

**SCARECROW**  
— and — *Mrs. King*

"THE ACM KID"

FIRST DRAFT

August 2, 1983



**WARNER BROS.  
TELEVISION**

SCARECROW AND MRS. KING

"The ACM Kid"

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SCARECROW AND MRS. KING

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 EXT. ACM PLANT - HIGH ANGLE - DAY 1

High technology. Windowless bunkers. A fancy glass and steel front office. Barbed wire fence. CAMERA PANS TO an innocuous-looking panel van parked a block down and across the street from the main ACM entrance.

2 INT. VAN - DAY 2

There are tape recorders, video monitors, and three armed agents inside, among them, LEE. The men are hot, cramped, in their shirtsleeves. Lee looks in the locker where food is kept and finds a single bag of corn chips, which he listlessly opens. One of the other men, DANE, keeps his eyes on the monitor.

DANE

We sure our source is reliable?

LEE

(shrugs)

Reliable as they ever are in this kinda thing. Anyone seen the bean dip?

DANE

Who's the informant?

LEE

Secretary. Several nights after work, she said Clemens slipped into a project area he had no business in. Saw him with his hand right in the old cookie jar.

DANE

Surveillance satellite?

Lee nods, then stares at the monitor.

LEE

There's our man.

3 ANGLE ON BLACK AND WHITE MONITOR 3

Jeff Clemens is a skinny, nervous guy who emerges from the main gate carrying a briefcase, looks around, then quickly crosses to a parking lot.

4 BACK TO SCENE 4

LEE

Let's go.

5 EXT. VAN - NIGHT 5

as it pulls away from the curb. Ahead of it, Clemens pulls out of the small parking lot and both vehicles move off into traffic.

CUT TO:

6 EXT. SEEDY MOTEL - DAY 6

Clemens' car is parked in front of one of the little rooms.

7 INT. VAN 7

Lee sits next to the driver. SHOOTING ACROSS him, we see Clemens' car in the motel lot across the street. The agents all look weary.

LEE

(irritated)

What's he doing in there alone?  
There's not another car in the  
whole lot. I'm gonna have a look.

8 EXT. CLEMENS' MOTEL ROOM - DAY 8

Lee comes from behind a row of rooms perpendicular to the bungalow with Clemens' room. He moves stealthily toward the room. He is right at the edge of the window.

9 INT. CLEMENS' MOTEL ROOM - ANGLE ON HAND - DAY 9

CAMERA PANS UP the hand, which is attached to the lifeless form of Jeff Clemens, sprawled on the bed, shot to death. We now see, across the room, a cruel-looking man named BECKER, going through the documents in the opened briefcase. He closes the case, and moves toward an open window in the rear of the room.

10 ANGLE ON FRONT WINDOW 10

where, through a crack in the drapes, we see just the edge of Lee's face peering around. As he takes in the death scene before him, his eyes widen. CAMERA PANS TO the door, which Lee kicks open, bursting into the room.

11 EXT. MOTEL - HIGH ANGLE - DAY

11

Becker's car moves quickly away from the rear of the building and out into traffic. Lee comes running out of the motel room to see the CAR SCREECH away, and points at it, running toward the van, which is suddenly in motion. Lee leaps into the van, it takes off, and we...

CUT TO:

12 EXT. KALNIKOV FRONT PORCH - DAY

12

A small, asphalt-shingle house in a working class neighborhood. VASSILY and GALINA KALNIKOV are a Russian couple in their forties. They are arguing with a cold businesslike thug named COUGHLAN.

VASSILY

No! We have told you never again!

COUGHLAN

(wearily)

Mr. Kalnikov, let's go inside and talk like friends, hmmm?

VASSILY

We are not friends!

COUGHLAN

Mr. Wilson's your friend. When you first came to this country, he sure helped you out of a jam or two. Rented you this house... Gave you a job when you needed it...

VASSILY

(snorts)

He tell me he is on welcoming committee to help people like us... Then we find out job is for KGB! We don't come to America to spy for KGB!

COUGHLAN

(shrugs)

Work's work. Anyway, we don't want you, we want Alexie. Just one more time.

VASSILY

No!

13 EXT. CITY STREET - AGENCY VAN - DAY

13

Traffic is hopeless; the VAN swerves in and out of cars, SCREECHES to a stop to avoid hitting someone who's just stepped into the road, starts up again, goes around a corner.

14 KALNIKOV HOUSE

14

Becker's car has pulled up, and he now comes up to the porch.

COUGHLAN

(to Becker)

Vassily's not in the mood to talk to us anymore.

BECKER

Is he in the mood to keep breathing? Vassily, let's go iron this out with Mr. Wilson.

Wilson's name strikes a note of hate and fear in Vassily, and he slams the door shut.

VASSILY

No!

Coughlan and Becker look at each other with a sigh, lift their feet, and blast the door open with a vicious kick. They rush inside, and grab the cringing Vassily and Galina.

15 ANOTHER ANGLE - TRACKING

15

as Coughlan and Becker wrestle Galina and Vassily toward the cars parked at the curb. Coughlan takes over stuffing them into one of the cars.

COUGHLAN

Go get Alexie.

But just then, the Agency VAN ROARS down the street at them. Coughlan and Becker realize whoever's in the van means business, and quickly leap into their cars. The VAN SCREECHES up, and Dane jumps out, gun drawn.

DANE

Halt! Federal agents!

But the two heavies are already speeding away. Lee has jumped out, too, and starts springing toward the house, as the Agency van takes off after the heavies. Dane goes around to the side yard.

16 INT. KALNIKOV HOUSE - HAND-HELD - DAY

16

as Lee cautiously enters, gun drawn. He moves into the simply furnished place, then down a short hallway. Suddenly he hears a small NOISE from behind one of the closed doors. He slowly reaches for the doorknob, then throws the door open, and leaps into the room in his best agent-with-gun stance.

17 INT. ROOM

17

LEE  
 (gun aimed)  
 Freeze!

Then he stops, stares in amazement, and lowers his gun.

18 LEE'S POV - CORNER OF ROOM

18

Crouched in a corner near the bed is a twelve-year-old boy, ALEXIE KALNIKOV. He is sturdy, defiant, dark, good-looking.

ALEXIE  
 Okay, I'm frozen. Now what?

CUT TO:

19 EXT. AGENCY HEADQUARTERS - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

19

20 INT. AGENCY INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

20

START ON FRANCINE, who wearily crosses over to where Alexie is seated, arms stubbornly folded. Lee sits in the corner, watching with some amusement.

FRANCINE  
 All right, Alexie, let's start again at the beginning...

ALEXIE  
You start again at the beginning, sister. I'm through talkin'.

FRANCINE  
 You have no idea who the men were that took your parents away?  
 (after a beat)  
 How do you expect us to help you if you don't help us?

ALEXIE  
 I never asked you to help me!

LEE  
 Actually, that's true, Francine. He never did.

FRANCINE  
 (to Lee)  
 I'm glad you find this so amusing.

BILLY enters, carrying a large lollipop.

(CONTINUED)

BILLY

I knew we had one of these around here somewhere.

(to Alexie)

Could I trade it for a little cooperation?

ALEXIE

(to Lee)

Is he kiddin' with that thing, or what?

FRANCINE

(exhausted)

Look, it's after midnight. Let's adjourn.

Lee has stood, comes over to Francine and Billy.

LEE

(quietly, indicating boy)

What about him?

BILLY

They've got room for him over at Dozier Hall for tonight...

LEE

Aw, Billy, that place is a nightmare. We can't send him there...

FRANCINE

(pleasantly)

We could clap him in irons...

Lee thinks for a moment, then:

LEE

Listen... What if I took him to my place for the night?

Billy and Francine stare at him in surprise. A new Lee. He feels a little awkward.

LEE

(continuing)

Okay, so I feel sorry for him. What's the big deal? He's a scared little kid.

ALEXIE

Hey, blondie, can I blow this dump?

(CONTINUED)



20 CONTINUED: (2)

20

Francine glares over at him, then looks sweetly over at Lee.

