoslovakia.

Two WORKERS pass the old lady, ignoring her as they sip on unmarked liquor bottles.

SUPER: 1968. SOFIA, BULGARIA.

EMILYE (18) - a black-haired, blue-eyed angel of a girl - hurries along, carries a bundle in her arms with a smile.

TV NEWSCASTER (V.O.)  
A meeting between the  
representatives of Bulgaria, the  
Soviet Union, East Germany, Poland,  
Hungary and Czechoslovakia is  
scheduled for August 3rd.

INT. KOLEV APARTMENT - EVENING

MAMA KOLEV (50) cooks in the tiny, cramped apartment while a TV plays the evening news.

TV NEWSCASTER  
While Czechoslovakia's Alexander  
Dubcek insists that his reforms are  
internal, Moscow and the rest of  
the world is not convinced.  
Bulgarian troops are preparing for  
any necessary action.

She pause at the chopping board, confused.

Emilye slips inside, gives a soft knock. Gives Mama Kolev a big smile and holds up her bundle.

BEDROOM

ANDREI KOLEV (18) - good-looking and pure of heart - sits on his bed, tense, trembling. Army fatigues are folded neatly on top of a camouflage bag.

He stares at his leg. Grips his knee and takes in a deep breath. Raises a kitchen knife.

MAMA KOLEV (O.S.)  
Andrei? Come here, please.

Andrei flinches, focuses again on his leg. Then deflates.

KITCHEN

Andrei emerges, trembling and empty-handed.

Emilye slips down the hallway behind him, out of his view.

Mama Kolev points out a box on top of the cupboard.

MAMA KOLEV  
Get that down for me?

Andrei pulls down the box and rests it on the table.

MAMA KOLEV  
Keep it in your room.

ANDREI  
Let's throw it out.

Andrei opens the box - an old dog collar, leash and food dish.

MAMA KOLEV  
Throw out what's perfectly good? It won't do any harm in your room. Go on, dinner's almost ready.

Andrei scoops up the box and heads for his room.

Mama Kolev follows behind him with a grin.

BEDROOM

Andrei stops in his tracks as Emilye steps up with a delectable grin. She wraps her arms around him and gives him a kiss.

She steps aside to reveal...

KAFO, a black lab puppy. He waddles up to Andrei's feet.

ANDREI  
Hey there, little one.

Emilye and Mama Kolev beam with pride as Andrei kneels down and plays with the pup.

Andrei notices the knife handle poking out from under his pillow. He rests the box there, covering it.

Kafo laps at Andrei's hands, delighted.

INT. COMMUNIST PARTY HQ - EVENING

SAVA KOLEV (30), handsome and earnest, walks alone down the wide corridor, nervous. Before him, two guards bookend a plain but imposing door.

As he passes an intersection...

GEORGI MARKOV (35), charming and lively, walks along with three ESCORTS. He lights up as he sees Sava.

GEORGI

Sava!

SAVA

Georgi, my friend. Good to see you.

Georgi waves his escorts on.

GEORGI

I'll be right out.

Sava and Georgi give each other a firm hug.

SAVA

How have you been? I hear you have a new play?

A devilish smile crosses Georgi's lips. He looks to his escorts, now out of earshot.

GEORGI

This one might not make it past the Committee.

Sava clicks his tongue.

SAVA

Georgi. You're becoming too good at stirring up trouble for yourself.

Down the way, the ornate door opens, and THREE SULTRY WOMEN are escorted out.

Sava and Georgi exchange a look of amusement.

GEORGI

I won't keep you, but we should have a drink sometime. Give my regards to President Zhivkov.

INT. ZHIVKOV'S OFFICE - EVENING

PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV (55), a grumpy weasel of a man, is flanked by his officials as they watch the TV news broadcast.

Sava chews his lip, keeps one eye on the TV, the other on Zhivkov.

ON TV: In a rundown section of the city, a large truck has taken out the corner of a building.

TV NEWSCASTER

Walled-off and concealed from the rest of the building, which has served as the headquarters of Writer's Union since 1958...

ON TV: Police swarm about the corner of the building. Lights pour over a hidden cramp space.

TV NEWSCASTER

WW2-era operational documents of the Fascist Monarchist Alliance have been uncovered.

ON TV: Police drag out a large chest with a Swastika on it.

Zhivkov perks up, intrigued.

Sava turns his attention back to the TV, proud.

TV NEWSCASTER

Several Bulgarian nationals, as well as citizens in Germany and France have already emerged as former collaborators.

ZHIVKOV

Ha! Sting a few asses at home, shake a few hornet nests abroad. This was all you?

SAVA

Your men supplied me all of the names, of course. But the real success was in the laboratory. To age the papers and make them seem authentic was an admirable task.

ZHIVKOV

Sava Kolev, is it?

Zhivkov gestures to his men. One steps forward, offers Sava a cigar.

Zhivkov sizes up Sava, proud.

ZHIVKOV  
I've got a nose for people.

INT. KOLEV APARTMENT - NIGHT

Emilye washes dirty plates in the sink while Andrei smokes a cigarette at the window, in a dark mood.

EMILYE  
Honey. What is it?

Andrei crouches down and scratches Kafo behind the ears.

EMILYE  
Andrei.

No response.

SAVA (O.S.)  
Sorry, everyone.

Emilye takes a bowl, goes for the pot on the hot plate.

EMILYE  
We thought you went home.

Sava enters the kitchen, upbeat.

SAVA  
Oh no, I'm happy to stop by.

EMILYE  
Have a seat. We'll get you fixed--

SAVA  
No no no, I already ate. But.

Sava unwraps a cloth to reveal pastries. Emilye beams.

EMILYE  
Sava. How did you get this?

SAVA  
We're going to have more and more  
privileges now.

Andrei flicks his cigarette out the window and marches to his room, ignores Sava cold.

SAVA  
You alright, kid?

Andrei shuts his door, firm.

ANDREI'S BEDROOM

Sava watches Andrei pet Kafo, gloomy as hell.

SAVA

They're Czechoslovak, Andrei.  
Drunken little insects. Don't  
worry. With five armies lining  
their borders, they'll surrender.

ANDREI

We shouldn't be going there. It's a  
crime. And you and your kind are  
making me a criminal.

Sava flushes red. He steps into the room and closes the door  
behind him.

SAVA

Don't so much as think that  
nonsense.

ANDREI

I'm not allowed to think? Like the  
Czechoslovaks aren't allowed to--

Sava bellows loud in the tiny apartment.

SAVA

No more! Not a single word more.  
(eases off)  
Get yourself thrown in the uranium  
mines if you like. But don't put my  
neck at risk with this reckless  
talk.

Andrei looks up, eyes like daggers.

ANDREI

Whatever you say. Brother.

EXT. FOREST HILLTOP - DAY

An ARMY LIEUTENANT (40) waits at a hilltop crest as scores of  
SOLDIERS, loaded with equipment, jog up on foot.

MARKO MARIN (20), fit, eyes like a jaguar, is the first to  
arrive.

ARMY LIEUTENANT

Good man, Marko. At ease.

Marko drifts towards the crest, takes in giant gulps of air.  
Three more soldiers arrive up the hill.

ARMY LIEUTENANT

At ease.

They immediately strip their packs and helmets, breathe hard as they join Marko.

SOLDIER #1

Marko. You can take off your gear.

MARKO

I know.

But he doesn't.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Andrei looks up to the hilltop - still a long ways off - where more and more soldiers are collecting.

He stops a moment, not terribly winded.

He looks behind him, where only a small handful of OVERWEIGHT SOLDIERS approach.

He waits for them to get near, then Andrei takes off again.

INT. STATE SECURITY - DAY

The main headquarters of the Bulgarian Secret Police.

A flurry of activity in this large room with several tables, occupied by scores of intelligence officers.

SAVA'S OFFICE

Sava takes notes as two INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS brief him.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

As Vladimir Lenin said, "a man living in a society cannot be free from the society." Likewise, one state cannot free itself from the common interests of the larger community.

SAVA

I understand. The Czechoslovaks are digging their own graves, and the local press must reflect as much.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

Precisely.

The Intelligence Officers leave.

Sava opens a box - a handful of cigars, a snifter of cognac and a glass.

Sava smiles, grabs a cigar. Pats his shirt pockets.

HALLWAY

Sava rummages through a supply cabinet. Through the open door of a nearby office...

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER (O.S.)

Georgi Markov. A disgrace. Have you heard about his new play? Thumbing its nose at the Party. The Party that gives him his life, that gives him the right to pen his plays!

Sava looks concerned.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER (O.S.)

Well, we can rest assured. It's "curtains" for Georgi Markov.

The men chuckle. They shuffle closer towards the door, and Sava backs off. He bumps into Agent Tonchev, a.k.a. SHADOW, a short, squat man who seems to know what you're thinking.

Shadow watches Sava retreat into his office.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - NIGHT

Sava waits in his small sedan, tucked in between stacks of raw materials. He perks up as the headlights of a car sweep into the plot.

Georgi cuts the engine, slips out and follows Sava into the shadows.

A car drives by on the road. Sava watches it, paranoid.

SAVA  
The Politburo is not happy, Georgi.  
Is your exit visa still valid?

GEORGI  
Yes.

SAVA  
Use it. Tonight.

Pained, Sava gives Georgi a hug.

GEORGI  
Sava. Wait a minute. What's been  
said?

SAVA  
Go home, take what you can, but be  
quick. And don't arouse suspicion.

Sava heads for his car.

GEORGI  
Sava, wait--

SAVA  
You've finally done it, Georgi.  
You've... stirred up a deadly  
amount of trouble for yourself.  
Goodbye, my friend.

Georgi stands, stunned.

Sava climbs into his car and pulls away, leaving the  
headlights off until he reaches the street.

INT. COMMUNIST PARTY HQ - DAY

Sava stands in the somber, crowded room. He tenses, seeing  
that Shadow is staring at him.

A SOVIET DELEGATE shakes hands with Zhivkov as the power  
players take their seats.

SOVIET DELEGATE  
Moscow has decided to put an end to  
these liberalization efforts,  
despite what we declared in  
Bratislava.

Zhivkov nods.

SOVIET DELEGATE

This talk of self-determination in Czechoslovakia is detachment from the international workers' revolution, and direct action must be taken.

ZHIVKOV

We are in your hands.

SOVIET DELEGATE

Of the five Warsaw Pact countries, yours has been selected to invade with Soviet troops.

ZHIVKOV

It will be our honor.

Sava takes in a deep breath and puts on a brave face.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: August 19th, 1968.

EXT. TRAINYARD - DAY

Andrei squeezes onto the train car with his squadron.

EXT. STATION WAGON - DAY

Sava buckles into the spacious backseat. He gives orders to the handful of young JOURNALISTS on board.

SAVA

In the event we cross the border, we will be reporting protest, but no more than one sentence in our columns. Focus on the success of our troops, and the groundswell of support in the Czechoslovak government and its citizenry.

A dark sedan pulls up next to them, and the Intelligence Officer spills out. Serious. He beckons Sava.

Sava gets out, approaches.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

When is the last time you saw Georgi Markov?

SAVA  
 Weeks ago. Outside of comrade  
 Zhivkov's office. What's happened?

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER  
 Did he say anything out of the  
 ordinary to you?

SAVA  
 No. Is he okay?

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER  
 We'll discuss this matter upon your  
 return. Instructions are for you to  
 leave without delay.

Shadow steps out of the car.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER  
 Comrade Tonchev will accompany you.

INT. TRAIN CAR - DAY

Soldiers are packed like sardines, most on the floor.

As the train pulls away, the Lieutenant shoves Andrei against  
 the wall.

ARMY LIEUTENANT  
 Last one in, first one out!

The Lieutenant makes his way down the aisle.

ARMY LIEUTENANT  
 Privates! The Czechoslovaks have  
 two choices! To be our brother or  
 to be our enemy! Twenty four hours  
 track time, get your sleep, go over  
 your maps and maneuvers.

Andrei settles in, glares at the Lieutenant. Then notices the  
 hawk-eyed Marko glaring at him.

INT. STATION WAGON (MOVING) - DAY

Sava buckles in, glances at Shadow - who seems to quietly  
 judge him. Sava address the journalists.

SAVA  
 We've got a lot of work ahead of  
 us, comrades.

(MORE)

SAVA (CONT'D)

All material must pass inspection, but I will have little time myself to look over your shoulders. Pay strict attention to two major points. One. Czech dissent will be reported, but confined to the approved phrasing. Two. Subversive tactics of Western powers must be foremost in your readers' minds.

EXT. PRAGUE STREET - DAY

The ROAR of dissent as a crowd of hostile PROTESTORS fills the streets.

Andrei and his squadron hold them back as Soviet soldiers march past.

INT. HOTEL CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The roar outside this large luxury hotel is muffled but prominent.

Sava edits papers while the journalists write feverishly.

ON TV: *Thousands of protestors fill the streets, hostile to the foreign tanks and soldiers.*

Sava studies the scene outside the window, concerned.

ON TV: *Signs of protest, screams for freedom are showered upon the foreign troops.*

The TV cuts out, the screen turns to snow.

O.S. CHEERS from the neighboring conference room. A military officer appears in the doorway.

MILITARY OFFICER

Channel Two is down.

Sava readies a stack of papers on his desk.

SAVA

Any word on the radio stations?

MILITARY OFFICER

They're still barricaded inside Radio Prague, refusing to give up the building. Several stations are launching underground operations, but we'll find them soon.

