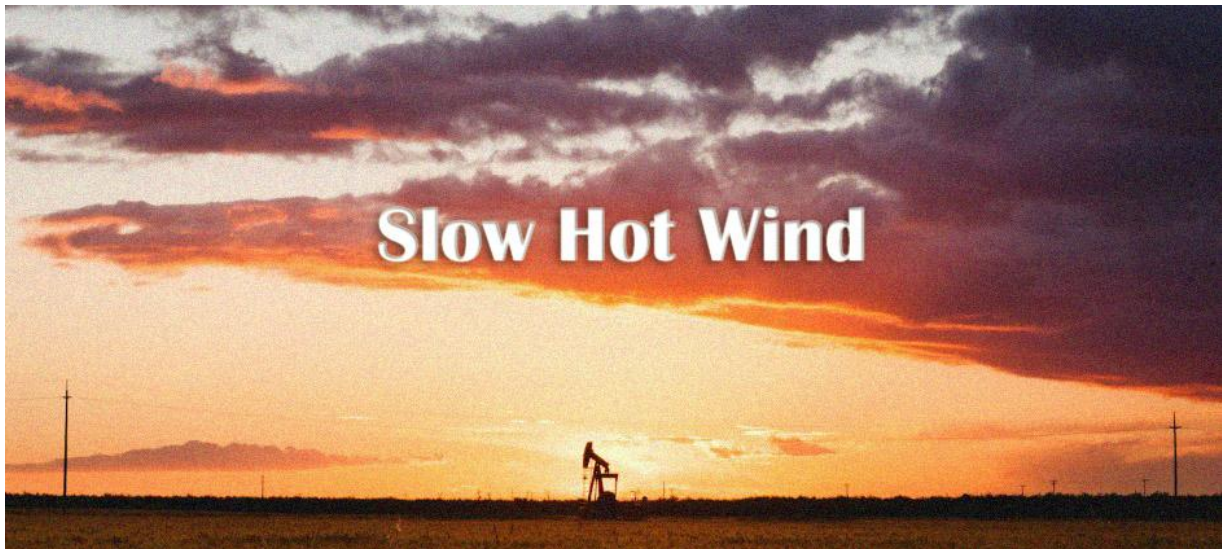


# Slow Hot Wind

A screenplay  
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**“Slow hot Wind” is a poignant feature about a man who has to choose between reality and illusion after having gotten an explosive look behind the curtain of dubious financing methods concerning Alberta’s oil sand exploitation.**

A bank writes off some 800 Million. VICTOR works for an international accounting firm in Germany and suspects the losses to be a stock market fraud. This pulls him from his everyday routine into a thrilling clue hunt through Germany, France and then Canada. There he quickly takes up with his Canadian assistant LOUISE, but doesn’t notice that she is playing a double game: she also monitors him. To get his trust, she draws Victor into a close relationship in which they both analyze their lives and dreams. As a consequence Victor begins to confuse his interest in the mission with his feelings for Louise. But after the murder of an involved trader, Louise decides to protect Victor. She travels with him to Fort McMurray, helping him to illuminate the relationship between an industry-conspired oil spill and the fraudulent stock market investments. However, there she disappears...

Big money, investigation, friendship, betrayal: an odyssey that leads from Europe to Canada and the US, and finally, to the key: Henry Mancini's Music Score “Slow Hot Wind”.

“Slow Hot Wind”, a screenplay of 100 pages, talkative but gripping, atypically constructed: an ordinary man slips into a mission that he believes to control. But it’s nothing else than manipulation, sending him around from place to place, offering a thrilling inside view on how big money, politics and environmental issues may be linked. But this impacting and cutting-edge topic just serves to lead us to the deeper level of the story: Victor has to redefine the sense of his life.

TORONTO,  
CANADA

EXT. CITY STREET - EVENING

Sunset over the skyline of Toronto. A wide road. An ambulance chases by with wailing sirens.

INT. AMBULANCE - EVENING

Paramedics try to revive a man: oxygen mask, heart massage. The paramedics shout to drown the wailing sirens.

PARAMEDIC 1  
Ok, let's try the defibrillator again.

PARAMEDIC 2  
(He bends down with two electrodes on  
the patient, the uploading defibrillator  
whistles)  
Clear! One - Two - Three...

He places the two electrodes. The patient shakes.

EXT. AMBULANCE - EVENING

The ambulance chases through the city. In foreground the flashing red warning lights on the roof of the ambulance.

The warning lights fade into a red traffic light.  
The movie title fades in on the red traffic light:

SLOW HOT WIND

MUNICH,  
GERMANY

INT/EXT. CAR BLACK SAAB / CITY ROAD - DAY

The traffic light turns from red to green.

A BLACK LEATHER SHOE floors the accelerator

VICTOR (classy, some grey hair, nearly fifty, wearing a dark suit, an old gold watch on his wrist), drives off with squealing tires. He crosses the intersection avoiding a cyclist. He angrily hits the horn.

He races along the wide avenue, jumps the curb and stops his car on the bike path and stops in front of a restaurant. He really is in a hurry.

Victor's HAND WITH REMOTE KEY locks the distant Saab. The car beeps (S.O.)

Victor spins through a revolving door into a restaurant.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

A stylish restaurant crowded with business people used to having their lunch there.

We follow Victor as he approaches a table. BARBARA MÜLLER, an elegant woman in her early fifties is already eating.

VICTOR

(He sits down and takes a menu.)

What's up?

BARBARA MÜLLER

Delbert had a heart attack in Toronto.

VICTOR

(He closes the menu without having even looked inside.)

So what?... Sorry, I'd ought to say: Jesus! Heart attack! I hope nothing serious? ... OK, joking aside: What does this have to do with me, if he tries to kick the bucket on a holiday trip to Toronto?

A waiter bends down to Victor.

VICTOR

The usual: Tuscany salad...

The waiter turns away.

BARBARA MÜLLER

Now, there's a big deal with someone from the Supervisory Board of the Deutsche Börsen Investment Bank ...

VICTOR

(Interrupts her)

Oh, the Supervisory-Board-someone! I'm really excited. Is he Canadian?

BARBARA MÜLLER

PLEASE... Delbert was supposed to uncover a stock market scam in the DBI - with a mission as Internal Auditor.

VICTOR

...As a camouflage auditor? Isn't it a bit like camouflage Prince Charles enquiring about the I.R.A. in Belfast?

BARBARA MÜLLER

(Loses her patience)

Will you just let me finish my story?!

VICTOR

(He raises innocently his arms)

Did I say anything? ...

BARBARA MÜLLER

(She looks annoyed at the ceiling)

Well, the DBI made some unusually high provisions. We should find out why, before they write it off as losses.

VICTOR

Sure...

The waiter brings Victor's Tuscany salad.

WAITER

Guten Appetit...

VICTOR

How do I get in there? ... I mean, they won't just hold the door for me when I show up with a smile.

BARBARA MÜLLER

Hold on - you just take on Delbert's job. Therefore we got that...

BARBARA MÜLLER hands an envelope over to Victor who pulls out the mandate and glances through the document.

BARBARA MÜLLER

... official mandate to go through the records of the DBI and all its branches.

VICTOR

What brought Delbert to Toronto?

BARBARA MÜLLER

No idea. He'd been switched off the night he arrived there. Since yesterday he's back recovering in Frankfurt Hospital.

VICTOR

We got nothing? No kind of interim report?

BARBARA MÜLLER

Somebody nicked his laptop when he collapsed in the subway. And he actually lost his memory. He was to be backed there by a Canadian auditor. A girl named Louise Hansen.

VICTOR

(Chewing, he mimes with his hands a generous bust.)

I understand that heart attack ... already on the first night.

BARBARA MÜLLER

(She does not deal with it)

Louise has nothing to work on for the time being. What about having a chat with Delbert in Frankfurt hospital? I told him you'd show up tomorrow morning at nine.

VICTOR

(He puts his knife and fork in the salad bowl and gets up)

Email me Delbert's hospital address, the number of that Louise in Toronto and anything else you might have.

BARBARA MÜLLER

(Aghast, she stares at him)

And where the bloody hell are you going now?

VICTOR

(While leaving, he simply looks back)

Packing bags. What else?...

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Victor unlocks a luxurious entrance door and steps into a tastefully furnished apartment.

IN GERMAN (SUBTITLES OVER)

VICTOR

Hello, anybody in there?

He listens, no answer.

He follows the long corridor. A noise makes him stop. He opens a door.

One leg in stockings extends from the bed: his daughter lying on her stomach on an unmade bed listening through headphones to loud music.

VICTOR

Hi girl, I'm leaving for Frankfurt. Please  
tell Mama...

No reaction, she doesn't notice him. Victor smiles.

He carefully closes the door again and walks straight into the bedroom.

He fetches a cabin case from the top shelf of the wardrobe, pulls the laptop from his briefcase and stuffs it with charger, shirt, pants, socks and tie into the case. Victor is a business travel professional.

He turns down the aisle towards the front door, reopens the door to his daughter. As she still doesn't notice him, he closes the door again and leaves the apartment with the suitcase.

INT. HIGH-SPEED-TRAIN/ 1. CLASS COMPARTMENT - DAY

Landscapes flashing by: trees, fields, hills, gilded by late afternoon sunshine. Train sound and a few hums.

Victor occupies a single seat, laptop on his knees. He looks thoughtfully through his reflection into the passing landscape. After a while he closes his laptop and shoves it in the trunk. He gets up, removes his jacket, hangs it next to him on a hook, and loosens his tie. Then he fishes his cell phone out the jacket, sits down lolling back, taps a number on his phone and brings it slowly to his ear.

VICTOR

Hi, it's me; I called a few times already.

SUSANNE (V.O.)

My phone was off. What's up?

VICTOR

I'm on the way to Frankfurt.

SUSANNE (V.O.)

(Unimpressed)

When'll you be back?

VICTOR

Don't know yet, but it might take two or three days, I suppose.

SUSANNE (V.O.)

Then let me know when YOU know.

Susanne simply hangs up. Victor slides his cell phone back in his pocket and closes his eyes.

FRANKFURT,  
GERMANY

EXT. MAIN STATION - NIGHT

We follow Victor as he walks along the deserted platform towards the exit.

EXT. "KAISERSTRASSE" - NIGHT

Sparse traffic, some late pedestrians stroll past shop windows. Victor drags the small cabin case, glancing lost in thoughts at the lighted shop windows. His cell phone rings.

SUSANNE (V.O.)

Hi, just in case you'd have forgotten. Friday night, we wanted to take Nadine out to celebrate her birthday. I hope it still fits into your schedule.

VICTOR

(He remains puzzled)

I thought it was on Saturday?

SUSANNE (V.O.)

No, on Saturday she gives her party. Don't forget, your daughter is turning 18, even if you've got a soooo uuurgent job. See you on Friday.

She hangs up. Victor stuffs his cell phone away and stares in the shop window next to him. A mannequin in underwear. She looks challenging. Her lace bra costs 250 €.

VICTOR

(to himself, looking at the doll)

Any comment?

INT. HOTEL RECEPTION - NIGHT

Hotel Victoria in the Kaiserstrasse. Victor swings through the revolving door towards the reception. Profusion of marble and mahogany. A desk clerk alone behind the counter talks on the phone. Victor waits until he finally finishes his conversation and looks up.

CLERK

Ja bitte?

VICTOR

My name is Foss, F-O-S-S...

CLERK

(He types the name into the computer)

Victor Foss?

VICTOR

That's me.

Victor signs the receipt, hands over his ID. The clerk makes a photocopy, giving Victor back his ID and the key card.

CLERK

Room 508. Simply slide it down through the slot to unlock the door. I wish you a pleasant stay.

Victor nods, loosens his tie and rolls his suitcase toward the lobby.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Leather chairs, small round tables, soft lighting, soft music. Victor sits on a stool at the far end of the bar in the deserted lobby, sips thoughtfully a whiskey. A bartender runs with a cloth from place to place, collecting empty glasses and wiping off the tables.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Large hotel room, luxury furnishings, a bed blanket rumpled on the floor. Victor, wearing only underpants, wakes up with pain. He opens an eye for a glimpse of his watch on the bedside table. Eight am.

VICTOR

Shit!

He jumps out of bed.

---

The shower rains down his face. He rubs his eyes.

---

In front of the mirror: He pulls his tie into position.

---

The watch on his wrist shows 8:25.

VICTOR

Shit.

INT. TAXI - DAY

The taxi is stuck in traffic. Victor looks at his watch: ten to nine.

DIALOGS IN GERMAN (SUBTITLES OVER)

VICTOR

Will we make it before nine?

TAXI DRIVER

(his eyes in the rear mirror)

Kardiocentrum in Königswarterstraße? Hardly.



VICTOR

Shit.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

We follow Victor as he enters Delbert's hospital room. Delbert looks up from his book. Victor approaches and shakes his hand.

VICTOR

Sorry. I'm late.

DELBERT

(He puts his book aside)

No problem, I won't run away.

VICTOR

How are you? (Delbert sticks his right thumb in the air) Let's keep it short, you need rest, I'm here to take on your mission...

DELBERT

(He spots Victor skeptically)

The doctors think the collapse in Toronto is due to fatigue and jet lag, smoking, the usual causes. But I didn't drink, believe me!

VICTOR

Don't worry. Now what did you fizzle out about DBI? Or, what do you remember anyway?

INT. TAXI - DAY

Victor is on the way to DBI Bank, he flips through his records, speaking simultaneously on the phone.

VICTOR

...No, his brain is reset. But he stayed in Paris before he went to Toronto. There's a link.

He looks at his notes, draws a circle around the name Schlagberger.

VICTOR

I'll now meet with Nicola Schlagberger at DBI. What's her job there?

BARBARA MÜLLER (V.O.)

HIS job... sorry, Nicola is a man, probably an Italian mother ... He's chief auditor for annual accounts. All controllers under his wings...

CUT TO:

Victor looks up through the side window at the Main Tower.

EXT. MAINTOWER - DAY

In front the impressive Main Tower. Victor gets out of the taxi armed with his laptop.

A quick look at his watch: 10:55. Victor slows his pace to swing gently through the revolving door into the large glass-enclosed lobby. We see him through the windows heading towards the reception.

INT. RECEPTION - DAY

Maintower. Lots of glass, light and chrome.  
Mr. Schlagberger, early thirties, designer suit, Mickey Mouse tie, and designer eyeglasses, approaching with an outstretched hand to greet.

SCHLAGBERGER  
(He shakes the hands a little too vigorously.)  
Schlagberger. Good to meet you, Mr. Foss.

VICTOR  
Thank you very much for seeing me so quickly.

They go for the elevators.

SCHLAGBERGER  
That goes without saying.  
(They step into an open elevator)  
Our offices are on the 36th Floor. We've got a great view from there.

The elevator door closes on them.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Stylish Elevator, mirrors, soft music.  
Schlagberger and Victor face each other.

VICTOR  
As you've probably been told, I'm taking on Delbert's job. I've to check again the quarterly balance sheets and also the annual ones of course.

SCHLAGBERGER  
I've been told nothing except that you'd come. However, I'll try to get everything you need.

VICTOR  
Fine. Just give me the budgets and associated P&L files of the past three years on a stick.