FRANCINE

Enjoy yourself.

CUT TO:

21 EXT. LEE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EARLY MORNING

21

Old, urban, not terribly posh.

22 INT. LEE'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

22

Lee Stetson is a man who has yet to put down roots, and his apartment shows it. He furnished it quickly and pragmatically: director's chairs, soft, casual couch; a dart board; card table with portable typewriter and a mound of work; and a clutter of mementos, Indian pots, African shields, Chinese porcelain, from years of knocking around the world. The DOORBELL RINGS. A moment. It RINGS AGAIN. Lee stumbles from one of the bedrooms wearing only a short kimono-type robe, which he is tying. He groggily opens the door to reveal a very bright and perky AMANDA.

AMANDA

Good morning!

Lee just stares blearily at her, trying to focus.

LEE

What are you doing here? How did you know where I lived? What are you doing here? Why didn't you call? What are you doing here?

23 ANOTHER ANGLE

23

as Amanda marches in, looks around.

AMANDA

I did call. Your service said they had orders not to disturb you. This reminds me of a place I lived in at college. Mother saw it and made me move.

Lee is stumbling toward the kitchen area, visible over a counter.

(CONTINUED)

LEE  
(weakly)  
Coffee...

AMANDA  
Are you always this punchy in the morning? Billy called and said you needed help on a case.

LEE  
Billy was wrong.

AMANDA  
... Something about a little boy.

LEE  
Well, I suppose you could do some babysitting...

Amanda comes into the kitchen, a bit irritated by this last.

AMANDA  
That's not exactly how Billy described the assignment...

Amanda is looking dubiously around the place.

AMANDA  
(continuing)  
Oh, but, Lee, are you set up here to take care of a child? They need...

LEE  
Attention and someone to talk to!

Amanda has opened the refrigerator to reveal a bottle of champagne and some old cheese.

AMANDA  
What they need is food. You don't have any.

LEE  
(defensively)  
And just what the hell do you call this incredibly expensive Camembert?!

AMANDA  
Moldy.

CUT TO:

Lee pushes the shopping cart, Amanda walks next to him. She is nervously eyeing Alexie, who marches along in stony silence.

AMANDA

So... Alexie... What's your favorite cereal?

Alexie shrugs listlessly.

AMANDA

(continuing)

Oh, you know what's in season? Apples. I love apples. Want to get some apples?

ALEXIE

No.

LEE

He likes pizza. Alexie, go pick out a couple.

ALEXIE

(helpfully)

And we finished all the beer last night.

Alexie goes off. Amanda stares at Lee, appalled.

AMANDA

Going for 'Father of the Year,' are you?

LEE

Hey, he's been through a bad time. His folks came to the United States when he was little, he grew up in a rotten neighborhood... And whoever borrowed his parents last night plays very rough. They murdered this guy we've been keeping an eye on over at ACM.

AMANDA

ACM? Aren't they the people sending up that satellite next week?

LEE

Yeah. We got a tip that an employee there... Jeff Clemens... was rummaging around in the satellite project area.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEE (CONT'D)

The satellite's a special surveillance jobby, and obviously the bad guys would just love to find out what makes it tick.

AMANDA

And Alexie's parents are somehow connected to all this?

LEE

Looks like. Listen, I've gotta go in to the Agency for a while... Could you sort of...

AMANDA

(dryly)

'Babysit'?

LEE

You'll be great. You know how nice you can be...

AMANDA

Oh, you must be desperate.

He hands her a wad of money.

LEE

Do something fun with him. I'll have one of our people follow you around... Just in case...

AMANDA

In case what?

LEE

Well... just in case... our friends would also like to get their hands on Alexie.

Amanda's interest is sparked.

AMANDA

Really?

Lee grins, teases her...

LEE

(a la spooky narrative)  
Yes, Amanda... Danger! Excitement!  
Intrigue!...

AMANDA

Oh, shut up.

CUT TO:

25

INT. AGENCY INTERROGATION ROOM - CLOSE ON BARBARA

25

This is Jeff Clemens' ex-wife. Her eyes are a bit vacant as she searches for how to feel about Jeff's death. CAMERA PULLS BACK during her speech to reveal Lee and Billy listening thoughtfully.

BARBARA

... In the last year of our marriage, the gambling got really bad. Jeff would promise to quit, then I'd find out about the loans he'd taken to start gambling again. He began coming home later and later. He said he had to work, but I always knew I could find him down at the Lug Wrench Bar. That's where all the ACM guys hang out. He always knew he could get a game going down there...

She covers her eyes with her hands.

BILLY

Did Jeff ever mention being in any kind of... trouble?

BARBARA

Always! He owed everybody money. Including me! After the divorce, he couldn't even make the child support payments!...

Billy and Lee exchange looks, we...

CUT TO:

26

INT. AGENCY CORRIDOR - TRACKING - DAY

26

Billy and Lee walk down the long hall, which is busy with the usual carts, personnel, PA ANNOUNCEMENTS...

LEE

... We've seen this kinda thing before, Billy... An average guy gets in way over his head... He's got access to sensitive material the other side would pay an arm and a leg for. If he's desperate enough, sometimes the temptation's too much.

BILLY

If the Lug Wrench Bar is a known hangout for the ACM people, that may be where Clemens made his connection.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

BILLY (CONT'D)

Let's put you in there for a while  
and see if we get a nibble.

LEE

(thoughtfully)

But I wonder what all this has to  
do with Alexie's folks?

BILLY

Tell the King woman to keep her  
ears open. How's she doing with  
him, anyhow?

LEE

You know Amanda. She's got  
Motherhood carved on her bones.  
She's having the time of her life.

CUT TO:

27 INT. AMANDA'S CAR - MOVING - DAY

27

Alexie and Amanda are in the front seat. Amanda angrily  
snatches a cigarette out of his mouth.

AMANDA

Alexie, I'm not going to tell you  
about this again!

ALEXIE

What're you, a cop?

AMANDA

You are twelve years old!

ALEXIE

Everyone smokes at the dives I  
hang out in!

AMANDA

Well, not the dives I hang out in!  
Now, do you or do you not want to  
get a strawberry milk shake?!

ALEXIE

I kicked strawberry milk shakes  
when I was two!

Amanda's about to speak, but thinks better of it. She  
calms down, gets a grip on herself, then:

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

AMANDA

All right. Fine. Is there anything special you would like to do?

Alexie thinks a moment, then:

ALEXIE

I wanna go to a video arcade.

AMANDA

Fine. There's an arcade my boys like to go to...

ALEXIE

I wanna go to the one I like to go to!

AMANDA

Fine. Where's that?

ALEXIE

Peppertree Shopping Mall.  
(looks behind them)  
That goon still following us?

AMANDA

Alexie, that goon is there for your protection.

ALEXIE

(scornful)  
What do I need protection from?

AMANDA

(under her breath)  
Me.

28 EXT. STREET - DAY

28

as Amanda's car moves swiftly PAST CAMERA, followed by the ND government sedan with an Agency guard driving.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. PEPPERTREE MALL - ESTABLISHING - DAY

29

Big, maybe brick, surrounded by trees. OVER the SHOT we hear outrageous ELECTRONIC EFFECTS from a VIDEO GAME.

30 INT. POP'S ARCADE - ANGLE ON VIDEO GAME SCREEN - DAY 30

Interplanetary fighters annihilate the human race in a small purple explosion. GAME OVER flashes.

31 ALEXIE AND AMANDA 31

Amanda leans against the machine, patiently watching Alexie as he finishes the game. The air is filled with the BEEPS and BOINKS from the other GAMES.

AMANDA

(brightly)

Well. That was fun. Now, let's...

ALEXIE

I wanna play some more.

AMANDA

Alexie, you've played four times...

ALEXIE

Just a couple more times. Please?  
C'mon, I saw the wad Lee gave you.

Amanda sighs, gives him a bill.

ALEXIE

(continuing; running  
off)

I'll get change.

Amanda looks over at the Agency guard, who is leaning against the doorway of the place. She shrugs.