Sava hands him the stack of papers.

SAVA  
Keep me updated.

EXT. PRAGUE SQUARE - DAY

Andrei surveys the furious crowd as his squadron opens up a barricade to let a military jeep pass.

A YOUNG COUPLE barks at Marko as he roughly pushes them clear of the barricade. The girl screams and hits him on the arm.

Marko pushes her down, hard.

Her boyfriend leaps over the barricade and grabs Marko, but beats him to the ground in a flash and draws his gun.

ANDREI  
No!

Andrei peels back his fellow soldiers, but before he can reach Marko SHOTS ring out, spreading panic through the crowd.

Andrei pulls back Marko, reveals the mortally wounded boy who pulls in jerky breaths.

ARMY LIEUTENANT  
Barricade, back! Open this road!

The Army Lieutenant grabs Andrei, furious.

ARMY LIEUTENANT  
Whose side are you on, Kolev?!

He takes in the sight of wounded boy, disturbed.

ARMY LIEUTENANT  
He's not going to live.

The Lieutenant looks around the area, worried. Narrows his eyes on Andrei.

ARMY LIEUTENANT  
Put him out.

Andrei looks back blankly.

Red with rage, the Lieutenant shakes Andrei and pulls Andrei's sidearm from his belt. He thrusts it into his hand.

ARMY LIEUTENANT  
Put him out, Kolev!

Andrei drops his gun. Resigned, he sinks to his knees.  
The Lieutenant raises his own sidearm to Andrei's head.

ARMY LIEUTENANT  
Are you refusing orders?

Andrei takes in the sun. Closes his eyes, he takes in his last breath.

A shot RINGS OUT and Andrei flinches as blood sprays his face.

Andrei opens his eyes to see the protestor shot dead. Then he looks up as the Lieutenant delivers a boot to Andrei's face.

INT. HOTEL CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The TV in the room still broadcasts snow.

The journalists are in the thick of their writing and editing. Sava oversees the operation, reading their work.

SAVA  
Final copy in twenty minutes! First  
radio report goes up at the top of  
the hour.

A CRACK against the window gets everybody's attention. Sava closes the curtains.

Sava hands a journalist's report back.

SAVA  
Omit the Czech military hiding in  
their bunkers. Say they're in the  
villages, showing their support and  
keeping the peace.

TWO POLITBURO MEMBERS slides into the room, flanked by soldiers.

POLITBURO MEMBER  
Mr. Kolev.

They look grim. Sava pales - something's wrong here.

HALLWAY

Sava is escorted down the hall, spooked.

INT. HOTEL SUPPLY ROOM - DAY

Dead silence.

Sava sits before the POLITBURO MEMBERS, an ARMY SECRETARY and the Army Lieutenant.

POLITBURO MEMBER  
Tell us about his Western  
sympathies.

SAVA  
Who?

POLITBURO MEMBER  
So you have several acquaintances  
with Western sympathies?

SAVA  
Is this about Georgi Markov?

The Politburo Member looks to the secretary, who makes a note.

SAVA  
I was asked about him recently. I--

POLITBURO MEMBER  
Your brother. Andrei Kolev.

SAVA  
What about him? Is he okay?

ARMY LIEUTENANT  
Andrei Kolev attacked his fellow  
soldiers, then he murdered a  
student.

Sava is speechless.

POLITBURO MEMBER  
We must ensure that these violent  
bourgeois sympathies don't run in  
the family, comrade Kolev.

SAVA  
This doesn't make any sense.

POLITBURO MEMBER  
You accuse us of lying?

Sava watches the secretary take note of this.

SAVA  
I mean to say, it's a shocking  
development.

POLITBURO MEMBER  
Pack your belongings, Mr. Kolev.  
You're returning home.

INT. HOLDING CELL - DAY

Broken and bloodied, Andrei curls up against the wall.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

Sava passes the conference room, where the journalists inside  
are still hard at work.

He sees Shadow, who collects documents at Sava's desk.

INT. SAVA'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Sava packs what he can from his suitcase into his briefcase.  
He takes in the room, thinks hard as the room seems to spin  
and close in around him.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

Sava peeks down the hall, where the two soldiers chat.

Sava breaks the key off on the inside door knob. He clicks  
the door shut and slips down the hall unseen.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Sava keeps his head down as he slides out the front door. He  
makes a bee-line for the station wagon and taps on the glass  
to wake the DRIVER.

EXT. MILITARY OUTPOST - DAY

The station wagon arrives at the checkpoint. Sava flashes his  
ID to the GUARD. The guard waves them through.

INT. MILITARY OUTPOST - DAY

Sava approaches the front desk.

SAVA  
I need to locate a soldier in  
custody. Andrei Kolev.

The OUTPOST CLERK checks his logbook.

OUTPOST CLERK  
And your name?

Sava shows him his ID.

SAVA  
Sava Kolev, State Security.  
(with a weak smile)  
No relation.

Sava glances up nervously at the nearby corridor.

OUTPOST CLERK  
BC5, at the south perimeter.

SAVA  
Thank you.

OUTPOST CLERK  
You have military clearance? State  
Security doesn't have jurisdiction.

SAVA  
I certainly do. I have orders to  
pick him up now.

OUTPOST CLERK  
I need to see them.

Sava looks at the station wagon, thinks.

OUTPOST CLERK  
Sir, I need to see those orders.

SAVA  
I'm wondering if I left them back  
at the... I'll be right back.

Sava heads out. The Clerk stares after him.

EXT. MILITARY OUTPOST - DAY

Sava scans his eyes over the outpost property as he approaches the station wagon.

INT. STATION WAGON (MOVING) - DAY

Sava climbs in.

SAVA

Let's go.

The driver leaves. As soon as they're out of the view of the outpost building...

SAVA

Take a right up here. We need to find BC5.

The driver does so. They drive past several buildings, Sava's eyes peeled.

Building "BC5". Sava spots the Army Lieutenant loitering outside next to a jeep.

SAVA

Stop!

The driver does so. The Army Lieutenant's eyes flick up to the station wagon before he turns back to the jeep.

Soldiers escort Andrei out of the building and into the jeep.

The Army Lieutenant climbs into the passenger seat and the jeep takes off.

Sava keeps his hand up, shielding his face and staring as the jeep drives past with Andrei.

Sava punches the seat in frustration.

SAVA

No! No! No!

Sava eyes fill with tears as he watches the jeep slide down the road, farther and farther away.

DRIVER

Mr. Kolev?

Tears fall as Sava hangs his head in despair.

DRIVER

Mr. Kolev?

Sava takes a breath. Struggles to speak with a steady voice.

SAVA

We've got to pick up a package. In  
Nuremberg, West Germany.

The driver turns around and heads for the outpost exit.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

The Politburo Members pound on Sava's door. Unable to open it, they nod to the soldiers, who break the door down.

EXT. LARGE HOTEL - DAY

The Politburo Members hustle out of the hotel. They look up and down the parked cars, one grabs a nearby soldier.

POLITBURO MEMBER

Which one is Sava Kolev's car?

The soldier shrugs, confused.

INT. STATION WAGON (MOVING) - NIGHT

Sava signs a paper on top of his briefcase.

EXT. IRON CURTAIN CHECKPOINT - NIGHT

From the backseat, Sava unrolls the window.

He passes an official-looking letter to the Soviet border guard.

SOVIET BORDER GUARD

I haven't been informed of any--

SAVA

You don't need to be informed. It's not an intelligence matter, not a military one. Now hurry up, I don't have all night.

SOVIET BORDER GUARD

Let me check with my captain.

SAVA

Do you know who you're speaking to?  
Look at that signature. It's from  
President Zhivkov himself!

The border guard looks at his fellow soldier, uncertain.

SAVA

Let me through! Or I'll make sure  
Moscow knows your name.

The border guard nods to his compatriots and they open the gate.

INT. STATION WAGON (MOVING) - NIGHT

The driver pulls forward.

Sava contemplates the tall barbed wire fence, the guard tower above.

Gaining distance from the checkpoint, Sava looks to the road ahead. Relieved, scared.

INT. TRANSPORT TRUCK - NIGHT

Bloodied, bruised and handcuffed, Andrei is thrown roughly into the back of a transport truck.

He winces, pained, then smirks at the TRANSPORT GUARDS who join him. One cracks Andrei hard in the ribs with the butt of his rifle.

TRANSPORT GUARD

What are you so happy about?!

Andrei grimaces in pain, then manages a smile.

ANDREI

When my brother gets me out of  
here, you'll have to answer to  
Zhivkov himself.

The transport guards exchange a glance, concerned.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: Ten Years Later. July 8, 1978.

INT. RADIO FREE EUROPE - DAY

The busy halls of a sound studio.

SUPER: Radio Free Europe. Munich, West Germany.

A large poster depicts a map of the Eastern bloc and reads "Radio Free Europe - broadcasting freedom to the peoples of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union."

Georgi Markov (now 45) hands a manuscript to a RADIO HOST.

GEORGI

Break a leg.

RADIO HOST

You're not going to listen?

GEORGI

I'm due back home London.

RADIO HOST

Have a safe trip, Georgi.

They shake hands, and the host makes his way to a sound booth.

INT. SOUND BOOTH - DAY

The radio host readies the manuscript, dons his headphones, and adjusts the microphone.

A small red light glows.

RADIO HOST

Welcome to episode seven of "Personal Meetings with President Todor Zhivkov", the memoirs of Bulgarian dissident Georgi Markov.

(beat)

My immediate impression of him was that Zhivkov was far removed from the intellectual leaders.

INT. ZHIVKOV'S OFFICE - DAY

Zhivkov (now 65) stares out the window, uncomfortable.

A recorder rests on a table. Marko (now 30) plays a recording of the broadcast tape for him...

RADIO HOST (V.O.)

(filtered)

He had not read many books and his education was limited. Even his vocabulary showed the uneasy combination of peasant language and pompous phrases. What I thought he lacked, above all, was imagination. No doubt he loved his power and basked in it, but with--

Zhivkov shoots a look to Marko, who snaps off the recorder.

MARKO

Radio Free Europe has put in a dozen new antennae. We're jamming the signal, but half of Bulgaria's been able to tune in.

Zhivkov nods, furious.

ZHIVKOV

I want Operation Wanderer put into effect immediately.

INT. URANIUM MINE - BELTLINE - DAY

Claustrophobic, dark and wet. Bare bulbs shed sparse light on MINERS that load chunks of rock onto conveyor belt cars.

MINE ROOM

A dark shaft, supported by wooden beams that creak and groan under pressure.

SUPER: HASKOVO URANIUM MINE, HASKOVO, BULGARIA.

The small lamp of a worker's hardhat illuminates the black earthen corner. The worker is slumped over, motionless. The pick axe slips out of his grasp.

From the corridor, the MINING SUPERVISOR pokes his head in, sees the worker.

MINING SUPERVISOR

Ah, shit. Ready another coffin!

He pulls the worker back, then flinches as our worker, Andrei (now 28) gasps for air.

MINING SUPERVISOR

What the godamn are you doing?!

Andrei comes to.

ANDREI

Sorry.

MINING SUPERVISOR

You sleeping?

ANDREI

No, I... I'm sorry, I'm okay.

MINER #1

Three more carts before lunch. Get busy!

ANDREI

Sorry.

With difficulty, Andrei lifts up the pick-axe. Brings it down on the rock.

And again.

And again as the supervisor leaves the room.

As soon as he's gone, Andrei lowers the axe. He rubs his chest in discomfort, checks his pulse on his jugular.

INT. KPON NEWSROOM - DAY

Sava (now 40) strides through the busy newsroom, furious. He carries a folder in his hand.

WALTER (V.O.)

You knew that the day you knocked on our door asking for a job.

INT. KPON EDITOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Sava fumes before the desk of the editor, fatcat WALTER BRIMM (50s).

SUPER: KPON, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

SAVA

I did not agree to censorship! To you twisting my words! What is the point of writing, if you are going to tear it up like wolves?!

WALTER

Take it easy.

Walter shoots a glance to KIP O'RILEY (40), a sun-tanned, plastic news anchor.

SAVA

I am not here to be a pawn in your game. To make a sensation of everything, little candies to throw to your audience. I am here to give them the truth.

WALTER

Truth is subjective. Everybody has an agenda.

SAVA

Mine isn't to sell advertising.

WALTER

I appreciate your position, now appreciate mine. I need viewers.

SAVA

These members of the People's Temple and of Jonestown deserve to be treated with dignity. Not to be mocked. You butchered my report...  
(shoot a thumb to Kip)  
...and had this mannequin deliver what was left.

KIP O'RILEY

Hey, pal.

WALTER

I'm not going to devote precious airtime to understanding all of the ins and outs of a bunch of nutcases. We have real news to report.

SAVA

These aren't nutcases. They aren't cult members. They are 1,000 U.S. citizens, mostly black, mostly poor, who embrace the Christian ethic, but their leader is a dangerous dictator. That's not news?

WALTER

Look. I like you, Sava. I like your integrity. But you need to be more of a team player.

Sava drops his head, angry, but keeping his emotions check.

SAVA

People's lives are at stake, and  
you refuse to speak up.

WALTER

You don't like how it works around  
here, plenty of other folks would  
love to have your job.

Sava throws up his hands and heads for the door.

Before he leaves...

SAVA

As much as you praise your  
democracy, it only works if there's  
an informed public.

Sava leaves.

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPER: September 11, 1978.

INT. URANIUM MINE - BREAK ROOM - DAY

Andrei - covered in grime - sits on the earthen floor, eats  
his paltry lunch among the other MINERS.