SCHLAGBERGER  
No Problem. I'll prepare that right away.

They step out of the Elevator.

INT. DBI-OFFICE - DAY

A very large and modern equipped open-plan office, full of traders staring at computer screens.

Victor follows Schlagberger towards a fully glazed conference room. Victor registers questioning and suspicious glances of Schlagberger's staff.

VICTOR  
(turned to Schlagberger)  
Your staff seems bothered about my being here.  
Anything wrong?

SCHLAGBERGER  
It's just that auditing means a lot of extra  
work and your colleague had already screened  
all accounts.

Schlagberger unlocks the conference room and they step in.

VICTOR  
Well, as Delbert had heart attack, we have to  
go over all this again. I don't appreciate it  
either. But I'll try to remain quite  
invisible, even in here...

Victor points to the glass walls of the conference room, in which they just enter.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A spacious room, glazed on all sides, breathtaking view over Frankfurt. In the middle a large conference table, surrounded by a dozen leather chairs. Victor sits alone at the big table, brooding over his laptop. He scribbles a number on his notebook and underlines. He bends over the table to fish the phone. After a look at his notes he dials.

VICTOR  
Mr. Schlagberger, I have some questions here,  
could you just come over?

Schlagberger walks in with a very pretty young woman: trouser suit, convincing low-cut, high heels.

SCHLAGBERGER  
This is our Nina Carstens; she's familiar with  
the case.

CARSTENS  
(She stretches out her hand with an  
accommodating smile)  
Guten Tag Herr Foss.

VICTOR  
(with a bright smile)  
Guten Tag "our Nina Carstens", you may  
definitely help me.

Nina Carstens casts a cold eye on Schlagberger, who ignores her glance.

She bends over Victor's laptop. Schlagberger remains in the background. Victor points out the dubious line.

VICTOR

I don't get this here. But please take a seat.

Nina Carstens sits on the chair next to Victor.

VICTOR

Just walk me through your interpretation of these 818-point-304 million Euro...

CARSTENS

Well, these private equity funds are of great strategic importance.

VICTOR

For this amount it should be.

CARSTENS

(she can't be interrupted)

In recent years many institutional investors have staked a portion of their resources into alternative assets, while hedge funds stood clearly in the foreground. This trend was not obvious.

VICTOR

I easily imagine.

Schlagberger brings Nina with a glance to silence.

SCHLAGBERGER

It's tricky I concede. Let me expound to ease your discern:

(He now speaks very fast)

Back a few years, if you broached on the subject of alternative investments, you typically received the answer that in the alternative sectors not hedge funds, but only private equity could come into question. It could be invested later in the difficult-to-understand hedge funds. We know it turned out differently...

VICTOR

(very softly)

Mr. Schlagberger. I don't get in and my schedule forces me to brevity. So just get me the files and make me understand which risk values these 818 million were popped in for.

(he shows a bright smile)

Let's add: each spoken word burns about 2500 neurons. Don't expose yourself to pointless risks.

(He gives him a wink)

Just the whole file, OK?

Schlagberger looks shaken, but gathers himself quickly. Nina turns away, grinning.

SCHLAGBERGER

Give me an hour.

VICTOR

(appeasing)

OK. Could you get me something to fill my stomach?

SCHLAGBERGER

No problem. Miss Carstens, a sandwich and a beer for Mr. Foss...

Nina Carstens sighs softly.

VICTOR

Sandwich and mineral water. Thank you.

Schlagberger and Carstens leave the room.

---

Victor talks in his phone chewing a sandwich.

VICTOR

... over 800 million.

(Whistling on the other side)

And best, he first tried the usual ploy with the pretty girl, and then...

Schlagberger and Nina Carstens entering. Schlagberger waves with a USB key.

VICTOR

OK, we'll keep in touch. Bye Barbara.

(He hangs up and turns to

Schlagberger)

You got everything?

SCHLAGBERGER

I think so.

VICTOR

(he sticks the key into his laptop)

Well, let's have a look.

He opens the files.

SCHLAGBERGER

All you need is in this folder: "Various private equity". Simply ring me up if you want more.

Schlagberger and Carstens prepare to leave.

VICTOR

(looks at Nina Carstens)

Please stay for a minute.

Schlagberger stops too.

VICTOR

You may already go.

Schlagberger leaves the room, worried. Victor goes through the files.

VICTOR

Past 2 weeks another 131 million in provisions. What is "DBI Energy 100"?

CARSTENS

That one is managed by our Paris office.

VICTOR

Some reasons for such provisions?

CARSTENS

This is here:

(She takes over the mouse and clicks)

Provision for anticipated losses on uncompleted contracts. It's purely a precaution.

VICTOR

818 million just for precaution? Did you check these deals?

CARSTENS

No, that's what Schlagberger entered from France into our balance.

VICTOR

(looks into her eyes)

Strange. What about Schlagberger?

CARSTENS

Nothing to say ...

VICTOR

OK, get sandwiches and shut up!

(He continues to look in her eyes)

Do you sleep with him? Your fairy prince and his three thousand Facebook friends? Wow! Microwave cuisine, ironing shirts and sorting Mickey Mouse ties in alphabetical order into his Wardrobe! I wouldn't call that career plan!

CARSTENS

(angry)

But in Paris they cover as well. You should have a word with this Nathalie Drumond... SHE manages "DBI Energy 100".

VICTOR

Nathalie Drumond... D-R-U-M-O-N-D?

(she nods)

Did you tell Delbert?

CARSTENS

(shaking her head)

No, I didn't... But Schlagberger has most likely redirected him to Pierre Waechter, Miss Drumond's boss.

VICTOR

The trader and her boss...  
(he notes)  
Ever heard about a link to Toronto?...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Victor lies on the bed with wet hair, wrapped only in a towel, and telephones in front of his open laptop.

VICTOR  
... And tell Waechter I'll be in Paris tomorrow. And you wanted to get me the telephone number of that Louise in Toronto...

BARBARA MÜLLER (V.O.)  
OK, I'll call you back.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

High speed train ICE Frankfurt Paris 6:00 to 9:50 1st class compartment. Victor glancing at hilly landscapes. His eyes are shining in the glowing dawn. He looks at his watch: half past six.

Flat landscapes sailing past. Victor looks at his watch again. Quarter to eight. He pulls the mobile out his jacket.

VICTOR  
Good morning, it's me.

SUSANNE (V.O.)  
What's up?

VICTOR  
I gotta go to Paris...

SUSANNE (V.O.)  
Don't forget Friday!

VICTOR  
Don't worry, I'll be ...

Victor wants to add something, but Susanne just hangs up.

PARIS, FRANCE

INT. TAXI / TRAIN STATION - DAY

Victor drops into a cab, his bag next to him on the rear seat. He looks at his watch: 10:05

VICTOR  
(reading from his note pad)  
Banque DBI, Quatre Place de la Défense.

They push along the Seine to the west. Passing Notre Dame, Victor takes a photo with his cell phone.

TAXI DRIVER  
(his eyes in the rear mirror)  
Pour la première fois à Paris ?

VICTOR

Je ne parle pas bien français ... But -  
I love this particular view of Notre Dame.

TAXI DRIVER

(his eyes in the rear mirror, raises  
his right hand)  
Sorry, No English...

Conversation ended. Victor looks at Barbara Müller's SMS and calls the Canadian number.

LOUISE (V.O.)

Hi, this is Louise Hansen's answering machine,  
I'm temporarily unavailable. Please leave a  
message after the tone.

VICTOR

My Name is Victor Foss, replacing Mister  
Delbert.

(he looks at his watch)  
I know, for you it's about half past four in  
the morning, but please give me a shout after  
your breakfast. Bye.

They approach the Eiffel Tower. Victor takes another picture.

---

The driver stops, behind the windshield appears the "Grande Arche de la Défense".

TAXI DRIVER

(his eyes in the rear mirror)  
Cela fait 57 Euro et 30 centimes.

VICTOR

(hands him sixty and leaves the car)  
Thanks, keep the change.

EXT. PLACE DE LA DEFENSE - DAY

Victor hurries across the Square towards a 5-story glass building. A quick  
look at his watch: 11:03 am.

CUT TO:

INT. DBI-FRANCE - DAY

Large lobby, glass, steel, lots of light. Victor is slouching on a leather  
couch. He yawns as he leafs through a DBI booklet. A fleshy bold giant in  
his forties comes along and builds up in front of Victor.

WAECHTER

Monsieur Foss?

VICTOR

Thank you for your time, Mister Waechter.

WAECHTER

Oh, c'est normal. Parlez-vous français?

VICTOR

I prefer English.



Victor rises to follow Waechter towards the elevator.

WAECHTER

No Problem. Well, as I understand, you take on the audit of Mr. ... ?

VICTOR

Delbert... his stroke deleted his memory.

WAECHTER

Sorry to hear that. I'll render up all we know and Delbert already got, it's not a lot. I'm afraid you will be disappointed.

They enter the elevator.

VICTOR

Or not, if "not a lot" is a lot...

Elevator doors closing on them.

---

They step out the elevator and walk along a long corridor to an office at the far end.

VICTOR

(innocently)

I'd like to talk with this girl in charge with the DBI Energy 100 - What's her name again? Nathalie Drumond?

WAECHTER

(even more innocently)

Oh, she quit last week... You see, you WILL be disappointed.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Victor alone in a fully glassed office, his head in his hands; he looks at the screen of his laptop. Then he clicks on a shortcut: CAES. An info bubble jumps on: Canadian Alternative Energy Supplies

He picks up the phone next to him.

VICTOR

Mr. Waechter? ...Yes, just a few seconds. Thank you.

---

Waechter stands behind Victor.

VICTOR

(to Waechter)

These CAES made only losses?

WAECHTER

Well, that's why Drumond quit, I suppose. She operated some non-regular deals. And she's the one who knows about details...

VICTOR

You want me to believe that a Fond Manager  
entitled to handle near a Billion runs out of  
control, and you don't have any bloody idea  
about the spreading?

WAECHTER

(shrugging shoulders)

But she disappeared! We tried to contact her...  
we sent emails, left messages on her voice  
box, but no answer.

VICTOR

Give me her contact data.

WAECHTER

No problem, but I doubt you'll do any better.

INT. WAECHTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Waechter's fingers tapping nervously on a cell phone. He brings the mobile  
to his ear. We discover him sitting in a small office, furnished only in  
white. He leans back in his white leather chair, trying to relax.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

WAECHTER

It's Pierre Waechter. Listen, Delbert has been  
replaced by a man named Foss, Victor Foss.

UNKNOWN MAN (V.O.)

So what?

WAECHTER

He's on his way to Canada. But he first  
travels to Lyon to meet with Drumond. What a  
stupid idea, Delbert's heart attack on his  
arrival day.

UNKNOWN MAN (V.O.)

Don't interfere. Let me deal with it...

WAECHTER

(Sweat beads on his forehead)

Well, what do you suggest then?

UNKNOWN MAN (V.O.)

This is not your concern! Just do your job ...

The man hangs up.

INT. TRAIN STATION GARE DE LYON - DAY

Travelers cross from every which way the station hall. In the middle:  
Victor motionless like a statue.

---

Station clock: the minute hand swings on 14:30.

---

Victor's old wristwatch: the thumb and index finger set the watch from  
14:24 to 14:31.

---

Victor's face. His gaze moves from the watch towards the display panel of the departing trains, back on his ticket, then on the big clock in the middle of the facade. Just below the emblem of the station restaurant, "Le Train Bleu".

---

We follow Victor as he spins through the revolving door into the restaurant.

INT. LE TRAIN BLEU - DAY

A sandwich and a beer are placed on a table. Victor's seated in an old-fashioned leather chair at a mahogany table. He gulps half the beer in one swig. Then he bites greedily into the sandwich. Cell phone ringing. The screen displays "LOUISE HANSEN".

VICTOR

Hi Miss Hansen, Thank you for calling me back.

LOUISE (V.O.)

Hi Mr. Foss; so you're the man who happens to be replacing Mr. Delbert. How is he doing?

VICTOR

Quite well, but he remembers almost nothing, only some vague stuff, nothing relevant. What do you know?

LOUISE (V.O.)

Delbert only mentioned a German French Stock Market connection with a link to some mysterious Canadian PE Fund.

IN THE BACKGROUND: A very beautiful woman in a red dress comes through the revolving door. Victor observes her discretely.

VICTOR

Canadian Alternative Energy Supplies. Handled at Toronto Stock exchange. But I need more, like who is involved and what is in the whole package?

LOUISE (V.O.)

Canadian Alternative Energy Supplies?

VICTOR

CAES for short. I'm actually leaving for the south of France to meet with the girl who acquired CAES for DBI France and now disappeared. I want to find out why...

IN THE BACKGROUND: A waiter with a salver passes the beautiful woman and turns towards her, stumbling over a chair and tilting his salver. (S.O. breaking glass)

LOUISE (V.O.)

When do you come to Toronto?

VICTOR

As soon as I know why she invested 818 Million Euros in this CAES.

IN THE BACKGROUND: The waiter is insulted by his boss. The woman in red taps on her phone.

LOUISE (V.O.)

Jesus! That's more than a lottery hit.

Meanwhile: The Lady in Red looks at her phone. She taps on the photo icon of the screen, zooms on Victor and secretly takes a picture.

VICTOR

Tell ME! (a glance at his watch) I've got to leave. I'll call you back as soon as I've got more, Bye now.

LOUISE (V.O.)

Bye...

INT. TRAIN PARIS-LYON - DAY

Burgundy landscapes rushing past the window. A book, "The Stolen Legs" on Victor's lap. He stares dreamily at the passing landscape.

LYON, FRANCE

INT. TRAIN STATION - AFTERNOON

Victor leaves the train. A man in a blue suit checks a picture on his cell phone. Victor's photo from the restaurant "Train Bleu" appears on the screen. The man follows Victor at a safe distance.

---

A hand places a car key in Victor's hand.

CAR RENTAL AGENT

Parking Vivier Merle, Place 142 au premier  
sous-sol. Bonne route

INT. RENTAL CAR PARK - AFTERNOON

Victor opens the trunk of his rental car and stows away his light baggage.

---

A barrier opens. Victor leaves the garage.

INT. CAR - AFTERNOON

Victor drives along a straight road leading to the Lyon Mountains.

Hands on a steering wheel, the sleeve of a blue suit. Through the windshield we see Victor's car on the highway.

Back in Victor's car: At Bellevue crossing the GPS commands to turn right. Victor drives the now winding road to the medieval village Riverie situated on a ridge. He steers the car through the City Gate and parks on the village square. He turns off the GPS, grabs his cell phone on the passenger seat and types a number.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

VICTOR

(surprisingly fluent in French)  
Hello Mr. Drummond, I'm on the spot.

M. DRUMOND

Alright Mr. Foss, I'll pick you up.

MAN IN BLUE POV

He observes Victor as he crosses the village square to greet an elderly gentleman (M. Drumond). As they walk off, the man in blue gets out his car.

EXT. VILLAGE - AFTERNOON

MAN IN BLUE POV

He follows Victor and M. Drumond at a safe distance.

Victor and Drumond sit on the terrace of a street café. A young woman serves coffee.

EXT. STREET CAFÉ - AFTERNOON

The man in blue takes a seat a few tables away.