32 CASHIER'S DESK 32

as Alexie approaches. The owner of the arcade has his back TO US. Alexie looks around to make sure no one is nearby, then:

ALEXIE

(quietly)

Mr. Wilson...

And the owner turns around. A seemingly nice older gentleman, MR. WILSON.

MR. WILSON

(not unkindly)

It's about time you showed up.

(CONTINUED)



32 CONTINUED:

32

ALEXIE

They're watchin' me. Where are  
my parents?

MR. WILSON

Someplace safe. For the moment.  
Alexie, you know we still need  
your help. Be here tonight.

ALEXIE

I can't. I told you. They're  
watchin' me.

MR. WILSON

(suddenly cold)

Alexie, you have an IQ of 185.  
You'll think of something.

Alexie's tough guy facade melts. We now see him for  
what he is. A very frightened kid.

ALEXIE

Please don't hurt my parents.

MR. WILSON

If you're not here I'll do more  
than just hurt them.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

33 INT. A GLOOMY ROOM - NIGHT 33

CAMERA STARTS ON a couple of frozen food containers with partially eaten contents. PAN UP FROM the sorry dinner TO two chairs where Galina and Vassily are securely tied up. Galina is trying to doze, but can't fall asleep in this upright position, and looks miserable. Vassily is trying very hard to slowly, methodically, loosen the knots around his wrists. A hand comes INTO FRAME and very firmly clamps down on Vassily's shoulder. Vassily stops struggling, jerks his head up, frightened to see, as we PULL BACK: Coughlan. He stares down at Vassily with a nasty smile, bringing a gun playfully close to Vassily's temple, giving his hair a flick, and we...

CUT TO:

34 EXT. LUG WRENCH BAR - NIGHT 34

A small, neighborhood-type bar with a large, painted cut-out of a wrench outside.

35 INT. LUG WRENCH BAR - NIGHT 35

Inside the bar, the decor and uniforms pick up the garage motif. The bartender, CANDY, is dressed in mechanic's overalls and a garage attendant's shirt with her name printed over the pocket. She chats with a young customer, BILL, while she takes away his empty glass.

CANDY

Your wife called, Bill. I told her you'd be home in ten minutes.

BILL

(tipsy)

How can I make that?

CANDY

By leaving now. 'Bye.

Bill collects his change and resignedly departs for home, passing Lee, who sits a few stools away, nursing a drink. Lee's wearing dressy western clothes, cowboy boots, and playing the role of a transplanted Texan.

LEE

(to Candy)

Whoo. That was a might chilly, bustin' him like that. At Polly's, back in Houston, they give a man a little protection.

(CONTINUED)

CANDY

Maybe at Polly's they don't have these wives calling at all hours asking where their husbands are. If these guys don't wanna go home, fine. But I'm not making their excuses for 'em.

LEE

You and my ex-wife'd get along real well.

CANDY

(points to his drink)

You want another hacksaw?

He nods, leans on one hand, stares dreamily into her eyes. Candy's seen it all before, but good-naturedly smiles, mixes the drink.

LEE

I don't suppose you could tell a poor cowboy where he could find a little action...

CANDY

What kinda action?

LEE

Oh... Anything with odds... Poker... ponies... pinball...

She gives him the drink, indicates the room.

CANDY

Ask one of these ACM guys. They usually got a game going.

(re: the drink)

Three fifty.

He pulls out a checkbook.

LEE

Take a check? I'm a little short on cash.

CANDY

(slamming down a hand)

I shoulda known! Another ACM deadbeat!

LEE

(surprised)

Say what?

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (2)

35

CANDY

You guys are the only people I know who knock down fifty thou a year and never have a dime.

LEE

Didn't they teach you sympathy at bartender school?

CANDY

I cut class.

Lee grins, studies her a moment, then extends a hand.

LEE

Hell, the check's good. Can we be friends?

CANDY

No.

(relents)

Okay.

They shake hands. CAMERA ARCS AROUND, holding Lee in profile, and revealing, at the other end of the bar, Becker. He nurses a beer, and is listening, very intently, to Lee.

LEE

(all charm)

Ricky Joe Jackson. Put 'er ther.

CUT TO:

36 INT. KING KITCHEN - ANGLE ON BLENDER - NIGHT

36

An odd-colored concoction whirls around as the BLENDER ROARS. CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal Amanda tossing all sorts of vegetables into the blender. We hear Dotty entering from the foyer.

DOTTY (O.S.)

I'm home! Is anybody else?

AMANDA

In here!

Dotty enters, very dressed up, except for her bare feet. She carries her shoes.

AMANDA

(continuing)

Where've you been?

&lt;CONTINUED&gt;

DOTTY

With Fred.

Amanda shuts OFF the BLENDER, gets glasses.

AMANDA

Fred? As in Dr. Fred Bain the  
chiropracist?

Dotty sits on a stool, looks happily at her feet.

DOTTY

Did you know the feet were  
erogenous zones?

AMANDA

(startled)

Uh... well... Mother, I...

DOTTY

Of course, it's different with every  
person. Fred and I determined I  
carry a lot of passion in my arches.

Amanda just stands there, looking at her. PHILLIP,  
JAMIE, and Alexie enter.

AMANDA

You boys having fun?

JAMIE

Yeah. Alexie's teaching us how to  
roll a drunk.

Amanda stares at Alexie. Dotty stares at Amanda, then,  
turns sweetly to Alexie, and:

DOTTY

I don't think we've met. I'm Dotty  
West, the boys' grandmother. Who  
are you?

ALEXIE

Alexie Kalnikov.

DOTTY

And you go to school with Phillip  
and Jamie?

ALEXIE

Nah. The feds've got me in  
protective custody.

(CONTINUED)

DOTTY

(sweetly)

I see. Amanda, could I speak to you for a moment?

She hands the blender pitcher to Phillip.

AMANDA

Here, boys. Go drink.

PHILLIP

Mom, have you smelled this?

AMANDA

(urging them out)

I didn't say smell it, I said drink it.

They go.

DOTTY

(keeping a grip)

Darling, who is that child?

AMANDA

I'm glad you asked that.

(a vacant beat, then:)

I volunteered to keep him. See, I just joined a... Big Sister program. We take children from broken or deprived homes and try to show them healthy role models...

DOTTY

And why, exactly, do the... 'feds' have him in protective custody?

AMANDA

I'm glad you asked that.

Another vacant beat. The PHONE RINGS. Amanda gratefully rushes to it.

AMANDA

(continuing)

Hello?

INTERCUT with Lee, at a pay phone in the Lug Wrench Bar.

LEE

Look, I can't talk...

(CONTINUED)

AMANDA

(smiles)  
How's it going down there... 'Ricky  
Joe'?

LEE

I've gotta work late, and I don't  
want to leave Alexie alone in my  
apartment. So could you...

AMANDA

(irked)  
Keep him here? I think that's...

Then she spots Dotty watching her, and suddenly shifts  
gears into forced cheeriness.

AMANDA

(continuing)  
... really a splendid idea.

LEE

(dumbfounded)  
You do?

AMANDA

Of course! Let's not undo all the  
good we've done by sending him back  
to the hellhole he was in this  
morning.

LEE

(mock pain)  
Hey, watch it, will ya? Look, I'll  
have a security man out in the street,  
and...

Lee suddenly spots Becker standing nearby, watching.

LEE

(continuing; suddenly  
angry)  
So get off my back! You got the  
house, the car, the kid... You  
make it work out!

He slams down the phone, glances over at Becker.

LEE

(continuing;  
disgusted)  
Ex-wives.

37 INT. KING KITCHEN - ANGLE ON AMANDA 37

She stands there, staring at the receiver, looking puzzled. She hangs up the phone as we...

GO TO:

38 A LOOSER ANGLE 38

which reveals that Jamie has entered, and is in a hushed conversation with Dotty. She looks up.

DOTTY

Dear, Jamie was just saying he wished he could ride his bike before dinner.

AMANDA

Why don't you, honey?

JAMIE

Alexie has my bike.