Andrei pulls a pack of cigarettes from his shirt, tosses it  
at the feet of the Mining Supervisor. The Mining Supervisor  
regards Andrei with suspicion.

ANDREI

Take them. I can't anymore.

The Mining Supervisor snatches them up. Takes out a cigarette  
and lights it.

MINING SUPERVISOR

Only man I know wants to live  
longer in this goddammed place.

EXT. SAVA'S HOUSE - EVENING

A spacious two-story house nestled among large trees and a  
wide lawn, hidden from the residential street.

Sava pulls up in his Suburban, parks next to a luxury car.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - EVENING

Comfortable, elegantly furnished with several racks of wine and wine cask decor that bear the stamp and logo of "Edora Vineyards."

Sava enters as JACLYN (35) - elegant and attractive - sits at the kitchen bar.

She looks at him, tears welling.

SAVA  
What is it?

INT. SAVA'S STUDY - EVENING

An ornate letter opener rests on a marble stand upon a large desk.

Two full walls lined with bookshelves, stacked from floor to ceiling. A reading table rests in the corner of this mini-library.

Sava paces on the phone.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. BUSH HOUSE - DAY

A simple office in the BBC World Service HQ, London.

ALISTAIR (50) speaks on the phone while two POLICE INVESTIGATORS carefully search the contents of a neighboring desk.

ALISTAIR  
Sava. How are you feeling? Have you had any fevers?

SAVA  
No. What's going on?

Alistair looks out over the streets of London, the Waterloo Bridge in the distance.

ALISTAIR  
Four days ago, Georgi arrived here at the BBC for work.

BEGIN MARKOV SEQUENCE:

INT. BUSH HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Georgi Markov arrives, rubs his leg in discomfort.

ALISTAIR (V.O.)

He was bothered by a small mark on his leg and recalled an incident only an hour before.

Georgi complains to Alistair about his leg.

EXT. LONDON BUS STOP - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

Georgi climbs up the stairs of Waterloo Bridge and stands in line at the bus stop.

ALISTAIR (V.O.)

On his way to work, he felt a pinch in his thigh. Like a splinter, nothing more.

A man behind him picks up a closed UMBRELLA from the sidewalk. Tips his hat and hustles across the street, hails a cab.

ALISTAIR (V.O.)

He recalled a man picking up an umbrella. Apologizing and hustling away.

Georgi rubs his leg.

INT. MARKOV'S APARTMENT - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

Eating dinner with his wife ANNABEL, Georgi looks terrible. Rubs his head.

He mutters quietly, stumbles off towards the bedroom.

ALISTAIR (V.O.)

That evening, he developed a high fever.

INT. LONDON HOSPITAL - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A DOCTOR and two NURSES monitor Georgi, concerned as he thrashes in his hospital bed.

ALISTAIR (V.O.)

By ten o'clock, he was admitted to hospital.

(MORE)

ALISTAIR (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 He related the incident at the bus  
 stop to the doctors, convinced that  
 Zhivkov was behind it.

Georgi gives a heated explanation. The doctors exchange looks  
 of skepticism.

ALISTAIR (V.O.)  
 But the doctors couldn't believe  
 his wild tale. They thought they  
 had a paranoid person on their  
 hands, raving about the KGB.

INT. LONDON HOSPITAL - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Orderlies plunge Georgi into an ice bath.

He hardly reacts.

ALISTAIR (V.O.)  
 He was treated for all kinds of  
 bacteria, but nothing worked.

END MARKOV SEQUENCE.

INT. BUSH HOUSE - DAY

ALISTAIR  
 (on phone)  
 I'm sorry. We lost him this  
 morning. The doctor has postulated  
 that it could be some sort of snake  
 venom, but we're still waiting on  
 results.

INT. SAVA'S STUDY - EVENING

Sava scans his teary eyes over his back yard.

SAVA  
 (on phone)  
 And on Todor Zhivkov's birthday.  
 Well done, you rats.

ALISTAIR  
 (on phone)  
 They're taking the investigation  
 quite seriously. They will get to  
 the bottom of it.

SAVA  
Thank you, Alistair.

Sava drops the phone back onto its cradle.

EXT. URANIUM MINE - SUNSET

Andrei is the last to emerge. He removes his hard hat and wipes his sweaty, grimy forehead.

He takes in a gulp of fresh air, looks to the foothills, catches the last few rays of sun.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - EVENING

Andrei and a dozen other hardened workers ride in a dirty bus.

EXT. ANDREI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Andrei approaches his apartment block. One dismal building containing dozens of tiny apartments.

INT. ANDREI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Andrei enters his apartment, grimy and beat. Kafo, now a pudgy, full grown dog, is there to greet him.

ANDREI  
Hey, boy.

Emilye (now 28) gives him a kiss and helps him out of his work clothes. With a squeal of delight, she embraces him.

ANDREI  
What's got into you?

LATER

Emilye, still with her mysterious smile, serves dinner and takes her seat.

Andrei - freshly bathed - looks at his food, suspicious.

ANDREI  
I give up.

Emilye takes a bite.

ANDREI

Tell me.

Emilye takes his hand and puts it on her belly.

Andrei's face goes limp.

EMILYE

I went to the doctor this morning.

A smile washes across his face.

He pulls her to her feet, and they hold onto one another tight, kissing each other with joy.

Kafo's tail thumps against the wall. He waddles up and barks.

INT. ANDREI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Andrei and Emilye hold one another tenderly in bed.

He caresses her belly, smiling, until she pulls him in for a kiss. They kiss slowly, passionately, until Kafo whimpers from the foot of the bed.

ANDREI

Kitchen.

Kafo stays put, his tail thumping against the floor.

ANDREI

Kitchen. Now.

With a groan of frustration, Kafo leaves the room.

Emilye turns off the lamp and pulls Andrei on top of her.

In the brilliant moonlight pouring in through the window, Andrei and Emilye make love.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: November 10th, 1978.

INT. SAVA'S STUDY - NIGHT

Sava stares at his desk, swimming with papers and notes.

He clears room for his typewriter and turns it on, slides in a sheet of paper.

He types, checks in on his notes, and types some more as...

RADIO HOST (V.O.)

Good evening, Bulgaria. We regret to inform you that this week's addition of Georgi Markov's program, "Personal Meetings with President Todor Zhivkov", begins on a tragic note. Mr. Markov passed away a few weeks ago in London.

INT. STATE SECURITY - DAY

Little has changed over the past ten years. Scores of Bulgarian officers man their workstations, pushing pencils and reviewing data.

RADIO HOST (V.O.)

Today we bring you a special broadcast from a fellow dissident who worked in close association with Mr. Markov, a man who was also familiar with the world of Todor Zhivkov and the Bulgarian State Security apparatus.

In the glass-enclosed radio room, two RADIO MEN exchange looks of concern.

RADIO HOST (V.O.)

A man by the name of Sava Kolev, former officer of the Bulgarian State Security, now journalist of KPON in San Francisco, California, and contributor to Radio Free Europe.

INT. ZHIVKOV'S OFFICE - DAY

Marko stands nervous while Zhivkov paces the room, reading over a manuscript.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Today's program will be an expose of a highly unusual aspect of Bulgarian political life. And that is the promiscuous behavior of Zhivkov and other party leaders. According to Mr. Kolev, the use of prostitutes is quite common, even tolerated by Zhivkov and his inner circle.

Zhivkov hurls the manuscript at Marko.

ZHIVKOV

I don't care how it's done, you  
crush this insect! Now!

INT. SAVA'S STUDY - NIGHT

Sava slaves away on his typewriter, pounding on the keys...

RADIO HOST (V.O.)

By contrast, the low wage workers  
that are the supposed bedrock of  
the communist system are subjected  
to prison or worse at the slightest  
hint of this sort of behavior.

Sava pounds the keys as...

RADIO HOST (V.O.)

Double standards are the real  
bedrock of communist ideology. And  
in this respect only, Todor Zhivkov  
and his band of petty thugs are  
gods among men.

INT. MARKO MARIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A cold, uninspired apartment. Marko paces the room, thinking  
hard.

He scours through several dossiers, coupled with photographs,  
spread across his desk.

He snatches one up and studies it with great interest.

I/E. SAVA'S HOUSE - DAY

Livid, Jaclyn follows Sava around the house as he prepares  
for work.

SAVA

You used to admire it when people  
stood up for what they believe.

JACLYN

I didn't ask to live in constant  
fear of what was coming around the  
corner.

Sava addresses a BODYGUARD sitting on the couch.

SAVA

You can go ahead and wait outside.  
I'll be right out.

The bodyguard heads out.

Outside, two nondescript cars are parked at the end of the driveway. Two more bodyguards mill about.

SAVA

(to Jaclyn)

It's just a precaution. So you  
don't have to live in fear.

JACLYN

You provoke murderers who will stop  
at nothing. And you make me a part  
of it without even coming to me!

SAVA

What would you have me do? Stand  
silent? Cower like a child?  
Godammit, Jaclyn. Open your eyes  
and understand that some things are  
bigger than you are!

JACLYN

You selfish son-of-a-bitch.

Jaclyn snatches up her jacket, purse and cars keys. Heads out the door.

SAVA

Where are you going?

Sava softens, follows her out.

SAVA

If you were in my shoes, you would  
do the same thing. I just can't let  
them get away with it.

Jaclyn heads for her car.

JACLYN

You can't solve all the world's  
problems, Sava. But you sure can  
create them.

Jaclyn gets her door open. Gestures to the bodyguards.

JACLYN

And how noble of you that you  
volunteer my bank account to pay  
for this so-called protection.

She climbs in, slams the door shut.

As the engine roars to life, Sava nods to one of the  
bodyguards, who follows suit and slips into his own car.

Disheartened, Sava watches her pull of the driveway.

EXT. ANDREI'S APARTMENT BLOCK - NIGHT

Andrei approaches his building, relieved.

INT. ANDREI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Andrei drops his gloves and unties his dirty boots.

ANDREI

Hi, baby.

No response.

He lifts his eyes and looks curiously into the apartment.

Shelves have been cleared. Books, papers and photos are  
scattered everywhere. Cabinets have been torn apart. The  
stuffed chair has been torn to shreds.

ANDREI

Emilye?!

In the upturned bedroom, he sees Emilye sitting in a chair.  
She looks to him, petrified.

ANDREI

Emilye.

As he edges into the room, he spots a huge, muscle-bound man -  
MOLOTOK - who stands menacingly before her.

Andrei is blind-sided by two more MEN. With terrific force,  
they slam him up against the wall.

Marko appears in the doorway, calm and cool.

MARKO

Andrei Kolev. My name is Marko  
Marin, State Security.

The color drains from Andrei's face.

LATER

Andrei sits at the table, frightened. Marko slaps down a surveillance photo of Sava - taken outside his California home.

MARKO

Talk.

ANDREI

It's Sava. My brother. I don't...  
What do you want to know?

MARKO

Talk.

ANDREI

I... haven't seen him for ten  
years. Not since Czechoslovakia.  
Even then, not much. He had his own  
place. I mean, he visited us.  
But...

Marko remains quiet, studying him coldly.

ANDREI

He was very happy the last time I  
saw him. I think he met with  
Zhivkov.

Marko lights a cigarette. Keeps his eyes on Andrei.

ANDREI

I don't know what I'm supposed to  
talk about.

MARKO

Why did he leave?

ANDREI

I didn't know he left. I thought he  
was even dead, maybe.

MARKO

No rumors? You haven't heard  
anything at all?

ANDREI

Of course I hear rumors. Living in  
Moscow. Married. Or he lives in the  
West.

MARKO

Nothing contraband has been smuggled in to you? Perhaps we can search your neighbors' apartments here? Or visit your cousin in Samokov? Perhaps we will find something of interest.

ANDREI

I have nothing to hide. Yes, we talked twice last year, me and cousin. But we didn't say anything out of the ordinary. We didn't exchange anything. I didn't mention him because it was so... normal.

MARKO

Anything else you "didn't mention"?

ANDREI

Nothing.

Marko nods to Molotok.

Molotok grabs Emilye by the hand. She resists, and he yanks her to her feet. She yelps in pain.

ANDREI

No!

With ease, Molotok drags her to the bedroom.

Andrei bolts up, lunges towards them, but the other men pin him to the floor, wrench his arms behind his back.

ANDREI

I don't know! Please, I don't know!

Andrei screams in agony.

MARKO

Andrei! Andrei!

Marko drifts up to him.

ANDREI

What do you want me to say, I'll say it! I just don't know! Please!

MARKO

Molotok.

In the bedroom door, Molotok emerges into view and releases Emilye.

He puts a suitcase on the bed.

MARKO

Andrei. It's okay. There simply cannot be secrets between us, do you understand?

ANDREI

Yes. I understand.

The men pull Andrei to his feet.

MARKO

Today can be a good day for you. Nobody works in the uranium mines and lives past 50. But that doesn't have to be you. You can be free of all that, if you like.

Emilye packs up their clothes.

EXT. ANDREI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

From within the darkened windows of the apartment block, the curious stares of several neighbors.

Andrei and Emilye hold hands tight, while Marko and his men lead them to the two cars waiting on the street.

The agents steer them apart, Molotok leading Emilye into the first car, where Kafo is already waiting.

Marko and Andrei climb into the back seat of the second car.

INT. MARKO'S CAR - NIGHT

Andrei and Marko settle into their seats.

MARKO

Tell me what your brother did before he left.