MAN IN BLUE POV

Victor talks persuasively to M. Drumond. The man in blue does as if he read a newspaper; he tries to listen to the conversation. A cup of coffee is placed on his bar-table. The newspaper shows an article about French football while he snatches bits of conversation between Victor and Drumond.

DIALOGS IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

VICTOR

(bends to M. Drumond)

I swear it's safe; your daughter will remain an anonymous source.

M. DRUMOND

OK, I'll call her...

MAN IN BLUE POV

M. Drumond rises and moves a few steps further so that his phone call may not be heard. He speaks softly but convincingly to his daughter. Then he sits down again in front of Victor.

M. DRUMOND

She has agreed to meet you tomorrow in Annecy...  
Be there at 3pm and text her as you arrive.  
She'll tell you where to go.

INT. CAR - AFTERNOON

Victor in his car again, the mobile in his hands. He leans back, closes his eyes, and takes a deep breath. Let's get over this. He dials.

VICTOR

It's me. Bad news. I can't come home tomorrow.  
I'm really terribly sorry, but I have to  
travel to Annecy. And the only return flight  
will be tomorrow night. That's too bad...

SUSANNE (V.O.)

(she interrupts him)

That's shit! You've never had anything else in mind than your fucking career. For you our children are just shit, I'm shit. You and your dream job you're married to. That gives you the hard-on you can't get with me anymore! I'd ought to buy a vibrator! To offer me the much more stimulating company you've ever been!

She hangs up.

VICTOR

(to himself)

That's done...

EXT. PEDESTRIAN ZONE LYON - EVENING

Victor strolls through the historic center. He stops in front of a camera store. Digital cameras in all sizes.

---

He leaves the store with a small video camera (Go-Pro or similar).

---

He comes across a restaurant with street terrace. He studies the menu beside the front door.

---

Behind his empty plates Victor clears the bottle by pouring him a last glass of wine. He opens the box and drags out the camera. He looks through the viewfinder. BLACK. The lens cap.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

4:30 a.m. Victor puts his watch back on the bedside table, gets up and moves sleepily all naked into the bathroom. He's dreamy, sits on the toilet to pee.

---

He opens the mirror cabinet on a forgotten vanity bag. A make-up pen inside. He's checking himself in the mirror for a long time, touching his face and his traits. Bending to the mirror, he marks with the make-up pen a beard on his face, first a mustache, then the chin, finally the cheeks. He considers himself from all sides and likes what he sees. He returns into the bedroom, coming back with his new video camera. He sits on the toilet lid turning the pages of the manual. Then he inserts a memory card into the camera, unfolds the monitor and films his mirror image. The small screen of his camera shows him as he picks his false beard. He switches the camera off and puts it back into the box. Then he washes off his beard and leaves the bathroom. He returns into bed, puts the camera on the bedside table and glances to the window. Dawn over the city roofs.

INT. CAR - MORNING

Victor's left hand pushes a red button and draws a toll ticket. The barrier opens.

---

He increases the volume of the radio. Rock music, distorted guitar riffs... The empty Highway slides by. Victor's hands are tapping to the rhythm on the steering wheel. Through the windshield: The sun rises behind the Alps.

---

The sleeve of a blue suit, hands on a steering wheel - and in front:  
Victor's car on the highway.

ANNECY

EXT. LAKESIDE - DAY

Victor sits on a park bank and bites into a croissant. He's dressed in a grey suit, jacket over the shoulder. He is unshaven. He's just starting his beard look project.

MAN IN BLUE POV

He observes Victor from another park bank.

VICTOR POV

Swans gather for some bits of Victor's croissant. He fritters his second croissant to crumbs and throws them into the water near to the swans.

---

He sips his coffee from a carton cup and observes the swans battling for the food. He takes his mobile to write a message. The screen shows: "I'm in Annecy, waiting for your instructions."

He puts his phone back in the jacket and slurps the remaining coffee. Then he rises and strolls to a trash can to dump cup and paper bag.

MAN IN BLUE POV

trailing Victor in safe distance back to the city center.

Victor's mobile vibrates in his jacket. He drags it out to read the message: "Go to the Forclaz pass and take a room at Hotel Edelweiss. I'll contact you tonight."

Victor quickens his step towards his car.

EXT. CAR PARK - DAY

Victor enters his car and drives off the car park. The Man in Blue moves his car out of a niche and follows Victor.

INT. CAR - DAY

The Man in Blue steers his car carefully through the dense traffic, Victor 3 cars ahead.

MAN IN BLUE POV

Victor passes a crossing, the traffic lights changing to red. The Man in Blue is blocked by the other cars in front. His fist hits angrily the steering wheel.

INT. CAR / COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Victor drives his car around the turns of the winding mountain road towards the Forclaz pass.

EXT. FORCLAZ PASS - DAY

Victor's car appears on the Forclaz pass. He stops in front of the Edelweiss Hotel. He takes his luggage out of the trunk, spotting a group of

young men and women preparing for a paraglide flight. He finally enters the hotel.

INT. HOTEL EDELWEISS - DAY

Victor drops his luggage in front of the vacant reception desk and waits. A barkeeper pours beer for a client, and then saunters over to Victor.

DIALOGS IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

BARKEEPER

Hallo, have you booked?

VICTOR

I'm afraid not ...

BARKEEPER

What's your name?

VICTOR

Foss, Victor Foss

BARKEEPER

I've got a booking for you.

He turns around to catch an old fashioned key from a wooden board and hands it to staggered-looking Victor.

BARKEEPER

Room 11, first floor, facing the stairs. Have a pleasant stay.

VICTOR

Merci.

INT. CAR - DAY

The Man in Blue, his mobile at an ear.

UNKNOWN MAN (V.O.)

You fucked it up. Listen you fucking shithead, You gotta find that woman. Use any means you prefer and then clip her out of the picture for good. No murder, but accident, gottit?

INT. HOTEL EDELWEISS - DAY

Victor unlocks the door and steps in his room. Looks around. Old fashioned wallpapers from the early seventies, a wooden single bed. He drops his luggage where he stands and throws his jacket on the bed. He presses the mattress. Not that bad... He opens the tiny bathroom. Shower and sink are in terrible condition. He opens the French door and steps onto the balcony.

VOCTOR POV

What a breathtaking view over the lake, the mountains and Annecy. In the foreground a group of young people ready to start Paragliding. They run down a wooden platform, which ends in a gap over the lake far below. Their legs continue kicking in the air after takeoff.



EXT. FORCLAZ PASS - DAY

Victor approaches the Paragliding area, a beer can in the hand: A lot of time to kill before contact. He sits down on the grass near the starting platform and gulps his beer, observing the Paragliding preparations. Some adventurers take off in tandem. Victor empties the can, gets up and wanders to the booth of the Paragliding club. He considers a table with rates and conditions. A young woman comes by.

DIALOG IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

YOUNG WOMAN

(She looks his grey suit up and down)  
If you wanna fly, you'd better change first...

VICTOR

I've got nothing else!

YOUNG WOMAN

Well, it's okay...  
(she looks at his shoes)  
Ask Philip in the hotel to lend you a wind jacket and sneakers. Come back around 3 p.m.; if the wind's fine, you'll take off!

VICTOR

It's a bit scary...

YOUNG WOMAN

(laughing)  
I hope so!

Turning, she gives him a wink and leaves towards the platform.

YOUNG WOMAN

3 p.m.!

---

White sneakers, grey flannel pants, white hand-tailored shirt under a sky blue wind jacket. Grinning, the young woman is looking over Victor's outfit and hands him a yellow helmet.

YOUNG WOMAN

I guess that's your size, color-wise it fits!

Victor pulls his video camera out.

VICTOR

I want to fix this on the helmet. Got you any tape?

YOUNG WOMAN

Later. First some lessons, then we'll see about souvenirs.

---

Victor's hand surrounds the helmet with a black tape to fix the camera.

---

VICTOR POV HELMET CAMERA

They are running down the platform.

YOUNG WOMAN

Plus vite, plus vite! Décollage. Parfait !

The ground disappears under their feet. Victor turns his head to the young woman. Her grinning face appears in the view of the helmet camera.

YOUNG WOMAN

(she now speaks English)

Now Victor Foss, what do you want to know about these Canadian funds?

VICTOR

You're Nathalie Drumond?!

NATHALIE

I thought we'd better talk up here!

HELMET CAMERA POV

Overflying treetops, mountains in background.

VICTOR

Very funny! How did you know it was me?

NATHALIE

I asked Philip the hotel guy to tell me when you'd come in.

VICTOR

Very smart. So what happened? Why disappearing?

NATHALIE

I ask first. What did you find out so far?

HELMET CAMERA POV

A tight left turn makes the landscape incline hardly to the right.

VICTOR

DBI Germany writes off 818 Million. According to Waechter you've put them in CAES. Without informing him. That's why you quit, he says.

HELMET CAMERA POV

The paraglider pans down and speeds dangerously up.

VICTOR

You might schedule suicide on a next flight.

NATHALIE

My suicide was to obey Waechter's order to invest these Millions in CAES.

HELMET CAMERA POV

They overfly the lake. Sailing boats like toys under Victor's feet.

NATHALIE

Then your colleague shows up. A week later all data on my computer deleted. I got it: something wrong with the Canadian stuff. Waechter calls me into his office. The big boss waiting there wants me to report on CAES.

I realized: I would carry the can. I cleared out and contacted a lawyer.

VICTOR

That's the fiddling I'm investigating and you will be cleared. Who is managing CAES?

NATHALIE

John Clancy, GREEN INVEST. He handles CAES at Toronto Stock Exchange. In any case, he's the guy who sold'em to me.

VICTOR

Well... Finally I get some reliable information. What about a drink after the flight?

HELMET CAMERA POV

pans to Nathalie's face.

NATHALIE

A drink: Yes. Options: No...

INT. CAR / FORCLAZ PASS - DAY

MAN IN BLUE POV

He stashes the field glasses into the bag beside and taps a number into his mobile.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

MAN IN BLUE

Found her again.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL EDELWEISS - SUNSET

The restaurant terrace overlooks the lake. Nathalie and Victor at an isolated table are talking and sipping beer.

VICTOR

... how do you survive without any income?

NATHALIE

Savings and occasional Paragliding instructor.

VICTOR

But that's less money than trading.

NATHALIE

But more fun. How about you? Do YOU like talking always about money?

VICTOR

If linked to Paragliding experiences, yes.

NATHALIE

You see, you should try a new job, I mean a new life, especially at your age...

VICTOR

My age... too late now.

NATHALIE

It's never too late.

She gets up, taking her belongings.

VICTOR

Another plan for tonight?

NATHALIE

(teasingly grinning)

Fucking my Girlfriend, and you?

VICTOR

A lonesome dinner.

NATHALIE

THE occasion to think it over. Bye.

VICTOR

Have Fun...

She gives him a wink, goes to leave the terrace and turns back.

NATHALIE

You happened to invite me for this drink.

Then she disappears behind the corner.

EXT. FORCLAZ PASS - NIGHT

MAN IN BLUE POV

Nathalie crosses an unlighted parking lot in the nearby forest to join her car. The Man in Blue follows on his tip toes. Nathalie fastens her pace. The Man In Blue get's closer, in his hand a police baton. Nathalie hears a noise behind and spins around. She sees the baton arriving in front of her eyes. The sound of a muffled hit.

BLACK

EXT. HOTEL EDELWEISS - NIGHT

Victor is still sitting at the table. He talks on his mobile tucked under his chin while studying the menu. A waiter taps his pen on the notepad.

VICTOR

... la tartiflette. Avec un quart de blanc.

The waiter turns away.

LOUISE (V.O.)

Quelle surprise! Vous parlez français!

VICTOR

I didn't know that YOU spoke French.

LOUISE (V.O.)

Grown up in Montreal... While we're at it: tell me when you'll land. I'm gonna pick you up at the airport.

VICTOR

I'll book for tomorrow or Sunday.

LOUISE (V.O.)

OK. Enjoy dinner but finish on a lemon sherbet. With vodka. You'll understand when you see what "tartiflette" means. Bye now.

EXT. FORCLAZ PASS - NIGHT

The Man in Blue puts gloves on and pulls unconscious Nathalie on the passenger seat of her car. He closes the door, surrounds the car and squeezes behind the steering wheel. He starts the engine, hits the high beams and drives off.

EXT. HOTEL EDELWEISS - NIGHT

VICTOR POV

On the table a huge plate of potatoes in cream sauce with bacon, onions and cheese. Victor turns to the waiter.

VICTOR

Pour le dessert : sorbet citron et vodka...

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

MAN IN BLUE POV

He drives Nathalie's car down the winding mountain road. Beside him, Nathalie remains unconscious.

The car approaches a remote U-bend. The man breaks hard, turning the wheel as to avoid an obstacle and stops the car at the precipice. He turns off the engine, leaves the car and listens. No noise. Then he bends into the car and drags Nathalie on the driver's seat. He first fixes the seat belt, and then reopens the clasp. He starts the engine, closes the driver's door, and puts his gloved hands on the back of the car. He pushes the car. The front wheels leave the road into nothing.

MAN IN BLUE POV

Red lights disappearing in the precipice. Noise of a crash.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Victor undressed on his bed. He considers the mobile in his hand. After a while, he dials and slowly takes the mobile to his ear.

SUSANNE

(V.O. Answering machine)

Ich bin momen...

Victor hangs up.

---

Victor on the balcony, only dressed in underpants and T-shirt. He stares into the night. The city lights of Annecy twinkle over the lake. He returns into the room, puts his pants on and leaves.

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

Victor enters the bar. The barkeeper (Philippe) serving some late clients.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

VICTOR

Avez-vous des cigarettes?

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A MATCH strikes the box and lights a cigarette.

Back on the balcony. Victor inhales a deep puff. First cigarette since eternities. Cigarette to his lips, gaze lost in smoke and the nightly sky. His mobile rings on the bed. Victor enters the room to fetch the phone and returns on the balcony.

DIALOGS IN GERMAN (SUBTITLES OVER)

VICTOR

Hi Susanne

SUSANNE (V.O.)

We were still in the restaurant when you called. Listen, I think we should make use of your absence to see how we can go on.

VICTOR

That's why I called. I think we're pretty much at the end. I mean, grown apart.

SUSANNE (V.O.)

You've grown apart...

VICTOR

Both of us. We live in an economic community. A union of common interests. And our affection has changed to habits...

SUSANNE (V.O.)

Please, not now. Bring your job to an end, and then we'll see. Call only if you really feel like it. I won't rush anything, I promise.

VICTOR

Well. I've to go to Toronto for a week or two...

SUSANNE (V.O.)

Then have a good time.

VICTOR

You too.

He switches his phone off.

FADE TO BLACK

INSIDE JET (S.O.)

Airplane engines, Soft voices.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

VICTOR'S VIDEOCAMERA POV

Clouds in the sky, the window as a frame.

Victor turns his camera off and stuffs it back in the bag. He opens the book "THE STOLEN LEGS" but can't concentrate. He gazes at the clouds and finally closes his eyes.

TORONTO,  
CANADA

EXT. TORONTO AIRPORT - DAY

Victor leaves the Arrival Hall towards the drop off parking, the ear glued at his mobile.