AMANDA

You lent it to him?

DOTTY

He lost it in a crap game.

Amanda just sighs, and we...

CUT TO:

39 INT. KING LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 39

Amanda is making up a bed for Alexie on the couch. He sits on a chair, pulling off his shoes.

AMANDA

I hope you'll be comfortable down here, Alexie.

ALEXIE

I slept in worse places.

AMANDA

I don't have any pajamas for you.

ALEXIE

I don't wear pajamas.

AMANDA

Okay. Look... Alexie... I hope you know I want to be your friend.

(CONTINUED)



39 CONTINUED:

39

ALEXIE

There's no percentage in friends.  
You can't count on 'em.

AMANDA

Oh, but Alexie, you've got to believe  
in people. Remember how in Peter Pan,  
when Tinker Bell was dying, and her  
light was flickering...

ALEXIE

You talk with little kids a lot,  
don't you.

AMANDA

(proud)

Well, with two boys of my own, I  
guess I...

ALEXIE

You should get out more.

AMANDA

All right, try this. While you're  
in my house I'm going to act like  
your friend if it kills me, and I  
expect you to do the same. So get  
in bed, go to sleep, and in the  
morning you can give Jamie his bike  
back.

Alexie just looks at her a moment, then:

ALEXIE

Boy... You're tougher than the fed  
with the moldy cheese.

AMANDA

Really?

(beat; pleased)

Could I get that in writing?

CUT TO:

40 EXT. LUG WRENCH BAR - NIGHT

40

Becker is writing down the number of the Texas plates on  
Lee's Porsche. He gets in his own car, drives off, as  
CAMERA MOVES IN ON Lee, in the b.g., looking on with  
satisfaction.

CUT TO:

41 INT. KING FOYER - LATE NIGHT 41

The doors to the living room open a crack. Alexie peeks out, checks for signs of life, then sneaks over to a window looking out on the street.

42 ALEXIE'S POV - THE STREET - NIGHT 42

Outside, the Agency guard relaxes back in the seat of his car, glancing at a book, and looking around.

43 BACK TO ALEXIE 43

who swiftly moves to the den, opens the French doors leading to the back, and squeezes through the bushes, catching his sweatshirt as he runs off.

CUT TO:

44 INT. MALL WALKWAY - OUTSIDE ARCADE - NIGHT 44

The mall is deserted. The arcade is locked up for the night.

45 INT. COMPUTER ROOM - REAR OF ARCADE - ON WILSON - NIGHT 45

Wilson gives orders to someone we don't yet see.

MR. WILSON

The name is Ricky Joe Jackson.  
Verify that Texas license number I  
gave you, then let's do a credit  
check.

46 ANOTHER ANGLE 46

reveals, sitting before Wilson at a computer console, our own Alexie. The room is a maze of wires coming in and leaving the room, and on a long table is a massive computer set-up, patched together in a home-style way. Alexie taps the keys, then looks up at Wilson.

ALEXIE

I wanna see my parents.

MR. WILSON

Perhaps when you've finished your  
chores...

<CONTINUED>

ALEXIE

(bitterly)

My pop said doing your dirty work is just like being back in Russia.

MR. WILSON

(too sweetly)

Your pop is too sentimental. He's lucky he has a friend like me. And, of course, a useful son like you.

ALEXIE

(scornful)

How many other poor, scared people you got workin' for you, Mr. Wilson?

MR. WILSON

Plenty, Alexie. Most of whom are far more grateful than you.

(firm)

Now, get back to work.

Alexie sighs, puts the receiver of a phone into the modem, punches some more keys.

ALEXIE

Okay, I got the credit network.

INTERCUT computer monitor THROUGHOUT.

It now reads: JACKSON, RICKY JOE RESIDENCE, HOUSTON TEXAS. Alexie types: REQUEST CREDIT DATA. The screen reads: ENTER ACCESS CODE. Alexie checks a card on the table, then types in a word. Becker has entered, comes over and looks at the screen with Wilson.

BECKER

(whistles)

This guy is in up to his eyeballs.

MR. WILSON

Owes back alimony... Several loans outstanding... Cancelled credit cards...

BECKER

Our kind of guy.

MR. WILSON

All right, now access the ACM personnel computer.

Alexie sighs, taps some more keys. INTERCUT the screen: JACKSON, RICKY JOE HIRE DATE 9/11/79.

<CONTINUED>

BECKER

Why can't we get into the satellite project computer that easy?

ALEXIE

You kiddin'? You only get into these computers with an access code word. Gettin' into a credit computer is one thing. But the codes for projects are top secret. They sit on those babies like gold eggs.

MR. WILSON

Job description, please.

Alexie taps keys. The screen reads: ASS'NT DIRECTOR, CRYPTOLOGY LABORATORY. SECURITY CLEARANCE: TOP SECRET.

MR. WILSON

(continuing;  
with a smile)

Excellent. Only five days remain until the satellite launch... Perhaps our Mr. Jackson can be persuaded to hatch a golden egg for us by then.

ALEXIE

That it? I gotta go.

MR. WILSON

I think, Alexie, it would be best if you stayed with us.

ALEXIE

No way. And don't try and stop me from goin'. I left a note back where I'm staying. If I don't tear it up before they find it in the morning, they'll know right where you are.

Wilson is furious at being outwitted by this kid, but controls himself. He glares at Alexie, then turns to Becker:

MR. WILSON

Get busy with this Jackson person, Becker. Once that satellite starts sending messages to the ACM computer, our people want to know everything it knows.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: (3)

46

MR. WILSON (CONT'D)

(to Alexie)

As for you, Alexie... You want to help your parents, you help me. That's a warning.

CUT TO:

47 INT. KING KITCHEN - MORNING

47

Amanda is on the phone.

AMANDA

(into receiver)

Dean, that's so exciting! Tri-City Weather Forecaster of the Year!!

(beat)

What kind of trophy? An aluminum sun.

(beat)

Gazendheit. I told you to take your rain poncho.

Alexie enters, starts rummaging through the refrigerator. Amanda makes kissing noises into the phone.

AMANDA

(continuing)

'Bye.

She hangs up.

ALEXIE

Who was that?

AMANDA

My boy friend.

ALEXIE

You two-timing the fed with all the teeth, or what?

AMANDA

I occasionally help the fed. I am not involved with the fed.

ALEXIE

Good. You two'd make a lousy couple. A guy who lives in a place like his could never dig a girl who lives in a place like yours.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

AMANDA

At the risk of sounding too friendly,  
would you like me to wash your jeans?  
I'm about to do a load.

(noticing his shirt)

Where'd this tear come from? I  
didn't notice it yesterday.

For half a second, a bit of nervousness crosses Alexie's  
eyes, then, Mr. Cool:

ALEXIE

I ripped it this morning. You know  
us problem kids. We rip things.  
So what's the big deal?

He leaves, passing Dotty, who has come in from the  
garden. Bare feet.

DOTTY

How are you and young Stalin getting  
along?

AMANDA

Oh... making progress. Mother,  
you're barefoot.

DOTTY

Fred says feet strangle in shoes.  
He recommends letting them breathe  
until at least noon. Speaking of  
feet, which one of our three  
hooligans trampled my marigolds?

AMANDA

What?

DOTTY

Several of them are absolutely  
squished. I can't imagine when it  
happened. I got out there first  
thing this morning, and worked in  
the garden 'til after dark last  
night. Strange, isn't it?

She goes to the sink to wash her hands, as CAMERA  
PUSHES IN ON Amanda, starting to be a bit suspicious.

AMANDA

Yes. Very.

CUT TO:

48

INT. LUG WRENCH BAR - DAY

48

Lunchtime business. Candy's behind the bar. Lee and Becker are sitting on stools, talking. Obviously, a relationship of sorts has been formed.

LEE

(laughing)

... And she says, 'Don't bother takin' your boots off... I like cowboys!'

(har har)

Candy, could you maybe stir us up a couple more hacksaws?

BECKER

No thanks, R.J. Noon is too early for me to lose it.

LEE

I can't lose what I no longer have, big Beck.