ANDREI

He worked for the Department of Foreign Affairs. He'd just been promoted, or was being considered for a post. I don't know what.

Marko chuckles.

MARKO

Is that what he told you?

Marko hands Andrei a dossier.

Andrei reads over it, shaken by what he sees as...

MARKO

Your mother's affair with your downstairs neighbor. Your unwillingness to participate in the army. There are even details about Emily. Now who's signature is that? State Security officer?

Andrei looks at the signature. He's sickened.

ANDREI

Sava's.

MARKO

Your brother was in the secret police.

Andrei hands the report back.

MARKO

He was good at keeping an eye on you, and he was very clean in his reports. One of the best officers in the department, which made it all the more disappointing to lose trust in him.

The car pulls away from the curb, following the first car.

MARKO

Sava was approached by the CIA in 1965. Three years before the events in Prague. He thought he could get away with it, living off the fat of the Americans, taking advantage of the Party and turning his back on his family and friends. But you can help us to set it straight. You can help us wash our hands of him.

Andrei averts his eyes, looks out his window. Quiet and terrified.

INT. KPON CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Walter Brimm chairs the story pitch session of a dozen journalists.

JOURNALIST

Major tension between Harvey Milk and Dianne Feinstein. Apparently Milk told Mayor Moscone outright that he'd have to go through him to get the gay vote.

WALTER

What does Feinstein's office have to say?

JOURNALIST

No comment.

WALTER

Sounds hot. Run it.

Sava raises his hand.

WALTER

Kolev.

SAVA

Congressman Ryan's office is in talks with State Department officials, he wants to visit Jonestown down in Guyana.

Walter and Kip catch eyes. Kip looks at Sava in disdain.

SAVA

Among other reports of abuse, I'm told that the people down there have no access to information except for the loudspeakers that put out Jones's voice 24/7. I'd like to run a piece on the angle of this socialist dream becoming a totalitarian nightmare.

WALTER

Kolev, forget Jonestown. It's an old story. I want you with Terrence on Charlie Chaplin's corpse being stolen in Switzerland.

Sava stares in disbelief, looking like a cat in the rain.

Smug, Kip gives Sava a smile.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A note on the fridge reads: "Might be back next week - not sure yet. We'll see. J"

Sava sighs in frustration and plucks it off.

SAVA'S STUDY

Sava sits down to his desk.

On a legal pad entitled "Radio Free Europe" are a mess of notes, with many prominent entries circled.

Sava types away on the typewriter.

EXT. GRAND HOTEL SOFIA - NIGHT

Several State Security agents are on hand as the two sedans unload Andrei and Emilye.

INT. GRAND HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

With the exception of a small lounge area, manned by two agents, the floor is empty.

Marko and his men escort Andrei, Emilye and Kafo along.

MARKO

You are both are frightened. That is perfectly reasonable. But the Party always rewards those who serve it well.

Marko and his men escort Andrei and Emilye into...

LUXURY SUITE

The main room alone is as big as their entire apartment.

Andrei and Emilye take in their new surroundings. A luxurious feast for the eyes.

MARKO

Make it yours. Have a good night's rest. We will come for you in the morning.

The agents leave.

Now alone, Emilye collapses into Andrei, terrified.

EMILYE

What are they doing, Andrei?

Emilye clings to Andrei, silently crying. He passes his eyes over the room, getting the lay of the land as he strokes her hair.

INT. GRAND HOTEL SURVEILLANCE ROOM - NIGHT

One AGENT sits near a recording station, while another yawns, flops across a bed.

Marko takes the headphones from the agent, listens in.

ANDREI (V.O.)

(filtered)

Sava spied on us the whole time. In our own house.

INT. LUXURY SUITE - NIGHT

Andrei holds Emilye on the sofa while she pets Kafo. Both are grim and on the brink of tears.

ANDREI

Betrayed everyone in the family.  
Now he lives like a king while we suffer.

EMILYE

What do they want from us?

ANDREI

They want me to make him pay.

Emilye fights back more tears.

So does Andrei. He takes in a breath to steady his voice.

ANDREI

But you know, I'm happy.

INT. GRAND HOTEL SURVEILLANCE ROOM - NIGHT

Marko listens in...

ANDREI (V.O.)

(filtered)

Now I know what he is.

(MORE)

ANDREI (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
And when this is over, the Party  
can rehabilitate me. We can live  
like everyone else again.

INT. LUXURY SUITE - NIGHT

Andrei and Emilye lie in bed, holding one another tight. Both wide awake.

INT. LUXURY SUITE - DAY

Emilye leaves with Molotok and other agents.

Marko shows Andrei to the table.

Spread out before him are several surveillance photos of Sava in the U.S.: At dinner in a five-star restaurant; shaking hands with his editor; arriving at a fancy art opening, etc.

MARKO  
He has powerful connections.  
Politicians, intelligence forces.  
We wish it was as simple as a  
bullet to the head, but it is not.  
It must look natural.

Marko produces a small metal vial.

MARKO  
No taste. No odor. He might get a  
little feverish for a day or two,  
no worse than the common flu. And  
he will pass away peacefully in his  
sleep.

A surveillance photo of Sava's house.

MARKO  
It will have to be administered  
over the course of a week. If you  
give it to him all at once, the  
reaction will be much more violent  
and arouse suspicion. So tell me.  
How do you administer it?

ANDREI  
Something he likes to drink.

MARKO  
Yes.

ANDREI

How much do I give him?

MARKO

Five drops a day. That's the easy part. The difficult part is that he must not suspect you. The minute he does, you have failed us. And of course the consequences will be enormous.

Andrei tenses.

MARKO

What is it? You must tell me everything, Andrei. It is very important that we be straight with one another.

ANDREI

It's... Perhaps I can help get one of you in the door? And from there... I've never killed anything in my life. I don't want that to be a problem.

Marko sizes him up, thinking.

MARKO

It's the least I can do for you. I'll run this by my superiors, see what they think.

Andrei's body sags in relief.

ANDREI

Thank you.

INT. STATE SECURITY - EVENING

A handful of Bulgarian and Italian newspapers, a map of the Adriatic sea, and a mock-up of a prison break story featuring Andrei's picture lay on the table.

Marko speaks to an agent.

MARKO

Everything is on course, no need to deviate from the plan. Prepare the dogs.

The agent leaves, and Marko turns his attention to AGENT GATEV and his team as they present their plan to Marko.

AGENT GATEV

A report goes out in our local press, one week from now. Five prisoners escape from Sofia Central Prison. They murder two guards, they're armed and dangerous.

Gatev refers to the map, charts a simple course.

AGENT GATEV

A few days before we move Andrei. Our friends in Rome break a different version of events. Five political prisoners, no one harmed. Two men, including our Andrei, have slipped across to Trieste and were smuggled to Italy.

He sits back, proud of his plan.

AGENT GATEV

He asks for asylum.

MARKO

How does he make contact with Sava?

AGENT GATEV

We have a man in the BBC mail room. He can start a rumor, or perhaps even approach Sava's contact. Show him the article.

Marko thinks it through.

INT. SAVA'S SUBURBAN (MOVING) - DAY

Followed by his bodyguards' car in the distance, Sava drives down a canyon road, turns down a private driveway.

An etched wooden sign reads "Edora Vineyards".

He passes the parked car of another bodyguard, who nods him through.

EXT. COUNTRY ESTATE - DAY

JACLYN'S FATHER (50) watches disapprovingly from the front porch as Sava and Jaclyn walk the vast lawn of this immaculate ranch.

SAVA

You're right. I should have consulted you. I acted emotionally, and that was foolish of me.

JACLYN

I'm glad to hear you say that.

SAVA

And I can promise to be much more cautious in the future. To think of our welfare, not just my own.

Jaclyn nods, thoughtful.

SAVA

I only wish you knew what I knew. I'm not justifying my action, it was a mistake. But to leave behind everything that I did... Well, no. If I was truly brave, I'd be back there, fighting the good fight.

JACLYN

Don't get me wrong, Sava. I am very proud of you.

SAVA

It's torture, this helplessness.

They reach the fence line and stop.

SAVA

But what more can I do than to try? Without that...

JACLYN

I'm not heartless. I know what you've been through, and I feel for you. I do.

Jaclyn puts her hand on his.

JACLYN

But you've got to be safe about the way you handle it. I don't want to be there when the world comes crashing down on you. I love you. I won't be able to take it.

He pulls her in for a hug.

At the sight of this, Jaclyn's Father heads inside the house.

SAVA

That won't happen. It just won't.  
And I'll never let anything happen  
to you, either. I love you, too.

JACLYN

I know.

She breaks. Looks at him warmly.

JACLYN

But you also love your work. You've  
been married to it for a long time  
now.

SAVA

I come to you, trying to make up.

JACLYN

Don't get upset.

SAVA

I wanted to stay in Paris. I came  
here for you. I gave up a lot for  
you.

JACLYN

I'm not here to keep score. I'm  
trying to tell you something.

SAVA

Just come home, dammit. We'll work  
this out.

JACLYN

I'm not ready yet. I need...

SAVA

What?

JACLYN

I need some sign from you that  
things are going to change.

SAVA

That's what I'm telling you.

JACLYN

These are just words, Sava.

Frustrated, Sava throws up his hands in surrender.

SAVA

Between the two of us, you're the one that's not compromising.

Sava storms off to his car, leaving Jaclyn behind.

INT. LUXURY SUITE - NIGHT

Emilye is on her knees next to the toilet, holding her stomach and breathing slowly.

Andrei kneels next to her, puts a damp washcloth on the back of her neck. Strokes her back.

Emilye fights back tears.

She turns on the sink faucet, full blast, and pulls Andrei in close.

EMILYE

(whispers)

If you get the chance, I want you to run.

ANDREI

No no no no.

EMILYE

Baby, listen. Listen. You can't save me. It's impossible. No matter what we do, they'll never--

ANDREI

I won't turn my back on you.

EMILYE

You can't save me. But you can save yourself.

ANDREI

Shhht!

He kisses her to quiet her.

ANDREI

I will do it. I will come back. We will be okay.

EMILYE

They'll never be done with us, and you know it. When you get to the West, stay in the West. You have to let go of me.

Emilye shuts off the faucet and leaves. Andrei falls limp, devastated.

INT. LUXURY SUITE - MORNING

Andrei and Emilye are startled awake when the agents rudely bang on the door.

Kafo perks up his ears, curious, and wags his tail.

Andrei looks at the clock. 5:45 am. He pushes himself out of bed as the agents continue to bang on the door.

Andrei answers the door and the agents mumble brief instructions.

Emilye watches in concern as Andrei hustles on some clothes.

EMILYE  
What's going on?

ANDREI  
I don't know.

Emilye peeks through the bedroom door. The agents wait in the hall, petting Kafo.

EXT. GRAND HOTEL SOFIA - MORNING

Marko and his team lead Andrei into the front sedan.

INT. MARKO'S SEDAN (MOVING) - MORNING

The sedan navigates through the streets of the city.

Andrei and Marko ride in the back.

ANDREI  
Where are we going?

No one answers.

Andrei glances at his door. It appears to be unlocked.

EXT. SOFIA STREETS - MORNING

The two sedans head into an industrial area on the outskirts of Sofia.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

The sedan pulls up to a dark warehouse under construction where a handful of cars and trucks are parked.

Several agents mill about, including handlers of five German Shepherds.

Marko and Molotok pull Andrei out of the sedan and drag him roughly towards the warehouse.

ANDREI

I'm helping you! I'm on your side!  
Please!

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Pitch-black and ominous, the only light in the room is a ray of sun through the broken roof in the far corner.

The agents drag Andrei there.

Here a small table rests with a dozen INSTRUMENTS OF TORTURE.

The agents slam Andrei down into a chair before it. One holds Andrei's arms firmly behind his back.

ANDREI

Tell me what to do and I'll do it.  
Tell me what to do.

MARKO

I don't expect that you'll do it  
for your country. Or for us. But I  
suspect you'll do it for Emilye.

Andrei breathes hard as he takes in the wicked instruments.

MARKO

Choose.

A rusty saw blade. Sharp pincers. Hooks and spikes of all varieties.

Marko plays with a carving knife, taunts.

MARKO

I recommend something... efficient.

Marko places the knife in a prominent position on the table.

ANDREI

I don't understand. I'll do whatever you tell me. What do you want me to do? I'll do it!

MARKO

I want you to choose.

ANDREI

I don't--

Marko slams his fist down, shaking the table.

MARKO

Choose! Or I choose for you.

Marko nods to Molotok and the other agents.

MARKO

Hold his head.

Molotok pulls Andrei's hair back and exposes his face.

Marko selects a dirty, twisted piece of metal that resembles a corkscrew.

MARKO

Open his eye.

Molotok peels back Andrei's eye and holds his head still. Andrei fights back, but the agent has him good.

Andrei lets out a scream.

MARKO

One more sound from you and I take out both eyes!

Andrei quiets down. Marko draws in closer.

MARKO

Just remember one thing. If it's all you remember today.

Marko grabs Andrei's hand, twists it and exposes his palm.

MARKO

This wouldn't be happening if it wasn't for your brother. He knew his actions would cause pain.

He drives the metal in deep, making Andrei tremble in pain. But he hardly makes a sound.

MARKO

And he didn't care.

Marko pulls the metal back out, releasing Andrei's bleeding hand and letting him clench it to his chest.

Molotok holds Andrei's head tight, while another agent holds his arms behind his back.

Marko lifts the piece of metal.