VICTOR

I'm just coming out; I'm a tall handsome guy,  
grey suit...

LOUISE (V.O.)

All men here are handsome guys wearing grey  
suits.

VICTOR

Hold on a second...

He stops, pulls a Newspaper out of his bag, rolls it and raises it in the air.

VICTOR

Spot the newspaper.

LOUISE (V.O.)

Got it...

Louise, long red curls coiffed in a relaxed bun, frog green over-knee-dress, high red heels. Pretty face. She waves her hand, coming towards Victor with a bright smile.

LOUISE

(Shaking Victor's hand)  
You could have folded that to a hat...  
(she points to the rolled newspaper  
still in Victor's other hand)  
...to fit with your long-distance-scarecrow-  
look!

Louise walks him towards the car park.

VICTOR

(throws the newspaper into a nearby  
trash bin)  
Enchanté Madame.

LOUISE

Mademoiselle : je suis divorcé.  
And you? Is there any Madame Foss?

VICTOR

Since years. Any kids?

LOUISE hesitates, concentrating to find her car in the huge park while Victor peers at her waiting for an answer. She spots her car and walks away, Victor catching up with her.

LOUISE  
Hmm, a son, 6, absolutely lovely! And you?

VICTOR  
Two wonderful girls, 21 and 18, with declining communication abilities...

They reach an old Volkswagen Beetle. Victor is grinning at the view of the rusty car. Louise opens the left door, drops her handbag on the rear seat and gets in. She leans over to unlock the passenger door and starts the engine. Victor folds his seat forward to store his luggage in the back and they embark.

INT. CAR - DAY

Louise drives off into dense traffic.

LOUISE  
Sorry, I didn't ask, how was your flight?

VICTOR  
(grinning)  
Scarecrowing...

LOUISE  
(with a sorrowful smile)  
Sorry, I never qualified in good manners, even though my mom tried so hard...

VICTOR  
Oh, I'm quite happy that she didn't make it.  
By the way, what about John Clancy?

LOUISE  
Has worked at GREEN INVEST for more than 3 years. His business profile says he's an economist ...

They enter the express way to Toronto City.

VICTOR  
The guy who'll explain to you tomorrow why what he predicted yesterday fucked up today.

LOUISE  
He'll explain it tomorrow nine a.m., 'cause I've already arranged for an interview with'im and I'm gonna come with you, 'cause I'm a cute girl...

She shows him her brightest smile.

VICTOR  
That's for sure... Have you ever met him?



LOUISE

No, just two short phone calls with his agenda managing crone.

EXT. HOTEL - AFTERNOON

They appear in front of Four Seasons Hotel, Avenue Road. Louise breaks and jumps out the car. Victor fetches his luggage from the rear seat and joins Louise at the hotel entry. Louise hands him a piece of paper.

LOUISE

Green Invest. All you need for tomorrow is on that note. Address, phone numbers.

VICTOR

It's a real pleasure to work with you... and ... don't graduate in good manners.

LOUISE

Don't worry, I'm over eighteen, it's too late. Nine a.m. at the Bay Street office. Seeyaah...

She drives off waving her arm by the open window. Victor remains on the pavement shaking his head: Wow, dig that girl! He picks up his belongings and enters the Hotel.

EXT. CITY STREETS - EVENING

Victor leaves the Hotel. Casual dress, jacket over the shoulder. On the other sidewalk a good looking young man, friendly face in a grey suit observing Victor.

MAN IN GREY POV (UP SOUND GUITAR BLUES)

Victor strolls along Avenue Road, turns into Bloor Street and stops in front of "Gabby's". He takes a quick look at the menu and enters.

INT. HOTELROOM FOUR SEASONS - NIGHT

Victor lays in his bed. He turns around. He can't sleep. Detective mood, time shift, Louise. A glance at his mobile on the bedside table: 3:15 am. He gets up, slides in his underpants and pulls the camera out the bag. Switch on. He films his hotel room.

VIDEOCAMERA POV

Pan around the room, zoom on the unmade bed, pan to the window. He approaches the window and films the deserted street below.

INT. FOUR SEASONS LOBBY - MORNING

Victor appears in the lobby. Dark suit and briefcase.

EXT. CITY STREETS - MORNING

Victor stops in front of a shop window to check his yellow tie. Then he continues his way towards Museum subway station.

INT. METRO - MORNING

A crowded subway train enters the station. Victor pushes in and grabs after a handlebar. In background the MAN IN GREY squeezing in through closing doors.

EXT. KING STREET - MORNING

Victor comes up the escalator of King Station and walks towards Bay Street.

VICTOR POV

He recognizes Louise walking very quickly ahead. She wears a short dress, stockings in different colors, and the same red high heels as the day before. She's on the phone.

---

Louise's face shows anger.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

LOUISE

...Goddamn! You fucking piece of shit! I hope he'll never learn about Drumond. And if you consider my opinion as to who gets a nod to be clipped: Foss is an N.O. case! Got this? We need him to BE and to STAY in perfect shape ...

VICTOR POV

Victor fastens his pace to catch her up. Victor overtakes and stops in front of her.

VICTOR

(grinning, he shouts)  
Hi, interesting stockings...

LOUISE

(still walking, she closes her phone)  
Oh, THESE are to hide my big ears!

VICTOR

(catching up with her again)  
That's comprehensible.

LOUISE

How was your first night in Toronto?

VICTOR

Exciting, got a Tuscany Salad, had some red wine, Californian. Is there any Canadian wine?

LOUISE

If you like adventures - then yes!

MAN IN GREY POV (UP SOUND GUITAR BLUES)

he spots from safe distance how Louise and Victor enter a building on Bay Street.

INT. GREEN INVEST - DAY

Louise and Victor arrive in front of the door of John Clancy's office. He pushes her in front of the door, making her a sign to knock. She knocks and opens the door. Victor stays behind.

John looks up; he is in his thirties, tired and unfocused.

JOHN

Yes?

(he screens her from top to bottom)

If it's for a kiss, you got five minutes, if  
it's for a complaint: 30 seconds...

Victor's grinning face appears in the doorframe.

VICTOR

The complaints, that's her. The kisses, that's  
me...

John invites them with a gesture to sit down. They take place in front of  
him.

JOHN

How may I help you?

LOUISE

We need to know what you trade with.

JOHN

Oh, that's an easy one. I trade stocks, stock  
options, equity index futures, interest rate  
futures, and commodity futures.

VICTOR

Such as CAES?

JOHN

Case?

VICTOR

No! C-A-E-S, Canadian Alternative Energy  
Supplies... You sold them to DBI France Nathalie  
Drumond.

JOHN

Yes, you're right. I remember, but I don't  
handle them anymore.

VICTOR

Why?

JOHN

Probably it wasn't a good business anymore...

VICTOR

I thought a good business is other people's  
money! What's inside this Fund?

JOHN

I really can't remember, I mean, you know, I  
trade with hundreds of values every single  
day, billions of dollars, handle thousands of  
orders day in day out... I hardly remember CASE...

VICTOR

... C-A-E-S

JOHN

CAES! Thank you. So how do you want me to recall any details?

LOUISE

Don't be a fucking cock teaser. Now get to the hit! You know that Drumond quit and nobody's got a bloody idea where she is!

JOHN

I've NO inkling why she quit and where the hell she is...

LOUISE

I get the picture: dance for your life! Makes you fucking nervous. Something wrong?

JOHN

NO! Nothing wrong, but it's like in trial here! You're running in, shooting questions at me about values I haven't dealt since ages!

LOUISE

Ages? Just a couple of weeks!

JOHN

That IS ages!

LOUISE

This shit is wearing me thin!

VICTOR

Time for kisses! OK John, let's take a break.

With a discreet wink he gives Louise a sign to leave. She understands immediately and leaves the office.

VICTOR

I'll keep this contained. You're in trouble John.

JOHN

I just can't comment in here, OK?

VICTOR

What about a private conversation on a beer? Whenever you want! I'll leave now to tell my colleague for everyone to hear that we got nothing out of you. Could THAT be a deal?

JOHN

That's a deal.

VICTOR

(He slips a business card under his legs and gets up.)  
My business card's on my chair. You'll pick it when I'm out, ok?

JOHN

OK.

He pushes the chair under the table and leaves the office. He joins Louise in the trading room and catches her arm to make them leave.

VICTOR  
(yelling)  
It's a waste of time. He knows nothing, says nothing.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

MAN IN GREY POV (UP SOUND GUITAR BLUES)  
Louise and Victor leave the building. They are absorbed in a deep conversation. Louise walks them along Bay Street towards Harbor Front.

LOUISE  
I know a nice place for lunch on the waterfront. Now, as we are supposed to work together, I'd like to know a bit more about you...

VICTOR  
Now?...  
(she nods)  
OK, in a few words, I'm in my best age, living in Munich, married for over 20 years, 2 girls. I like reading, cinema - hate smart phones, ties...  
(grinning, he touches his yellow tie)  
...bankers, traders, financial affairs, weekends, family meetings...

LOUISE  
In short: you're hunting for a new life.

VICTOR  
I'm not that far yet. But I might tell you once over a candle light dinner. Now over to you. What's your fact sheet?

LOUISE  
I'm in a better age than you, grown up in Montreal, 6-year-old-son, divorced for 5 years. I like music, all kinds of music. And cinema, travelling, sailing, jogging. ... I hate housework, cooking, sandwiches, my boss, girls cuter than me... and Ex-husbands or future Ex-husbands...

She gives him a challenging wink while they enter the "Il Fornello" restaurant on Queen's Quay.

(UP SOUND GUITAR BLUES)

EXT. KING STREET - DAY

MAN IN GREY POV observing John coming out Green Invest Building.

He trails him. John cues up at a sandwich stand. There he takes his mobile, a business card and dials.

INT. "IL FORNELLO" - DAY

A spacious mahogany furnished restaurant. Louise and Victor just got the starters. Victor's phone rings, he turns to draw it out the jacket on the back of his chair.

VICTOR  
(to Louise)  
...Clancy.

He takes the call.

JOHN (V.O.)  
Tonight 7 pm Pogue Mahone's. 777 Bay Street.  
Irish Pub. You pay, I drink and talk... 777 Bay  
street at 7. Bye now.

EXT. KING STREET - DAY

MAN IN GREY POV

John puts his mobile back in his jacket, pays, takes his beer and bites in his sandwich as he leaves.

INT. "IL FORNELLO" - DAY

Victor's puts his phone on the table, raises his glass towards Louise for a toast.

VICTOR  
(with a bright smile)  
He took the bait. Cheers!

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Victor strolls along a crowded sidewalk. He stops in front of a clothing store. He looks at the shop window and enters.

---

He comes out dressed in jeans and a casual white shirt, his suit stashed in a shopping bag. He spots his mirror image in the shop window. He opens the briefcase to take out his small video camera. He stuffs the briefcase together with the suit into the bag. He takes the bag and follows the sidewalk by filming street scenes, holding the camera in one hand, the bag in the other.

VICTOR'S CAMERA POV

People hurrying past, cars, crossings, road signs, traffic lights. Victor captures city atmosphere.

INT. POGUE MAHONE'S PUB - EVENING

Victor and John sip their pint at the far end of the bar. Victor wears his new clothes, the old ones in the bag beside him. John wears the same suit as in his office. He sweats. Obviously they've been here for some time. They are both a little drunk. They are laughing, but suddenly John gets serious.

JOHN

Let's stick to the point. I'm in serious trouble. I'd walk you through the entire story... (he hesitates)

VICTOR

Go on.

John rinses his beer and gives the waiter a sign for another one.

JOHN

2 years ago I got married.

Victor stares at him, stunned.

JOHN

The prettiest girl in the world. A model.

VICTOR

Wow!

JOHN

She left me 3 weeks ago. For her ex-husband.

The waiter puts another pint in front of John. He swigs half of it in a gulp.

VICTOR

I'm sorry...

JOHN

She met him at a party a month ago. She told me that he's always been the man of her life. I can't believe it! Well, he's a rich man...

John grins and then starts laughing, a bit too loud, he's drunk.

VICTOR

Then try to get richer than him! As an ex-ex-husband you'll be twice the man of her life...

JOHN

You're a funny one!

(as if getting sober within a second)

DAYSRING-ECO-POWER's the key. I'll pass you my logs. Tomorrow nine a.m., your hotel. See ya!

John turns on his barstool and leaves the pub in a move. Victor remains staggered. After a while he dials on his mobile.

VICTOR

Hi Louise, Victor speaking. Sorry, I'm a little drunk. John downs a lot. But he gave me DAYSRING-ECO-POWER. He'll give me his logs. Tomorrow nine a.m. at my hotel.

LOUISE (V.O.)

Not bad. See you tomorrow after John.

VICTOR

Yes, I'll call you.

LOUISE (V.O.)  
Then sleep well! Bye.

Victor gives a sign to the waiter.

MAN IN GREY POV  
He observes Victor and pulls his mobile.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

MAN IN GREY (FOX)  
Hi.  
---  
Clancy just left, Foss just phoned...  
---  
So what's up?

FOX POV  
Victor pays and leaves the pub.

FOX  
Thanks Honey!

He hangs up.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Victor wanders towards his hotel. He's in a good mood and films nighttime street scenes.

INT. HOTELROOM - NIGHT

Toronto night pictures. Neon signs, cars, traffic lights, people laughing into the camera or passing in a hurry. The bedside radio plays a blues.

Victor in underpants on his bed, watching his video on the TV screen. His recordings come to end; he gets up, staggers towards the TV, unplugs the camera from the screen and sticks it back into the box.

His phone rings. He fishes it out of his Jacket.

VICTOR  
Susanne, something happened?

SUSANNE (V.O.)  
Nadine got her driving license. That's all I  
wanted to tell.

VICTOR (tired)  
Well, another step towards independence. Tell  
Nadine I'm proud of her, give her a hug.

SUSANNE (V.O.)  
I'll tell her. Bye

VICTOR  
Bye...

Victor switches his phone off.



INT. HOTEL LOUNGE - MORNING

Victor sipping coffee. A glimpse at his watch. 9:15 am. John is late.

---

Laptop Screen. DAYSPRING-ECO-POWER typed into a search engine. Victor tries to find out more.

---

Victor's watch shows 9:40 am. He fetches his mobile.

VICTOR

Hi John, it's a quarter to ten. I've finished breakfast. What's happening?

JOHN (V.O.)

(Seems to wake up)

I'm sick, didn't wake up.

VICTOR

You can't take intense drinking?

JOHN (V.O.)

Oh, drinking's never a problem. I'm really sick. Just to make you understand: DAYSPRING-ECO-POWER is not an alternative energy supply company as the name makes believe; it's a very confidential fund raiser for oil field exploitation in Fort McMurray, Alberta. And by the look of it: not a clean one. Politics and money. I gonna show you. But for now, I gotta run to the office. I suggest noon at Red's Bistro, 77 Adelaide Street West. It's just a stone's throw away from Bay Street. I'll get you what you need, but you'll keep me out. And you come alone.

EXT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL - DAY

Fox stands in front of the building, peering at his watch. 9:55. He opens his mobile.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

FOX

Clancy didn't show up. Call Foss.

