

"A TRICKY GAME"

BY SERAPHINA MICHELINA AURELIA BOGOMOLOVA-HUOTELIN

FADE IN:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

In the light of street lamps, big fluffy snowflakes swirl down, covering ground with a thin layer of snow.

MALE VOICE/DMITRY VORONOV (V.O)

Before you, silently I sway.
In vain, I feel this agitation,
In vain, I cast a glance your way:
I'm sure that I will never say,
What freely says imagination.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NIGHTCLUB (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT

A silver BENTLEY tears out of the night, WHIZZES along the curb and stops before the club, leaving an imprint of its tires in the new snow.

A stunning woman in her 30s, wearing an evening dress, -- ANGELA -- steps out of the car.

EXT. ENTRANCE - NIGHTCLUB (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT

At the door to the club, a HOSTESS, a crimson-lipped smile attached to her otherwise expressionless face, welcomes Angela in.

INT. NIGHTCLUB (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT

The insistent beats of MUSIC slam across the room.

Angela makes her way through the crowd of raving CLUBBERS and dancing STRIPPERS.

INT. STAGE - NIGHTCLUB (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT

A square stage. Its floor covered with wood boards. In the middle of the stage a pole. By the pole a STRIPPER dances.

By the stage a table and two chairs stand. At the table sits an elegant businessman in his late 40s, -- KAZIMIR STANKEVITCH. Drawing on his cigar, he watches the movements of a STRIPPER, wrapping her tanned body around the pole.

INT. TABLE - NIGHTCLUB (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT

Angela approaches Kazimir Stankevitch. She stands behind him silently observing him. He turns around and jumps to his feet. Angela extends her hand to him. He grabs it. His lips parted, he is about to impresses them on her hand, but Angela pulls it away.

KAZIMIR STANKEVITCH

(still standing)

Are you playing with me?

ANGELA

(sitting down at the table)

I think you enjoy being played with.

KAZIMIR STANKEVITCH

It depends.

ANGELA

(lighting up a cigarillo)

On what?

KAZIMIR STANKEVITCH

On the game.

INSERT-

Angela's rouge lips encircled around the chocolate tip of the cigarillo.

BACK TO SCENE

Angela draws on the cigarillo, then releases a blow of smoke towards Kazimir Stankevitch.

He motions at a WAITRESS, then sits down at the table.

INSERT-

A silver 'bucket', filled with bottles of Krug champagne nestled in the crashed ice, is placed on the table.

BACK TO SCENE

Kazimir Stankevitch takes a bottle out and pours champagne into the glasses.

KAZIMIR STANKEVITCH (CONT'D)

(raising his glass)

To our agreement.

ANGELA

(taking her glass)

As you wish.

KAZIMIR STANKEVITCH

(staring intensely at Angela,
not blinking)

Do you think it really matters what I
wish?

ANGELA

It depends.

KAZIMIR STANKEVITCH

On what?

ANGELA

On your wish.

Kazimir Stankevitch leans forward and brings his glass to Angela's.

INSERT-

The crystal glasses meet, releasing a CLINK.

BACK TO SCENE

Kazimir Stankevitch gulps his champagne and puts his glass on the table. Angela takes a sip of hers and also puts her glass on the table.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

It's late. I have to go.

KAZIMIR STANKEVITCH

Please stay.

ANGELA

(standing up)

Are you tempting me?

KAZIMIR STANKEVITCH

(grabbing her by the hand and
pulling her towards him)

I'm indulging you.

Angela pulls away. He tightens his grip, enjoying the sensation it produces, then lets her go.

INT. NIGHTCLUB (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT

Angela walks away, engulfed by the crowd of the CLUB REVELLERS.

INT. TABLE - NIGHTCLUB (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT

Kazimir Stankevitch throws some bank notes on to the stage.

INT. STAGE - NIGHTCLUB (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT

Bank notes swirl in the air and land on to the wood boards of the stage. The stripper smiles then slowly edges towards Kazimir Stankevitch, stripping in neon-light throbbing.

EXT. CITY (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT

Pulsating with myriads of lights, the city pushes in and out sparkling flows of the night traffic.

INT. BACK SEAT - ANGELA'S BENTLEY (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT
- TRAVELLING

In the back-seat Angela sits, looking out. Her head leans against the car window.

INT. FRONT SEAT - ANGELA'S BENTLEY (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT
- TRAVELLING

In the front-seat, a sleek-looking man in his late 40s, his face bears no emotions - the DRIVER - sits, his eyes fixed on the road. His eyes still on the road, he turns the radio on. A mellow JAZZ tune of 'Dream A Little Dream of Me' by Doris Day flows out.

INT. WINDOW OF THE BACK SEAT - ANGELA'S BENTLEY (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT - TRAVELLING

The JAZZ tune fills in the salon of the car. Angela's head silhouettes against the window. In the window, the street-lights flash by, blurring into colourful smudges.

EXT. STREET (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT

A street stretches out into the night.

On the one side of it, a seven-storey modern residential building stands. Near its entrance, a blacked-out Mercedes-Benz S500 is parked by the curb.

On the opposite side of the street, a half-built building is coated in darkness. Over it, a crane towers.

EXT. WINDOW GAP - TOP FLOOR - HALF-BUILT BUILDING (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT

In a large window gap a silhouette of a broad-shouldered

man in mid 30s, wearing a military navy-blue jacket --
PAVEL NEKRASSOV -- is visible.

INT. WINDOW GAP - TOP FLOOR - HALF-BUILT BUILDING (MOSCOW,
RUSSIA) - NIGHT

In the window gap Pavel Nekrassov stands, looking down onto
the street. Next to him, a pile of bricks. On it, a
takeaway box. Its lid is open.

INSERT-

A row of round golden 'pirozhoki'.

BACK TO SCENE

Pavel Nekrassov reaches for the takeaway box, fingers out a
round 'pirozhok' and bites in.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL BUILDING - STREET (MOSCOW, RUSSIA)- NIGHT

The silver Bentley pulls up before the residential
building. The driver gets out of the car and opens the
door. Angela steps out.

EXT. ENTRANCE - RESIDENTIAL BUILDING - STREET (MOSCOW,
RUSSIA)- NIGHT

Angela walks towards the brightly lit entrance.

INT. WINDOW GAP - TOP FLOOR - HALF-BUILT BUILDING (MOSCOW,
RUSSIA) - NIGHT

Playing with his gun, Pavel Nekrassov points it in the
direction of the residential building. His finger on the
trigger, he munches on the 'pirozhok' and looks down.

A CROW flies in, brushing his face with its wings. Pavel
Nekrassov pulls the trigger. A GUNSHOT shatters the night.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - HOSPITAL (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - DAY

Angela lies in bed, the golden waves of her hair spread on the pillow. Her eyes open, she takes in the surroundings.

INSERT -

The blue bareness of the hospital walls, the white sheets, the transparent plastic of the bedside table.

BACK TO SCENE

A NURSE enters, places a glass of water onto the bedside table and walks out.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CITY - (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT - DUSK

The street lights come on, casting beams of light upon the snow-powdered streets of the city.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - HOSPITAL (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT - DUSK

The room is in semi darkness. On the floor the patches of golden light falling through the window.

Angela gets out of bed, goes to the window and looks out.

EXT. CITY - (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT - DUSK

The windows in high-rises light up one by one, winking in the night.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - HOSPITAL (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - NIGHT - DUSK

Angela moves away from the window and goes back to bed. Lying, she stares out into the darkness for a while then closes her eyes.

The door of the room opens noiselessly.

A man in his late 20s, wearing a black silk mask covering

the upper part of his face, -- DMITRY VORONOV --, quietly slips into the room. He holds a bouquet of pink tulips in his hand.

Silhouetted in the dim light, coming from the window, Dmitry Voronov softly approaches the bed and puts the bouquet onto the bedside table.

SILENT, he stands, gazing at Angela.

MALE VOICE/DMITRY VORONOV (V.O.)

Your fair eyes were sad and bright,
And voice was so sweet,
As sound of a pipe apart
Or murmur of the sea.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - HOSPITAL (MOSCOW) - DAY - MORNING

The sunshine streams through the window into the room.

Angela wakes up and opens her eyes. Noticing the bouquet of pink tulips on the bedside table, she reaches out to their heads. Her fingers touch their delicate petals.

The door of the room swings open.

Angela quickly withdraws her hand from the tulips.

Kazimir Stankevitch strides in and throws a bouquet of red roses on the bed. Falling out of the bouquet, the crimson flowers fan across the white sheets.

KAZIMIR STANKEVITCH

(coming over and examining
Angela's bandaged arms)

What's happened?

ANGELA

I've no idea.

KAZIMIR STANKEVITCH

Are you serious?

ANGELA (CONT'D)

As serious as I can be.

KAZIMIR STANKEVITCH

I do not find it funny.

ANGELA

Neither do I.

Kazimir Stankevitch takes Angela's hand and impresses his lips on it. She winces.

EXT. PORTICO - THE RITZ-CARLTON HOTEL (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) -
DAY - LATE AFTERNOON

A blacked-out Mercedes-Benz S500 pulls out of the swirling snow and stops under the hotel's portico.

Out of the car steps a distinguished looking GENTLEMAN in his late 70s.

The HOTEL PORTER rushes to open the door for him.

INT. O2 LOUNGE - THE RITZ-CARLTON HOTEL (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) -
DAY - LATE AFTERNOON

The panoramic windows of the lounge offer a view of the Red Square, covered in snow, with the Kremlin towers silhouetting in the distance.

In the centre of the lounge, a bar counter with stools around it is placed. Behind the bar counter a BAR ATTENDANT mixes cocktails.

By the windows, a row of egg-shaped red and gold damask covered armchairs runs.

The Gentleman walks in and approaches one of the 'eggs'. He sits down and motions at a WAITER#1.

INSERT-

A cup of steaming espresso is swiftly placed on his table.

BACK TO SCENE

The Gentleman pulls his cigar case out and lights up a cigar. Puffing on it, he sips espresso and waits.

INT. O2 LOUNGE - THE RITZ-CARLTON HOTEL (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) -
DAY - LATE AFTERNOON

A man, aged 30, with a travel bag on his shoulder and a laptop case in his hand, -- JUAN MACBRIDE -- enters the lounge.

Quickly scanning over the egg-shaped armchairs, Juan MacBride heads to the bar counter.

Noticing Juan MacBride, The Gentleman rises out of his armchair, comes over to Juan MacBride, extends his hand to him.

THE GENTLEMAN

Welcome to Moscow Monsieur MacBride!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - MACBRIDE'S FLAT (MOSCOW, RUSSIA)- NEXT
DAY - DAY

The room is in semi darkness. Some light sifts in through black organza curtains, framing the tall windows.

By one of the walls a sofa stands, before it - a coffee table. Dirty paper plates and empty beer cans crowd the coffee table.

On the sofa, face down, Juan MacBride lies. On the floor, next to the sofa, clothes are scattered.

A mobile RINGS, stops and RINGS again.

Juan MacBride lifts his head.

The mobile keeps on RINGING.

Juan MacBride peels off the bed and scans the floor around him. Spotting his jeans, he picks them up, drags his mobile out of the pocket and hits 'answer'.

JUAN MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

Yeah?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV (V.O.)

Hey, Mac.

JUAN MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

Pavel?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV (V.O.)

Yes, man. Where have you been?

JUAN MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

Me?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV (V.O.)

You. I've been trying to get you since yesterday.

JUAN MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

I went to a club. Met some girls...

PAVEL NEKRASSOV (V.O.)

You fucking shit!

JUAN MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

Yeah, whatever, just get over here.

Juan MacBride jabs the phone off. Staring at the mess around him, he catches a sight of a white envelope. Juan MacBride picks it up and tears it open.

A single typed note and a key fall out.

Juan MacBride reads the note.

INSERT-

Dear Juan,

Take the keys. Go to my flat and wait for me there.

Angela

BACK TO SCENE

The DOORBELL rings.

INT. HALLWAY - MACBRIDE'S FLAT (MOSCOW, RUSSIA)- DAY

Juan MacBride undoes the lock and pushes the door open.

In the door way, Pavel Nekrassov, holding a large grocery bag in his arms, stands.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

(to Juan Macbride)

Hey, man, I'll need to fix you a Russian
cure for that hangover!