MARKO

This is just as painful for us as  
it is for you. But your brother has  
left us no choice.

Marko draws the metal in closer, inches from Andrei's eye.

MARKO

He's left you no choice.

On the other end of the warehouse, the doors rip open.

Marko takes a step back and lowers the metal as the handlers bring in the German Shepherds.

Marko studies Andrei a moment, calculating. Then, to his men at the door...

MARKO

Bring them over.

The handlers do so, bringing the dogs closer but keeping them hidden in the shadows.

Marko backs up, pointing the dogs out to Andrei.

MARKO

Fass! Fass!

The dogs strain at their leashes, snapping and barking at Andrei as the agents back away.

The agents disappear into the shadows, leaving Andrei to fend for himself.

He leaps to his feet and grabs the chair, holding it between him and the dogs.

HANDLERS (O.S.)

Fass! Fass!

The dogs scratch and claw towards Andrei, though the handlers keep them at bay, spreading out and surrounding the room.

Andrei sticks to the pool of light, petrified.

MARKO (O.S.)  
 (to the handlers)  
 One at a time.  
 (to Andrei)  
 Choose fast, Andrei!

A handler on the far side of the room lets a dog go. It sprints across the floor towards Andrei.

Andrei snatches up the nearest weapon on the table, a sharp hook, holding it and the chair in defense. His eyes widen, searching the shadows as the dog bullets near.

The dog leaps from the shadows, jaws wide.

The dog YELPS IN PAIN and limps back into the darkness, carrying the hook in its side.

MARKO (O.S.)  
 Death, Andrei! Don't fear it. Face  
 it!  
 (to the handlers)  
 Two more.

Andrei searches the table, snatches up the carving knife.

HANDLERS (O.S.)  
 Fass!

More claws tear at the floor, speeding towards Andrei.

He leaps behind the table, throws it to the floor for a barricade.

Eyes wide, he wields the carving blade before him as he searches the shadows.

Another dog leaps from the shadows and Andrei rips down the knife.

ANDREI  
 No!

He stops in the nick of time, sparing the dog.

His dog.

ANDREI  
 Kafo!

Kafo leaps onto him, grateful, licking and wagging his tail.

Andrei is relieved.

Then he pulls Kafo back, shielding him behind the table.

MARKO (O.S.)

Out.

The handlers pull the German Shepherds back and quiet descends upon the room.

The agents step back into the pool of light with Andrei.

Marko steps up, gestures for Andrei to lower the knife.

Andrei does so, trembling.

MARKO

Very good, Andrei.

Marko calmly lifts the table back in its place.

He pats the table and gestures for Andrei to pick up Kafo.

MARKO

Up here.

Andrei hesitates.

Marko glares at him coldly.

Marko eyes Molotok, who slams Andrei against the wall and pins him. The knife falls, but an agent picks it up, slaps it back into Andrei's hand.

Marko picks up Kafo, who responds happily to the attention, licking him as Marko sets him on the table.

Marko rests Kafo on his back, rubbing his belly.

Molotok pushes Andrei to the table and releases him.

Andrei strokes Kafo, who licks at him, oblivious.

ANDREI

Please.

MARKO

A decision, an execution of that decision. It is that simple.

ANDREI

Please.

MARKO

Sava left you no choice. Do it. And do it quickly. Or I will do it slowly.

Weeping, Andrei turns to Kafo. He strokes his head in farewell, though Kafo doesn't know what's coming to him.

Through his tears, Andrei looks over Kafo's body, deciding on the throat.

MARKO

Sava left you no choice.

Andrei lifts up the knife, wiping his tears away with the back of his hand, and prepares to plunge in the blade.

Andrei lets out a TERRIBLE MOAN as he swings the blade down.

INT. SAVA'S STUDY - DAY

Sava slices a open large package from London with his letter opener.

Heavy-hearted, he unpacks the contents onto his desk. Spiral notebooks, typed manuscripts, and published plays - all written by Georgi Markov.

INT. GRAND HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Marko and his team walk Andrei back to his door.

LUXURY SUITE

Andrei enters the room, shattered.

Marko and the agents leave.

Andrei holds up a bloody hand, keeps her at bay. He tries to say something, but the words won't come.

Andrei throws Kafo's empty leash on the floor as he heads for the sink.

Emilye cries.

Andrei snatches up the soap and scrubs hard, tearing at his hands.

He stops the water, lets out a PRIMAL SCREAM.

INT. SAVA'S STUDY - NIGHT

Sava drinks coffee, pouring over Georgi Markov's works.

Outside, headlights pass the window.

Sava looks up, drops the book, and gets up.

EXT. SAVA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sava steps outside as Jaclyn gets out of her car.

She gives Sava a weak smile.

Sava smiles back.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sava and Jaclyn eat dessert and drink wine at the table.

JACLYN

It struck me one day that I could hardly remember the last time we had any fun. Went on a vacation, or enjoyed an evening out. Enjoyed each other's company, like this.

SAVA

I know. I'm sorry.

JACLYN

I'd just like to be happy again with you. To live in peace. Like a normal couple. Is that wrong?

SAVA

Of course not.

JACLYN

I love you, and I don't mean to edit you. To get in the way of--

SAVA

You're not.

He takes her hand.

SAVA

I'm just glad you're back.

They kiss, tender and caring.

JACLYN

Me too.

Sava chews over an idea. Gets up and heads for the study.

JACLYN

What are you doing?

STUDY

Sava throws the empty packing box up on the desk, re-packs Markov's work, as well as all of his own work for Radio Free Europe.

JACLYN

I want you to express yourself,  
just not--

SAVA

I don't want this coming between us  
again. So it's gone. Out of sight,  
out of mind.

JACLYN

I don't want you holding this over  
my head later.

SAVA

I won't. Jaclyn, you're right. I've  
given it some heavy thought. And  
there's no need to play with fire.

Sava gestures to the bodyguards in the driveway.

SAVA

I'd still like to keep them around.  
Until we're one hundred percent  
sure that things have blown over.

Jaclyn strokes his face.

JACLYN

Thank you.

EXT. STREET KIOSK - MORNING

Molotok buys a pack of smokes.

Headlines of the newspapers tell of a brutal prison escape.  
Two guards dead, five murderers fled.

Andrei's name and photo are featured among the escapees.

INT. LUXURY SUITE - MORNING

Emilye wakes, confused to find Andrei's side of the bed empty.

EMILYE

Andrei?

No answer.

She sits up, calls a bit louder.

EMILYE

Andrei? Baby?

She gets up, moves through the empty suite, worried.

EMILYE

Andrei?

The kitchen is empty.

The bathroom door is ajar.

EMILYE

Andrei?

She edges through the door.

BATHROOM

Andrei sits in the open window, snowfall wafting inside, as he contemplates the seven-story drop.

EMILYE

Andrei.

He turns, his expression distant.

EMILYE

Come in, it's cold. We need to shut the window.

She edges up, gets within reach.

EMILYE

Andrei?

He nods and crawls down.

Emilye shuts the window, holds him.

EMILYE

You're freezing. Come on, let's get  
you warm.

INT. LUXURY SUITE - MORNING

Andrei picks at his breakfast, uninterested.

Emilye serves him tea, and as she nears, he puts his arms  
around her waist, holds her tight.

He rests his hand on her belly, gives it a kiss.

The agents give a firm knock on the door.

HALLWAY

Marko and the agents gently escort Andrei down the hall.

INT. MARKO'S SEDAN (MOVING) - DAY

Andrei rides in the back, silent but skittish.

Marko rides next to him, quietly studying him.

INT. QUIET BUILDING - DAY

Marko and the agents lead Andrei through the suspiciously  
quiet building.

INT. CELLAR - DAY

The dark, dank cellar.

Andrei freezes at the sight of another table of torture in  
the corner. An agent here fills a SHORT NEEDLE SYRINGE from a  
bottle of chemicals.

MARKO

Come.

He nudges Andrei into the room, clasps his shoulder in  
friendly support.

An agent turns on another bulb, revealing a bound and gagged  
PRISONER.

MARKO

Nikola Dinev. Convicted of crimes against children. The worst of crimes. Due to be executed next year.

Andrei averts his eyes, feeling faint.

Marko delivers a sound slap to Andrei's face.

The agent finishes the syringe and rests it on the table before Andrei.

MARKO

If you are not ready for your task, Andrei, then let us know now. There will be a great price for you and Emily, but at least we can end this. We do not have time to waste.

Andrei eyes the prisoner.

MARKO

This world will be happy when he is gone. It is a positive action.

Andrei takes up the syringe, looks the prisoner in the eye. The prisoner lets out a muffled scream, twists and fights against his bonds.

EXT. SOFIA STREETS - DAY

The two State Security sedans slide through the snowy streets of Sofia.

INT. MARKO'S SEDAN (MOVING) - DAY

The color drained from his face, Andrei slumps against the seat, catatonic.

EXT. SOFIA STREETS - DAY

The two sedans continue down the street otherwise empty of car traffic.

INT. MARKO'S SEDAN (MOVING) - DAY

Andrei stares at the back of the driver's seat in a daze.

Marko gazes upon the streets, deep in thought.

As the sedan slows to make a turn, Andrei comes alive with a burst of energy, pops his door open and bails out.

Marko makes a reach, but just misses while the driver hits the brakes and slides on the ice.

EXT. SOFIA STREETS - DAY

Andrei scrambles to his feet and sprints down the street in the opposite direction.

Marko and the agents leap out and give chase.

Andrei clambers over a low wall and cuts through a small church square.

MARKO

Around! Go!

Marko directs his men around both sides of the city block.

Furious, he takes the lead as he hops over the low wall in pursuit.

EXT. SOFIA SQUARE - DAY

Andrei dodges pedestrians and looks back. Marko is far behind, but he's faster.

Andrei bolts ahead. He crosses a street, races for a residential area thick with trees.

Marko bullets forward, gaining.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL AREA - DAY

Andrei rounds a building, running out of steam. The area here is less populated, more places to hide but...

...he looks behind him, horrified to see his footprints in the snow.

Police SIRENS behind him.

He lunges forward, desperately looks for an escape with no time to lose.

A playground. A block of apartments. A few parked cars. He can't find an out.

He rounds another building just as...

...Marko enters the residential area behind him, hardly winded.

Marko scours the area, easily spots Andrei's footprints.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

A couple of blocks ahead, a State Security sedan passes. Andrei stops in his tracks.

Across the street next to a work truck, Andrei spots an entrance to the sewers.

He runs over, cutting a path of footprints, and slides onto his belly.

It's a tight fit. He strains to make it.

Marko rounds the corner, follows Andrei's footprints.

Down the street, more agents round the corner, closing in. Marko signals to the area between them.

MARKO

He's here!

Marko slows down, catches his breath as he follows Andrei's footprints.

He spots the obvious trail towards the truck. With a self-satisfied smirk, he follows it.

Marko rounds the truck, but his smile drops when he spots the sewer entrance. He sprints forward and gets on his belly, peers inside.

MARKO

No no no!

His men, accompanied by a policemen, jog up.

MARKO

Flashlight!

The policeman hands Marko his flashlight. Marko sticks his head inside, flashes the light around.

MARKO

Andrei!

He tries to squeeze inside, but it's too narrow.

MARKO

Andrei! Don't do this! You won't  
make it! Andrei!

Marko pulls himself to his feet, pissed.

Marko throws the flashlight against the nearest building,  
smashing it.

MARKO

Godammit!

Scurry marks on the ground catch Marko's eye.

MARKO

Wait, wait, wait.

His men hold up.

His eyes follow the scurry marks, which lead underneath the  
truck.

Marko smiles.

Marko crouches down, gets a clear view underneath.

MARKO

Hello, friend.

Andrei is tucked up inside the chassis of the truck, hanging  
on for dear life.

INT. KPON - DAY

Sava sits at one of the dozens of desks in the busy newsroom,  
buried in his work.

A Journalist heads for Sava's desk.

JOURNALIST

Kolev. You got that background  
check yet?

Sava hands him a folder, not looking up from his work.

The Journalist flips through it, becomes annoyed.

JOURNALIST

This is it?

SAVA

They stole his body, they were  
caught. What's to report?

JOURNALIST

Well, this isn't--

SAVA

There are bios there on both men,  
I'm sure you can find something  
there to compliment your piece.

The Journalist leaves, shaking his head.

On Sava's desk, the box of Markov materials.

Sava remains focused, taking notes on the many Markov works  
spread out before him.

INT. LUXURY SUITE - DAY

Molotok pushes Andrei down onto the sofa. Andrei's face is  
bruised and he holds his ribs in pain.

Emilye approaches in concerns, but Marko cuts her off. Points  
to the kitchen.

MARKO

Get in there and make him some  
food.

(to Molotok)

Don't let them talk to each other.

Molotok nods, while Emilye meekly makes her way into the  
kitchen.

To the other agents...

MARKO

The rest of you. With me.

INT. GRAND HOTEL SURVEILLANCE ROOM - DAY

Marko paces the room, boiling.

MARKO

This foolish act will not get in  
our way. But any of our superiors  
hear of this, they'll pull the plug  
in a heartbeat. So let me make it  
clear. No one breathes a word about  
this. If I go down, you go down.  
Every damned last one of you.

INT. ZHIVKOV'S OFFICE - DAY

Zhivkov reads over a folder, while Marko stands before him, controlling his nerves.

MARKO

We'll have to allocate some more money to pay for it, but it's the best way.

ZHIVKOV

Why the sudden change? I thought he was going alone.