INT. LOUISE'S OFFICE - DAY

An old fashioned furnished office, glass all around, with view on the city. Louise is leaning backwards on a heavy leather chair, her legs on the wooden desk. Victor on phone loudspeakers.

VICTOR (V.O.)

... Yes, he spoke about politics and big money. He wants me to keep him out.

LOUISE

Where did you say you'll meet him?

VICTOR V.O.)

Red's Bistro...

LOUISE  
Try to record with your cell.

INT. HOTEL LOUNGE - DAY

...Victor phoning.

VICTOR  
...You're kidding. My mobile's from early middle age. It does phone... and photos...

LOUISE (V.O.)  
Then record directly in your brain.

VICTOR  
When my brain calls for a neuron assembly, they are four to show up.

LOUISE (V.O.)  
(laughing)  
Ok Victor, try your best. I'd like to get more than just crumbs of what is to be a top story.

EXT. AVENUE ROAD / TORONTO - DAY

Fox gets in his car, mobile at his ear.

LOUISE (V.O.)  
... au Red's

FOX  
OK, bien reçu!

He hangs up, turns the key and drives away. At that very moment Victor leaves the hotel, crosses the street and moves towards the metro station. He's dressed business and carries his briefcase.

EXT. BAY STREET - DAY

FOX POV  
John walks out GREEN INVEST Building and hurries towards the Subway station. Fox trails at a safe distance.

ENT. SUBWAY - DAY

John stands near the door in the crowded subway, a hand on the handrail. Fox just behind.

Fox's hand pulling a syringe off his jacket. The syringe approaches John's buttocks.

The subway approaches a station.

SOUND: SUBWAY BRAKES

The syringe pierces through John's trousers in his posterior. Fox empties the syringe in a move as the subway stops.

John turns around touching his aching butt.

JOHN

Whatta hell...

Fox leaves the subway through the opening doors and disappears in the crowd. Beads of sweat on John's forehead. He staggers towards a vacant seat.

---

John sits motionless, mouth and eyes are wide open. As the subway stops again he falls like a sack on the ground.

Terrified Screams.

EXT. REDS BISTRO - DAY

Crowded street terrace of Red's at Adelaide Street. Red covered tables, guests chattering.

Victor in front of a glass of red wine, nibbling peanuts. Victor's watch shows 1:20 pm. He takes his mobile.

VICTOR

Hi Louise, John didn't come. I've left him 3 messages, but he doesn't call back.

LOUISE (V.O.)

I'll be with you in 10 minutes!

Fox enters Red's terrace and sits at a table in the background. Victor opens his briefcase and takes out his small camera. He starts filming the street in front and pans to the terrace filming the agitation of the waiters. Fox in the Background hides behind a newspaper.

Louise approaches Victor from behind. She wears her short green dress with two different stockings, red shoes, high heels. She puts her hands for surprise around Victor's head in front of the camera.

LOUISE

What are you filming?

VICTOR

Hands, right now.

He switches off his Camera. Louise draws the earphones out her ears sitting down in front of Victor.

LOUISE

I mean just before?

VICTOR

The camera was to record Clancy. As he didn't show up I film people, street scenes.

LOUISE

What for?

VICTOR

I don't know, I just began filming some days ago. Sort of a cinematographic autobiographic introspection, if you want.

LOUISE

A filmic introspection? Wow! The movie about  
your life!

Victor takes the camera again, stands up and starts filming Louise.

VICTOR

To back my memory I guess. Now, get up and  
turn around, I have to film these stockings!

Louise laughs out loud, rises and spins around.

LOUISE

And what memory are you backing by filming my  
legs, please?

VICTOR

No comment...

She smiles forgivingly.

LOUISE

Let's return to my office and do some research  
on this Fort-Mac-something-hole in the Alberta  
boondocks.

She takes her bag and leaves. Victor follows.

VICTOR

Fort McMurray. DAYSPRING-ECO-POWER...

LOUISE

Sounds awesome!

VICTOR

(pauses)

Wait a minute, I've to pay.

LOUISE

(shrugging with a cunning smile)

Or just run...

FOX POV

He folds his newspaper, observing Louise and Victor leaving the terrace. He  
takes a deep swallow of his beer and gives the waiter a sign.

INT. LOUISE'S OFFICE - DAY

Louise and Victor are leaning towards the screen on the wooden desk. Louise  
types "DAYSPRING-ECO-POWER"/FORT MCMURRAY in the search field of an  
investment program. The sandglass sign turns on the screen. Then the  
results appear. Louise and Victor get closer to the screen.

VICTOR

DAYSPRING-ECO-POWER in Fort McMurray is a Land  
development corporation.

LOUISE

(She takes the mouse and clicks)

And this one in California seems to be an  
Enterprise Risk Management Insurance.

VICTOR

That's something John will have to explain.

Victor grasps his mobile. John's voice on Victor's phone:

JOHN'S VOICE

Hi, you have reached John Clancy. I'm  
temporarily not available but please leave a  
message after the tone...

Victor holds his phone towards Louise.

VICTOR

Since 12:15... What's happening?

LOUISE

Let's go on, we'll get him later.

VICTOR

OK, you continue on your stock market program,  
I'll do some basic internet search.

Victor takes out his laptop from the suitcase, opens it and starts typing  
in the search field.

VICTOR

Wow, basic search, interesting results.

He leans towards the screen and reads.

VICTOR

I just typed "DAYSPRING-ECO-POWER financial  
scandal".

He turns his laptop for Louise to see and points his finger on the screen.

VICTOR

Have a look: "Government offers generous  
allowances for writing off capital costs to  
encourage investments... Oil sands rush creates  
unmanageable environmental impacts ...  
DAYSPRING-ECO-POWER project backed by  
insurance based PE funds..."

LOUISE

(approaching the screen)

Who's signing the article? Scroll down.

VICTOR

(scrolling to the end)

Sandman dot org, Chuck Woylnovicz, local  
Policy Analyst. HE is the man we should  
interview. What about a trip to Fort McMurray?

LOUISE

(skeptical)

Let's try to get John Clancy before.

VICTOR

I'll just email that Chuck.

Victor is typing his email. Clicks on "SEND". Louise looks worried.

LOUISE

I'm not sure. Goddamn, it's all too easy.

VICTOR

It has to be! If it's obvious it doesn't wake up interest. The best way to hide something is not to hide it. Let it obvious, but put it in an unusual place and nobody will see it. It's like butter in the fridge: Put it in the bottle compartment; it will be obvious, but nobody will see it.

LOUISE

Bullshit! Especially MEN will not see it!

VICTOR

I see! You're back!

Victor's laptop rings like a phone. The message Icon is highlighted.

VICTOR

Here we go. Chuck Woylnovicz replied.

He opens the message.

VICTOR

He awaits us with sensitive information. Wow, I' feel like a secret agent...

He stands up trying a 007 face in the mirror image of the glass door.

VICTOR

May I invite you for dinner?

Louise looks into his eyes, hesitating...

LOUISE

Hmm... why not? But I prefer Double O Seven to join his James Bond Girl at HER flat. This may avoid last minute babysitting logistics.

VICTOR

THAT sounds thrilling.

LOUISE

(she stands up, collecting up her belongings)

I go there first, feed my thrilling son, and putt him to bed. 8.30 pm, OK?

VICTOR

Fine, I'll buy the dinner and a bottle of wine. What's your address?

INT. CITY CAR PARK - EVENING

Louise hurries to her car tapping on her mobile.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

LOUISE  
(she unlocks her Beatle)  
Hi.

---

She throws her belongings on the rear seat and gets in her car.

LOUISE  
He got it. We'll... (she hesitates) ...well I  
think the process is now unstoppable. We gotta  
change our plans. And don't start anything  
without my approval.

---

I'm just telling you: he hit the pay dirt, and  
that's why we have to think it over,  
sweetheart yourself!

She hangs up, closes the door of her car and looks on her mobile again.  
5.30 pm. She starts the engine and leaves the parking.

INT. LOUISE'S CAR - EVENING

LOUISE POV

She steers her Beatle through some heavy traffic, looking for a store. She  
is in a hurry. At the corner King's- Bathurst Street she catches sight of  
"The Toy Space". She breaks hard and turns right. Angry horns (S.O.). She  
looks in the rear mirror and shows her middle finger.

EXT. BATHURST STREET - TOY STORE - EVENING

Louise stops her Beatle in front of the toy store. She takes her handbag  
from the rear seat, leaves the car and rushes into the shop.

INT. CATERING DUNDAS STREET - EVENING

Sage is a chic catering with a large choice of colorful dishes, salads and  
desserts. Victor tastes several specialties, opts for pasta, quiche and  
salad.

INT. TOY STORE - BATHURST STREET - EVENING

Louise deposits a big toy truck, some Teddies, an Action-man and some small  
toy cars on the cashier's desk. She's steaming and blows her hair out of  
her eyes.

CASHIER  
A birthday?

LOUISE  
No, a birth!

INT. CATERING DUNDAS STREET - EVENING

VICTOR POV

A young woman is packing the dinner into paper bags.

VICTOR

(To the young woman)

Do you know a good wine shop nearby?

INT. LOUISE'S CAR - EVENING

Louise steers her Beatle through heavy evening traffic. On the passenger seat the brand new toys.

EXT. CITY STREETS / TORONTO - EVENING

Victor strolls on the sidewalk glancing on a sticker with the address of a wine shop. In the other hand he carries the dinner. He enters a building on Dundas Street. "Hobb's wine merchant".

INT. LOUISE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Louise unlocks the door and enters a spacious living room, leading to an open kitchen separated by a bar. Modern furniture, large framed posters on white walls. White racks with books and an important collection of Music CDs.

She walks to her bedroom, throws her belongings on the bed and fetches the toys. She leaves the room for the kitchen. There, she fills a big cooking pot with water, drops some tea in it and heats it on the stove. She throws the teddies into the pot.

INT. WINE SHOP - NIGHT

A wine glass shaken by Victor's hand. The red wine turns to liberate its taste and aroma. Victor smells and sips. He nods approvingly.

INT. LOUISE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Louise dashes the metal toy cars into a steamer, locks it and shakes the pot with vigor. The toys clatter.

INT. WINE SHOP - NIGHT

Victor's mouth moves to savor the wine.

He puts the glass back on the counter.

A bottle approaching the glass to pour in white wine.

INT. LOUISE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Louise picks the toy cars out the steamer, the cars' paint peeled as planned. They look used. Then she fishes the teddies with a ladle out of



boiling tea and cools them in the sink under cold water. She carries the teddies to the bathroom and throws them into the dryer.

INT. WINE SHOP - NIGHT

Victor nods to the wine merchant.

VICTOR

Ok, I'll take two Gigondas and one of this white Tuscany.

INT. LOUISE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Louise scrubs the big plastic truck with a scrapper. Lines and traces of intense use appear on the plastic body.

---

She scratches the corners of the truck with a fork.

---

She carries the dried teddies, the toy cars and the truck into a corner of the living room and places them as if abandoned after intense playing. Then she returns to the kitchen, takes dishes for two and sets the table. She lights a candle, moves back to spot the scenery. She is satisfied. She returns to the table, blows out the candle and returns to the bedroom.

---

She stands in bra and panties in front of her wardrobe. She hesitates, caressing different dresses with her fingers. Finally she draws out a short black dress with plunging neckline and puts it on. She considers herself in a wall mirror, spins around, checking her curves.

INT. HOTELROOM FOUR SEASONS - NIGHT

In the foreground the bag with the dinner, 3 wine bottles bulging out of another one. In background Victor dressed with a grey pullover over white shirt and jeans. He sprays some cologne on his chest, takes his casual jacket, the bags and leaves the hotel room.

INT. LOUISE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Louise in the bathroom: make up, lipstick; she moves her lips, making her mouth look perfect. She adjusts her dress, pulls down the neckline to make it look even more generous.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

VICTOR POV

He looks through the windows into the passing shop windows. He spots a flower shop. He taps on the driver's seat.

VICTOR

Please stop here and wait a minute. I need some flowers.

TAXI DRIVER

Okey dokey...

INT. LOUISE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Door bell ringing. Louise rushes to the door and opens on bright smiling Victor, holding out a big flower bouquet with his right, carrying the dinner with his left.

VICTOR  
(waving the flowers)  
This is for you.

LOUISE  
That's pretty nice.

She takes the flowers and lets him in. He follows her into the living room by screening her from head to feet.

VICTOR  
Pretty nice flowers for a nice pretty lady.

She turns to face him and looks in his eyes. As they are in front of a mirror, she looks directly into the camera via the mirror.

LOUISE  
Oh, thank you. And what are you expecting now?

VICTOR  
I just expect you to put them into a vase and...  
(with a glance to the candles on the  
table)  
...to light these candles.

Victor unwraps the dinner and dresses the salads on the table while Louise puts the flowers in a vase on the bar. He joins her in the kitchen.

VICTOR  
The pasta needs to be heated.  
(seeing the abandoned toys in a  
corner)  
Your son is already in bed?

LOUISE  
(shoves the pasta into the microwave)  
Better: at the last minute I managed to have  
him stay 3 days with my ex-mother-in-law. It's  
easier if we have to travel to Fort McMurray.

VICTOR  
(uncorks the white wine)  
Pretty nice arrangement!

---

Victor and Louise at dinner, candlelight, Italian food, an empty bottle of white Chianti and an almost empty one of Gigondas between them. Mozart playing softly in the background. Both are slightly tipsy.

LOUISE  
You remember? Yesterday you promised me to  
tell me over a candlelight dinner if you were  
looking for a new life! So...  
(She points her forefinger at the  
candles)

CONT'D

Here's the candlelight...

(She points her finger at her stomach)  
... and there's the dinner! Where is your new  
life so far?

VICTOR

Why did you actually divorce?

LOUISE

I see... biting back, hiding inhibition! No  
problem... So, why did I actually divorce?...  
Because I got married before.

VICTOR

Sure...

LOUISE

Once I met a nice, charming, keen and witty  
man. When he said he wanted to spend his life  
with me, I melted away.

VICTOR

Right now you're telling me why you got  
married...

LOUISE

You're right, why should I tell you all this.

VICTOR

Probably because you wanted ME to talk and  
I've asked the good question...

Victor is chewing and waits for her reaction. Louise thoughtfully considers  
her fork, and then points it on Victor's chest.

LOUISE

Well, then let's walk you through my  
tremendous love story: I married my Prince  
Charming. Always here for me, love, trips,  
flowers, laughs. And one day he goes: I want a  
child with you. Child is born. And there it's  
as if his emotional software had turned crazy.  
The programs "always here for me" and "keen"  
are stuck. Instead he only runs programs like  
"work" and "tired". I had to juggle alone with  
child and job, the mighty master is on a  
business trip, in a SO! important meeting:  
"Honey I'll be late tonight" - or: "Oh, it's  
your birthday? Really? Why didn't you tell  
me?" - Or, I nestle myself to him (*She purses  
up her lips for a sensual kiss*): "Not now,  
honey, it's late..." And the few times he got up  
at night when our son was a baby, was to pee  
in the dark beside the bowl.

VICTOR

I always got up at night, when our kids were  
little.

LOUISE

Oh yeah! You are certainly SUCH a PER-fect husband.

VICTOR

After 23 years, it's no longer that perfect.