INT. LIVING ROOM - MACBRIDE'S FLAT (MOSCOW, RUSSIA)- DAY

Pavel Nekrassov walks in and heads to the coffee table.
Clearing the empty beer cans and dirty plates off it, he
puts his grocery bag down and starts unpacking it.

INSERT-

A big jar of pickles, a bottle of vodka, and a
'Stolichnaya' sausage.

BACK TO SCENE

Juan MacBride follows Pavel Nekrassov in and sits down on
the sofa. The note still in his hand, he glances at it then
pushes it toward Pavel Nekrassov.

JUAN MACBRIDE

I had a note delivered to me.

Pavel Nekrassov, takes his coat off, throw it on to the
sofa, then sits down next to Juan MacBride.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV (CONT'D)

(taking the note from the
coffee table and reading it)

So, she wants you to go to her flat and
wait?

JUAN MACBRIDE

Looks like it.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

Looks more like bullshit to me.

JUAN MACBRIDE

If this looks like bullshit to you then
why would she want me to go there?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

No idea, man.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ENTRANCE - ANGELA'S HOUSE (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - THREE
DAYS LATER - DAY

Cleared of slush, the stairs of the entrance glisten in the
sun.

The silver Bentley pulls up. Angela steps out and heads to
the entrance.

The driver follows her. He carries the two bouquets of pink
tulips and of red roses, and a brown leather overnight bag.

INT. THE DOOR - ANGELA'S FLAT - 7TH FLOOR - ANGELA'S HOUSE
(MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - DAY

A door in light brown wood panelling with '7B' set in
brass. Angela stands before the door. The driver slightly
behind her, holding the bouquets and the brown leather
overnight bag.

Angela rings the DOORBELL.

A moment passes then the lock CLICKS and the door opens.

INT. THE DOOR FRAME - ANGELA'S FLAT - 7TH FLOOR - ANGELA'S HOUSE (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - DAY

In the door frame, a stern looking woman, aged 60, - MARIA ALEKSEEVNA, - in horn-rimmed old-fashioned spectacles, wearing a red apron, streaked with flour, over the dark blue woollen dress, stands.

Angela glances at her apron.

ANGELA

(smiling)

Zdrastvuite, Maria Alekseevna.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

(brushing the flour streaks
off her apron)

Zdravstvui, Angela. Welcome back.

INT. HALLWAY - ANGELA'S FLAT - ANGELA'S HOUSE (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - DAY

Angela comes in and heads along the hallway into one of the rooms.

The driver steps in, hands the two bouquets and the overnight bag to Maria Alekseevna and leaves.

EXT. ENTRANCE - ANGELA'S HOUSE (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - DAY - LATER

Juan MacBride and Pavel Nekrassov walk up the stairs, heading into the building.

INT. THE DOOR - ANGELA'S FLAT - 7TH FLOOR - ANGELA'S HOUSE (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - DAY

Juan MacBride and Pavel Nekrassov stand in front of the door of the flat '7B' and share a hesitant look. Pavel Nekrassov brings his head to the door and listens then nods

to Juan MacBride. Juan MacBride takes the key out of the pocket and slides it into the lock. It CLICKS.

The door opens.

INT. THE DOOR FRAME - ANGELA'S FLAT - 7TH FLOOR - ANGELA'S HOUSE (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - DAY

In the doorway, Maria Alekseevna, hands on hips, stands.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

Who the hell are you?

JUAN MACBRIDE

I... we're friends of Angela.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

(looking Juan MacBride and
Pavel Nekrassov over)

I see.

Juan MacBride turns to Pavel nekraassov.

JUAN MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

Pavel, tell her!

INT. LIVING ROOM - ANGELA'S FLAT - ANGELA'S HOUSE (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - DAY

Through the large windows, sunshine streams in, playing on the rows of book spines in the floor-to-ceiling bookshelves.

In the middle of the room, facing the windows, a French style sofa, upholstered in linen, stands. On a glass coffee table, a vase with pink tulips is placed.

Angela sits on the sofa, looking at the screen of her laptop. On the screen - stock exchange graphs and figures are displayed.

The door into the room opens. In peers Maria Alekseevna.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

There are two men here for you.

ANGELA

(keeping her eyes on the laptop screen)

Which men?

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

They say they're your friends.

Angela looks up at Maria Alekseevna, holds her gaze for a second then shuts her laptop.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Show them in, please.

INT. HALLWAY - ANGELA'S FLAT - ANGELA'S HOUSE (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - DAY

Maria Alekseevna grabs Juan MacBride and Pavel Nekrassov by their arms.

Juan MacBride tries to twist his arm out of her grasp.

JUAN MACBRIDE

Let me alone, woman!

Tightening her grip, Maria Alekseevna drags Juan MacBride and Pavel nekraassov along the hallway.

JUAN MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

Pavel, tell her it's a mistake!

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

Take it easy, man.

INT. LIVING ROOM - ANGELA'S FLAT - ANGELA'S HOUSE (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - DAY

Maria Alekseevna pushes Juan MacBride and Pavel Nekrassov into the room. Angela rises from the sofa.

Engulfed in silence, Juan MacBride and Pavel Nekrassov stare at her.

Maria Alekseevna heads into the adjacent room. In a moment she returns with a bottle of 'Russian Standard' vodka and three goblets. She puts them onto the coffee table by the sofa.

Angela pours vodka into the goblets and hands them to Juan MacBride and Pavel Nekrassov. They hesitate.

ANGELA

Please, MacBride and... I don't believe we've been introduced.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

Pavel Nekrassov.

ANGELA

Delighted to meet you, Pavel.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

Likewise.

Pavel Nekrassov takes the goblets, passing one to Juan MacBride.

An awkward SILENCE lingers around them.

Angela sits down on the sofa. Juan MacBride and Pavel Nekrassov follow her.

Seated, Juan MacBride and Pavel Nekrassov look down at the floor. Angela looks at them.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

(to Juan MacBride)

What are you doing here?

JUAN MACBRIDE

I don't really know.

ANGELA

What do you mean?

Juan MacBride looks into his goblet.

JUAN MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

You see...

Fiddling with the goblet, Juan MacBride glances up at Pavel Nekrassov then at Angela.

JUAN MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

Well, I was supposed to meet you at the Ritz, but instead I met an elderly man there.

ANGELA

What elderly man?

JUAN MACBRIDE

The rather suave looking bloke. He gave me a note from you.

ANGELA

I haven't written any notes to you.

JUAN MACBRIDE

He said it was from you.

Reaching for the bottle, Juan MacBride refills his goblet and takes a swig.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

What was in the note?

Juan MacBride pulls the note out and hands it to Angela.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

(reading the note)

What's the name of the elderly suave man, you say?

JUAN MACBRIDE

Jack. No. Jacques. Yeah, Jacques.

Angela gives the note back to Juan MacBride.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Never heard of him.

JUAN MACBRIDE

Are you telling me you don't know who they are?

ANGELA

I thought there was just the elderly suave man in the Ritz.

JUAN MACBRIDE

(whispering)

I think I was followed.

ANGELA

By who?

JUAN MACBRIDE

There was this blacked-out Benz S500 sitting on my tail all way to the Ritz.

ANGELA

There is a certain Kazimir I know who drives in a S500.

JUAN MACBRIDE

Yeah. But, where were you? I thought we were supposed to meet at the Ritz!

ANGELA

In hospital. I'd been shot at.

JUAN MACBRIDE

By who?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - ANGELA'S FLAT - ANGELA'S HOUSE (MOSCOW,
RUSSIA) - NIGHT - EARLY EVENING

In the middle of the oval shaped dining table, covered with
a linen table cloth, a vase with the red roses stands.
Around the table eight French style chairs are placed.

Maria Alekseevna sets up the table for dinner, arranging
glasses and silverware around porcelain plates.

INT. KITCHEN - ANGELA'S FLAT - ANGELA'S HOUSE (MOSCOW,
RUSSIA) - NIGHT - EARLY EVENING

Maria Alekseevna stands by the gas stove. A frying pan
placed on one of the rings. Scooping batter, Maria
Alekseevna pours it into the pan and tips it around from
side to side.

INT. DINING ROOM - ANGELA'S FLAT - ANGELA'S HOUSE (MOSCOW,
RUSSIA) - NIGHT - EARLY EVENING

Angela is seated at the head of the dining table with Juan
MacBride on her right and Pavel nekrassov on her left.

Maria Alekseevna walks in and puts a plate with a pile of
'blini' before them.

They reach out to the plate, taking pancakes.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

(to Angela)

I heard you're acquainted with Kazimir...

ANGELA

Yes.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

Is he the one known as Kazimir
Stankevitch? The one who owns the
aluminium syndicate 'SurLa'.

ANGELA

How come you're so well-informed about

different Kazimirs?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV (CONT'D)

I work for the Special Police Unit.

ANGELA

Does it offer you the privilege of knowing Kazimirs and their businesses?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

Sort of. We sometimes have to deal with his stuff.

ANGELA

'His stuff' sounds most intriguing.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

He's a frequent customer of the 911 Club.

ANGELA

Are you a frequent customer of the Club too?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

I don't have the budget. We sometimes do raids on the Club.

ANGELA

Must be a very exciting job.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

You've mentioned that Kazimir drives in a Benz S500.

ANGELA

So?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

It might be the same Benz that tailed Mac.

ANGELA

I doubt it.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV (CONT'D)

What makes you sure?

ANGELA

I don't think Kazimir would personally
tail anyone.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

And what if he would?

ANGELA

He deals with far more important things.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

Like laundering money?

ANGELA

He might.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

The information we've gathered suggests
that Kazimir Stankevitch uses clubs to
launder his money.

ANGELA

Interesting point.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

So, something rings a bell?

ANGELA

What rings a bell is that perhaps you're
right about laundering money.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

But?

ANGELA

But what?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV (CONT'D)

You tell us.

ANGELA

Tell you what?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

Is Kazimir your lover?

ANGELA

What are you getting at?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

I'm not getting at anything, just asking.

Maria Alekseevna walks in and starts clearing their plates from the table.

Pavel Nekrassov stands up and lends her a hand.

A stack of plates balanced in his arms, he carries the dishes out of the room.

Maria Alekseevna takes a porcelain tea set out of the dresser standing next to the dining table and puts the set on the table.

Juan MacBride reaches out and picks up a cup from the set. Turning it over, he looks at the feature of a flower sprig depicted on the cup.

Maria Alekseevna gives him a stern stare, takes the cup from him and puts it back onto the table.

Pavel Nekrassov enters the room and sits down at the table.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

(to Angela)

Perhaps, we can help you figure out who shot at you.

Juan MacBride reaches out for the cup again. Maria Alekseevna slaps his hand.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV (CONT'D)

(to Angela)

Let's go over things you know and see if
there's a pattern.

Juan MacBride turns his attention from the cup to the
conversation.

JUAN MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

(to Pavel Nekrassov and
Angela)

Why don't we start with various players?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

Players?

JUAN MACBRIDE

Like in a game.

ANGELA

I'm not sure if I understand.

JUAN MACBRIDE

Look, someone tails me in a Benz S500 to
the Ritz. Then, at the Ritz, I meet this
elderly man...

ANGELA

(to Juan MacBride)

It can be just a figment of your
imagination.

JUAN MACBRIDE

What is?

ANGELA

The tailing.

Maria Alekseevna puts a plate of chocolate candies and a
china teapot on the table.

Juan MacBride switches his attention to studying the flower design on the plump sides of the teapot.

Angela reaches for the plate with chocolates.

Pavel Nekrassov helps himself to tea.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV (CONT'D)

(to Angela)

Do you think the shot was a warning?

ANGELA

I can't really say.

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

(slurping his tea)

I think the warning is more likely.

ANGELA

(rustling out a chocolate)

What makes you think so?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

From my experience of working in the Special Police Unit, I can say that professionals don't miss.

ANGELA

You think it was a professional?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

Yeah. He was probably in a half-built building across the street.

ANGELA

How do you know?

PAVEL NEKRASSOV

It seems like an obvious place to hide. From there the shooter had a clear view of the street.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I see.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MOSCOW - NIGHT

A piercing wind drives clouds of swirling snow along the street. An endless procession of cars crawls along it.

A snow-grimed taxi pulls over and stops by the curb.