MARKO

It's not sudden. We've been discussing it since the beginning, but I didn't want to bother you with the details.

Zhivkov looks him in the eye.

ZHIVKOV

Marko. Are you certain everything is going smoothly?

MARKO

Absolutely certain, comrade Zhivkov. You are about to be a very happy man. And I'd like to thank you for the opportunity. It is an honor to serve the Party in this way.

Zhivkov nods, hands back the folder.

INT. LUXURY SUITE - DAY

Emilye's suitcase is packed, agents ready to escort her out.

Marko soothes Andrei and Emilye.

MARKO

We've arranged a nice apartment in South Sofia. She'll be very comfortable. And when you come back, you can both have your choice of any employment you like. We'll see to it there is hardly any work involved.

Molotok carries her suitcase out.

MARKO

We leave in five minutes.

Marko and the agents leave the room.

Andrei and Emilye take one another in, solemn.

Emilye throws her arms around him, holds him tight.

EMILYE

I love you so much.

ANDREI

I love you.

EMILYE

So much.

She squeezes him tighter.

EMILYE

Don't come back.

ANDREI

Emilye.

Emilye convulses with tears.

EMILYE

Don't come back!

He tries to peel her off...

ANDREI

No, no.

...but she won't budge.

ANDREI

Emilye. I don't care what you say.  
I'm coming back.

He peels her back, looks her in the eye.

ANDREI

I'm coming back.

EXT. GRAND HOTEL SOFIA - DAY

Escorted by the agents, Emilye climbs into one car, and  
Andrei into another.

Emilye stares out the window at Andrei, trembling.

Andrei catches eyes with her. Then he steels his gaze and turns to Marko and the other agents as if one of the gang.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: November 18, 1978.

INT. KPON NEWSROOM - NIGHT

On a TV MONITOR: The intro jingle of a news program, fancy video graphics and credits while...

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

KPON News Central takes you straight to where the news happens. Kip O'Riley. Chuck Tanner. Meteorologist Terry Parsons. Frank Butler on sports. Brought to you by First Central Bank of San Francisco, this is News Central, Channel 5. The world's most watchable news.

The jingle ends with a flourish as a station camera centers in on Kip O'Riley at the news desk.

KIP O'RILEY

Good evening, I'm Kip O'Riley. In our top story, we bring you tragic news from Guyana, South America this evening, where San Francisco Congressman Leo Ryan and three American reporters have been killed. What's more, hundreds of cult members in Jonestown have taken their own lives in a bizarre ritual of death.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sava watches the TV, stunned, as Kip delivers the news.

KIP O'RILEY

(on TV)

A tragedy unparalleled in recent human history. A tragedy of such proportions that it is beyond human understanding.

SAVA

You son-of-a-bitch.

INT. ROME APARTMENT - DAY

A small B&W TV spits out an Italian gameshow.

A bare bones apartment with little furniture. Two LARGE THUGS play cards at a table by the door.

In worn-out, ill-fitting clothing, Marko and Andrei watch the TV.

Andrei closes his eyes, rests his head back in his chair.

Marko chews on items from a shopping bag in his lap. He eyes the phone, sitting alone on a small table at his side.

INT. BUSH HOUSE - MORNING

A shadowy MAIL BOY drops a stack of mail on Alistair's desk. Alistair picks up the first piece, an Italian newspaper.

He aims it for the trash, but stop short as he notices a front page article with Andrei's picture.

Astonished, he takes a closer look. "Andrei Kolev" the "Bulgaro dissidente".

Alistair picks up the phone.

INT. SAVA'S STUDY - NIGHT

Jaclyn is perched in the doorway, adjusting her eyes to the lamp light.

With the phone at his ear, tears of joy roll down Sava's face.

SAVA

(on phone)

We've got to get him out of there before they get to him. Can we contact the paper, find that reporter?

ALISTAIR (V.O.)

(on phone)

My assistant is doing so as we speak. In fact... In fact, yes, he's giving me the thumbs up.

SAVA

(on phone)

My God. This...

(MORE)

SAVA (CONT'D)

I'm wiring money immediately to cover any expenses. Get him to you, or get him over here. Explain the situation, I want him on the first flight out.

ALISTAIR (V.O.)

(on phone)

Indeed.

Sava turns to Jaclyn. Absolutely beaming.

More tears fall from his face as Jaclyn embraces him.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: November 25th, 1978.

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

Andrei stares out the dark window, while Marko sleeps soundly.

A cabin bell sounds.

PILOT (V.O.)

(through intercom)

Ladies and gentlemen, we are beginning our descent into San Francisco International Airport.

Flickers of light from outside the window dance across Andrei's face.

He leans in closer, taking in the view.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT - NIGHT

Nervous with anticipation, Sava stands in the terminal with Jaclyn.

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

The fluorescent lights flicker on as passengers stand and gather their belongings.

Marko has Andrei exit before him, then follows behind watching him like a hawk.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT - NIGHT

Sava watches anxiously as the passengers file out of the terminal.

Andrei and Marko emerge with precious little baggage.

Tears fill Sava's eyes.

Sava hugs his brother tight. Andrei, tense and awkward, pats him on the back.

Sava breaks, holds him at arms' length and takes in the sight of him.

SAVA

This is...

Andrei doesn't look Sava in the eye.

Marko extends his hand. Sava shakes it.

MARKO

Hi, Stefan. Thank you so much.

SAVA

Sava. And you're welcome, Stefan. If there is anything you need, anything, please ask. It's our pleasure to make everything perfect for you.

Jaclyn extends her hand to Andrei.

JACLYN

Jaclyn, hi.

Andrei takes it, with little eye contact.

JACLYN

I've heard so much about you. Welcome.

ANDREI

Hi. Thank you for...

SAVA

How's mother? How's everyone else? Emily? I want to know everything.

Andrei, tense, keeps his eyes on the floor.

MARKO

Such a long flight. We're very  
sorry if we're...

SAVA

No no, please. Let's get you home.  
You'll be very comfortable. You can  
sleep until next week, if you like.

Sava and Jaclyn lead them towards the terminal.

Marko spots Sava's Bodyguard, who watches them from a few  
yards away. Both men stiffen, a natural fight chemistry in  
the air.

SAVA

He's with me. I've had to take some  
precautions, things have been  
rather... There's a lot to fill you  
guys in on. But there's no need to  
worry. We're 100% safe here.

Sava claps a gentle hand on Andrei's shoulder.

SAVA

My God, it's so good to see you.

Andrei nods his head, barely making eye contact.

INT. SAVA'S SUBURBAN (MOVING) - NIGHT

Headlights flicker past on the highway.

Sava drives with Jaclyn at his side, while Andrei and Marko  
ride in the back seat.

Andrei gazes out the window, taking in the scene.

SAVA

It's a lot to get used to. This  
whole Bay Area is maybe... You  
could probably fit about two  
Bulgarias in all of California. But  
just here in the Bay Area alone,  
there's about the same population.

More silence.

SAVA

Sorry, Bay Area is uh... There's San Francisco, then there's about a hundred other cities around it, very close. All of it together is called the Bay Area.

MARKO

And the Yankees? Where are they from?

SAVA

The Yankees? Baseball team? Yes, they're in New York. Other side of the country.

More silence.

MARKO

And John Wayne? Where is he?

SAVA

John Wayne. Uh... I'm not sure exactly.

Sava glances in the rear-view, sees Andrei silently staring out at the view.

SAVA

Andrei, I don't know if you were too young, but I was just thinking of him recently. Do you remember Kostis? You were 4 or 5, I think.

ANDREI

Kostis...

SAVA

Big guy. Big beard. He was out in the courtyard all the time.

A slight smile crosses Andrei's lips.

ANDREI

Yes, yes. A little.

SAVA

I was a bit older then, but you had...

(chuckling)

You didn't care about rules, or... I mean, Dad had just died.

(MORE)

SAVA (CONT'D)

And of course you were too young to know what the Party even was. But. But Kostî. He was something else.

Marko shifts uncomfortably.

SAVA

He could belch the entire alphabet in one go. You got to around "e", I think.

ANDREI

And you...

Andrei shakes his finger at Sava, remembering.

ANDREI

You gave me my first cigarette.

SAVA

Sorry about that. It was funny at the time.

Andrei smiles.

ANDREI

It tasted horrible.

SAVA

That was the year Zhivkov came into power. None of us could believe that this... villager, this country boy, would ever last as General Secretary. I guess history proved us very, very wrong.

Marko interjects, out of tune...

MARKO

You should have seen us when we got to Rome. We were wrapped in blankets we'd managed to steal, but our prison clothes were still on underneath.

Marko slaps Andrei on the arm.

MARKO

We got some funny looks, huh? Do you remember the man who picked us up outside the city?

Andrei nods, getting Marko's dirty look loud and clear.

ANDREI

Yes. Yes, it was funny.

MARKO

You've never seen a more sorry sight. We went to the police. But no passports, no money. They didn't know what to do with us.

SAVA

I'm anxious to hear all about it. I... I can't imagine what you've been through.

EXT. SAVA'S SUBURBAN - NIGHT

They pull into the Sava's driveway, the headlights illuminating the house and lawn.

MARKO

How many people live here?

SAVA

Me and Jaclyn.

The bodyguard on the porch watches them, then flicks his eyes out over the property.

MARKO

My God. It's bigger than the Nevsky Cathedral.

SAVA

We're very lucky. Jaclyn's father owns a wine label.

The other bodyguard's car pulls up behind them.

EXT. SAVA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

They climb out of the Suburban. Marko glances at Bodyguard #2 at the door, then floats his eyes over the yard.

SAVA

Speaking of which, we have plenty around for you to try. Very high quality. Puts Mavrud to shame.

MARKO

That I will never believe.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sava and Jaclyn show Marko to his room.

JACLYN

This is our guest room, it should have everything you need. But let us know the minute you need anything else.

MARKO

Thank you so much. It's very kind of you.

JACLYN

There's a bathroom at the end of the hall here. A shower. Towels are already there.

MARKO

Thank you.

Sava opens the door to the...

STUDY

The reading table has been removed, the desk cleared and tucked into the corner.

A single bed rests under the window.

SAVA

We had to improvise a little here, but I think you'll be comfortable.

ANDREI

Thank you.

Andrei takes in the room while Sava stares after him, beaming.

Jaclyn tugs at Sava's sleeve.

JACLYN

(to Andrei and Marko)

Why don't you guys settle in for the night. It must be quite strange for you.

ANDREI

Yeah, I'm very tired. Thanks.

SAVA

Again, doesn't matter if it's in the middle of the night. If you need anything, please come up and ask.

ANDREI

Yeah. Yeah, thanks.

Jaclyn tugs at Sava's sleeve again. Sava leaves the room.

Andrei gives a weak wave of appreciation, then closes his door.

MARKO

Again, thank you so much. You have no idea how much this means to us.

SAVA

Don't be silly. We're thrilled to have you.

The two shake hands, and Marko drifts into his room. Takes a look around.

JACLYN

Good night, Stefan.

Jaclyn starts to shut the door, but Marko stops her.

MARKO

No, it's...

Marko looks at Andrei's door.

MARKO

I'd rather it stay open. Is that okay?

Jaclyn and Sava shrug, acquiescing.

MARKO

Closed doors seem like prison to me.

JACLYN

Oh, of course. I'm sorry.

INT. SAVA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

With the study's reading table in the corner, piled high as a makeshift desk, Jaclyn and Sava crawl into bed.

Sava looks worried.

JACLYN

He'll be okay. It'll just take time  
to adjust.

SAVA

I have no idea what it was like.  
I've never set foot inside a  
prison, and that poor kid... He's  
been through Hell and back.

JACLYN

I know. But just be patient.

INT. MARKO'S ROOM - NIGHT

With a clear view of Andrei's door, Marko takes down his  
pants - revealing his thigh wrapped in white gauze - and sits  
on the bed.

He unwraps the gauze.

An Italian passport, a stack of US currency, and a pen.

He unscrews the body of the pen and produces the small metal  
vial.

KITCHEN

Keeping an eye on the Bodyguards outside, Marko quietly pokes  
around in the kitchen.

INT. SAVA'S STUDY - NIGHT

In the dark room, Andrei sits on the edge of the bed, wide  
awake, staring out the window.

FADE TO BLACK.

The sound of COFFEE BREWING, BACON SIZZLING and plates being  
arranged.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Jaclyn makes breakfast.

MARKO

There were three of us. Me, Andrei and Petko. We would be driven out to the coal mine once a week.

Sava and Marko sit at the table. Sava drinks coffee and juice, while Marko sticks to juice.

Jaclyn offers Marko coffee, but he waves her off.

MARKO

It was on our third or fourth trip, Petko made the plan. But he was smart.

Andrei emerges from his room, sleepy.

SAVA

Ah, here he is.

JACLYN

How did you sleep?

ANDREI

Not much.

JACLYN

The time difference makes it hard. Have a seat, we'll get you some breakfast.

Sava has a permanent grin on his face as Andrei takes up a seat at the table.

MARKO

But Petko knew to wait. And we decided to go on the 11th trip. Which was very lucky, because a few trips before, they had put extra guards on us. But on this day, they were completely unprepared. We slipped out at a stop sign and made our way North of the village. We made our way onto a train yard, slipped under one of the cars.

Marko shows a long scar on his arm.

MARKO

We hung onto the bottom for...

Marko looks to Andrei.

MARKO  
For what, ten hours?

ANDREI  
At least. It was morning by the  
time we arrived in Yugoslavia.