LOUISE

As time goes by... You've met another woman?

VICTOR

No, it's a story about 20 years of common bedroom with separated dreams. Routine... the usual reactions, arguments, tenderness. Knowing all about the other. Even the buttons we have to press to wake up the last remnants of desire...

LOUISE

(She swallows down her wine)

Sure ... *(nods with a wry grin)* and shortly before that, you'd dug a much younger...

VICTOR

You're totally wrong. What I really miss after all these years, it's that specific form of excitement during the tender prelude to an emerging relationship ... Oh! That's poetry!

LOUISE

Maybe barber shop literature! What I mean: For you she became too old. As you for her.

VICTOR

No, I'm talking about habits, routine, lack of inspiration... On both sides... Because women are like hair dryers! After 20 years they make a lot of noise, burn your head and don't blow anymore...

(LOUISE claps slowly her ironic applause)

OK... Well, I had no more imagination to come up with something new. To reinvent... affection, tenderness, love ... What do I know?

LOUISE

So you no longer wanted to sleep with her?

VICTOR

It simply bored me. Because it bored us... Neither of us wanted anymore to take the initiative to screw. That's it...

LOUISE

What does "that's it" mean? What do you want?

VICTOR

I don't know.

LOUISE

Do you still love her?

VICTOR

Let's say: I can't erase all these years like...  
(he snaps his fingers)... that from my mind,  
even though our marriage has long since  
expired. But is it wrong to stay together?  
Maybe it's just out of pure cowardice - I mean  
that's why we've built ourselves into habits.

LOUISE

How could you stand it all these years?

VICTOR

Reading... A lot. At least a book per week.  
Living the other life, the fictional one. And  
now, I've started filming my life as a movie.  
I'm playing the main character. Facts or  
feelings become fiction. You see: fiction  
fills in for missing tender foreplays to sex.  
Reality remains nothing more than an  
unpleasant sequence to fast forward.  
(He takes a swig of wine)  
...Man, I am in top form...

A long silence. The Mozart concerto has come to an end.

LOUISE

Quand le silence dort, il rêve de musique...

VICTOR

What?

LOUISE

A French saying: When silence is sleeping, it  
dreams about music.

Victor uncorks the last bottle of wine and pours.

LOUISE

You're filming to build a dream world, I use  
music for this. Music doesn't only stimulate  
my imagination but also my memory. Music makes  
me remember all I want and recall it anytime.

She runs with her index finger across the impressive CD collection.

VICTOR

(He feels relieved as they change the  
subject)

And that works?

Louise inserts a CD, Henry Mancini's Music Score "Slow Hot Wind". She  
smiles slyly.

LOUISE

For sure! I've discovered that after a trip  
through Tuscany. While driving there I heard  
this score. Henry Mancini, "Slow Hot Wind"...

She sits back at the table, the remote control oriented towards the stereo system to increase the volume. The strings play a heartbreaking melody. She looks into Victor's eyes. Victor listens carefully; he is impressed. Louise puts her elbows on the table, her head in her hands. She closes her eyes as she begins her story:

LOUISE

Then, one day, years later, cinema: THE BIG LEBOWSKI. There's the same music again. Instead of the movie I saw the roads and landscapes of Tuscany. Since then these landscapes have always been linked to this score. I found out that it works with everything: like a dinner with music in the background. Never mind the kind of music, but a good melody. If I want to remember: I simply listen to the same music again. I'm able to remember words and even thoughts, mostly everything... Music is a fantastic tool for memorizing whatever you want.

VICTOR

So that's why you always wear these earphones...

LOUISE

You should try it once, it's certain to work for you.

Louise gets up, looking for her MP3 player, plugs it on her computer and copies some files. Then she hands the MP3 solemnly over to Victor.

LOUISE

This is for you ... I've just copied "Slow Hot Wind". Tomorrow morning, track number 108. You'll see, you'll remember the whole evening.

VICTOR

And you? Now you need a new MP3.

LOUISE

Don't worry, I've got three of'em. Always one in my handbag... You promise, you'll try?

VICTOR

I promise!

He gets up, takes dishes and glasses to carry them into the kitchen. Louise follows him, taking tenderly his arm.

LOUISE

If you wanna leave, just say goodbye and leave. I'll clean up with "Slow Hot Wind" while traveling through Tuscany.

VICTOR

Well Louise, I had a great time and...

LOUISE  
(interrupting him)  
... You will remember tonight every time you  
listen to Mancini.  
(giving him a wink)  
That's the price you pay.

INT. ELEVATOR LOUISE'S BUILDING - NIGHT

Victor pushes the ground floor button. The elevator door closes on Louise looking in his eyes with a tender smile.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

(UP SOUND GUITAR BLUES)  
Victor steps out of Louise's building. He perceives a man hidden in an entrance on the other side of the street. He feels like this man is monitoring the entrance of Louise's building. He hurries to the nearest Underground station, verifying that he is not being followed.

INT. METRO STATION - NIGHT

Victor hurries along the platform. He is alone. Nobody behind. He is the only one to enter the arriving train. The train is deserted.

INT METRO - NIGHT

Victor sits at the end of the empty train and feels uneasy. He takes his mobile, pushes the phone button, "LOUISE" appears on the screen. No reception.

INT. LOUISE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

LOUISE, still in her black dress, is in the bathroom undoing her hair when her mobile rings in the bedroom. She rushes to the bedside table, looking at the screen of her mobile. "FOX". She picks up.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

LOUISE  
What's up?  
  
FOX  
Did it work? Did you fuck?  
  
LOUISE  
What's wrong with you?  
  
FOX  
I want to know what you do with Foss. Always!  
  
LOUISE  
You are spying on me now?  
  
FOX  
Just checking.

LOUISE

Listen to me carefully you little piece of shit: We are on the same spot, but with different aims. So: if you don't trust me, I cancel. Part of my mission is to have Victor's trust and friendship. Got that?

FOX

Calm down honey...

LOUISE

The fuck you honey!

She hangs up.

INT. HOTELROOM FOUR SEASONS - NIGHT

Victor cannot sleep. Again and again he turns in his bed. Finally he gets up, pulls on some pants, opens his suitcase, draws out his camera and turns it on. He enters the bathroom, filming himself in the mirror.

VICTOR'S CAMERA POV

He zooms on his face.

He folds back the monitor, leaves the bathroom, looks for a cable in his suitcase, switches on the TV and plugs the camera in. He stares at the pictures filmed the day before in Red's Bistro:

LOUISE's smiling face, her legs, her laughing.

Victor is charmed...

And as he doesn't know him, Victor can't notice Fox on the pictures, trying to hide himself behind a Newspaper.

EXT. CITY STREETS - MORNING

Victor leaves the Hotel, walks towards Museum Station to take the subway.

METRO STATION - MORNING

Victor enters the station pulling Louise's MP3 out of his jacket. He pops the earphones on and enters track 108. Mancini's Slow Hot Wind. Music overruns the noise of the Metro station. He wanders through the corridors and comes to a group of gospel singers performing at the entry of the platform. He watches the singers moving to their song on Mancini's music. He takes out his camera to film the gospel choir.

VICTOR'S CAMERA POV

Striking contrast between the dancing gospel singers and Mancini.

All on Mancini's "Slow Hot Wind": A subway train enters the station. Victor enters a crowded wagon. The doors close in front of him.

INT. METRO

Victor observes the passengers. They're focused on not looking at each other, tossed in a common move by the drive of the wagon. Mancini gives a strange rhythm to this random ballet.



INT. LOUISE'S OFFICE - DAY

Victor enters the office. Louise sits behind her desk reading a newspaper. Mancini's music stops as Victor draws out his earphones.

VICTOR

It worked!

Louise looks up, worried.

VICTOR

(sits down in front of her)

What's wrong?

Louise hands him the Newspaper without a word. Victor reads the headline.

TRADER DIES AFTER HEART ATTACK.

JOHN CLANCY, 35, DIED IN THE AMBULANCE AFTER HE COLLAPSED ...

Victor lays down the newspaper. He glances at Louise: she is white.

VICTOR

This is no coincidence. Delbert and Clancy are linked by the same case. And there was a man...

LOUISE

How's that, "there was a man"?

VICTOR

Last night. A man, hiding to monitor the entry to your building.

Louise pulls herself together.

LOUISE

Listen; there are more than forty flats in my building. Why should someone monitor mine? You have probably seen a bum. And well, there is a coincidence: Delbert was a chain-smoker with a long time heart condition, and John was drinking. Let's just keep going.

VICTOR

Well, as you like, let's travel to Fort McMurray. It's perhaps a safer place. We'll also meet with this Chuck Whatever-vicz...

LOUISE

Tell him we arrive at 6.15 pm

Louise hands him an internet ticket. Victor looks impressed at the ticket.

LOUISE

My son's with my-mother-in-law, our flight takes off at one pm. Taxi at 10:30...

VICTOR

Wow, I'll call him to pick us up.

LOUISE

No need. In Fort McMurray cars are essential. I've booked one at the airport there. But for now, I didn't get any breakfast yet. First a coffee, then stopover at your hotel with the cab. You'll need some belongings for our ride.

She takes her bags. Victor discovers that she's got already her luggage for their trip to Alberta.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

VICTOR'S VIDEOCAMERA POV

Clouds in the sky, the window as a frame.

Louise grins at Victor's filming activities. She pulls her earphones out and touches Victor's shoulder.

LOUISE

Gonna be a road movie... ??

Victor turns to her, holding his camera on Louise.

VICTOR'S VIDEOCAMERA POV

LOUISE grinning into the camera

VICTOR (V.O.)

The air movie part...

LOUISE

Aerial introspection?

VICTOR

Yep.

LOUISE

You'd really need some essential changes...

Victor switches off his camera, and then looks Louise in the eyes.

VICTOR

What changes? I've just been filming impressions of a trip through Canada.

LOUISE

You are in the typical age when travelling may carry changes as the issue you've expected - but not tackled yet. And I'm quite sure that's what you're looking for.

VICTOR

All right Mrs. Freud, if you'd let me get up from the sofa...

LOUISE

..Men, dodge scratching their shell, they'd rather stay inside.

FORT-MCMURRAY,  
ALBERTA,  
CANADA

EXT. AIRPORT RENTAL CAR PARK - DAY

Victor and Louise walk across the rental car park. At Victor's surprise Louise opens a mint green convertible.

VICTOR  
Wow, Louise, where's Thelma?

Louise throws her belongings into the trunk. Victor follows.

LOUISE  
After years of day-to-day life with my Beetle  
I wanted this to reinforce my ego.

VICTOR  
Is your ego unsatisfied?

They get into the Car

LOUISE  
By definition an ego can't be satisfied. We've  
known that since ancient times: "Cogito EGO  
sum ..."

He hesitates... fastens his seat belt.

VICTOR  
...I think I am myself...

LOUISE  
(She starts the engine)  
You got it!

VICTOR  
Very smart!

The car drives off with screaming tires...

INT. CAR - SUNSET

Louise steers the convertible through dense highway traffic. They pass and cross an endless line of trucks. Victor phones.

VICTOR  
Tell me, all these trucks on the highway, are  
they preparing for the Olympic summer games  
next year?

CHUCK (V.O.)  
Tomorrow morning...

VICTOR  
OK Chuck, see you at nine.

Louise glances to him. Victor nods.

VICTOR

Tomorrow nine at...

(He looks at his mobile)

...Gregoire Lake, Township road 862 in Anzac.

Louise types the address into the GPS.

LOUISE

That's strange, that's in the middle of  
nowhere...

EXT. TWIN PINES INN - EVENING

Louise and Victor get off the car, fetch their belongings from the trunk  
and walk towards the motel.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Victor's face under the shower.

Scrubbing his head with a towel.

Closing with a painful grimace the last button of his jeans.

EXT. TWIN PINES INN - NIGHT

Victor's hand knocking on a door. After a second the door opens on Louise's  
cheeky grin. She is wearing a country style shirt unbuttoned down to her  
bra and skin-tight jeans.

VICTOR

Wow! Quick, let's run, or you'll get a bunch  
of rednecks at your heels.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

They stroll through the streets of Fort McMurray looking out for a  
restaurant.

VICTOR

You know what? Fort McMurray's the right place  
for some typical Canadian food.

LOUISE

Oh, that doesn't exist. Typically Canadian,  
what should THAT be? Reindeer in vinegar,  
mashed potatoes with toasted beaver? People  
here even eat their kids when snowstorms keep  
them from hunting.

Victor looks at her with a painful smile.

LOUISE

Mom told me... Really!

He points towards a "Far West" style restaurant, Keg's Steakhouse. He walks  
her across the street into the restaurant.

INT. KEG'S STEAKHOUSE - NIGHT

Truly rustic ambiance: wooden walls, tables and chairs. A handsome waiter comes across.

LOUISE  
(whispering to Victor)  
At least the waiters are handsome.

Victor makes a horrible grimace.

WAITER  
Have you made your choice?

VICTOR  
Not really... What's your special?

WAITER  
We have these Barbecue Baby Back Ribs...

LOUISE  
(whispering in Victor's ear)  
Baby ribs... What did I tell you! In this rat's  
ass they eat them.

VICTOR  
(ignoring her remark)  
What's that?

WAITER  
Baby Back Ribs are tender and meaty baby pork  
back ribs, basted with barbecue sauce. They  
come with fried potatoes. If you like, we'd  
add some fresh green salad with Dijon  
dressing.

VICTOR  
OK, we'll take two of those with salad.

---

Louise and Victor are exchanging glances in front of huge portions of meat and mountains of salad, a bottle of red wine between. Louise rises, moves to a vacant table, takes a chandelier to place it on their table. She lights the candles.

LOUISE  
YOU wanted a rustic dinner...

Louise plants her fork into the plate and starts sawing her meat. She nods approvingly.

LOUISE  
Not bad after all...

Victor chews observing her with a mysterious smile.

LOUISE  
So what?

VICTOR  
Nothing, it's just you always pay attention to  
little things like candles, details...

Louise interrupts her sawing.

LOUISE

Details form a whole picture. It's like a beginning relationship: small steps towards a strong feeling, tiny bits and pieces of affection and attraction, which - once put together - form the feeling of love.

Victor pours wine into glasses.

VICTOR

We move on to THAT now? While you're at it: what about love at first sight?

Louise poises knife and fork and takes a deep sip of wine.

LOUISE

... Same, except it's fast. That said, you men trust your instinct, you can't analyze. You don't discern WHAT you like about a girl. You bolt at the fact THAT you like her - because she simply suits with your attraction template. But as soon as you know her for real, she won't fit anymore with your cliché. Result: You wanna change your life.

VICTOR

Well, men are simple, women are complicated...

LOUISE

You just drop a girl when she gets out of your pattern! We are analyzing our feelings to know if we are in love or not...

VICTOR

Wow! A lot of analysis needed before feeling the desire to roll in the hay!