MacBride gets out and, struggling through the snow, walks down the street.

His mobile BUZZES.

MacBride takes the phone out and glances at the screen.

INSERT-

a local number.

BACK TO SCENE

MacBride answers the call, his breath fogging the night air.

MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

Yes?

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.)

Monsieur MacBride, this is Jacques Moreaux.

MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

Ah, Monsieur Moreaux. Bonjour, or what do you say up there?

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.)

Bonsoir. How is Mademoiselle Angela?

MacBride shields his eyes from the swirling snow.

MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Mademoiselle Angela is very well as far as I can see.

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.)

I'm glad to hear that.

MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

Except that there seems to be a little misunderstanding.

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.)

Which one, Monsieur MacBride?

MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

Apparently, the note you gave me wasn't from her.

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.)

That's right, Monsieur MacBride.

MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

But why did you say it was?

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.)

How else do you think I'd persuade you to go to her flat?

MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

Is this some sort of freaking game?

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.)

I think you can call it life, Monsieur MacBride.

MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Yeah, maybe, but what's in this game for you, Monsieur Moreaux?

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.)

The security of Mademoiselle Angela.

MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

Well, then why haven't you protected her?

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.)

What makes you think I haven't?

MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

If you had, she wouldn't have ended up in hospital.

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.)

Perhaps, she might have ended up in a much worse place than that.

MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

I see, though it doesn't make sense to me.

INT. RESIDENTIAL BUILDING (MOSCOW) - NIGHT

Faded blue walls display patches of peeled off paint. The worn-out terracotta tiles of the floor bear traces of dark grey slush.

MacBride enters, adding a fresh trail of slushed foot prints.

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Monsieur MacBride, I would very much

appreciate your further co-operation.

MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

My further co-operation in what?

MacBride shakes snow off his coat. The mobile slips out of his hand and HITS the floor.

The line goes QUIET.

MacBride picks his mobile up and walks into--

THE LIFT

He presses the third-floor button. As the lift goes up, the light flickers.

His mobile RINGS. MacBride hits 'answer'.

MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Yeah?

PAVEL (V.O.)

Hi Mac, it's Pavel.

MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

Hey man, what's up?

PAVEL (V.O.)

I did some checking around.

MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

Yeah, what about?

PAVEL (V.O.)

(into the phone)

Kazimir Stankevitch.

MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Oh yeah. And?

PAVEL (V.O.)

He owns a hunting lodge in Finland.

MACBRIDE

(into the phone)

Lucky dude.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KAZIMIR'S OFFICE (MOSCOW) - NIGHT

In the middle of the room a glass desk stands. Kazimir sits at it, facing the floor-to-ceiling windows. A cigar smoulders between his fingers. The wall behind him is covered with gilded icons.

Angela walks in.

KAZIMIR

(turning his head)

Angela?

ANGELA

Yes.

KAZIMIR

(turning back to the window)

I see.

Kazimir draws on his cigar and blows a cloud of smoke towards the window that frames the city's industrial landscape: the Moscow River winding into the horizon and the factories, dotted along it, pluming smoke out into the night sky.

Angela sits down on the black leather sofa.

Kazimir and Angela stare out the window.

KAZIMIR (CONT'D)

Feeling better?

ANGELA

Yes.

Cigar in mouth, he stands up and goes to the espresso machine.

KAZIMIR (CONT'D)

Espresso?

ANGELA

No, thanks.

He sits down on the sofa besides Angela.

KAZIMIR (CONT'D)

I'm going hunting.

ANGELA

Good for you.

KAZIMIR

(drawing on his cigar)

Join me.

ANGELA

I will.

KAZIMIR

(surprised, moves slightly
away)

Will you?

ANGELA

Yes, but first I need to go to St.
Petersburg.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RAILWAY STATION (MOSCOW) - NIGHT

A line of cars runs to the security gates of the crowded car park. Angela's Bentley sits in the line, slowly moving forward.

INT. ANGELA'S BENTLEY (MOSCOW) - NIGHT

Angela looks out of the car window, throwing an impatient glance at the station clock tower.

Grabbing her travel bag, she gets out of the car.

EXT. RAILWAY STATION/GRAND EXPRESS PLATFORM (MOSCOW) - NIGHT

Travel bag in her hand, Angela hurries along the platform, heading to the 'Premium' carriage of the 'Grand Express' train.

The last CALL FOR BOARDING is announced. Angela steps in.

INT. THE GRAND EXPRESS/PREMIUM CARRIAGE - NIGHT

The CONDUCTOR, a young woman in her 20s with an air of self-importance and bright make-up, wearing a gilded red uniform of the 'Grand Express', locks the door of the carriage and shows Angela to her compartment.

Angela places her laptop on a small side table by the window and sits down on the red velvet sofa.

EXT. THE GRAND EXPRESS - NIGHT

Picking up the pace, the 'Grand Express' leaves the outskirts of the city and enters the vastness of Russian countryside.

An odd stand of trees flashing by, the train speeds down the tracks.

INT. THE GRAND EXPRESS/PREMIUM CARRIAGE/ANGELA'S
COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

The screen of Angela's laptop flickers and lights up. She goes to Google Chrome and types in.

INSERT-

Dmitry Voronov, Bioyl Holdings Inc.

BACK TO SCENE

Angela quickly scrolls through the list of links. One of them catches her attention. She pauses, then moves the cursor over it.

INSERT-

The founder of the Bioyl Holdings Inc. to throw a charity Ball Masquerade at the Konstantinovsky Palace.

BACK TO SCENE

Angela clicks on the headline and reads the text, then goes to images search for Dmitry Voronov.

A KNOCK at the compartment door.

The conductor enters.

A tray with a glass of black tea in a nickel holder, some miniature sugar cubes scattered around it, is placed on the side table.

Angela picks up the glass and takes a sip of tea.

EXT. THE GRAND EXPRESS - NIGHT

The train cuts through the night, the rows of its lit-up windows blur into flickering line.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NEVSKY PROSPEKT (ST PETERSBURG) - DAY

Interweaving streams of passers-by flow down Nevsky Prospekt. In the distance, at the further end of the street, the pike of the empire style Admiralty building is

visible.

Angela strolls past art galleries, boutiques and restaurants. Reaching a six-storey Art Nouveau building, crowned with a glass globe -- Singer House of Books -- she goes in.

INT. SINGER HOUSE OF BOOKS/SECTION OF HISTORY AND CULTURE
(ST PETERSBURG) - DAY

Angela walks slowly along bookshelves, browsing the spines of books.

INSERT -

The spines of books then a volume of an illustrated album on Venetian masks.

BACK TO SCENE

Angela takes the album out and opens it.

INSERT -

an illustration of the Jolly Joker mask.

BACK TO SCENE

Angela studies the illustration for a bit then, closing the book, takes it to the cashier counter.

EXT. NEVSKY PROSPEKT (ST PETERSBURG) - DAY

The wrapped-up album under her arm, Angela goes over to a street stall, a portable ice-cream freezer, with a bundled-up SELLER standing next to it.

ANGELA

(in Russian)

'Plombir', please.

The seller dips her gloved hand into the portable freezer and takes out a deformed waffle cup, filled with frozen ice-cream.

Angela takes it and licks the ice-cream's frosty top.

Tiny feather-like snowflakes start whispering down from the grey sky.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KEMPINSKY HOTEL/ANGELA'S ROOM (ST PETERSBURG) - NIGHT

On the bed, Angela's travel bag lies open. Next to it, in the midst of torn wrapping paper, the album on Venetian masks is nestled.

Angela unpacks, puts her clothes away in the wardrobe and lays out a green silk evening dress on the bed.

INT. KEMPINSKY HOTEL/BELLEVUE BRASSIERE (ST PETERSBURG) - NIGHT

The panoramic windows of the glassed-in terrace look out onto the city's rooftops. Above them, the Alexandre Column towers, crowned with a sculpture of an angel with a cross.

Angela enters the candle-lit room. A WAITER#2 shows her to the table. She sits down and orders a glass of champagne.

It arrives swiftly, a crystal flute placed on the crisp white tablecloth.

INSERT-

tiny glittering bubbles rush to the surface of the bubbly.

BACK TO SCENE

Angela sips her champagne and waits.

A petite curly brunette in her mid 30s - BOUNOUR - enters the room and approaches Angela's table.

BOUNOUR

(giving Angela a kiss on the cheek)

Bonsoir, chérie.

ANGELA

You're late.

BOUNOUR (CONT'D)

Oh, it wouldn't be me if I were not late.

Glancing at the champagne glass in Angela's hand, Bounour orders the same for herself.

BOUNOUR (CONT'D)

What's new with your Moscow assignment?

ANGELA

I'm going to his hunting lodge.

BOUNOUR

Chérie, isn't he obvious?

ANGELA

Obvious about what?

BOUNOUR

His intentions.

ANGELA

His intentions aren't quite what first springs to your mind.

BOUNOUR

Oh, pardon me, what are they?

ANGELA

I think he just wants some company.

BOUNOUR

Company without any intentions?

ANGELA

Sometimes, men like him want some company without any intentions, don't you think?

BOUNOUR

Non, chérie, I don't.

INT. KEMPINSKY HOTEL/ANGELA'S ROOM/BATHROOM (ST PETERSBURG)
- NIGHT

BUBBLING, the water runs into the bathtub.

Angela undoes her evening dress. The green silk slips down onto the white tiled floor.

Turning the tap off, she steps into the bathtub. Immersed into the water, the puffs of foam floating above her, she listens to the soft MURMURING coming from the outside.

Her mobile RINGS, vibrating on the bathroom's tiled floor.

Pulling herself up, Angela reaches for the mobile. The foam drips off her arm onto the tiles.

ANGELA

(into the phone)

Yes?

KAZIMIR (V.O.)

It's Kazimir.

The line CRACKLES.

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

You know...

Kazimir goes SILENT. Angela waits. The line CRACKLES.

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

Just don't play any 'tricks' on me.

He disconnects.

Angela puts the mobile back on the floor and slides down the bathtub's wall back into the water.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. VAANTA AIRPORT/ARRIVALS HALL (HELSINKI) - NIGHT

The doors slide open into the arrivals hall. TRAVELLERS, rolling their suitcases and travel bags, flow out.

Scanning the travellers, a middle-aged MAN IN AN ORANGE SILK SCARF, waits by the exit.

Angela walks out.

The man in the orange silk scarf waves at her.

EXT. VAANTA AIRPORT/CAR PARK (HELSINKI) - NIGHT

A thick coat of snow, sparkling in the streetlight, covers the ground. Huge snow piles border the car park area.

Angela and the man in the orange silk scarf walk out of the arrivals hall.

Angela glances up at the night sky.

INSERT -

A display of constellations and faraway stars.

BACK TO SCENE

The man in the orange scarf, oblivious, walks on, heading towards the shiny black H1 Alpha Hummer.

Angela catches up with him. They approach the car. Its door pushed open, in the dimly lit salon Kazimir sits, grinning.

EXT. HIGHWAY (FINLAND) - NIGHT

Glistening in the light of the street lamps, black H1 Alpha Hummer speeds along the highway, cutting through coated in snow forest land.

EXT. KAZIMIR'S HUNTING LODGES (FINLAND) - NIGHT

The H1 Alpha Hummer pulls in before a two-storey hunting log lodge.

Kazimir exits the car and heads in. The door of the main lodge shuts closed behind him.

INT. KAZIMIR HUNTING LODGES/GUEST LODGE/LIVING ROOM
(FINLAND) - NIGHT

CRACKLING, huge logs burn in the fireplace. Before it, a bear rug is spread on the floor.

Angela lies on it, her laptop and the album on Venetian masks placed next to her.

The heat of dancing flames reflected on her face, Angela flips through the album, looking at the images of Venetian masks.

Coming to the page with an image of the Jolly Joker mask, she pauses then closes the book and moves her attention to the screen of the laptop.

INSERT-

The cursor on the folder labelled 'bio-fuel-investments-confidential'.

BACK TO SCENE

Angela dials a number on her mobile.

ANGELA

(into the phone)

Kazimir, are you up?

KAZIMIR (V.O.)

(after a short pause)

Are you?

ANGELA

(into the phone)

Would you like to talk about Voronov?

KAZIMIR (V.O.)

Voronov?