SAVA  
Healed fast.

MARKO  
What?

SAVA  
The scar. It healed fast.

Marko looks at his arm with a flicker of nervousness.

MARKO  
Yes, I guess it did. I took good  
care of it.

ANDREI  
When we got to Rome, we were able  
to clean it up.

Andrei shows his arms.

ANDREI  
I was lucky. Not a scratch.

SAVA  
What happened to Petko?

MARKO  
He went his own way once we got  
over the border. He had a friend in  
the South.

Jaclyn serves up breakfast.

SAVA  
How long did it take you guys?

Andrei looks to Marko.

MARKO  
Five days.

SAVA  
Lucky. Damned lucky.

MARKO  
You're telling me.

SAVA

Andrei, I was thinking you and I could go for a drive today. If you're feeling up for it.

MARKO

That would be great.

SAVA

No, I was actually...

Sava gestures to the Bodyguard out by the front gate.

SAVA

We can have Jake take you into the city, show you around a bit.

MARKO

No no, I don't need to see the city just yet, it's okay.

SAVA

Stefan, I hope you don't think it's rude. But it would be nice to have a bit of time alone with my brother here.

Marko looks rattled. He looks to Andrei, a bit awkwardly.

MARKO

I'm sorry. I can be quiet.

SAVA

It's not that.

MARKO

No no, go ahead and talk.

SAVA

Of course we can all talk here. I just mean to say that I'd like to take my brother for a drive today.

MARKO

Oh.

Marko focuses on his breakfast.

ANDREI

To be honest, I don't think I'm ready for a drive.

SAVA

No?

ANDREI

I've been moving from one place to the next so much. It would be nice if I could sit still for a change.

Sava is crestfallen.

SAVA

Sure. I understand.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - EVENING

Sava looks at Marko, who naps on his bed, his door open.

Sava knocks gently on Andrei's door.

No response.

He knocks gently again.

ANDREI'S BEDROOM

Sava cautiously opens the door, edges inside. Gives another soft knock at the door.

Andrei wakes up from his nap.

Sava keeps his voice down.

SAVA

Hey there. Sorry to wake you. Jaclyn and I are going for a walk if you'd like to join. Just around the neighborhood.

ANDREI

No, I'm... I'm still feeling very tired. But thank you.

SAVA

We don't have to go far. The air might do you some good.

ANDREI

Maybe tomorrow. I really just need to sleep right now. Sorry.

SAVA

Okay, sure. Didn't mean to disturb. Love you, kid.

Andrei nods. Averts his eyes as...

ANDREI  
Love you, too.

HALLWAY

Sava slips out of the room and quietly closes the door.

Marko is awake, sitting up on the edge of his bed.

As soon as Sava turns and sees him, Marko rubs his eyes and stretches his back.

They catch eyes. Sava gives him a polite smile.

EXT. SAVA'S HOUSE - EVENING

Sava rubs his forehead in discomfort as he and Jaclyn saunter down the driveway and onto the quiet residential street.

A bodyguard trails a respectful distance behind them.

SAVA  
I don't know what's wrong with him.

JACLYN  
He's just jet-lagged, honey. And probably very scared. This is all so new to him.

SAVA  
Prison has changed him.

JACLYN  
Just give it time.

Sava coughs, rubs his forehead again.

JACLYN  
How are you feeling?

She brings the back of her hand to his face, his forehead.

JACLYN  
You seem a bit warm.

SAVA  
I'm fine.

JACLYN  
You need to relax. Be patient. No sense in stressing yourself out over nothing.

SAVA

I know.

EXT. SAVA'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

Sava, Andrei and Marko sit at the patio table, overlooking the yard and the stars beyond.

Sava makes it through a minor coughing fit.

SAVA

No, here you have to fight your way to the top. In just about everything. They pressure their teenagers to decide early. To find what they call their "career path". There are advantages and disadvantages to that.

Jaclyn joins them with a bottle of wine and pours it into waiting glasses.

Sava waves off the wine.

SAVA

No thanks.

(to Marko)

But it doesn't compare to the Zhivkov way. Forced into this or that line of work, whether or not you're truly qualified. What was your job? Originally.

MARKO

I never had one. I was in a student group. Arrested before I could be unleashed on society.

SAVA

Arrested, no doubt, by some brainless officer of the regime who would sell his own mother to advance in rank.

Marko stiffens.

SAVA

I'm sorry to hear it.

Marko lifts the wine bottle.

MARKO

So what is this?

JACLYN

This is from the second year of our vineyard. Back in 1965.

MARKO

It's good. But you still can't beat Bulgarian wine.

Sava stiffens.

SAVA

Really? I guess it's a matter of taste. But now that I've gotten used to this, I could never go back.

As Andrei tastes his wine, he eyes Sava's empty glass.

Sava has another minor coughing fit.

ANDREI

Maybe you should have some hot tea. In case you're getting the flu.

SAVA

Good idea.

Jaclyn nods and gets up.

FADE TO BLACK.

The sound of WATER TRICKLING into a glass.

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

Sava drops a couple of medicine tablets into the water. He waits as they fizz out, groaning in discomfort.

KITCHEN

Jaclyn speaks on the phone.

JACLYN

(on phone)

Yeah, he's feeling a bit under the weather. 'Tis the season for colds, I guess.

(beat)

Great. Thanks for understanding. Bye bye.

She hangs up.

## SAVA'S BEDROOM

Jaclyn drifts up the stairs and enters the bedroom.

JACLYN

You're not alone. Two others have called in sick this morning, as well.

Sava downs the water.

JACLYN

Honey, you should have waited until after we took your temperature. Now we have to wait for the cold water to wear off.

SAVA

It's not that bad. Truth is, I wanted some time off work anyway. This is a blessing in disguise.

## INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Andrei and Marko lounge on the couch and recliner, watching TV.

Sava eats breakfast at the kitchen counter.

Jaclyn comes through, dressed for work.

JACLYN

I'll try to come home early if I can. You take it easy, get plenty of rest.

She kisses Sava on the cheek and leaves.

Sava finishes up his plate, watching Andrei and Marko as they watch TV.

Outside, Jaclyn's car pulls out of the driveway, followed by one of the bodyguards.

Sava wipes his mouth, heads for the living room.

SAVA

Andrei. Come have a ride with me.

Marko and Andrei look up, almost worried. Andrei glances at Marko.

ANDREI

I'd rather just rest, if that's okay.

SAVA

Nonsense. It'll be a peaceful drive. A beautiful part of the country here.

ANDREI

Are you sure you should drive while you're sick?

SAVA

I'm perfectly fine. Come on.

Andrei reluctantly stands.

SAVA

Sorry to leave you alone like this, Stefan. If you'd like, just ask Jake out there to take you into town. Or if you need anything, just ask. We won't be all that long.

Marko looks to Andrei, as if for help.

SAVA

Or just...  
(gesturing to the TV)  
...carry on enjoying yourself.

Sava leads Andrei out the door.

Marko watches after them, on edge.

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - DAY

An endless stretch of blue sky and blue sea. Far below the road, at the bottom of the tall cliffs, waves roll and crash against the rocks.

INT. SAVA'S SUBURBAN - DAY

Sava and Andrei drive along the majestic coastline on the winding, narrow two-lane road.

One slip of the steering wheel, and it's certain death.

Far behind them, Sava's bodyguard follows in his car.

SAVA

Do you remember the Black Sea? We took you out to Golden Sands when you were about ten.

ANDREI

Yeah.

SAVA

We thought it was paradise. Of course, it hardly compares to this.

Andrei nods. Keeps his eyes on the crashing coastline far below.

SAVA

I think you'll like it here. This place has a lot to offer. And life here is so much different.

Sava glances over briefly, noting Andrei's discomfort, but must keep his eyes on the winding road.

SAVA

Sometimes the fog rolls in here and you can't see an inch in front of your face.

Andrei rubs his forehead, trembling.

SAVA

Andrei, I want you to know... I mean, it may take awhile, but you'll find a life here. A thousand times better than the one you escaped. Anyway, I just want you to be happy.

Andrei brings his dark eyes up to the winding road before them.

SAVA

And I want you to know that you can tell me anything, whenever you like. Anything that's bothering you. Anything you'd like to discuss. In your own time. But I'm here for you. I know you've been through a lot.

Out of the corner of his eye, Andrei stares at the steering wheel. For a long time.

SAVA  
How mom's doing?

ANDREI  
She's in the Sofia polyclinic.

Andrei looks back at the winding road along the cliff's edge. Wipes the sweat from his hands.

SAVA  
Oh no. What's wrong with her?

ANDREI  
She's healthy, she's just lost a lot of memory.

SAVA  
That's a shame. Are conditions okay there? In the clinic?

ANDREI  
Fine.

Sava suddenly stiffens, wincing.

SAVA  
Take the wheel, take the wheel!

Andrei perks up, alarmed, and takes the wheel as Sava arches his back in pain.

The truck swerves dangerously close to the cliff's edge. Andrei wrenches it back towards the road in the nick of time.

Sava slows the truck down, holding his lower back in pain. He helps Andrei guide the truck into the nearest turnout.

They come to a stop, and Sava unbuckles his seatbelt. Cuts the engine and steps out.

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - DAY

Sava rubs his lower back, walks it off and catches his breath. The pain subsides.

Andrei crawls out of the truck and joins him.

ANDREI  
Are you okay?

SAVA  
Yeah. Yeah, I'm... Sorry, that was... Whew. That was... Damn.

ANDREI

What is it?

SAVA

I'm okay now. Just a shooting pain.  
Is that the kidney?

Sava continues to massage his lower back.

His bodyguard pulls up behind them, concerned. Sava holds up a hand - it's okay.

Sava points to a rock by the cliff. Wanders over and has a seat, inspiring Andrei to follow.

SAVA

Can you drive?

ANDREI

Never learned.

SAVA

Well, it's okay. We'll just have to  
take it slow on the way back.

The two brothers sit on the rock, take in the view of the ocean.

SAVA

It's funny really.

Sava points to the next turnoff, way up the road.

SAVA

That turnoff, it looks much higher  
than this one.

Sava turns, points to the turnoff far on the road behind them.

SAVA

So does the one we passed back  
there. And of course when we get to  
that one, this one we're on now  
will look higher. Strange illusion  
around here.

Andrei nods. Compares the turnoffs.

SAVA

So it's true, the grass is always  
greener on the other side of the  
fence.

(beat)

(MORE)

SAVA (CONT'D)

If circumstances were much different... I mean, in spite of everything there's a lot I miss about Bulgaria.

ANDREI

Yeah.

Sava glances at Andrei.

The two brothers look out over the ocean in silence.

EXT. SAVA'S HOUSE - DAY

Sava and Andrei climb out of the truck. Sava looks terrible.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - DAY

Marko wanders in from the backyard as Sava and Andrei enter.

MARKO

Hello.

Marko reads them both closely.

Sava heads straight for the stairs.

MARKO

Are you okay?

SAVA

I'm gonna lay down for bit.  
Jaclyn'll be home in a couple  
hours, if you can wait until then  
to eat.

The moment he's out of sight, Marko drifts over to Andrei and speaks softly.

MARKO

So. What did you talk about?

ANDREI

Nothing, really. Just...

MARKO

Andrei. You need to tell me  
everything. There may be something  
that will help us uncover his  
contacts, or his CIA assignments.

(MORE)

MARKO (CONT'D)

What may seem insignificant to you could mean everything. You need to tell me every word.

FADE TO BLACK.

The sound of Jaclyn's soothing whispers.

INT. SAVA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sava lays in bed, sweating, leaning over a large plastic bowl about to vomit while Jaclyn strokes his hair.

After a few moments, he lays back. Catches his breath.

JACLYN

Sweetheart, this is getting too serious. We need to take you in to see a doctor.

Sava nods.

SAVA

Make an appointment for tomorrow.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

With the hall light on, Jaclyn knocks softly on Andrei's door.

With his door still open, Marko stirs.

MARKO

Is everything alright?

JACLYN

I think so. Sorry to wake you, go back to sleep.

Marko lays back, awake.

Andrei opens the door, eyes adjusting to the light.

JACLYN

Sava would like to see you.

ANDREI

Is he okay?

JACLYN

He's pretty sick. He asked to have a word with you.

ANDREI

Oh.

Jaclyn leads Andrei to the stairs.

Andrei looks to Marko like a deer in the headlights.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Jaclyn leads Andrei to Sava's bedroom, the soft light from the bedside lamp emanating from within. But before they reach the door, Jaclyn pulls Andrei aside.

JACLYN

(whispering)

Andrei, can I ask you a favor?

ANDREI

(whispering)

What?

JACLYN

(whispering)

I don't know what you've been through, and I don't mean to be insensitive to that. But Sava has tried his best all these years, because he loves you very much. Just please remember that when you talk to him. And whatever he says, please just hear him out and be nice to him. I think all the stress has been making him worse.

ANDREI

(whispering)

What do you mean, tried his best?

JACLYN

(whispering)

The money he sent you. Trying to get you out of the army. Get you out of prison. The reporting he's done. You've always been an obsession with him.

A creak on the stairs cause both of them to look over. But nothing there from their vantage point.

JACLYN

(whispering)

Anyway, if you can let him know that you care...

(MORE)

JACLYN (CONT'D)

Even if you don't mean it, the words would mean a lot to him.

Jaclyn heads into the bedroom.

Andrei watches her, stunned, then follows.

SAVA'S BEDROOM

Sava looks terrible. His voice is weak, his breathing somewhat belabored.