LOUISE

Goodness, analysis! Nothing to do with SEX! When WE meet this handsome guy who's not necessarily attractive, but appealing enough for some adrenaline, then... Hmm, come and enter, in-out, in-out... yes- yes-yes ... like men: simple desire and a dick. No feelings needed for THAT. Well, the myth that women need feelings for sex was introduced by the bourgeoisie of the late eighteenth century, to encourage fickle men in their extra-marital desires. We know: after centuries of libertinism on both sides, it was highly urgent that men - helped by romanticism - set an end to all this. The petty romantic bourgeois had managed to lock up women in the duty of sentiments! By doing so, he was able to win back women's fidelity... Just to guarantee his kids were worth his patrimony. You see... Pure Bullshit!

She washes down her wine and takes fork and knife to eat away.

LOUISE

(Chewing)

Christ's sake; THAT made me hungry!

FADE TO BLACK

Knocking on the door (S.O.)

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Victor's hand opens the door on Louise's face.

LOUISE

Wow! What happened to you?

Victor's face looks bleary-eyed, he wears just a towel.

VICTOR

First a shower.

LOUISE

That bad?

VICTOR

No way to get asleep after your conference on sexual attraction. I had to reconsider all my past relationships.

LOUISE

What about considering future relationships?  
I'll be in the lobby with a strong coffee for you.

Victor nods and closes the door on her.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Louise is sitting alone in front of a mug of coffee with ham and eggs.  
She's on the phone.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

FOX (V.O.)

Well, if we let him get the whole story,  
what's your plan then?

LOUISE

Something big enough to make him drop.

FOX (V.O.)

And what's that to be?

With a glimpse through the window Louise sees Victor approaching the restaurant.

LOUISE

Girls are nasty... he's coming. Bye now.

FOX (V.O.)

Keep me posted...

She hangs up as Victor enters the restaurant, coming straight to Louise.

VICTOR

I'll take my coffee on the road. Let's go.

INT. CAR - DAY

Victor and Louise in the convertible, Louise driving, Victor sipping coffee from a plastic cup and filming the landscape. He pans to Louise.

VICTOR'S CAMERA POV

shows Louise driving along a deserted road outside Fort McMurray.

VICTOR (V.O.)

I thought about future relationships: I should try to find a man to live with. That's simpler...

LOUISE

What about sex?

VICTOR'S CAMERA POV

She looks into Victor's camera.

He switches the camera off.

VICTOR

As for now: self-control.

LOUISE

Self-control is nothing else than an obstacle to self-criticism, imagination, or affection; Stop controlling yourself. You need emotions, if you wanna play the main character in your introspection movie!

They continue their route without a word. They come along Gregoire Lake, enter Anzac, a small village on the eastern lakeside. Louise checks the GPS, turns left onto Stony Mountain Road, left again onto Township Road. They arrive at a large deserted car park on the lakeshore. Louise drives around the parking lot and stops close to the water. She turns off the engine and leaves the car. Victor follows her.

EXT. LAKESHORE / ANZAC - DAY

They walk together towards the stony beach. Victor puts his hand into the water. Louise stares at the shiny water surface. Victor looks at her. She seems nervous. After a while they hear the noise of tires on the gravel. A black car enters the parking. Victor approaches the car. Louise stays behind, recognizes Fox behind the windscreen, giving him a discreet sign to leave. Before Victor reaches the car, Fox drives off.

Victor comes back to Louise, shaking his head.

VICTOR

I hope it wasn't Chuck getting nervous...

At that moment a water plane flies directly towards them and rushes very low over their heads. Victor instinctively lowers his head.

VICTOR

Asshole!



The plane lands on the lake just behind them, turns around and idles back to the wooden pier. A white haired giant in his sixties pulls out and puts a rope around a pillar to fix the plane. He then walks towards Louise and Victor. He joins them holding out his hand.

CHUCK

Hi, I'm Charles Woylnovicz, Chuck for my friends and my friends to be.

He shows a bright smile.

VICTOR

Hi, I'm Victor, Louise, my colleague...

LOUISE

...nice to meet you Chuck.

Chuck points at his plane.

CHUCK

Are you afraid of boarding a small water plane?

Louise and Victor look at each other.

LOUISE

Your landing was racy ...

CHUCK

... making out that I'm at least able to land.

LOUISE

OK then, let's try...

Louise steps towards the car and locks it up. Chuck spots the mint green convertible.

CHUCK

Thelma will be with us?

VICTOR

(giving a grinning wink to Louise)

No, but we're on the same wavelength...

Chuck walks on the floaters of his Cessna 185 for a check. Louise and Victor wait on the wooden pier.

CHUCK

Ok, ready to go.

He holds the door wide open.

CHUCK

(indicates Louise the left rear seat)

Ladies first...

Louise slips on the left rear seat, Victor squeezes beside Louise on the right; Chuck pulls off the rope and gets in front of them behind the yoke.

INT. CESSNA - DAY

Chuck starts the engine and checks the control panel.

CHUCK

Ladies and Gentlemen, captain speaking, we're ready for takeoff, please fasten your seatbelts and we remind you that this is a non-smoking flight.

He grins and pushes the gears for maximum.

EXT. PIER - DAY

The Cessna takes off.

INT. CESSNA - DAY

Victor pulls his camera out and starts filming. Chuck turns around.

CHUCK

What you'll get to see isn't another spicy documentary but fucking reality!

They overfly huge refineries implanted in the middle of devastated forests and discover the extent of an environmental disaster. Victor keeps filming.

VICTOR'S CAMERA POV

Oil-bearing sand is conveyed in open cast mines. Huge areas of forest cut down. In lakes, oil streaks, an apocalyptic vision.

CHUCK

There are about 180 billion barrels of proven oil reserves here. That's only what companies can get with today's technology. But total estimates could be two or three trillion or even higher. That's eight times more than Saudi Arabia.

He turns the Cessna hard left.

CHUCK

The oil sands are under forests as large as the UK.

Chuck flies around a huge oil-infested artificial lake.

CHUCK

But the oil here doesn't bubble out of the sand the way it does in the Mideast. It's in the sand, which must be dug up and washed with hot water. Oil comes to the surface and the sand drops down. Contaminated water floats then into these huge basins, killing thousands of animals and birds.

Victor holds his camera on the oiled black lakes: Black sand, Black water, devastation.

VICTOR (V.O.)

How do they manage this environmental issue  
with local authorities and NGO's?

LOUISE's hand taking Victor's left hand. Victor's glance quits the  
viewfinder and goes to Louise's eyes.

CHUCK

You got it. Investors can't argue with it. No  
question, they've got a mess up here. So first  
they get Alberta to keep the taxes at one  
percent, which is the lowest most ridiculous  
tax rate in the world, except perhaps  
Liechtenstein. How does that go? Well, some  
million a year for infrastructures or helping  
politicians to be elected or re-elected.  
That's cheaper than paying decent taxes. And  
they even support environmentalists. By doing  
so, they stall upcoming protest.

LOUISE's sad face as she looks out the window.

VICTOR

What's the cover?

CHUCK

Risk insurances via Private Equity. The  
investors win twice. First when they pay,  
because it's written down as losses. And then  
when they get the profits. Dividends  
inclusive. That's how wonderland acts!

LOUISE

For how long has wonderland been at play here?

CHUCK

Since the sixties. But companies lost money  
because extracting was too expensive. They had  
to raise oil prices first.

(CONTINUE)

They needed a serious Mideast crisis!  
Therefore they fed Saddam with money and arms  
and he attacked Iran. Then they told him to  
feel free to invade Kuwait. So he did. And  
stepped into the trap. They called it Desert  
Storm. That made the barrel storm for the  
first time over the 40 Dollar mark. NOW oil  
sands made sense and most important: they made  
billions of dollars.

Victor holds his camera on Chuck.

VICTOR'S CAMERA POV

VICTOR (V.O.)

This is like the big Gold Rush...

CHUCK

You're kidding! Compared to that, the gold  
rush was a Tupperware-meeting! Alberta expects  
100 billion to be invested here over the next  
10 years. 100 billion for a 100,000 slob

CONT'D

living in this bumpkin dump! The Alberta Sandbox is becoming the world's biggest playground for the usual US, UK, Dutch and French petrol giants. And Canada looks with a parent's smile on the Sandbox gamblers and decides to be the only country in the world to raise Greenhouse gas emissions until 2025.

Chuck pilots the Cessna down and flies along the Athabasca River.

CHUCK

We'll land in Fort McKey. Jeff's an old friend and holds some sensitive information!

FORT-MACKEY

EXT. JEFF'S HOUSE - DAY

The Cessna lands on the Athabasca River in front of Jeff's house. Jeff, an old and sick man steps out on the veranda. The three get out of the plane and balance on the wooden catwalk towards the garden. Jeff lights a pipe.

INT. JEFF'S HOUSE - DAY

A wooden living room with old leather furniture around a heavy couch table. Victor and pipe-smoking Jeff are sitting in front of an old laptop, Louise and Chuck standing behind. Jeff puts his USB key into the laptop and takes the mouse to open the files.

JEFF

A few words about the whole shit happenin' out here. Let's have a look on your famous DAYSPRING-ECO-POWER fund.

(He clicks on the file)

Well, it spawns legends, but in reality this fuckin' fund is buying land,

(he points his finger on the screen)

or paying compensations for pollution,

(he shows another line in the financial tab)

(CONTINUE)

Or simply like here: delivering dough, to finance hotels or trips for the members of an environmental convention.

LOUISE

OK, but THIS doesn't come to more than 900 Grand...

JEFF

Hol'on babe, we just hit pay dirt in ONE file... There are hundreds of those. I pointed out more than 1.5 Billion.

(He sucks on his pipe and blows another cloud to the ceiling.)

Look hon', I've the complete tracking of where it comes from and who it goes to.

Louise now sits on her heels behind Victor, looking closer to the screen.

VICTOR

How did you get that?

JEFF

Chuck, goddamn, you didn't tell that Nimrod my pedigree? I'm of those who set up the system! I worked for the US, Brits, Dutch and even the French.

VICTOR

DBI France?

JEFF

'Course not! French State Oil giant. ONZE GLOBAL. They staked into DBI France.

(He opens a new file)

And DBI blew into CAES which dropped into ...

LOUISE

Dayspring...

JEFF

Sweetie, you're a champion! Yep, Dayspring. This business is simple, look:

(his finger again on the screen)

French Oil Company invests in foreign bank to invest in money loosing PE paying cost intensive problem solvent.

VICTOR

But then DBI's concern is pointless?

JEFF

You call this environmental and corruption fuck pointless? You're jokin'?

VICTOR

I totally agree, but from an economic point of view, there's no black hole.

JEFF

That's why it's still working, boy. They call it lobbying, you call it economics, I call it corruption.

VICTOR

Then what game do you want me to play?

JEFF

Write a report for Eco-sensitive sad-ass-politicians. To mess up at least Europe's share of this fuck polluting our country!

He pulls out the USB key and hands it over to Victor.

JEFF

Take it. All you need is there. Now boy... write a book, an article or any shit you want, but publish!

VICTOR

Why YOU don't write it?

JEFF

Come on! Credit me with some brains! There're a lot of unpleasant people out here looking for leaks in the ship. Truth hurts, even kills you know...

Victor glances at Louise like to say that he was right. Jeff stands up and moves into the kitchen.

JEFF

That's it for now folks. But I've prepared some lunch! Please be my guests.

Chuck opens his bag and comes out with a Tupperware.

CHUCK

I brought dessert.

JEFF

(With a skeptical glance on the Tupperware)  
What da hell is this?

CHUCK

Chocolate mousse...

JEFF

Fer God's sake! Come on Chuck, you know that my Jewish background forbids me to eat chocolate mousse!

CHUCK

Why? Is there any pork in it?

JEFF

NO! Air! THAT's robbery!

EXT. JEFF'S HOUSE - DAY

They are shaking hands, Jeff hugs Louise.

JEFF

(whispering into Louise's ear)  
You look worried kid; and I hope to never come across the reason. Whatever it is, take the other option.

JEFF POV

Chuck, followed by Victor and Louise are leaving towards the plane. The Cessna takes off.

EXT. CAR PARK / ANZAC - DAY

Chuck, Louise and Victor walk from the Cessna to the car park. They shake hands as they reach the convertible.

CHUCK

So, you'll return to Toronto tomorrow morning?

VICTOR

Yes, I've got to complete my report there.  
Thank you so much for your help. Without you,  
it would have taken years.

CHUCK

You're welcome. And write that book. Or...  
(with a sign on Victor's pocket with  
the camera)  
... make a movie.

He gives Victor a wink.

Louise and Victor get in their car. Victor opens his window, giving Chuck a sign. Louise starts the engine.

CHUCK

So long folks.

LOUISE & VICTOR

Bye...

The convertible drives off.

FORT-MCMURRAY

EXT. TWIN PINES INN - DAY

They appear in front of the motel. Louise and Victor climb the stairs up to their rooms.

LOUISE

(unlocking her room)  
I'll take a shower, change, call my son, and  
see you at 7 for dinner ok?

VICTOR

Where do you want that to happen?

LOUISE

Surprise... You'll love it!

She enters her room, turns around and closes the door on her bright smile.

INT. VICTOR'S MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Victor sits on the bed, mobile between shoulder and head, his laptop on his knees.

VICTOR

... And ONZE then plugs the holes at DBI  
France by regular capital inserts ...  
Therefore DBI France investments are no  
losses, but simply written off as such. They  
win twice: no gains, but re-capitalization! If  
far-fetched, it's pretty well knitted!

BARBARA MÜLLER

OK, send that over already.

VICTOR

It's on the way, you'll get the detailed one tomorrow night. I'll return to Munich in two or three days...

INT. LOUISE'S ROOM - DAY

Dressed with a bathrobe, wet hair, she is on the phone, too.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

LOUISE

That's it: Chuck, Charles Woylnovicz his full name. .... No ... it's all on his computer now... ... No, he hasn't got enough time because I'll take him out tonight. ... ... Exactly. Tomorrow it's over ...

INT. VICTOR'S ROOM - EVENING

Knocking on the door. Victor opens on Louise, dressed in jeans, white opened shirt, red boots. Her red hair wildly falling on her shoulders. She is very pretty.

LOUISE

Ready for the show?

INT. DANCING BAR - NIGHT

Paddy McSwiggins, the REAL far-west-style pub and dancing. An amateur band playing country music on a small stage surrounded by tiny tables and noisy audience. Some are hopping on the dance floor. Louise and Victor sit on the side at one of these small tables, gazing at each other over huge beer mugs and emptied plates. They laugh, they're quite tipsy.

LOUISE

...Then dance with me.

She raises and jumps on the dance floor. She dances more and more wildly, giving him signs to join her. Victor denies, shaking his head. Louise looks exasperated to the ceiling, stops dancing and returns to the table.

VICTOR

Sorry, I'm not a great dancer and I'm just pondering the report.

LOUISE

But that's only a job! Not your life! It's just a minor part of it. Your mission is just a plot element of the storyline. Hitchcock calls it a Mac Guffin: the protagonists are running after, but the audience doesn't care. Just handle it as that. Be the audience of your mission, but the protagonist of your life, get up. Dance. Change your life!

VICTOR

Hey! Mrs. Freud again! Change requires time.



LOUISE

No! Change requires decisions. And decisions require courage! YOU just run away from the decisions you should make.

VICTOR

So what! Heroes have been thought courageous because they were just afraid to run away.

LOUISE

You run away, 'cause you're afraid... of love.

VICTOR

No I'm not, but for me being in love is something special!