ANGELA

(into the phone)

The Dmitry Voronov.

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

Have you gone mad? See you in the morning.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. KAZIMIR'S LODGE (FINLAND) - DAY - MORNING

The sun shines over the snow-laden pine forest. In the midst of it, log cottages sit in a semi-circle.

White smoke plumes out of their chimneys.

INT. GUEST LODGE/BEDROOM (FINLAND) - DAY - MORNING

Angela lies in bed, looking out the window.

INSERT -

A patch of bright blue sky with fleeting patterns of fanciful smoke puffs.

BACK TO SCENE

The PHONE on her bedside table RINGS. She reaches out and picks up the receiver.

ANGELA

(into the phone)

Yes.

KAZIMIR (V.O.)

It's Kazimir. Are you up?

ANGELA

(into the phone)

Are you?

KAZIMIR (V.O.)

It depends.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

On what?

KAZIMIR (V.O.)

On the weather.

ANGELA

(into the phone)

How's the weather today?

KAZIMIR (V.O.)

Clear as far as I can see.

ANGELA

(into the phone)

And what else do you see?

KAZIMIR (V.O.)

I see us meeting in half an hour at my
lodge to talk about Voronov.

ANGELA

(into the phone)

Voronov?

KAZIMIR (V.O.)

Yes. The Dmitry Voronov.

INT. KAZIMIR'S LODGE/DINING ROOM (FINLAND) - DAY - MORNING

At the far end of the huge wood table, Kazimir sits. On the log wall behind him, a gilded icon of the Christ Pantocrator (All-Powerful) hangs. A flame flickers in the oil lamp before it.

On the table, a tea service is set for two: the white triangles of linen napkins glow by the delicate china cups.

Angela helps herself to tea.

KAZIMIR (CONT'D)

(fixing his eyes on Angela)

Did you sleep well?

ANGELA

(pouring tea into her cup)

Yes. Did you?

KAZIMIR

I didn't, I was thinking.

ANGELA

What about?

KAZIMIR

Dmitry Voronov.

ANGELA

(dropping a slice of lemon
into her cup)

A fascinating subject it must have been.

KAZIMIR

(stirring vigorously his tea
with a spoon)

A disturbing one.

ANGELA

I'm sorry to hear that.

KAZIMIR

Have you gone through his bio-fuel
investment portfolio?

ANGELA

Yes, I have.

KAZIMIR

And?

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I've found some areas that might be of interest to you.

KAZIMIR

There's only one area of interest to me.
51% of his Bioyl Investments Holdings.

ANGELA

I don't get you.

KAZIMIR

There isn't much to get.

ANGELA

Forgive me, but what exactly will your
aluminium syndicate 'SurLa' gain from
getting hold of 51% of his Bioyl Holdings?

KAZIMIR

I forgive you, but this is none of your
business.

Kazimir stands up, comes over, takes Angela's hand, kisses
it and leaves the room.

INT. KAZIMIR'S LODGE/DINING ROOM (FINLAND) - DAY - MORNING-
LATER

Angela stands by the icon of the Christ Pantocrator,
studying its features in a flickering light of the oil
lamp.

The man in the orange silk scarf walks in, takes an apple
from a large glass bowl and sits down at the table.

He peels his apple, slices it and drops the pieces into a
mug. Then pours black tea into it.

THE MAN IN THE ORANGE SILK SCARF

It's the first time I see you here.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

(studying the icon)

Likewise.

THE MAN IN THE ORANGE SILK SCARF

You seem like an intelligent woman.

ANGELA

I don't seem, I am.

THE MAN IN THE ORANGE SILK SCARF

I wonder what a woman like you has in common with a man like Kazimir.

ANGELA

I often wonder too, but the answer escapes me.

THE MAN IN THE ORANGE SILK SCARF

I've sort of guessed that.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. KAZIMIR'S LODGE/WOODS (FINLAND) - DAY

Angela exits Kazimir's lodge and sets on a path, leading into the woods.

The snow-laden branches of pine trees extend their paws to her. She shakes them.

Their white 'capas' slip off, revealing the green bunches of needles.

Leaving a trail of fresh footprints in the snow, she slowly walks further into the woods.

A branch CRUNCHES under somebody's foot. Angela turns.

MacBride stands by a huge pine tree, his feet sunken into the snow.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?!

MACBRIDE

Keeping an eye on you.

ANGELA

What on earth makes you think I need to be kept an eye on?

MACBRIDE

(coming over to her)

I don't. Monsieur Moreaux does.

ANGELA

What are you talking about?

MACBRIDE

Monsieur Moreaux.

ANGELA

What about him?!

MACBRIDE

It isn't about him, it's about you. He says that the only thing there is for him in this freaking game is your security.

ANGELA

What 'freaking' game?!

MACBRIDE

I don't know, but he says it's the game called life.

They stare at each other for a moment.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

MacBride, are you all-right?

MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

Yeah. Just a bit cold. I've had couple of vodka shots in the woodshed.

ANGELA

What woodshed?

MACBRIDE

The one behind the main lodge.

ANGELA

Are you hiding?

MACBRIDE

We're not hiding, we're keeping an eye on you.

ANGELA

Who are 'we'?

MACBRIDE

Me and Pavel.

ANGELA

Listen, you shouldn't be here, keeping an eye on me. It's dangerous.

A pine branch sways. A shadow falls onto the snow, catching Angela's sight. She looks up.

The man in the orange silk scarf stands, pointing his gun at MacBride.

THE MAN IN THE ORANGE SILK SCARF

Who the hell are you?

MACBRIDE

I'm a friend of Angela's!

THE MAN IN THE ORANGE SILK SCARF

Has she invited you here?

MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

I'm keeping an eye on her. Angela, tell him.

A GUNSHOT is fired.

MacBride shoots into the woods.

Angela dashed off down the path towards the lodges.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KAZIMIR'S LODGE/SITTING ROOM (FINLAND) - NIGHT

On the log walls various hunting trophies hang. On a large Persian carpet two black 'Kubus' sofas stand.

Angela, her green silk evening dress on, sits on one of the sofas, studying the animal heads on display.

INT. KAZIMIR'S LODGE/SITTING ROOM (FINLAND) - NIGHT - LATER

Kazimir walks in and crosses the room to a small table with the humidor on it. He opens the lid of the humidor box and peers in.

INSERT-

neat rows of chocolaty elongated 'bullets', lying side by side, their rings display various cigar brands.

BACK TO SCENE

Kazimir chooses a cigar and chops its tip off.

KAZIMIR

A man was reported to me. He said he was keeping an eye on you.

He lights up his cigar.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Did he?

Kazimir nods, draws on his cigar and exhales a cloud of smoke toward the ceiling.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

That's most kind of him.

KAZIMIR

I thought so too.

Angela gazes at the head of a wild boar on the wall.
Kazimir observes her for a moment then slowly circles the
sofa she sits on and comes behind her.

KAZIMIR (CONT'D)

(whispering into Angela's
ear)

What are you thinking about my brilliant
Red Riding Hood?

ANGELA

The 51% of Voronov's Bioyl Holdings that
you desire.

KAZIMIR

How alluring...

He sits down on the sofa beside Angela.

KAZIMIR (CONT'D)

You have a beautiful dress on.

ANGELA

Thank you.

KAZIMIR

I think you'll look dazzling without it.

He draws closer, placing his hand at the back of Angela's
neck.

An ATTENDANT walks in.

ATTENDANT

Dinner is served, Sir.

INT. KAZIMIR'S LODGE/DINING ROOM (FINLAND) - NIGHT

A huge wood table is set for two.

On the polished surface, bare of any tablecloth, the silverware glimmers, reflecting the flickering light of the varying in size and height candles, grouped in the middle of the table.

Angela and Kazimir watch in SILENCE while the attendant fills their crystal glasses with red wine.

Kazimir raises his glass.

KAZIMIR (CONT'D)

(looking across the table at
Angela)

So, how are you going to get me the 51% of
Voronov's Bioyl Holdings?

Angela studies the colour of the wine in her glass.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Is it something that you really want to
know?

Kazimir drinks his wine up in one go.

KAZIMIR (CONT'D)

Not really.

ANGELA

Then, why do you ask?

KAZIMIR

To keep the conversation going.

ANGELA

Perhaps, we can talk about something else.

KAZIMIR

I'm not used to talking about 'something
else'.

Angela takes a sip of her wine. The green silk of her dress

shimmers gently in the candlelight.

INSERT-

Candles throw dancing shadows on to the table. The candle wax drips down, spreading into fanciful shapes on the polished wood surface.

BACK TO SCENE

The attendant walks in. Kazimir waves him out.

Angela stands up and goes to the window. Pressing her forehead against the glass, she looks out.

Silhouetted in the dark, pine trees stand. Snow silently descends in fluffy clumps.

Kazimir looks at Angela, the curves of her body outlined by the shimmering fabric of her dress.

He stands up and goes over to Angela. Placing his hands onto her shoulders, he draws her close to him.

KAZIMIR (CONT'D)

(running his hands down her
arms)

Tell me, what you desire!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STARLITE DINER (MOSCOW) - DAY

At the table by the window, MacBride and Pavel sit.

Before them, two 'Really Big Shawn Burgers' are placed on a pile of chili-cheese fries.

Picking their burgers, MacBride and Pavel bite in.

The scarlet ketchup splatters onto the plastic of their trays.

PAVEL

I shouldn't have taken you to Kazimir's
lodge.

MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

No worries. We've got out of it just fine.

PAVEL

Yeah, but...

MACBRIDE

But what?

PAVEL

The 'game' we've gotten into is a serious one.

MACBRIDE

(stops munching)

Another game?

Pavel nods.

PAVEL (CONT'D)

I've got hold of some information on Angela's connection with Kazimir.

MACBRIDE

While sitting in the woodshed?

PAVEL

Sort of. Back at the lodge, I came across an ex-colleague of mine, a Special Police Unit officer. He works for Kazimir Stankevitch now.

MACBRIDE

Yeah?

PAVEL

It seems that Kazimir has an interest in the Bioyl Holdings owned by Dmitry Voronov.

MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

What Dmitry Voronov?

PAVEL

A young billionaire. Resides in St Petersburg, his home town, but his company's headquarters are in Moscow.

MACBRIDE

Are these two rivals?

PAVEL

Sort of. Kazimir is a survivor of the 'aluminium wars'. All his wealth was acquired in mid 90s. And Dmitry is a son of a favoured in the presidential circles official, powerful and rich...

MACBRIDE

But what does it have to do with Angela?

PAVEL

My ex-colleague overheard a conversation at the lodge.

Pavel pauses, biting into his burger.

MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

(staring at Pavel
impatiently)

And?

PAVEL

He doesn't know the details but what he gathered is that Kazimir wants Angela to get him 51% of Dmitry's stake in Bioyl Holdings.

MACBRIDE

(dropping his half-finished

burger on the plate)

I knew she was playing games!

PAVEL (CONT'D)

I'm afraid you're missing my point.

MACBRIDE

Which is?

PAVEL

It is not her game, it's his.

MACBRIDE

Whose?

PAVEL

Kazimir's.

They finish their burgers in silence then start on the pile of chili-cheese fries.

MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

There's only one way for Angela to get the 51% of that billionaire's stake...

PAVEL

Really?

MacBride nods.

MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

Stock manipulation.

PAVEL

How do you know?

MACBRIDE

Well, Angela occasionally involves me in similar cases.

PAVEL

So, she is...

MACBRIDE (CONT'D)

An expert in stock market manipulation.

EXT. STARLITE DINER/CAR PARK (MOSCOW) - DAY

A blacked-out Mercedes-Benz S500 drives in and takes a vacant space near the entrance.

INTERCUT -

Pavel's mobile BUZZES. He looks at it, gets up and goes to the mens room.

INTERCUT -

Two men with expressionless faces - MAN#1 and MAN#2 - get out of the blacked-out Mercedes-Benz S500.

INTERCUT -

MacBride takes the trays and walks to--

THE TRASH BIN

The trays emptied, MacBride turns.

The man#1 and the man#2 stand side by side, blocking his way. He tries to squeeze by but they seize him by the arms and pull him towards the exit.

INTERCUT -

The man#1 and the man#2 push MacBride into the blacked-out Mercedes-Benz S500.

ACCELERATED, the car swerves and speeds away.