Candy brings the drinks. Lee reaches for a deck of cards.

LEE

(continuing)

Thank you, honey. I'll cut you for the tab.

CANDY

(resigned)

That's okay. You can write me a check.

She goes off. Over at the side, Amanda comes in, feeling a little awkward. She stands there, trying to get Lee's attention. He finally sees her, nearly chokes on his drink, then pounds the bar.

LEE

Damn!

(to Becker)

Now you know why I'm broke. Most ex-wives would pick up the phone. Not mine. She jumps on a plane.

He has gotten off the stool, and crossed to Amanda, taking his drink with him.

LEE

(continuing; through clenched teeth)

Alimony check's in the mail, sugar.

(CONTINUED)

From his look, Amanda realizes she's expected to play along.

AMANDA

Uh, I need to see you... Ricky Joe.  
It's about the boy.

LEE

(pointedly)  
Now is not the time, honey.

AMANDA

Something is going on with him,  
honey. I think he ran away last  
night.

LEE

Think?

AMANDA

He came back, but mother's flowers  
were trampled.

(glancing at Becker)

Uh... you know... mother... who came  
to stay after... you left.

Lee rolls his eyes.

LEE

I gotta get back to work, now, or I  
might screw up my job totally, if  
you savvy. You're just gonna have  
to keep your eye on him. Come to my  
place, and we'll talk tonight.

AMANDA

But... I thought this might be  
important.

LEE

You're right. It may be. But so  
is my job.

AMANDA

Well, then...

LEE

(sotto)

Tell me I stink.

AMANDA

You stink!

(CONTINUED)



48 CONTINUED: (2)

48

LEE

(sotto)

Throw my drink in my face.

Amanda's eyes light up. She seizes his glass, and, with relish, tosses its contents in his face.

AMANDA

And frankly, Ricky Joe, sex with you was always a major disappointment!

She slams down the glass and storms out.

LEE

(to himself)

Ham.

(turns to Becker)

Still a lot of unresolved anger there.

Becker stands.

BECKER

Ricky Joe. I know you gotta get back to work soon, but do you have just a minute? I'd like to talk a little business.

CUT TO:

49 EXT. ACM PLANT - NIGHT

49

Becker and Coughlan sit in a car parked across the street from the plant. They talk quietly. Coughlan smokes. Their eyes are fixed on the employees gate.

50 COUGHLAN AND BECKER

50

BECKER

I promised him two grand for a couple of personnel files.

COUGHLAN

We got Jeff Clemens for half that.

BECKER

We got half the time we had with him. If this cowboy comes through with something simple like personnel records, he may be ready to graduate to the big time.



54 CONTINUED:

54

BECKER

That's the only reason we're keeping him around. Once we're into the satellite computer, Wilson wants the kid and his parents blown away. They're too much trouble.

And as he puts the car in gear, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

55 EXT. LEE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT 55

56 INT. LEE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 56

Amanda is in the last phases of straightening up the place. Unable to find a vase, she's filling a ram's horn with water for the fresh flowers she's brought. The table is set with the ram's horn as a centerpiece. Alexie is at the window staring at the stars through Lee's precision ground glass telescope.

AMANDA

We'll eat in about twenty minutes. I made a totally non-nourishing dinner, so I'm sure you'll like it.

ALEXIE

(preoccupied)

Sounds cool.

A KEY in the LOCK. Lee enters, carrying boxes and bags of toys, games.

LEE

(from behind his load)

I'm home.

He dumps the boxes. Alexie hurries over.

LEE

(continuing)

Hi, guy. How you been? Amanda beat up on you today?

ALEXIE

Not much. What's in the boxes?

LEE

Oh, just a few odds and ends... I wasn't sure what you liked and what you didn't...

Alexie is tearing through the boxes, pulling out sports equipment, video games, model kits, etc. Lee is pulling things from another box; a kid, himself.

LEE

(continuing;  
studying games)

Yeah, let's see, we got your Death Demon, your Space Dinosaur, and your every popular Swamp Humanoids...

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

Alexie is digging in another box. He pulls out a large panda bear, stares at it in disdain.

ALEXIE

(fumbling)

Oh... well... gee...

LEE

(embarrassed)

I guess you're a little old for that...  
I just told the lady to give me an  
assortment...

ALEXIE

Can I go try a video game?

LEE

Sure.

Alexie grabs them, runs off, Amanda calls after him:

AMANDA

'Thank you, Lee!'

ALEXIE (O.S.)

Thank you, Lee!

AMANDA

You know, some people would say you're  
spoiling that kid rotten, and that  
you're trying to buy his good will...

(looks at bear)

Wanna buy mine? This guy's gorgeous!

Lee is looking around, stunned.

LEE

Where'd my apartment go?

AMANDA

I just dusted off a few things... Maybe  
threw out some old newspapers...

Lee walks around surveying the damage, putting things  
back the way he likes them. He sees the ram's horn vase.

LEE

You drowned my Tibetan ram's horn!

He picks up a small, open book from coffee table.

LEE

(continuing)

'Understanding Sabotage: A Beginner's  
Guide.' That's not mine!

(CONTINUED)

AMANDA

(snatching it back)

It's mine. Part of the reading list  
Billy gave me...

LEE

You've taken over the place!

(realizes)

Yes! That's it! It isn't just  
neat and tidy... It looks like you  
live here, not me! Uh, not that I'm  
not grateful...

AMANDA

(sighs)

I guess Alexie was right when he said  
we're totally incompatible.

LEE

Alexie said that?

AMANDA

Actually, what he said was, 'Lee's  
fun, and you're a drag.'

LEE

You know, he's not all that bad. Some  
kids deserve a little spoiling. Life's  
not easy. And it's less easy if you're  
a scared kid. Maybe he pretends to be  
tough so no one'll know how scared he  
is.

Lee has picked up a neat stack of magazines, makes them  
look a trifle more sloppy on the table.

AMANDA

If I didn't know better, I'd think  
you were speaking from first hand  
experience.

LEE

You're not kidding. I ever tell you  
about my childhood?

He has crossed to stereo, is rummaging through records.

AMANDA

(all ears)

No.

LEE

I didn't think so.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: (3)

56

Beat. Amanda waits for more. There is no more.

LEE  
(continuing)  
Where'd you put my Rolling Stones  
albums?

AMANDA  
Oh, uh, under 'S.' Stones, Rolling.

Lee looks at her, hunts through albums.

LEE  
All I'm saying is, put up with the  
kid. For just a little longer. I'm  
sorry if he snuck out on you.

AMANDA  
I'm not sure he did, but I don't want  
him getting hurt. I think he knows  
more than he's saying, and he might be  
trying to... contact his parents.

LEE  
He might be. He sure as hell does know  
more than he's saying. But he's scared  
to death, and won't tell us a thing.

"Ruby Tuesday" is PLAYING on the STEREO. Amanda watches  
Lee as, doing his "uncleaning," he stands absently holding  
the panda. She smiles. He looks up, catches her.

LEE  
(continuing)  
What?

AMANDA  
I was just thinking... Some of you  
tough guys... aren't as tough as I  
thought.

He starts to say something, the oven TIMER RINGS, they  
both look at it, we...

CUT TO:

57 EXT. LUG WRENCH BAR PARKING LOT - DAY

57

Lee is walking from his parked car toward the bar.  
Coughlan and Becker have been waiting for him in their  
CAR, and now they pull up alongside him, nearly hitting  
him before SKIDDING to a stop.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

57

LEE

Whoa, fella!

BECKER

Hi, Ricky Joe. This is my associate,  
Jack Coughlan.

LEE

(leaning into car)  
Howdy. You slicks wanna join me in  
the bar? I'm buying.

BECKER

Nah, Jack's gotta get a haircut. Get  
in for a sec.

LEE

Thanks, but I'm sorta...

BECKER

(icy)  
Get in.

Lee climbs into the back seat.

58 INT. CAR - MOVING

58

as they drive toward the rear of the row of buildings the  
bar is situated in.