Jaclyn wipes his head off with a damp washcloth as Andrei sits beside him.

SAVA

Andrei. How well do you know Stefan?

ANDREI

A few years. He's a good guy.

SAVA

Do you know Georgi Markov's radio program?

ANDREI

I've heard about them. Everyone's heard about them. But I've never listened to one myself.

SAVA

They killed Markov for speaking the truth. And since then, I've been writing the broadcasts every week. Up until the day you came.

Jaclyn looks at Sava in disbelief.

Sava flicks his eyes up, guilty as they meet hers, then resumes with Andrei.

SAVA

Zhivkov wants me dead. Is there any chance that Stefan works for the government?

ANDREI

I don't... I don't think so. No, I don't see how that would be possible.

SAVA

Okay.

Sava nods solemn.

SAVA

Okay. I just had to ask.

STAIRCASE

Andrei leaves Sava's bedroom as Jaclyn closes the door behind him.

He stands quiet at the top of the stairs, his mind racing.

GROUND FLOOR

Andrei heads for Marko's door, and Marko is there to greet him.

They speak in whispers.

MARKO

What did he say?

ANDREI

It was... he wasn't making any sense. He kept asking about our mother.

Andrei studies Marko's face as...

ANDREI

And he said something about Radio Free Europe.

MARKO

Ah, that. Yes, the CIA was paying him around \$10,000 a show. What else?

ANDREI

Nothing.

Andrei starts for his room, but...

ANDREI

Can I ask a favor?

Marko tips his chin up, all ears.

ANDREI

Can I give the last few doses? I promise to be careful. I just want that son-of-a-bitch dead.

Marko sizes him up.

For several long, long seconds.

MARKO

I think it's best I handle it. We don't want to anything to go wrong now.

ANDREI

It won't. I'll be very careful. I'll put it in the water by his bed.

Marko chews on the idea, studying Andrei.

He lifts a finger to wait, then goes into his bathroom.

The light flicks on. Marko rummages around for a moment.

He emerges with the metal vial.

MARKO

Are you sure you want to do this? You don't have to.

ANDREI

Yes. And I do... have to.

MARKO

There are three more doses in there. It only takes five drops.

Marko offers it to Andrei, and Andrei takes it.

MARKO

You're a good comrade, Andrei. I'll include this in the field report, make sure everyone appreciates it.

FADE TO BLACK.

The sound of COFFEE BREWING.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Jaclyn prepares a tray with a small bowl of oatmeal, juice, and aspirin.

JACLYN

He seems to be feeling a bit better than last night. But when I get back from work, he's got a doctor's appointment at three.

Andrei stands at the counter, thumbing through the spice rack, while Marko sits at the table, eating his breakfast in good spirits.

MARKO

I hope he's okay.

JACLYN

Me too.

Andrei looks over in concern as Jaclyn pours a cup of coffee. She puts in sugar, stirs it, just as the tea kettle on the stove whistles.

JACLYN

You guys just be sure to wash your hands often. Whatever it is, you don't want it.

She abandons the coffee and pours the hot water into a waiting cup of tea on the tray.

She takes the tray up the stairs.

Andrei pours out her coffee, then the pot.

He joins Marko at the table.

Andrei eats, his coffee cup full, while Marko's is almost empty.

Andrei acts casual as Marko drains the last of his cup.

FADE TO BLACK.

The sound of MUFFLED LAUGHTER.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Andrei sits in the living room, tapping his leg, nervous.

He looks outside, where Marko is as healthy as ever, chatting it up with one of the bodyguards. Their muffled voices leak through the window.

Marko shows the bodyguard the scar on his arm.

The bodyguard shows Marko a scar on the back of his neck.

Andrei checks the metal vial. Empty.

Jaclyn descends the stairs, dressed for work.

JACLYN

If you could check in on him every hour or so, make sure he's alright.

ANDREI

Yes. Of course.

JACLYN

Oh now, don't be so worried. He'll be just fine.

EXT. SAVA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Jaclyn heads for her car, passes Marko and the bodyguards.

One of them climbs into his own car to tail her.

MARKO

Have a good day, Jaclyn.

JACLYN

You too, Stefan.

As she climbs into her car, she studies Marko a moment, suspicious.

She starts the car and pulls out of the driveway.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Marko heads in the door, and locks it.

He turns on the TV a bit too loud.

MARKO

Stay here. I'm gonna check on him.

He heads for the stairs.

ANDREI

It's okay. I gave him some this morning. In his tea.

MARKO

Just stay here.

Marko heads up the stairs.

Andrei watches him go. He paces the room, nervous.

SAVA'S BEDROOM

Sava is startled awake as Marko heads straight for him.

With every ounce of strength left in his weak lungs...

SAVA

Andrei!

But not much sound croaks out before Marko is on top of him. He throws Sava back against the pillow.

Marko pulls a glass pill bottle from his shirt pocket, which contains a small amount of liquid. He starts to open it, but Sava gets a hand up to interfere.

Marko grabs Sava's hand and sits on it, rendering him helpless.

Marko unscrews the cap, but before he gets it open...

ANDREI (O.S.)

No. Wait.

Andrei nears the bed.

ANDREI

He's been warned. We'll tell him to stop working against Bulgaria, and to start--

Marko lunges up and SMASH! He pounds his fist hard into Andrei's face.

Andrei sprawls back, hits the floor hard.

Andrei writhes around, tries to get his bearings. His nose is broken, pouring blood.

Andrei rolls over, confused, tries to get to his feet, but Marko kicks him hard, sending him into the door jam.

Andrei collapses in a heap.

Marko goes back to the bed, where Sava is struggling to sit up. Marko shoves him flat on his back with ease, then looks around the immediate area.

He locates the pill bottle on the floor, snatches it up.

Marko looks up, sees Andrei staggering towards the window.

Andrei gets into view of the window, tries to knock at the bodyguards in the driveway below, but Marko snatches him back.

Full of fire, Marko throws Andrei hard into the corner, smashing the reading table to splinters and upsetting all the books there.

Marko returns to the bedside, holds Sava down. He snatches up the pill bottle.

Tries to open it, but his bloody fingers are too slippery. He wipes his hand off, tries again.

Gets the bottle open.

With one hand, he holds Sava's head back.

Marko pries two fingers into Sava's jaw, opens it up.

He dumps the poison back into Sava's throat, tosses the bottle aside and holds Sava's mouth and nose shut. Sava writhes and squirms, but he's no match.

Finally, Sava swallows.

Glancing up, Marko's eyes widen in fury.

Andrei, bloody and weak, staggers near.

Marko bears his teeth, stands up and grabs Andrei by the hair, exposes his throat. He pulls back a fist to punch, but suddenly freezes.

Marko releases Andrei, holds his stomach.

Blood pours through his fingers.

Marko looks up, confused.

Andrei's hand flies across Marko's throat, slashing it.

Marko staggers back, falls against the night stand and wall, holding his throat.

Marko grabs at the bedside lamp next to him. Losing precious life by the second.

Andrei drops Sava's bloody letter opener on the floor.

Marko grunts, his eyes landing on the wound in his stomach. He tries to cover the hole, but his hand falls limp. He tries again, but his hand won't move.

Andrei grabs up the empty water glass at Sava's bedside. Staggeres towards the bathroom and rinses it, fills it.

He returns to Sava's side, forces him to drink.

ANDREI

Drink this. Drink this!

Andrei helps Sava drink it.

Andrei rolls him over, places Sava's hand at his mouth.

ANDREI

Fingers down your throat. Get it  
back up.

Sava puts his fingers down his throat while Andrei takes the glass back to the bathroom and refills it.

Marko sits limp against the wall, his dead eyes vacant.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

A DOCTOR guides Jaclyn and Andrei down the hallway.

DOCTOR

I'm afraid it's still very touch  
and go. There's been a lot of  
damage to his vital organs, some of  
it permanent. If we can't keep his  
liver from failing, I'm afraid  
there's nothing we can do.

JACLYN

Is he conscious?

DOCTOR

He's comes in and out. He's  
requested to see the both of you,  
but please try and keep any anxiety  
to an absolute minimum.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Sava is barely conscious, hooked up to a dialysis machine.

Andrei sits at the bedside, doing his best to keep calm.

ANDREI

Every doubt I had, there was an answer for it. It all seemed like the truth.

Sava speaks weakly, but he's clear and calm.

SAVA

You can't blame yourself.

ANDREI

I didn't want to believe it.

SAVA

I know. But what choice did you have? Andrei, I understand everything. Listen to me. Listen.

Sava puts his hand on Andrei's, squeezes it.

SAVA

I would have done the same thing. It's okay.

Jaclyn smiles sympathetically at the both of them.

SAVA

And now we can put this behind us. Enjoy one another's company. Let's be done with the past.

ANDREI

No, I... I have to go back.

Sava's looks at him in disbelief.

ANDREI

They've got Emilye. If I don't go back...

SAVA

I see.

ANDREI

I won't see her again, even if I do go back.

SAVA

Probably not.

ANDREI

But if I... prove I'm a good soldier. They might let her live.

(beat)

(MORE)

ANDREI (CONT'D)  
I don't know what to tell them  
about Marko. Or "Stefan".

Sava pulls Andrei closer.

Andrei gives his brother a hug.

FADE TO BLACK.

KIP O'RILEY (V.O.)  
And in news from Washington, while  
fishing earlier yesterday in his  
home town of Plains, Georgia,  
President Jimmy Carter was attacked  
by a swamp rabbit.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - DAY

ON TV: Kip O'Riley reports the evening news.

KIP O'RILEY  
(on TV)  
While desperately trying to board  
the President's fishing boat,  
baring its teeth, clawing and  
hissing, President Carter was  
forced to fend the creature off  
with vicious whacks of the boat's  
oars.

Under Jaclyn's direction, movers pack up Sava's belongings.

KIP O'RILEY  
(on TV)  
We assume that next time, President  
Carter will make sure that the  
Secret Service come ready in their  
scuba gear.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Andrei hands over his ticket to the airline clerk.

KIP O'RILEY (V.O.)  
And here on the West coast, the  
latest suspects in the Hillside  
Strangler case may go free by  
Tuesday if Los Angeles police don't  
come up with further evidence  
linking them to the murders of 13  
young women.

Andrei enters the tunnel to board the plane.

KIP O'RILEY (V.O.)  
 And finally, KPON Channel 5 News  
 Central ends on a personal note.

INT. ZHIVKOV'S OFFICE - DAY

Agent Gatev shows Zhivkov a scratchy playback of the Kip O'Riley broadcast.

KIP O'RILEY  
 (on TV)  
 We regret to announce that one of  
 our own reporters, Sava Kolev, has  
 died of complications after liver  
 failure.

Zhivkov tugs at his belt. He drifts over to the window and  
 lights a cigar, happy.

KIP O'RILEY (V.O.)  
 Our hearts go out to his family and  
 friends on this sad day.

Another AGENT enters sheepishly and hands Gatev a file.

The file: A dossier on Marko Marin, with a red stamp across  
 his photo. "DEFECTED".

Gatev looks to Zhivkov as Zhivkov enjoys the view. Gatev  
 gulps, nervous.

INT. SAVA'S HOUSE - DAY

While the movers continue packing, Jaclyn watches the TV.

KIP O'RILEY  
 (on TV)  
 A dedicated reporter, he was most  
 often found to be covering  
 international affairs...

A thoughtful smile creeps across her lips.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

A large A-frame cabin. Pine trees frame a wide, pristine  
 lake.

A small used car pulls up and parks in the driveway.

KIP O'RILEY (V.O.)  
...as well as local stories that  
focused a delicate eye on the  
inconsistencies between our  
society's ideals and its sometimes  
grim reality.

Sporting a short beard, Sava scoops up a couple sacks of  
groceries from the passenger seat.

INT. SOFIA AIRPORT - DAY

Two agents escort Andrei inside.

Grey walls, grey floor. Completely deserted, except for an  
old man in a worker uniform who casually mops the floor.

KIP O'RILEY (V.O.)  
He was just 41 years old, and a  
well-respected member of our family  
here at KPON.

Down the corridor, three more agents emerge and take note of  
Andrei.

Andrei grinds his jaw on the long walk.

He looks at the floor, tears welling in his eyes.

He slows, but the agents usher him forward.

KIP O'RILEY (V.O.)  
His absence will be felt not only  
around the studio, but in our  
personal lives as well.

Outside the terminal, three sedans are parked in the  
otherwise empty lot.

Every step of the long walk is torture.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Sava puts the groceries in the kitchen.

The main room is a hermit writer's dream. Every surface of  
the place is covered in books, notebooks and typed passages.

KIP O'RILEY (V.O.)  
He will be missed.

At the table, crumbs and dishes spread among papers, all centered around the typewriter.

Two thick typed manuscripts rest nearby:

"Inside the Bulgarian Secret Service" by Marko Marin.

"The Information War - Communist Dictatorships vs. American Sensationalism" by Anonymous.

KIP O'RILEY (V.O.)  
I'm Kip O'Riley. Stay tuned for  
more news at 10, KPON, News  
Central, Channel 5, the world's  
most watchable news.

The KPON extro music ends the segment with a flourish as Sava heads over to the table with food and a hot cup of coffee.

He sits down, full of purpose.

INT. SOFIA AIRPORT - DAY

As Andrei and the agents round the corner, Andrei's eyes widen.

Emilye stands up from a bench and hustles towards him.

They embrace with tears of joy.

The agents stand respectfully for a moment, then escort them outside.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.