INT. THE RITZ CARLTON HOTEL (MOSCOW) - DAY

MacBride and the man#1 and the man#2 stand before the door of the Suite 1112. The man#1 KNOCKS on the door.

The door opens.

The Gentleman, cigar in mouth, stands in the doorway.

The Gentleman steps away. The man#1 and the man#2 push MacBride into--

THE SUITE 1112

The Gentleman shuts the door.

THE GENTLEMAN 9CONT'D)

Monsieur MacBride, may I offer you a drink?

MACBRIDE

A poisoned one?

THE GENTLEMAN

Do you have such a low opinion of me?

MACBRIDE

Whatever opinion I might have doesn't seem to count in this freaking game of yours.

THE GENTLEMAN

I think you're missing the point. It isn't a game.

The Gentleman motions MacBride to the sofa.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

Please have a seat.

Reluctantly, MacBride obeys.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

Monsieur MacBride, my only concern is the security of Mademoiselle Angela.

MACBRIDE

Apparently.

THE GENTLEMAN

It seems you've undermined it.

MACBRIDE

But it is you who wanted me to keep an eye on her.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

Yes, but not you to go out there and start poking in the private lives of the powerful.

MACBRIDE

I haven't poked into anything!

THE GENTLEMAN

And what is it you were doing at Kazimir's lodge?

MACBRIDE

Talking to Angela!

THE GENTLEMAN

Monsieur MacBride, this doesn't make any difference to the outcome of your visit.

MACBRIDE

Which is?

THE GENTLEMAN

A fatal one.

The Gentleman goes to his desk and picks up an envelope.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

(handing the envelope to
MacBride)

Take it.

MACBRIDE

What is it?

THE GENTLEMAN

Plane tickets. I'd recommend you leave Moscow. Immediately.

MacBride takes the envelope. The Gentleman goes to the door of the Suite and opens it.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

Bon chance, Monsieur MacBride.

EXT. MOSCOW - DAY - TRAVELLING

The blacked-out Mercedes-Benz S500 joins a slow stream of snow-grimed cars.

Edging forward, the car approaches a blacked-out Benz, crashed head-on with a small Citroen.

INT. THE MERCEDES-BENZ S500 (MOSCOW) - DAY - TRAVELLING

MacBride looks out the car window. His eyes land on a covered-up body in the driver's seat of the Citroen.

He turns away.

A moment later, he catches a glimpse of the bell tower of a neo-classical church.

INT. CHURCH (MOSCOW) - DAY

Dozens of CRACKLING candles throw quivering light onto the iconostases.

MacBride walks to the middle of the colonnade, kneels down and presses his hands in prayer.

Censing at the altar, a PRIEST in lavish attire recites the office of the Ninth Hour.

The ECHO of his monotone VOICE travels around the colonnade, bouncing off the walls.

THE PRIEST (O.S.)

'My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for
the courts of the Lord: my heart and my
flesh crieth out for the living God.'

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE GRAND HOTEL EUROPE/FABERGE SUITE (ST PETERSBURG) -
NIGHT

Shimmering patterns of the wallpaper are reflected in the large windows, framed by sumptuous drapes.

On the bed, Angela lies, asleep.

The door of her Suite opens noiselessly.

A ray of light falls in, accentuating a silhouette of a man -- Dmitry Voronov.

He walks in and closes the door behind him. The upper half of his face is covered with the black silk mask. In his hand he holds another mask - a sinuous one, studded with Swarovski crystals.

Dmitry Voronov softly approaches the bed and puts the Swarovski mask onto it.

SILENT, he stands, gazing at Angela for a while then reaches out and strokes her hair.

MALE VOICE/DMITRY VORONOV (V.O.)

Amidst the noisy ball, in Hell

Of everyday distress,

I've seen you, but the secret's veil

Was covering your face...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE GRAND HOTEL EUROPE/FABERGE SUITE (ST PETERSBURG) -
DAY - MORNING

Angela opens her eyes.

The sun rays sift through the gap in the drapes.

On the bed lies the sinuous mask studded with Swarovski crystals, the two black ribbons attached to either side of it.

Angela reaches out and takes the mask. The crystals send a rainbow of sparkles across the room.

She gets out of bed, puts the mask on and looks in the mirror, admiring her reflection in it.

A KNOCK on the door. Angela opens it.

In strides Bounour.

BOUNOUR

What's this sparkling on your face?

Angela goes back to the mirror and looks at her reflection.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

A gift...

Bounour goes to the table set for breakfast and plucks an éclair from the plate.

BOUNOUR (CONT'D)

From whom?

ANGELA

A friend...

BOUNOUR

(munching on the éclair)

What friend?

ANGELA

I don't know.

BOUNOUR

What do you mean?

ANGELA

I mean, he hasn't introduced himself.

BOUNOUR

How did you two meet? In a dream?

ANGELA

He appeared before me after dusk.

BOUNOUR

An imaginary friend?

ANGELA (CONT'D)

A real one...

BOUNOUR

Really? What's this thing about the dusk then?

ANGELA

I think he likes the mystery of being incognito. It gives a certain freedom, you know.

BOUNOUR

Non, chérie, I don't.

ANGELA

(excited, swirling across the room)

Imagine, it's like the Ball Masquerades of the medieval court!

Bounour flops into an armchair.

BOUNOUR (CONT'D)

I don't get it.

ANGELA

Such Balls originally celebrated a marriage or marked a point in a royal dynasty...

BOUNOUR

Chérie, are you getting married or is your imaginary admirer of a royal blood?

ANGELA

No. What I mean is that guests at such Balls would wear a masquerade mask that provided them with the irresistible anonymity since their class was governed by the strictest etiquette and constricting rules.

Bounour picks up the book on Venetian masks from the coffee table.

BOUNOUR (CONT'D)

Is he 'constricted' in some way?

ANGELA

He might be, though I'm not sure if it comes from his 'class'... I think it is a different type of 'constriction'.

Bounour studies the illustration of the Jolly Joker mask.

BOUNOUR (CONT'D)

Like what?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. KONSTANTINOVSKY PALACE (ST PETERSBURG) - NIGHT

In the midst of the frosty park, a beige-coloured Palace stands. Its façade, vividly illuminated, displays a mix of baroque and classic style.

The driveway is lit up by flaming torches. Along it, a string of chauffeur driven cars runs to the Palace's entrance.

INT. KONSTANTONOVSKY PALACE/THE BLUE HALL ENTRANCE (ST PETERSBURG) - NIGHT

At the doors of the Blue Hall, WAITER#3 and WAITER#4, silver trays with champagne glasses in their hands, stand.

Angela, the Swarovski mask on, takes a glass of champagne from a tray and enters--

THE BLUE HALL

An exquisite interior is illuminated by crystal chandeliers. Their light plays upon a sea of feathery, silky, and lacy masks.

The room is abuzz with LAUGHTER, CHEERS, and crystal glass CLINKING.

Elegantly dressed WOMEN converse with MEN in tuxedos.

Kazimir, wearing a Griffin mask, throws a handful of silver metallic streamers at Angela. She catches them and throws the streamers back at him.

KAZIMIR

(coming over)

You look dazzling.

They make their way to--

THE VIP AREA.

Cigar smoke, pierced by pulsating magenta spotlights, hangs over burgundy Louis XV canapés with masked men and women lounging on them.

Angela spots two vacant canapés. They head towards them.

Angela motions at a WAITER#5.

The waiter#5 pours champagne into the glasses.

Kazimir lights up a cigar, inhales deeply and blows out smoke towards the ceiling.

KAZIMIR (CONT'D)

Is Voronov here?

Angela takes a sip of her champagne.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Life doesn't revolve around Voronov.

KAZIMIR

(drawing on his cigar)

For me, it does.

ANGELA

Then it is an obsession.

KAZIMIR

Obsession or not, the thought of him persistently loops in my head.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Let it go.

KAZIMIR

I cannot. Thanks to people of his ilk.

ANGELA

But he has nothing to do with the
'favouritisms' of the presidential office.

KAZIMIR

Maybe he doesn't, but his father does.

ANGELA

Maybe you should deal with his father
then?

KAZIMIR

Maybe.

ANGELA

We need to talk.

KAZIMIR

Aren't we just doing it?

ANGELA

We need to talk about our agreement.

KAZIMIR

I think we should move from talking to
action.

ANGELA

There won't be any action.

Kazimir gulps his champagne in one go.

KAZIMIR

How disappointing.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

C'est la vie.

KAZIMIR

What's that?

ANGELA

Such is life.

KAZIMIR

I presume you're pulling out of our agreement.

ANGELA

The presumption is spot on.

Kazimir refills his glass with champagne.

KAZIMIR (CONT'D)

You've been gaming me?

ANGELA

Life is a game. You should know it.

KAZIMIR

I know it, but, sometimes, I just want to forget about it.

ANGELA

Then do.

He orders more champagne.

KAZIMIR (CONT'D)

It's too late.

ANGELA

Any way out?

KAZIMIR

To keep playing.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I hope you will find another expert to help you keep on playing.

KAZIMIR

I don't want another 'expert'. I want you.

Kazimir takes Angela's hand in his.

KAZIMIR (CONT'D)

(looking into her eyes)

May I ask what's the reason for your pulling out of our agreement?

ANGELA

You may not.

INT. KONSTANTINOVSKY PALACE/THE BLUE HALL (ST PETERSBURG) - NIGHT - LATER

The multi-coloured beams of laser lights project fanciful patterns onto the masked GUESTS.

Golden confetti swirls in the air, descending in a shower of sparks onto the dancing glitterati.

Angela joins the raving guests.

A man, wearing the JOLLY JOKER mask -- Dmitry Voronov --, comes behind her, lightly touching her back.

Angela turns and meets the eyes of Dmitry Voronov, smiling at her.

She reaches out and touches one of the tiny bells attached to a curl coming out of the mask's top.

The bell TINKLES.

ANGELA

Cute mask.

The Jolly Joker nods, releasing more TINKLING.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Where did you get it?

THE JOLLY JOKER/DMITRY VORONOV

Venice.

ANGELA

What an unusual choice of the mask.

THE JOLLY JOKER/DMITRY VORONOV
(CONT'D)

A symbolic one. Jesters are twins of the King.

ANGELA

Are you a 'King'?

THE JOLLY JOKER/DMITRY VORONOV

More of a Prince.

ANGELA

(smiling)

Does the Prince have a Princess?

THE JOLLY JOKER/DMITRY VORONOV

More of a Queen...

The Jolly Joker takes Angela's hand and pulls her lightly towards him, inviting her into his dance. Angela and The Jolly Joker dance. The MUSIC increases its tempo. The room swirls around Angela, blurring into a colourful wind whirl.

EXT. KONSTANTINOVSKY PALACE (ST PETERSBURG) - DAWN

The sun slowly rises up, tinging the frosty gardens of the Palace with pink-rose light.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE GRAND HOTEL EUROPE/FABERGE SUITE (ST PETERSBURG) -

DAY - EARLY MORNING

Angela stands by the window. Her hand flies up, undoing the ribbons of the Swarovski mask. The mask off, Angela parts the veils and looks out.

In the middle of The Arts Square covered in snow, a statue of the Russian poet, Alexander Pushkin stands. His raised arm points in the direction of the Mikhailovsky Opera Theatre.

MALE VOICE/DMITRY VORONOV (V.O.)

Not long ago, in a charming dream,

I saw myself - a king with crown's
treasure,

I was in love with you, it seemed,

And heart was beating with a pleasure.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ST PETERSBURG - DAY - EARLY MORNING

The gold domes of the Church of the Spilled Blood glint in the sun.

The neon-classical mansions line up Millionnaya Street. The icicles sparkle, suspending from their roof-tops.

INT. MILLIONNAYA STREET/DMITRY VORONOV'S FLAT/BEDROOM (ST PETERSBURG) - DAY - EARLY MORNING

The drapes are drawn.

Carelessly dropped clothes and vintage poetry books are scattered on the plush carpet.

Elaborate Venetian masks decorate the wall above the king size modern bed.

Dmitry Voronov lies in bed, asleep. On the bedside table the mask of The Jolly Joker rests.

His mobile RINGS.

Dmitry Voronov wakes up, takes the mobile and hits
'answer'.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Yes?

PAVEL (V.O.)