BECKER

Ricky Joe, my friend and I need a  
little help. Help that you can  
provide.

LEE

Hey, I owe you. Speak.

BECKER

Remember how you were able to get  
those personnel files for us?...

LEE

(getting "nervous")  
Yep...

BECKER

Well, we need a little more information.

LEE

Uh... who did you fellas want to check  
up on this time?

(CONTINUED)



58 CONTINUED:

58

BECKER

We need access to the new surveillance satellite computer.

LEE

Whoa there, that's way out of my league. This is where I split. I'm not real interested in treason.

BECKER

How interested are you in losing your job and gaining a police record?

LEE

Now, wait a minute...

BECKER

Ricky Joe, you got financial troubles that won't quit... Gambling debts that could be called in any time... And now you've gone and stolen confidential files from a high-security organization. A word to the wrong people could...

LEE

You threatenin' me?

Now Coughlan turns toward Lee. He's a mean bruiser.

COUGHLAN

That's right, cowboy. And we mean business, I promise you. Now, get us that entry code book.

LEE

Now, ordinarily I'm obligin', but...

59 ANGLE ON COUGHLAN - LEE'S POV

59

As Coughlan draws a fist back, then slams it toward Lee's face, his fist FILLING the entire FRAME, we hear IMPACT and...

CUT TO:

60 INT. POP'S VIDEO ARCADE - PHILLIP AND JAMIE - DAY

60

Jamie is playing a vicious game of Donkey Kong Jr., while Phillip yells advice. PAN TO Amanda, at an adjacent machine, playing a much more polite game.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

60

AMANDA

Look, boys! I've got thirty-two points so far!

PHILLIP

Great, Mom. Jamie's got forty-six thousand.

Amanda just looks at them. CAMERA ADJUSTS to reveal Alexie on the other side of the room at the change counter, talking to Mr. Wilson.

61 ALEXIE AND WILSON

61

Wilson makes change, hands it to Alexie, during which they have a sotto conversation:

WILSON

We expect to have the code book tonight. We'll need you.

ALEXIE

And I'm tellin' you she watches me like a hawk.

WILSON

Alexie. The ACM satellite will be launched in three days. It is supposed to have incredible reconnaissance capabilities. It will continually send data on worldwide military installations to this computer, and we must know what information is being transmitted. All I want you to do is assure me that the codes I'm buying are the correct ones. Is that so hard?

(then, cooler)

Isn't it worth the lives of your parents?

ALEXIE

I want proof you haven't hurt them already.

WILSON

Don't negotiate with me, kid.

ALEXIE

Without them, you got nothing to bargain with.

It's a stare-down. They glare at each other, nearly nose-to-nose, and we...

CUT TO:

62 INT. MALL UPPER WALKWAY - DAY 62

Just outside the video arcade, as Amanda, Alexie, Phillip and Jamie emerge.

JAMIE

Don't feel bad, Mom. It was your first time.

AMANDA

That little video monkey laughed at me. It was humiliating.

As they reach CAMERA and march PAST, something catches Alexie's eye. He remains IN FRAME, looking up at:

63 A HIGHER WALKWAY 63

There, standing with Becker, are a very frightened looking Vassily and Galina.

64 BACK TO ALEXIE 64

His mouth is open, his eyes full of pain.

AMANDA (O.S.)

Alexie? Are you coming?

65 ANGLE TO INCLUDE AMANDA 65

Alexie looks away as she joins him, but she knows he was looking at something, and she glances up, too.

66 THE HIGHER WALKWAY 66

Vassily and Galina are gone.

67 BACK TO ALEXIE AND AMANDA 67

as Alexie walks off, and CAMERA PUSHES IN ON Amanda, who is wondering what to make of this boy.

CUT TO:

68 INT. BILLY'S OFFICE - DAY 68

Lee sits on the conference table, buttoning his shirt, beneath which we can see a large bandage wrapped around his ribs. His face looks just a bit banged up.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

FRANCINE leans against the desk, BILLY is near the door. An Agency doctor folds up his medical bag, nods to Lee, and exits. Lee hops off the table, wincing as he does so.

FRANCINE

You know, I love my work, too, but you wouldn't catch me letting thugs pound on my body.

LEE

Fine. And you wouldn't catch me in a hotel room with a Turkish gun runner.

FRANCINE

I did not go to a hotel room. It was a suite.

BILLY

(to Lee)

All right, so they're convinced you're scared of them. Are you making the drop tonight?

LEE

Yeah. Is the phony code book ready?

Billy picks up an 8 x 10 book from his desk, bound in a grey-silver cloth.

BILLY

Just like the real thing. With one minor exception.

69 INSERT - CODE BOOK

69

From it's thick spine, Billy pulls a tiny silver homing device.

70 BACK TO SCENE

70

FRANCINE

(to Lee)

Dane and I will be in the van. Once you make the hand-off, we'll follow the homing device straight to the KGB computer.

LEE

Pretty sure it's KGB?

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

FRANCINE

With this satellite involved, I don't think it's a gang in Harlem.

BILLY

(to Lee)

How're you and Alexie getting along?

LEE

You don't get along with Alexie, you get around him. That reminds me, I've gotta call Amanda about him...

He crosses to a phone on the desk.

FRANCINE

Why was it I could never bring out this domestic streak in you, Leland Milford?

BILLY

'Leland Milford'?

FRANCINE

Don't ask what was going on when he revealed that one.

LEE

(dialing)

That means you're supposed to ask.

FRANCINE

(with a sigh)

It's such a sordid story...

CUT TO:

71 INT. KING KITCHEN - DAY

71

Amanda is on the phone with Lee.

AMANDA

You keep calling this 'your' case, but I'm the one here with Alexie! And do not call it 'babysitting.' Thank you. Yes. He can stay here again tonight.

(exasperated)

Yes, I'm thrilled 'to be serving my country in this important way.' See you tomorrow. 'Bye.

She hangs up. Dotty has entered.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

AMANDA

(continuing)

That was the Big Sister people...  
They wanted to know if Alexie could  
spend one more night here. Do you  
mind?

DOTTY

Not at all. I'll just go hide the  
silver again...

She starts out.

AMANDA

Mother. Listen, can I ask you... How  
do you get a kid to open up to you...  
to trust you...

DOTTY

By 'kid' I assume you mean Alexie. He  
probably thinks you don't trust him.

AMANDA

I trust him!  
(then)

Well, now that you mention it, I'm  
suspicious as hell.

DOTTY

Children are like Chihuahuas, Amanda.  
They can smell mistrust. You've got  
to give him the benefit of the doubt.  
'Believe the best and you'll get the  
best,' I always say.

AMANDA

(inspired)

Okay, Mother. Thanks!

DOTTY

Now I'll just go attend to that silver...

She goes out. Amanda looks a little deflated, then,  
mustering her courage, she crosses to the foot of  
the stairs.

72 KING FOYER

72

as Amanda calls up the stairs.

AMANDA

(sweetly)

Oh, Alexie, could I see you for a  
moment?

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

ALEXIE (O.S.)

I got things to do.

Amanda forces herself to stay sweet.

AMANDA

Alexie. Please get your butt down here. I'm the tough one, remember?

Alexie comes downstairs, eyes her.

ALEXIE

What?

Amanda just looks at him for a moment. She's frustrated, doesn't know quite what to say.

AMANDA

I'm not tough, and you know it. I just don't know the right words to reach you with. If you were my boy... Or almost anybody... I'd put my arms around you... And tell you I know you're scared... And that things are gonna be okay. You're obviously not the hugging type. Fine. But things are gonna be okay, Alexie. And I want you to trust me. So I'm going to trust you. So... truce?

She puts out her hand to shake. He tentatively does the same. They shake.

ALEXIE

You're... really gonna trust me?

AMANDA

Yes.

He turns, starts up the stairs, stops, looks at her.

ALEXIE

I never said I wasn't the huggin' type.

And he runs upstairs.

73 ANGLE ON AMANDA

73

She smiles a sad smile. Maybe she's broken through a little. We...