It's Pavel. I have some news.

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

Couldn't your news wait?

PAVEL (V.O.)

It's urgent.

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

Go on.

PAVEL (V.O.)

You know, Angela's junior associate we
talked about the other day? Juan MacBride?

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

What about him?

PAVEL (V.O.)

He has gotten into deep shit.

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

What an achievement on his part.

PAVEL (V.O.)

Well...

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

What's happened?

PAVEL (V.O.)

A car accident on the way to the airport.
The driver died instantly, Juan MacBride's
in hospital.

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

I suppose the accident was not an
incident?

PAVEL (V.O.)

Sure not.

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

Have your guys keep an eye on him. When he
makes it, ensure he's safely out of the
country.

Dmitry Voronov tosses his mobile on the carpet and goes
back to sleep.

INT/EXT. DMITRY VORONOV'S FLAT (ST PETERSBURG) - MONTAGE -
VARIOUS

- INT. BEDROOM - Dmitry Voronov lies in bed, a poetry
book by Alexander Pushkin in his hands. Turning pages,
he reads.
- INT. LIVING ROOM - The antique clock on the mantle-
piece STRIKES the hour.
- INT. SITTING ROOM - Dmitry Voronov sits on the sofa,
holding the Jolly Joker mask. Thoughtful, he traces
the features of the mask with his fingers.
- INT. BATHROOM/SHOWER - Dmitry Voronov takes shower.
His eyes closed, sparkling droplets of water run down
his face.
- INT. BATHROOM - Dmitry Voronov, the towel wrapped

around his hips, comes to the bathroom window and looks out.

- EXT. WINTER PALACE - The night sky above the Palace, sprinkled with brightly lit stars.

END OF MONTAGE

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PUSHKIN CAFÉ (MOSCOW) - DAY

An antique telescope stands by the window. Vintage books line up shelves of the floor-to-ceiling bookcases.

Dmitry Voronov sits at the round table covered with a green table cloth. He waits, playing with the triangle of his napkin. The black diamond of his titanium ring sparkles on his index finger.

Pavel walks in and joins Dmitry Voronov at the table.

Dmitry Voronov pushes the menu towards Pavel.

DMITRY VORONOV

Order yourself a hearty meal.

Pavel's face drops.

DMITRY VORONOV

(looking at Pavel)

Are you serving your country well?

PAVEL

What do you mean?!

DMITRY VORONOV

I mean, are you doing your job well?

PAVEL

I think I'm...

DMITRY VORONOV

Seriously, what did offering advice to Juan MacBride bring you?

PAVEL (CONT'D)

Mac's my friend.

DMITRY VORONOV

What did he do to deserve your friendship?

PAVEL

Does anyone have to do something to
deserve one's friendship?

DMITRY VORONOV

I think you have to get your priorities
straight.

PAVEL

The interests of your family have always
been a priority to me.

DMITRY VORONOV

I'm not doubting that. But I'm of an
opinion that one should choose carefully
whom one offers his help to.

PAVEL

(dropping his eyes)

I've made a mistake...

DMITRY VORONOV

What the hell got into you when you took
that friend of yours to Kazimir's lodge!?

PAVEL

I just wanted to help Mac...

DMITRY VORONOV

Yes, you bloody did, nearly sending him to
'heaven'.

PAVEL

I didn't, Kazimir did!

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

And what did you think he would do?

PAVEL

Look, I thought Mac would just watch the lodge quietly. Instead, he dashed out of the woodshed and set after Angela!

DMITRY VORONOV

And I thought I'd clearly instructed you to investigate on Kazimir's case!

PAVEL (CONT'D)

I did! It's just that elderly man from the Ritz had gotten into the frame!

A WAITER#6 comes and places a glass of beer before Pavel.

Pavel takes a swig.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

What elderly man from the Ritz?!

PAVEL

I don't know! I've never seen him.

DMITRY VORONOV

Any thoughts on who it can be?

PAVEL

Dmitry, I don't know. Really.

The waiter#6 comes and places a bowl of meat 'solyanka' in front of Pavel. Pavel dips his spoon into the stew.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

Do you remember his name?

PAVEL

(munching on a piece of meat
from 'solyanka')

It was something to do with France or the

French...

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

(glaring at Pavel)

Stop munching and think!

PAVEL

I think Maria Alekseevna would know!

DMITRY VORONOV

Who's Maria Alekseevna? You haven't mentioned her before!

PAVEL

(with dreamy expression on his face)

Angela's housekeeper, cooks very nice 'blini'. You should try them... But she's left the country now.

DMITRY VORONOV

What do you mean?

PAVEL

Maria Alekseevna said they were moving, going to some Monti Rosi.

DMITRY VORONOV

Who are 'they'?

PAVEL

Angela and Maria Alekseevna.

Dmitry Voronov takes his mobile out.

PAVEL (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

DMITRY VORONOV

Googling your 'Monti Rosi'.

Dmitry Voronov looks at the screen of his mobile.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

It's not 'Monti Rosi', it's Monte Rosa,
the highest mountain in Switzerland.

PAVEL

It seems Maria Alkeseevna has been
'upgraded'.

DMITRY VORONOV

Do you have the keys to Angela's flat?

PAVEL

Yeah, but not the original.

DMITRY VORONOV

The duplicate?

PAVEL

Yeah.

DMITRY VORONOV

Aren't you a gem?

PAVEL

(chomping on 'pirozhok')

Not a gem, just an honoured Special Police
Unit officer.

INT. ANGELA'S FLAT/7TH FLOOR (MOSCOW) - DAY

Pavel and Dmitry Voronov stand before the door with the
'7B' set in brass in the wood panelling. Pavel brings his
head to the door and listens then nods to Dmitry Voronov.

Dmitry Voronov inserts the key into the lock and opens the
door.

INT. ANGELA'S FLAT/HALLWAY (MOSCOW) - DAY

Dmitry Voronov walks in. Pavel follows after him, a

takeaway box with 'pirozhki' cradled in his arms.

The hallway is dark. The doors leading to other rooms are firm closed.

DMITRY VORONOV

(whispering)

You're the professional. Where do we start?

PAVEL

(whispers back)

It depends on your goal.

DMITRY VORONOV

I don't have a particular goal. Just want to see what we can come across that helps us identify who the elderly man from the Ritz is.

Pavel looks thoughtfully at his takeaway box.

PAVEL (CONT'D)

Right, then you can start either in Angela's office or in her bedroom.

DMITRY VORONOV

Why?

PAVEL

Because this elderly man can be connected to Angela either in a business way or in a more intimate way.

DMITRY VORONOV

(raising his voice)

What are you implying?

PAVEL

(clearing his throat)

I'm not implying anything, just giving you

my professional advice.

INT. ANGELA'S FLAT/KITCHEN (MOSCOW) - DAY

Pavel puts the kettle on, then takes a mug out of the cupboard and makes himself some tea.

Mug in hand, he sits down at the kitchen table and opens the takeaway box.

INSERT-

layers of 'pirozhki', their roasted round sides glisten with butter.

BACK TO SCENE

Thoughtfully, Pavel studies the 'piroshki' then dips his hand into the box and fingers out a particularly plump one.

Dreamy expression on his face, he brings it to his mouth.

DMITRY VORONOV (O.S.)

Pavel, come over here!

Reluctantly, Pavel puts his 'pirozhok' back into the box, picks up his mug and heads in the direction of Dmitry's voice.

INT. ANGELA'S FLAT /OFFICE (MOSCOW) - DAY

In a room with the furniture pieces ghostly shaped by dust sheets covering them, Dmitry Voronov stands by the mahogany desk. The dust sheet is taken off it. He holds a silver photo frame in his hands.

DMITRY VORONOV

Look what I've found.

Pavel comes over, puts his mug on the desk and, wiping his hands off his jeans, takes the photo frame.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

What do you think?

PAVEL (CONT'D)

I see two people: a woman, looks like Angela, and an elderly man. There are some mountains in the background.

DMITRY VORONOV

Do you think the elderly man on the photograph can be the same one from the Ritz?

PAVEL

(shrugs)

He might be or might not.

DMITRY VORONOV

What do you mean?

PAVEL

The elderly man can be just anybody. A friend of a friend or a relative of a friend.

DMITRY VORONOV

But why is she having a photograph of 'just anybody' on her desk?

PAVEL

Well, it might hold a certain sentimental value.

DMITRY VORONOV

What sentimental value?

PAVEL

The elderly man can be her lover.

DMITRY VORONOV

I don't like it!

Dmitry Voronov takes the photo frame away from Pavel and looks at it.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

I think the elderly man on the photograph
is the same one from the Ritz.

Pavel picks up his mug and takes a slurp of his tea.

PAVEL (CONT'D)

Suppose he is. But what does he have to do
with Angela?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MONTE ROSA (SWITZERLAND) - DAY

In the azure skies the sun shines brightly. The snow peaks
of the Swiss Alps glisten in the sunlight.

Up the winding road a cobalt blue Porsche 911 is climbing.

Angela is at the wheel. Next to her, Maria Alekseevna sits,
clutching nervously her handbag.

Reaching a small plateau, the car stops in front of the
modern glassed-in house.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA (O.S.)

Angela, this house looks like an aquarium!

ANGELA (O.S.)

Consider yourself a gold fish then.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOUSE ON MONTE ROSA/KITCHEN (SWITZERLAND) - DAY -
MORNING

Her apron on, Maria Alekseevna stands by the modern
electric stove, lost in deep thought. Her hands cling to a
large frying pan.

Angela, bare feet, wearing a long white silk nightie, walks
in.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Good morning, Maria Alekseevna.

Maria Alekseevna comes out of her thoughts.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

(focused on the electric
stove)

Good morning, Angela.

Angela takes out a bottle of water from the refrigerator.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA (CONT'D)

Where's the gas stove?

ANGELA

In Russia..., here we have electricity.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

How am I supposed to cook with your
electricity?

ANGELA

By switching the electric stove on.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

Your electric stove looks like it needs an
operational manual.

Angela comes over and switches the stove on. A light
scarlet ring appears on the glass-ceramic top of the stove.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Maria Alekseevna, you have to update
yourself to present times.

Angela releases the frying pan from Maria Alekseevna's grip
and places it onto the stove.

Angela's mobile RINGS. She picks it up from the kitchen
counter and presses 'answer'.

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Welcome back, mon amour. Shall we have a long awaited catch up tonight?

ANGELA

(into the phone)

Absolument.

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.)

Are you cooking or shall I take you out?

ANGELA

(into the phone)

Maria Alekseevna will be cooking.

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.)

Qu'est-ce que c'est Maria Alekseevna?

ANGELA

(into the phone)

My housekeeper.

THE GENTLEMAN (V.O.)

Are we having une soirée Russe?

ANGELA

(into the phone)

Yes, provided Maria Alekseevna learns how to use the electric stove.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOUSE ON MONTE ROSA/DINING ROOM (SWITZERLAND) - NIGHT

Maria Alekseevna straightens the crisp white tablecloth and throws a triumphant look at her 'composition' consisting of crystal-, porcelain- and silverware on the dining table.

She takes a box of matches from the pocket of her apron and lights up seven candles in a gilded candelabra.

The DOORBELL chimes.

INT. HOUSE ON MONTE ROSA/DINING ROOM (SWITZERLAND) - NIGHT

The light of candles throwing a soft glow onto their faces, Angela and the Gentleman stand by the dining table.

The Gentleman takes out a Tiffany box, a white ribbon artfully wrapped around it, and hands it to Angela.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

A small cadeau.

Angela unties the ribbon and opens the box.

INSERT -

a two-row platinum band ring with a sparkling diamond set in the middle.

BACK TO SCENE

Angela gives the Gentleman a kiss.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Thank you.

THE GENTLEMAN

(embracing Angela)

Welcome home.

They sit down at the table.

Maria Alekseevna takes the lid off a porcelain tureen and scoops the reddish-purple 'borscht' soup into their plates.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

What a magnificent soup!

ANGELA

My favourite.

The Gentleman dips his spoon into the soup.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

How is your Moscow assignment going?

ANGELA

It's been cancelled.

THE GENTLEMAN

By who?

ANGELA

By me.

The Gentleman throws a thoughtful look at Angela.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

May I ask you why?

ANGELA

I prefer it remain a mystery.