CUT TO:

74 INT. AMANDA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 74

Much later. Amanda is still dressed, shoes off, sitting on her bed paying bills. We hear a bit of WOOD SCRAPING, then again... Possibly French doors opening? Amanda listens, goes back to her work. Then some RUSTLING in BUSHES outside. She forces herself to concentrate on her work.

AMANDA

(muttering to herself)

I trust him... I trust him...

I really, truly trust him...

More RUSTLING, then silence. Amanda sits there for a beat, willing herself not to think about it. Finally she slams her pen and papers down and jumps off the bed.

75 INT. STAIRWAY 75

as Amanda, shoes on, creeps down the stairs and over to the closed living room doors. She very quietly pushes one open, peeks around the door.

76 AMANDA'S POV - LIVING ROOM 76

Empty. A window open.

77 EXT. KING HOUSE - NIGHT 77

as Amanda comes racing out the front door and over to the car where the two agents are sitting.

AMANDA

He's gone! Went out the back!

(points)

If you go that way, I'll take my car  
and go the other way!

They take off. Amanda starts back toward her house, then glances up the street.

78 AMANDA'S POV - END OF STREET 78

At the opposite end of the street from the direction the agents were headed, we see Alexie. He rounds the corner.

79 TRACKING - AMANDA 79

She takes off running, heads to the end of the street.



80 END OF STREET

80

as Amanda comes racing around the corner, and nearly runs into... Coughlan! Alexie, who is just getting into Coughlan's car, spins, sees Amanda, looks horrified. Coughlan pulls his gun, and Amanda freezes. He beckons for her to get into the car.

COUGHLAN

In.

81 ON AMANDA

81

looking stunned and terrified, and we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

82 EXT. MEMORIAL BRIDGE - NIGHT 82  
 as Lee's Porsche drives PAST CAMERA, and over to the  
 Arlington side and the woods beyond.

CUT TO:

83 EXT. GRASSY KNOLL - HIGH ANGLE - NIGHT 83  
 CAMERA CRANES DOWN as Lee's Porsche appears around a bend  
 in the road in the distance.

84 INT. AGENCY VAN - MOVING 84  
 Dane is driving. Francine is in the passenger seat,  
 watching the blips on a tiny screen set in the console.

DANE

I don't suppose you brought any  
 food, did you?

Francine just gives him that look.

FRANCINE

Mr. Dane, I am not along as the  
 caterer.

(notes the screen)

It appears he's reached the drop-off  
 point.

CUT TO:

85 EXT. GRASSY KNOLL - NIGHT 85  
 as Lee's Porsche slowly moves toward a clump of trees  
 and stops.

86 LEE 86  
 watching warily.

87 BACK TO SCENE 87  
 A beat, then Lee's headlights blink twice. Another beat,  
 then, from the gloom, a second pair of headlights blink  
 in return.

88 INT. COUGHLAN'S CAR 88

Coughlan is at the wheel. Alexie is alongside him. In the back seat, tied up and frightened, is Amanda. Next to her, holding a gun, is Becker.

89 EXT. KNOLL 89

as Lee gets out of his car, walks slowly toward Coughlan, carrying a package.

90 COUGHLAN AND ALEXIE'S POV - LEE 90

Lee is a shadowy figure until he steps into a patch of moonlight just ahead of the car.

91 INT. COUGHLAN'S CAR 91

Alexie is stunned. Without thinking, he blurts out:

ALEXIE

Lee!

Amanda's heart sinks. Coughlan and Becker instantly know something's up. Coughlan looks over at Alexie, who wishes he were dead.

ALEXIE

(continuing)

Look... I didn't mean... uh...

COUGHLAN

(hissing)

Shut up!

92 EXT. KNOLL 92

Lee reaches the clump of trees, and Coughlan emerges from the darkness. Lee is immediately Ricky Joe.

LEE

Howdy. You boys sure did pick a heck of a meetin' place... I almost missed that last turn, and...

COUGHLAN

You have it?

LEE

Sure do.

He holds up the package. Coughlan takes it, tears off the paper, looks at it, during:

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

92

LEE

(continuing)

I still got a few pangas about what I did, and all, but you fellas drove a mighty hard...

Coughlan aims a gun at Lee's chest.

COUGHLAN

You can cut the corn pone...  
'Ricky Joe.'

LEE

Excuse me?

CUT TO:

93 INT. COUGHLAN'S CAR - BACK SEAT - MOVING - NIGHT

93

Lee sits sullenly next to Amanda, tied up as well. Becker still holds his gun on them.

LEE

(to Amanda, through  
clenched teeth)

I thought the idea was to keep him  
at your house.

AMANDA

What was I supposed to do? Tie him  
up?

LEE

Better him than us.

94 ANGLE TO INCLUDE FRONT SEAT

94

As Coughlan drives, he is rifling through the book, feeling its spine. Alexie looks miserable.

COUGHLAN

Quiet back there.

He feels a little bulge in the book's spine, then rips the cloth down to reveal a tiny silver homing device. Lee's face falls.

COUGHLAN

(continuing)

I thought so.

CUT TO:

95 INT. AGENCY VAN - MOVING - NIGHT 95

Dane drives, Francine bends over the screen. We can hear the BLIPS.

FRANCINE  
Moving... still moving... Turn right.

96 EXT. AGENCY VAN - NIGHT 96

as it ROARS off down a city street.

97 INT. AGENCY VAN - MOVING 97

FRANCINE  
Okay... now left. They've stopped.

98 EXT. VAN 98

It is barely creeping down a seedy city block.

99 INT. VAN 99

Francine stares at her screen, then points out the window.

FRANCINE  
That's it!

Dane squints out the window.

DANE  
You're kidding.

100 INT. STOREFRONT - CLOSE ON BOTTOM OF DOOR - NIGHT 100

On the floor is the homing device. PAN UP TO the door, over which is a transom. The door bursts open and Francine and Dane rush in, assume the stance, scream:

FRANCINE/DANE  
Federal agents! Freeze!

101 A LOOSER ANGLE 101

reveals a tiny, drab room, where two pairs of Sumo wrestlers hurl each other to mats, watched by a few shifty Orientals. Francine and Dane stand there, frozen, eyes glancing at each other, realizing something is wrong. A wrestler lands on his back with a loud grunt, and we...

CUT TO:

102 EXT. PEPPERTREE MALL - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT 102

103 INT. ARCADE STORAGE CLOSET - NIGHT 103

Lee and Amanda are tied up in a tiny room crammed with various tools, machine parts, and janitorial supplies.

LEE

So now we've got Soviet agents working out of video arcades. I can't believe we had Alexie with us all this time, and he turned out to be the key to the whole thing.

AMANDA

He couldn't talk. They were threatening his parents. Uh... What're they going to do with us?

LEE

If you were them and they were us, what would you do?

AMANDA

If only they hadn't found that homing device.

LEE

Amanda, I learned a long time ago... In this business, you can't look back.

AMANDA

(staring dismally off)

The trouble is, I don't have much to look forward to.

The door opens. Alexie stands there.

ALEXIE

I just wanted to say I'm sorry you're tied up in a closet.

LEE

I don't suppose you came to untie us.

ALEXIE

No. They'd shoot my parents. I gotta go.

(starts to close door, then)

They think the code book you gave them is probably phony.

LEE

They're probably right.

(CONTINUED)

ALEXIE

That's what I figured. I'll punch the phony codes into the computer, anyway. It'll buy you a little time.

LEE

(edging around)  
Here, Alexie... Just this little knot here...

ALEXIE

No! Would you cut it out?!

AMANDA

Alexie... We're not asking you to choose between us and your parents. Helping us won't get them hurt...

ALEXIE

... Shot.

AMANDA

... Shot. Alexie, if you untie us... You will have Lee Stetson on your side! Lee Stetson, one of the top agents in this country! He'll rescue your parents and stop these people! Trust me!

ALEXIE

If he's so hot, what's he doing tied up in a closet?

Amanda starts to answer, then turns to Lee.

AMANDA

Perfectly good question.

Lee looks at her, wounded.

ALEXIE

I gotta go. I really am sorry.

He leaves, shutting the door.

LEE

(disgusted)  
'One of the top agents in this country'?

AMANDA

Too much?

(beat)

I sensed that. Right away. Too much.

CUT TO:

104 INT. ARCADE COMPUTER ROOM - NIGHT 104

START ON Alexie, working away at the computer console. He looks at the code book, types something onto the keyboard, looks at the screen.

105 COMPUTER SCREEN 105

The response quickly appears: ACCESS DENIED.

106 THE ROOM 106

MR. WILSON

How many more do you have to try?

ALEXIE

A few.

MR. WILSON

Keep going. I want to be able to tell our people we've got a way into that computer before the satellite begins transmitting data.

CUT TO:

107 INT. STORAGE CLOSET - NIGHT 107

Lee is rolling around, bringing his hands under his feet so that his wrists are before him. He grips one of the loose ends of the knots with his teeth, struggles a moment, then:

LEE

Grab the other loose end with your teeth.

AMANDA

What?

LEE

Just hold it tight while I work on the knot.

Amanda brings her face to within inches of Lee's as she holds the loose end and he chews on the knot.

AMANDA

(muffled)

Don't bite me.

LEE

(muffled)

Hold still!

CUT TO:



108 INT. COMPUTER ROOM

108

Wilson and Coughlan are conferring. In the b.g. Alexie is punching the keys. We can hear the CLICKING of the COMPUTER. CAMERA PUSHES IN ON Wilson and Coughlan.

MR. WILSON

(quietly, to Coughlan)

This is ridiculous. Of course the book is a fake.

COUGHLAN

So where does that leave us?

MR. WILSON

We'll have to abandon our operation here, and attack the problem from a new direction.

COUGHLAN

What about Stetson and the woman?

The CLICKING STOPS in the b.g.

109 CLOSE ON ALEXIE

109

still facing the computer, but listening hard.

110 WILSON AND COUGHLAN

110

MR. WILSON

Get rid of them.

COUGHLAN

Now?

MR. WILSON

Now.

Wilson has suddenly become aware of the lack of activity over at the computer. He turns to look.

111 ANOTHER ANGLE

111

reveals that Alexie has vanished. The door to the room is closed. Wilson and Coughlan rush to the door, find it locked.

112 INT. ARCADE - NIGHT

112

as Alexie rushes breathlessly to the storage closet, throws the bolt, opens it.

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED:

112

ALEXIE

(blubbling)

Okay, you win! I can't stand it!  
I can't let you die after you bought  
me all that pizza! We gotta get  
outta here... They got my parents  
in a vacant store down the mall...

(startled)

You're untied!

LEE

(coming out)

Yeah... 'One of the top agents in  
the...'

113 ANOTHER ANGLE

113

as the front door to the arcade opens and Becker enters, sees what's going on, hears the POUNDING on the door from Wilson and Coughlan. He draws his gun, and, at that moment, Alexie whirls to a set of master switches behind him, pulls one lever down, shoves another one up. The room lights go out, and the video games all light up. The air is filled with the eerie WHINES and SYNTHETIC MUSIC generated by the MACHINES, and the scene becomes lit in violent reds, purples, and electric blues, all flickering crazily from the various game screens.

114 THE ROOM - VARIOUS ANGLES

114

We VERY RAPIDLY CUT, creating almost a strobe effect, BETWEEN the following: Lee hurls himself at Becker as Becker's GUN FIRES. The door is being broken down by Wilson and Coughlan. A fleet of fighters attack a space ship on one of the screens. Amanda and Alexie try to push a video game against Wilson's door. Becker's gun goes flying as Lee tackles him. A gorilla slides down a vine on one of the game screens. Lee and Becker slug it out. Wilson's door bursts open, and the video game falls over. The fighters are firing their little cannons. Lee dives for Becker's gun. Becker dives for Lee. The gun spins off across the floor. Coughlan and Wilson charge past, headed out the door. Lee K.O.'s Becker as Amanda screams:

AMANDA

Lee! Wilson's getting away!

115 INT. THE MALL - NIGHT

115

as Coughlan and Wilson rush from the arcade and along the elevated walkway toward the escalators.

(CONTINUED)

- 115 CONTINUED: 115
- Lee tears out after them, and throws a flying tackle on Coughlan. They roll on the ground, exchange a few punches, and Lee sends Becker reeling backward right through the plate glass window of a motorcycle shop.
- 116 ANOTHER ANGLE 116
- reveals Wilson rushing down a non-moving escalator toward the ground level.
- 117 BACK TO MOTORCYCLE SHOP 117
- as Lee ROARS out of the shop in a little jump through the opening in the plate glass.
- 118 THE MALL 118
- Wilson is already on the ground floor, headed toward the exit. Lee ROARS down the escalator on the MOTORCYCLE.
- 119 UPPER WALKWAY 119
- Amanda and Alexie run toward a vacant storefront, Alexie carrying a big ring of keys.
- 120 GROUND FLOOR 120
- Wilson sees Lee bearing down on him, changes direction and tries to dodge the oncoming bike by circling behind a fountain splashing in a reflecting pool.
- 121 LEE 121
- as he pulls up on the handlebars and the bike does a little leap into the air, sailing right through the splashing water of the fountain.
- 122 ANGLE TO INCLUDE WILSON 122
- as he stares, dazed, at the bike flying at him from out of the water. He runs a few steps, turns, blindly FIRES a few SHOTS, doubles back as the BIKE SCREECHES into a turn and heads back for him.
- 123 CLOSE ON LEE 123
- He's bent over the bars, ROARING TOWARD CAMERA.

- 124 WILSON 124  
 He's FIRING like crazy, runs out of bullets, turns, trips, and:
- 125 A LOOSER ANGLE 125  
 as Wilson lands in the middle of the reflecting pool and Lee SCREECHES to a stop, dripping wet, at its edge. Now we hear APPLAUSE, O.S. Lee looks up with a grin, breathing hard, to see:
- 126 SECOND LEVEL RAILING 126  
 At the railing are Amanda, Alexie, Vassily, and Galina, applauding wildly. Amanda cups her hands around her mouth and yells:
- AMANDA  
 (calling)  
 Like I said... 'One of the top agents in...'
- 127 LEE 127  
 LEE  
 (modestly)  
 No, no, no. Don't say it.
- 128 AMANDA 128  
 She shrugs.
- 129 LEE 129  
 LEE  
 Okay, say it.
- 130 AMANDA 130  
 She politely shakes her head "no."
- 131 LEE 131  
 LEE  
Say it!
- 132 AMANDA 132  
 ON her smile, we FREEZE, and:

FADE OUT.

TAG

FADE IN:

133 INT. KING FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT 133

DEAN lies face down on the couch. Amanda crouches near him, rubbing his shoulders.

DEAN

... So'd you hear on the news about what happened at Peppertree Mall? Spies! Right there, operating from a video arcade. Isn't that incredible? Right there in the suburbs.

AMANDA

(innocently)

No, Dean... Didn't hear a thing about it.

DEAN

You're kidding. It was all over the radio... On TV...

AMANDA

Well, I've been pretty busy with the kids...

134 ON AMANDA 134

as Dean rises up on an elbow, BACK TO CAMERA, and looks at her.

DEAN

Speaking of the kids... Jamie'll be coming to the movie with us tonight.

AMANDA

What? Since when?

DEAN

Since he rolled snake eyes, and I crapped out.

Amanda reacts, and we hear a KNOCK at the front door. She stands.

135 INT. KING FOYER - NIGHT 135

as Amanda crosses in to the front door, opens it. She is startled to see:

136 HER POV - FRONT PORCH

136

Sitting there is the huge panda bear Lee had bought for Alexie. We hear a CAR SPEEDING off in the distance.

137 AMANDA

137

She grins, shakes her head, picks up the bear, closes the door.

DEAN (O.S.)

Who is it, Amanda?

Amanda stands there, staring down at the bear. What does one say? She starts to speak, and we FREEZE and:

FADE OUT.

THE END

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