THE GENTLEMAN

There always seems to be a mystery in your life.

ANGELA

Talking about mysteries, what on earth were you doing in Moscow?

THE GENTLEMAN

I presume your friend MacBride has told you all about it.

ANGELA

He is not my friend, and yes, he has, but not 'all about it'.

THE GENTLEMAN

I have greatly overestimated his intelligence...

ANGELA

You are a hopeless idealist.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

I try to see a better side in people.

ANGELA

Better-side or not, using your pre-text,
he'd followed me to Kazimir's lodge and
was caught there red-handed!

THE GENTLEMAN

Oh, I know.

ANGELA

How come?

THE GENTLEMAN

I had my people keeping an eye on you.

ANGELA

What people?!

THE GENTLEMAN

I hired professionals. They were watching
your flat in Moscow and Kazimir's lodge in
Finland too.

ANGELA

It's extraordinary, really.

THE GENTLEMAN

Not quite, to my utter dismay somebody
managed to fire a shot at you. A turn of
events my people did not anticipate.

ANGELA

Quite a 'faux pas' on their part.

THE GENTLEMAN

They figure the shooter was in a half-
built building across the street.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Great minds think alike. Pavel is of the same opinion.

THE GENTLEMAN

Who's Pavel?

ANGELA

A Special Police Unit officer, a friend of MacBride.

THE GENTLEMAN

Another professional, it seems.

ANGELA

He is of an opinion that from the half-built building the shooter had a clear view and could have killed me easily.

THE GENTLEMAN

That's quite right, quite right. But evidently, he did not.

ANGELA

Yes, apparently, but then why to shoot at all?

THE GENTLEMAN

Based on the evidence present, I would be inclined to think that the shooter just wanted to scare you.

ANGELA

And why would he want to do that?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GENEVA LAKE (GENEVA) - DAY

A heart-shaped island, covered with a cluster of bare-branched trees, sits on the water.

In the midst of the sparkling sunlight, a swan glides by the island.

EXT. GENEVA LAKE/PONT DU MONT BLANC (GENEVA) - DAY

Dmitry Voronov stands, thoughtful, watching the swan. His mobile BUZZES. He takes it out and hits 'answer'.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Yes?

PAVEL (V.O.)

It's Pavel.

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

Bonjour, Pavel.

PAVEL (V.O.)

What's that?

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

Hello in French.

PAVEL (V.O.)

Are you in France?

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

Geneva.

PAVEL (V.O.)

We were able to identify the elderly man from the photograph...

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

Go on.

PAVEL (V.O.)

I have some contacts in the security department of Domodedovo Airport. I sent them the photograph. They matched it to one of their records in their customs department.

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

Excellent.

PAVEL (V.O.)

You were right. The man on the photograph and the man from the Ritz is the same person.

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

Have they given you his name?

PAVEL (V.O.)

Jacques Moreaux, a Swiss citizen.

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

I would need more specifics.

PAVEL (V.O.)

One more 'specific' they've provided is his profession. Well, the thing he'd filled in on the landing card.

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

Which is...

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

An expert on vintage tourbillons, working
for some Sotheby's.

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

Thank you.

PAVEL (V.O.)

Any time.

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

One more thing.

PAVEL (V.O.)

Yes?

DMITRY VORONOV

(into the phone)

Don't forget to return the photograph back
to Angela's flat.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOUSE ON MONTE ROSA (SWITZERLAND) - DUSK

The sun sets, slowly melting into the horizon, casting
scarlet shadows on the snow-covered peaks of the Swiss
Alps.

An eagle soars high in the sky, basking in the fading rays
of the sun.

INT. HOUSE ON MONTE ROSA/SITTING ROOM (SWITZERLAND) - DUSK

Angela sits on the sofa, admiring the view.

Maria Alekseevna foots the room, her pink fluffy slippers
glide across its parquet floor.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA (CONT'D)

You can't leave me alone on your Monte Rosa!

ANGELA

Maria Alekseevna, you'll be perfectly all-right on your own here.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

How can I be all-right, if I don't speak a word of their language?

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Maybe you should put an effort into learning 'their' language.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

I'm too old for that. Besides, it's the languages of capitalists.

ANGELA

Capitalists are pretty much the same as communists or socialists for that matter.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

How's that?!

ANGELA

Take your beloved 'Napoleon' cake. It's a simple 'mille-feuille'.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

What 'meal fui'?

ANGELA

The same 'Napoleon' cake you've been baking for years. It's a legacy of 'capitalists'. Means 'thousand leaves' in French.

Defeated, Maria Alekseevna flops onto the sofa.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PONT DU MONT BLANC (GENEVA) - DAY

The Gentleman strolls across the bridge, a baguette is under his arm.

In the middle of the bridge he stops and looks down at the heart-shaped island. Next to it a solitary swan is gliding.

The Gentleman breaks the baguette into pieces and throws them one by one in the direction of the swan.

INT. BEAU RIVAGE HOTEL/LE CHAT BOTTE RESTAURANT - (GENEVA)
- DAY

Dmitry Voronov sits at a tastefully appointed table. A Sotheby's catalogue lies open before him. Flipping its pages, Dmitry Voronov studies images of vintage tourbillons.

The Gentleman enters, spots Dmitry Voronov and heads to his table.

THE GENTLEMAN

(extending his hand to Dmitry
Voronov)

Bienvenue à Genève, Monsieur Voronov!

DMITRY VORONOV

(shaking the Gentleman's
hand)

Bonjour, Monsieur Moreaux.

The Gentleman sits down and takes his cigar case out.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

Would you care for a cigar, Monsieur
Voronov?

DMITRY VORONOV

Merci, but I don't smoke cigars.

THE GENTLEMAN

Is it a personal preference or a life

statement?

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

Neither. I simply haven't got the opportunity to be acquainted with the habit.

THE GENTLEMAN

Do you think it's a habit worth to be acquainted with?

DMITRY VORONOV

I think, on certain occasions, the act of smoking a cigar aids in accentuating one's masculinity.

THE GENTLEMAN

Very intriguing. And what, in your opinion, would such occasions be?

DMITRY VORONOV

Our meeting.

THE GENTLEMAN

Are you implying me trying to accentuate my masculinity over yours?

DMITRY VORONOV

What I'm saying is that I would have accepted your cigar if I had been acquainted with the habit of smoking it.

THE GENTLEMAN

(putting his cigar case back
into the pocket)

I see. I presume my presence at this fine restaurant was requested by you for a specific reason, n'est-ce pas?

DMITRY VORONOV

Yes.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

Would you kindly enlighten me on its nature?

DMITRY VORONOV

It's Angela.

THE GENTLEMAN

You have intrigued me once again.

DMITRY VORONOV

To my knowledge, you are well acquainted with her.

THE GENTLEMAN

I might be acquainted with Mademoiselle Angela, but what, if I may ask, is the reason of your enquiring of my being acquainted with her?

DMITRY VORONOV

It's personal.

THE GENTLEMAN

Are you a friend of hers?

DMITRY VORONOV

You may call me that.

THE GENTLEMAN

Could you be more specific than that, Monsieur Voronov?

DMITRY VORONOV

This is as specific as I can get, Monsieur Moreaux.

The WAITER#7 comes and hands them menus.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

Monsieur Voronov, what is it exactly you would like to know about Mademoiselle

Angela?

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

I'd like to know the exact nature of your interest in Mademoiselle Angela.

THE GENTLEMAN

What makes you think I have an interest in Mademoiselle Angela?

DMITRY VORONOV

I believe if you hadn't had any interest in her you wouldn't have come to Moscow.

THE GENTLEMAN

Even if I had visited Moscow, how could this be connected to my interest in Mademoiselle Angela?

DMITRY VORONOV

You hadn't just visited Moscow, you went there with a very specific purpose.

THE GENTLEMAN

Perhaps with the very same purpose as you have come to Geneva, Monsieur Voronov.

DMITRY VORONOV

I'm not sure if our purposes are of the same nature.

THE GENTLEMAN

What makes you doubt they aren't?

DMITRY VORONOV

Your actions in Moscow.

THE GENTLEMAN

What about them?

DMITRY VORONOV

You met up with Angela's junior associate,

Juan MacBride, at the Ritz and handed him a note, supposedly from her.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

I praise you for being so well-informed.
The waiter#7 servers their orders to them.

THE GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

Monsieur Voronov, why would you be so concerned about me meeting with Monsieur MacBride?

DMITRY VORONOV

I wouldn't have been concerned if Juan MacBride hadn't ended up in a car accident.

THE GENTLEMAN

A straight forward concern it seems.

DMITRY VORONOV

Rather.

THE GENTLEMAN

Monsieur Voronov, I must assure you that my only interest has always been to protect Mademoiselle Angela. No harm intended to anyone else.

DMITRY VORONOV

Why would it be in your interest to protect Angela?

THE GENTLEMAN

Because I'm her grandfather.

DISSOLVES TO:

EXT. MONTE ROSA (SWITZERLAND) - DAY

The Swiss Alps punctuate the blue horizon of the sky. The sun shines upon their snowy peaks. Glistening in the

sunlight, a cobalt blue Aston Martin drives up the mountain road.

Approaching a small plateau with a glassed-in modern house on it, the car stops.

INT. HOUSE ON MONTE ROSA/DINING ROOM (SWITZERLAND) - DAY

In the middle of the oval dining table, covered with the white crisp tablecloth, the 'Napoleon' cake sits. The warm custard cream drips down its crispy, layered sides.

Maria Alekseevna stands by the table, admiring her culinary creation.

The DOORBELL chimes.

INT. HOUSE ON MONTE ROSA/HALLWAY (SWITZERLAND) - DAY

Maria Alekseevna opens the door. Silhouetted in the door frame, Dmitry Voronov, a bouquet of pink tulips in his hands, stands.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

(handing the bouquet)

Zdravstvuite, Maria Alekseevna.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

Zdravstvui, Dmitry.

INT. HOUSE ON MONTE ROSA/DINING ROOM (SWITZERLAND) - DAY

Maria Alekseevna RUSTLES the tulips out of its packaging, puts the flowers into a crystal vase and places the vase on the dining table.

Dmitry Voronov comes over to the large glass wall of the living room and looks out.

In the distance, an eagle soars high above the peaks of the mountains.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

Beautiful view...

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

Angela thinks so too. Just sits and watches her eagles.

DMITRY VORONOV

(turning to Maria Alekseevna)

Don't you, Maria Alekseevna?

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

I don't have time for such luxuries.

DMITRY VORONOV

One can always find some time for a little bit of dreaming.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

I'm too old for dreaming.

DMITRY VORONOV

You are never too old to dream, Maria Alekseevna.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

I prefer to focus on the practical side of life.

Maria Alekseevna motions Dmitry Voronov to a chair.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA (CONT'D)

Please, have a seat.

She takes a porcelain cup, decorated with golden vignettes, pours some tea into it and hands the cup to Dmitry Voronov.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

Do you like it here?

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

I don't, there is no one to speak to.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

Speak about what?

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

Good old days. But Angela thinks there is no need for that when you have eagles to watch.

DMITRY VORONOV

Well, she might be right...

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA

About what?

DMITRY VORONOV

The eagles.

Maria Alekseevna takes a knife and slices through the crumbling layers of the cake. As she does, the golden cream sticks to the knife's blade.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

Pavel has told me all about your culinary skills.

Maria Alekseevna places a hearty piece of the cake on a plate and hands it to Dmitry Voronov.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA (CONT'D)

Really? And Angela says that all the recipes of my humble cooking come from some capitalistic 'grande cuisine'!

Dmitry Voronov takes the plate with the cake.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

I do not know about 'all of your recipes' but 'Napoleon' cake is a creation of the French chef, Marie-Antoine Carême, an early practitioner of the elaborate style of cooking known as grande cuisine...

INT. HOUSE ON MONTE ROSA/LIBRARY (SWITZERLAND) - DAY

The sun casts a beam of light onto the parquet floor of the library.

Dmitry Voronov and Maria Alekseevna walk in, stepping into the pool of light.

Squinting, Maria Alekseevna motions towards the floor-to-ceiling bookshelves.

MARIA ALEKSEEVNA (CONT'D)

Something for you to entertain yourself
with, while I'm looking for that phone
number you wanted.

Dmitry Voronov comes to a bookshelf, picks out a poetry book by Alexandre Pushkin, opens it and reads.

DMITRY VORONOV (V.O.)

A flower - shrivelled, bare of fragrance,
Forgotten on a page - I see,
And instantly my soul awakens,
Filled with an aimless reverie:

When did it bloom? the last spring?
earlier?
How long? Where was it plucked? By whom?
By foreign hands? or by familiar?
And why put here, as in a tomb?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VENETIAN PALAZZO (VENICE) - NIGHT

The rain drizzles, throwing its net over the Grand Canal.

The black and gold lacquered gondolas gently sway in the water.

In the midst of the city's curving streets, a Palazzo stands. Its red tiled roof glistens in the rain.

INT. VENETIAN PALAZZO/SITTING ROOM (VENICE) - NIGHT

The walls of the room bear ancient stucco reliefs. The floors are laid with chequered black and white marble.

In the huge ancient fireplace, the wood crackles. On the floor, a black fox rug is spread out. On the rug, the illustrated album on Venetian masks lies open.

Angela turns pages of the book, studying images of the Venetian masks.

As she comes to the page with the definition of the mask, she reads.

ANGELA (V.O.)

The mask is an object worn over the face to hide the identity of a person. This characteristic of hiding personality is common to all masks. The wearer of a mask is considered to be in direct association with the spirit force of the mask. Thus, after putting on the mask, the wearer undergoes a psychic change...

Angela bookmarks the page, takes a box from the mantelpiece and lifts the lid.

INSERT-

The Swarovski mask.

BACK TO SCENE

Angela takes the mask out and admires the sparkling of its crystals then puts the mask on, tying up the ribbons at the back of her head.

The mask on, she comes to the window and looks out.

A man in a white Bauta mask strides down the street. His Venetian cloak streams in black waves behind him.

The PHONE RINGS.

Angela glances in the direction of the sound.

The PHONE keeps RINGING.

She goes over and looks at the phone. The PHONE keeps RINGING. She hesitates then picks up the receiver and listens.

DMITRY VORONOV (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Zdravstvui, Angela. It's Dmitry Voronov.

ANGELA

(into the phone)

Zdravstvui.

DMITRY VORONOV (V.O.)

I hear you're in Venice.

Angela glances in the direction of the fireplace where the album on Venetian masks lies open.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

I see you're here too.

DMITRY VORONOV (V.O.)

Yes, but I haven't had the pleasure of seeing you recently.

ANGELA

(into the phone)

That's maybe because we have not been introduced properly.

DMITRY VORONOV (V.O.)

I'd like to suggest an impromptu.

ANGELA

(into the phone)

A customary one?

DMITRY VORONOV (V.O.)

An introductory one.

ANGELA

(into the phone)

Where?

DMITRY VORONOV (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Ball Masquerade, at the Palazzo Cavalli.

ANGELA

(into the phone)

How will I recognize you?

Angela reaches out for the album on Venetian masks.

DMITRY VORONOV (V.O.)

I will be wearing a mask.

ANGELA

(into the phone)

Which one?

DMITRY VORONOV (V.O.)

The one you will easily recognize.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VENICE - NIGHT

Angela, her Swarovski mask on, walks down the narrow passageway. Her cloak streams behind her.

EXT. THE PIER (VENICE) - NIGHT

Angela comes out on to the pier, spots a free gondola and gets in.

INT. PALAZZO PARUTA HOTEL/THE ROYAL SUITE (VENICE) - NIGHT

Dmitry Voronov stands in front of the mirror, fixing the black bow on the collar of his tuxedo.

EXT. THE PALAZZO CAVALLI (VENICE) - NIGHT

The lit-up windows glance out onto the canal's glossy

waters.

Dozens of shiny gondolas crowd at the pier.

Masked GUESTS get out of gondolas and head to the entrance of the Palazzo.

INT. PALAZZO CAVALLI/THE BALL ROOM (VENICE) - NIGHT

Angela enters.

The sea of faces covered with Venetian masks: Capitanos, Columbinas, Bautas, Galettos, Incas, and Jollys swirl in a dance around the Ball Room, greet her eyes.

She makes her way through the CROWD, scanning the masks. Her crystal-embroidered dress sparkles reflecting the light of chandeliers.

An ARLECCHINO grabs her hand.

ARLECCHINO

Seniora, per favore, una dance!

The Arlecchino whirls Angela in a short dance.

Breaking free, she heads for the galleries.

A MAN IN A MASK with the long pointy nose steps out before her.

THE MAN IN THE MASK

(offering a glass of red
wine)

Fancy a drink?

ANGELA

Grazie, no.

INT. PALAZZO CAVALLI/GALLERIES (VENICE) - NIGHT

Angela comes to the balustrade and leans over it.

Multi-coloured motorboats weave in and out, cutting through the dark-blue gloss of the lagoon water.

DMITRY VORONOV (O.S) (CONT'D)

Zdravstvui, Angela.

She turns.

Dmitry Voronov, wearing the Jolly Joker mask, stands before her. He offers Angela a cone with gelato.

Angela takes it. Dmitry Voronov joins her at the balustrade.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I was standing with my back to you. How did you recognize me?

DMITRY VORONOV

You have a beautiful back.

ANGELA

I'm serious.

DMITRY VORONOV

It was the distinct sparkling of your dress that gave you away.

Angela bites into the crunchy cone of the gelato. It crumbles. She tries to catch the crumbled pieces with her mouth.

Dmitry Voronov looks at Angela's profile outlined by the Swarovski mask.

He then takes his tuxedo jacket off, comes behind Angela and gently places it onto her shoulders.

Standing behind her, he gazes at the mask's bow at the back of Angela's head.

The silk ribbons of the bow gently flip in the breeze.

Dmitry Voronov catches one of the ribbons and pulls at it lightly.

INT. PALAZZO CAVALLI/THE BALL ROOM (VENICE) - NIGHT

Angela makes her way through the dancing crowd. The tux

jacket of Dmitry Voronov on her shoulders.

Dmitry Voronov follows after her. His white shirt is covered with bits of feathers and glitter.

INT. PALAZZO CAVALLI/THE MARBLE STAIRWAY (VENICE) - NIGHT

Angela and Dmitry Voronov come out on to the landing of the marble stairway.

Angela takes the tux jacket off and hands it over to Dmitry Voronov. He puts it on.

Angela smiles at him then sets off, running down the stairs.

The train of her open-back dress flickers on the marble stairs.

EXT. PIER OF THE PALAZZO CAVALLI (VENICE) - NIGHT

Angela and Dmitry Voronov get into a gondola and settle on its large red-cushioned seats.

The GONDOLIER pushes away and manoeuvres the gondola out.

EXT. VENICE CANAL (VENICE) - NIGHT

Slicing through quivering reflections of the palazzos' lit-up windows, the gondola moves towards the openness of the city's bay.

EXT. THE GONDOLA (VENICE) - NIGHT

Angela leans back in her seat. Her cloak slips off her knee.

Dmitry Voronov glances down.

INSERT-

the curve of Angela's leg, accentuated by the dress.

BACK TO SCENE

Dmitry Voronov reaches out for the wool throw. The sleeve of his tuxedo brushes over Angela's legs.

She looks down, her eyes meet the back of Dmitry Voronov's head. The ribbons of his mask flip gently in the breeze.

Angela captures one of the ribbons and pulls lightly at it.

Dmitry Voronov straightens up.

Angela pulls her hand away.

Dmitry Voronov spreads the throw out and covers Angela's legs with it.

ANGELA

So very romantic.

DMITRY VORONOV

I was just thinking of your bare legs.

Angela looks down at her legs.

The gondolier smirks.

Dmitry Voronov glances in the direction of the gondolier.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

But not in a sense you might think I would.

ANGELA

Really?

DMITRY VORONOV

I thought you might be cold.

Angela lifts the throw and covers their legs with it, spreading it evenly across them.

Dmitry Voronov looks up at the night sky.

Angela looks at his profile, outlined by the Jolly Joker mask.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I find Venetian masks so mysterious for

they shield secrets of their wearers.

Dmitry Voronov looks at Angela.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

Do you know where the tradition of wearing
masks comes from?

Angela shakes her head.

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

The citizens of the Venetian Republic,
seamen, merchants, and adventurers were
free spirited people, used to the openness
and freedom of the sea. But their city was
a place where the anonymity was a luxury
that was very hard to come by. Thus, once
on the shore, they started wearing masks
in order to preserve the feeling of
freedom and openness that they felt out in
the sea...

The gondolier stops rowing and lets the gondola drift
across the glistening in the moonlight dark-blue waves.

A shooting-star flashes across the night sky.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. VENETIAN PALAZZO/BEDROOM (VENICE) - DAY - MORNING

Gazing out the window, Angela lies in bed, curled up under
the duvet.

INSERT-

The city's skyline, punctuated by terracotta chimneys and
church towers.

BCK TO SCENE

On the table by the bedside, a vase with red roses stands.
Next to it, the Swarovski mask lies. The fallen petals of
the roses are sprinkled over it.

Angela takes the mask.

Shaken off, the petals leave a trail of scarlet drops on

the white sheets.

The CHURCH BELLS ring in the distance.

The mask in hand, Angela gets up and looks out the window.

An EARLY-RISER strides on the narrow, cobbled street. His shoes TAP a rhythmical tune on the ancient stones.

Angela goes back to bed and slides in under the duvet.

INT. THE PALAZZO PARUTA HOTEL/THE ROYAL SUITE (VENICE) -
DAY - MORNING

The wood crackles in the fireplace.

Dmitry Voronov lounges on the burgundy sofa. The carnival glitter stuck to his white shirt sparkles in the light of fire.

On the sofa, beside him, the Jolly Joker mask lies. The colourful features of the mask intensified by the heat of the dancing flames.

The CHURCH BELLS ring in the distance.

INTERCUT -

Angela puts the mask back on the bedside table and takes her mobile.

The mobile in hand, thoughtful, she looks at the screen.

INSERT-

The green 'whatsapp' icon on the screen of the mobile.

BACK TO SCENE

Angela types.

INSERT-

Angela's 'whatsapp' message blurb.

BACK TO SCENE

ANGELA

Buongiorno.

Angela stares at the screen.

INSERT-

Dmitry Voronov's 'whatsapp' response blurb.

BACK TO SCENE

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

Have you got some sleep?

ANGELA

I've been daydreaming.

DMITRY VORONOV

What about?

Angela thumbs in her reply and pauses.

INSERT-

Angela's 'whatsapp' message blurb.

BACK TO SCENE

ANGELA (CONT'D)

You.

Angela presses 'send' and closes her eyes.

The phone BUZZES in her hand. Angela opens hers eyes and looks at the screen.

INSERT-

Dmitry Voronov's 'whatsapp' message blurb.

BACK TO SCENE

DMITRY VORONOV (CONT'D)

Can you dream of meeting me tonight?

Angela smiles.

INSERT-

Angela's 'whatsapp' message blurb.

BACK TO SCENE

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Where?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAN MARCO SQUARE (VENICE) - NIGHT

BUZZING, MASQUAREDERS and masked VENETIANS flock in from the side streets, filling up the square.

Dozens of mobile cameras flash in the CROWD.

In the middle of the Piazza a stage stands.

On the stage, posing in the beam lights, PERFORMERS show off their elaborate masks. The black silk of their cloaks waves around them in the wind.

EXT. PIAZZETTA DI SAN MARCO (VENICE) - NIGHT

The two granite columns tower over the piazzetta. Their tops are crowned with the sculptures of the patron saints of Venice.

Angela, her face bare of the Swarovski mask, stands between the columns. Her back to the crowd she faces the openness of the lagoon.

EXT. THE LAGOON (VENICE) - NIGHT

In the distance, a dot of light appears.

Flickering over dark waves, the light moves quickly towards the quay.

INTERCUT -

A SKY-ROCKET shoots up.

Angela looks up.

A flaming flower opens up, dazzling the night sky. A shower of sparks flows down into the sea. Sparkling trails lead to the silhouette of a man, gazing at Angela from the motorboat.

EXT. THE QUAY/MOTORBOAT (VENICE) - NIGHT

In the flashing lights of the boasting in the night sky fireworks, Dmitry Voronov stands, his face bare of the Jolly Joker mask.

FADE OUT:

THE END