LOUISE

No, it's the usual! Being in love shows the person who he should be. Who are you when you are in love? I'd love to get a glimpse of it...

Victor looks around.

VICTOR

Well, whom could I fall in love with?

He returns Louise's gaze.

VICTOR

Any idea?

LOUISE

Come on Victor. Let yourself go!

---

They dance entangled cheek to cheek in the middle of the dance floor.

EXT. MOTEL PINES INN - NIGHT

Louise and Victor climb the stairs to their rooms, his arm around her hip. They come to her room. She tries to open the door, but can't introduce the card into the slot. Giggling. She tries again and again.

LOUISE

I'm afraid I have to spend the night with you...

VICTOR

Leave it to a man...

Victor takes her card and slides it through the slot. The door opens.

VICTOR

It worked...

LOUISE

No, for me it didn't.

She disappears into her room. Comes back to the door to close it.

VICTOR

Good night Louise.

As an answer he gets the door closing on her sad face.

INT. VICTOR'S ROOM - NIGHT

Victor in his bed, no way to sleep. His cell phone rings.

LOUISE (V.O.)  
I can't sleep. I'm in front of your door.

Victor opens on Louise dressed in pajamas. She closes her phone.

LOUISE  
I'm freezing.

VICTOR  
Come in...

---

They lay in the bed together, Louise in Victor's arms. She gives him a kiss on the cheek. Her mobile on the bedside table vibrates.

The screen indicates "FOX".

She grasps her phone to switch it off.

INT. PINES INN - DAY

Victor wakes up. Turns towards Louise. She is not in the bed. He rises, no Louise in the bathroom. He gets in his trousers, leaves the room, knocking on Louise's door. Waiting, knocking again. No answer. He returns into his room, takes the mobile, dials her number. Louise's mobile ringing on his bedside table. Back to her door. Knocking again. No answer. He tries to open the door. The door is unlocked, he enters Louise's room.

The room is empty. She disappeared with all her belongings. He returns in his room. He takes Louise's mobile and steps onto the balcony. The convertible still parked in front. From there he sees that the car keys are on the chair. His suitcase beside opened. He hurries into the room. The laptop gone. He searches for the USB stick. Gone. Fully dressed, he sits on the bed to consider the situation. Suddenly he gets up, takes his belongings, the keys of the convertible and leaves the room.

He puts his room card on the reception desk.

VICTOR  
Did Louise Hansen already check out?

DESK CLERK  
(looking on the computer)  
Yes, apparently last night.  
(He prints the bill, puts it on the desk in front of Victor)  
That's 129 Dollars for 2 nights.

Victor hands him his credit card.

INT. CAR - DAY

Victor is driving the car over the highway through heavy traffic. A road sign indicates the airport 4 miles away.

TORONTO

EXT. AIRPORT TAXI STAND - EVENING

Victor rushes out the building and queuing up for a taxi.

INT. TAXI - EVENING

Victor climbs into a taxi, takes out his mobile, types LOUISE. Her address appears on the screen.

VICTOR  
359 Bleecker Street.

The driver enters the address on his GPS and starts the car. Victor stares through the windows into the nighttime city. He's worried. He takes out his phone and dials.

CHUCK (V.O.)  
Hi, this is Chuck's answer phone. Please leave  
your message after the tone.

INT. CHUCK'S HOME / FORT MCMURRAY - EVENING

Answer phone blinking. Behind we see Chuck lying on a Sofa.

VICTOR (V.O.)  
Hi, Victor speaking; Louise disappeared with  
my laptop and all information. Please call me  
back, it's urgent.

Chucks face. His eyes wide open. He's dead.

INT. TAXI - EVENING

Suddenly Victor has an idea: he takes Louise's phone and switches it on. No Pin is needed. The screen shows a record icon; He clicks on it. LOUISE's face in a video filmed at night in her motel room:

"Hi Victor, I told you to become the protagonist of your life. I'm  
the prisoner of mine. Don't trust anybody. Listen to Mancini's "Slow  
Hot Wind", if you want to remember me as I'd like to be..."

The driver breaks in front of Louise's building.

VICTOR  
Just a minute please.

EXT. LOUISE'S HOME - EVENING

Victor jumps out of the cab and runs to the entry. He pushes C. Hansen. No answer. He rings again, longer. He insists. No answer. He returns to the taxi, looking up to her apartment. No lights.

INT. TAXI - EVENING

Victor hops back into the cab.

VICTOR

Let's move on to the Four Seasons Hotel.

INT. RESTAURANT FOUR SEASONS - NIGHT

Victor sits at the bar, sipping a brandy. He looks at Louise's record on her phone, as to key out a secret code. He pops 2 aspirin and washes them down with the brandy. He gives a sign for another one.

---

A bottle with some remaining brandy in front of him.

---

He flushes down the rest of it, fluttering at the empty bottle.

INT. HOTELROOM - DAY

Victor opens one eye after the other. He gets up, all naked, moving slow motion. Hangover. Serious one. He staggers into the bathroom. Shower on his face to wake up.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Victor walks towards the Metro station. He's on the phone.

OPERATOR (V.O.)

She's probably in a meeting. Please try later again...

INT. LOUISE'S OFFICE - DAY

Victor in the middle of the room looking around. Louise's assistant spotting him from the opened door.

VICTOR

No laptop, nothing. No inkling where she is?

ASSISTANT

No! According to her agenda she was supposed to be back tomorrow. With you...

EXT. BAY STREET - DAY

Victor enters the building of GREEN INVEST.

INT. OFFICE GREEN INVEST - DAY

Victor is waiting at the desk. A young overdressed woman, checking logs on her screen.

YOUNG WOMAN

... Yes! Dead sure! Last time she logged was five days ago with you.

CONT'D

By any chance she's gone to John's Funeral.  
There's where all the others are.

VICTOR

'f course. When does the service begin?

YOUNG WOMAN

11 am,  
(a glance at her computer)  
that's in 40 minutes.

VICTOR

Where?

YOUNG WOMAN

Park Lawn Cemetery, Royal York Station.

VICTOR

Thanks Lady.

EXT. BAY STREET - DAY

Victor beckons a cab.

EXT/INT. TAXI - DAY

Toronto's passing city streets reflect in the side window over Victor's worried gaze.

EXT. PARK LANE CEMETERY - DAY

Centennial trees, mossy grave stones and huge lawns. Victor follows the large alley towards the mausoleum.

INT. MAUSOLEUM - DAY

Victor appears as one of the last in a spacious and modern chapel. He keeps behind. An employee dressed in black gives him a sign to sit. He moves on his tiptoes to the last row and sits beside an old man.

The parish begins to sing:

*"Faith of our fathers, living still,  
In spite of dungeon, fire and sword;  
O how our hearts beat high with joy  
Whenever we hear that glorious Word!"*

Victor glances around at the singing community.

*"Faith of our fathers, holy faith!  
We will be true to thee till death."*

Suddenly his gaze holds on a man (Fox). The man's observing him. Victor looks away. A quick glance back. This man - he knows him somehow. But where or when? Christ Sake, he remembers! He rises abruptly and runs out of the chapel.

SOUND:

*"Faith of our fathers, we will strive  
To win all nations unto Thee;  
And through the truth that comes from God,  
We all shall then be truly free."*

EXT. PARK LANE CEMETERY - DAY

He hurries along the park alleys towards the gate.

*SOUND:*

*"Faith of our fathers, holy faith!  
We will be true to thee till death."*

INT. METRO STATION - DAY

He squeezes through the closing doors of the metro.

*SOUND:*

*"Faith of our fathers, we will love  
Both friend and foe in all our strife;"*

INT. METRO - DAY

Victor keeps standing close to the doors, anxiously observing the travelers.

*SOUND:*

*"And preach Thee, too, as love knows how  
By kindly words and virtuous life."*

INT. HOTEL ROOM FOUR SEASONS - DAY

Door being unlocked (S.O.). Victor enters and rushes directly to his bag. He takes his video camera and plugs it into the TV.

*SOUND:*

*"Faith of our fathers, holy faith!  
We will be true to thee till death..."  
SILENCE.*

He runs through different files. He opens the file showing Red's terrace. Louise smiling. Her legs in different stockings. Her smile again. Behind a man reading a newspaper. The same as in the chapel (Fox). He freezes on Fox and goes down on the floor, still staring at the TV. The ringing of Louise's mobile draws him out his thoughts. He digs in his bag, fetches the mobile and looks at the screen. UNKNOWN.

LOUISE (V.O.)

Hi Victor, it's me.

VICTOR

Oh my God, Louise! Where are you? I'm frightened to death! The man in the chapel is the same as the one in the video. Remember, when I filmed you twirling around to show me your stockings. The guy in the background was in the chapel. Who is this man? Are you ...

LOUISE (V.O.)

(interrupting him)

Listen Victor, I'm fine...

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

LOUISE in a simply furnished motel room, looking out a window.

LOUISE

... I'm in California. Take a pen... ready? OK:  
Stay America Pc 1100 Mondavi Way, Bakersfield.

VICTOR (V.O.)

Bakersfield?

LOUISE

Take the 8:30 morning flight to LA. You'll land at 10:40 local. Rent a car, two hours' drive to Bakersfield. Stay America Pc 1100 Mondavi Way. I gotta walk you through the uncut story. Bye now.

She hangs up and dials another number.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

LOUISE

He takes the 8:30. Be careful, he spotted you in the chapel 'cause you're on a video he made at Red's.

She simply switches her phone off.

INT. HOTEL ROOM FOUR SEASONS - DAY

Victor sits on the bed in front of the TV, his gaze fixed on Louise's cell phone. Finally he reaches for his own mobile.

VICTOR

Barbara? Something got in the way..

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Louise on the balcony in front of her room. She stares at the shimmering pool and passing traffic behind.

CLOSE SHOT

Tears in her eyes.

INT. HOTEL ROOM FOUR SEASONS - DAY

Victor still on the phone. He seems lost and out of balance.

BARBARA MÜLLER (V.O.)

... well, then put it together out of memory.

VICTOR

But I don't have my laptop anymore.

BARBARA MÜLLER (V.O.)

Good Lord, then buy one! And use the mail you sent me yesterday to download your interim report back. It's fair enough if you manage to specify on five or six pages.

INTERSTATE 5  
CALIFORNIA

EXT. INTERSTATE 5 - DAY

The Golden State Freeway near Castaic. Los Angeles' skyline as a background. A red open Mustang convertible approaching and passing by in dense traffic. 20 seconds later a grey Chevy Malibu.

INT. CAR MUSTANG - DAY

Victor behind the wheel. Trucks climbing the I5 to Pyramid Lake.

INT. CAR MALIBU - DAY

(UP SOUND GUITAR BLUES) FOX POV

The red Mustang is only a small red dot behind the windscreen. Fox glances at his wrist watch: 11:30am.

INT. CAR MUSTANG - DAY

Victor checks the mirror. He doesn't notice his pursuer. He changes the position of the backrest for a more relaxing drive position. He turns the radio on and runs through the stations. He holds on Portishead.

Landscapes move by, Victor's now relaxed, music as main ambiance. He passes Pyramid Lake. Near Gorman a road-sign announcing a gas station. Appears the sign "Carl's Jr. Coffee Shop". He leaves the highway and stations in front of Carl's.

INT. CAR MALIBU - DAY

FOX POV (UP SOUND GUITAR BLUES)

He passes the parked Mustang and stops 2 streets away. He lights a cigarette and opens the window.

INT. CAR MUSTANG - DAY

Through the windshield we see Victor coming back with a coffee cup. He slides in, drops the coffee in a cup holder, turns the key and drives back towards I-5. The rear mirror shows the Malibu coming out from a side road and trailing at a safe distance. Victor's eyes in the mirror. The Malibu in the mirror. Victor's hands clench the wheel. He speeds up.

INT. CAR MALIBU - DAY

FOX POV (UP SOUND GUITAR BLUES)

The Mustang speeds up. Fox slows down and takes the next exit. Fox stops the car, waits, and enters I-5 again. The Mustang has disappeared. Fox's face distorted by a bright grin...

HIGHWAY 99,  
CALIFORNIA

EXT. ALAMEDA - DAY

In foreground the Highway. Behind some farm houses. In distance the mountains. The red Mustang crosses. Then nothing. Some Trucks. Finally the Malibu passing by.

BAKERSFIELD

INT. CAR MUSTANG - DAY

MUSIC: MANCINI'S SLOW HOT WIND

Victor wears his earphones listening to Mancini's Music Score.

The GPS shows Bakersfield road map. Victor leaves the Highway and comes to a crossing. Red traffic light switches green. He turns left and takes Blue Star Memorial Highway. He drives through a big oil field. Cisterns, refineries, pumps. He has to wait at a railway crossing. An endless tanker



train tooting with its double horn. Victor engages Rosedale Highway, turns left on Coffee Road, still in the oil fields, turns right after another 3 miles into Brimhall Road.

First appearance of the sign "STAY AMERICA PC", then a dozen 2 floor buildings with a parking lot between. Victor steers the Mustang into the parking lot, stalls the engine. He pulls his earphones off, the music cuts off. He grabs his phone.

VICTOR

Here I 'am...

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. MOTEL STAY AMERICA - DAY

Louise on the balcony, phone at her ear.

LOUISE POV

Victor on the distant parking lot.

LOUISE

Hi Victor. I'm on the balcony.

VICTOR POV

She waves her arm.

Victor locks the car, crosses the parking and climbs the stairs to Louise. She gives him a kiss on the cheek. He pulls Louise's mobile out of his jacket and gives it back to her.

VICTOR

Your video message, I didn't get it....

LOUISE

Come in.

They enter her room. Louise sits down on the bed. Victor takes a seat beside a small table next to the window. He is looking around.

VICTOR

Where's your son?

LOUISE

There's no son...

VICTOR

What?! How's that?

LOUISE

That's part of the strategy.

VICTOR

What strategy are you talking about?

LOUISE

I'm working for ONZE. My job is to ascertain whether finance systems are untraceable. I needed you to show the leaks. And to get your trust, my strategy was to play the single mother...

VICTOR

You call that a play?

LOUISE

Do you feel like rationally discussing an undercover hit? It's usual business. Or do you imagine that you deforest a country for sullied oil-sands by inviting the local hunting club to a grill party?

VICTOR

OK, OKAY! So what happened since you vanished?

LOUISE

I simply gave your computer to DAYSPRING here in Bakersfield. We mirrored all data and reorganized the investment system to destroy the chain of evidence. Here's your Laptop.

He spots his laptop, gets up, takes it and sits down again.

VICTOR

Why didn't you copy the data and simply delete my files afterwards?

LOUISE

'Cause our computer monkeys delete for good. No evidence, no press, no book, no nothing.

VICTOR

Now, there's a personal one: May I understand that all our conversations, all that was fake? Your son is fake, your life is fake? Why did you make me fall in love with you? What for? To save the profits of an oil company?

Tears in Victor's eyes.

LOUISE

OK Victor, let's take a close up: you're far away from the usual, a girl steps into your life and you fall in love. Do you really? Or isn't it just a childish infatuation that YOUR kind of man feels, because you wanna stay in your fantasy world? Yes, you, I mean BIG Victor Foss! All alone to defend the world against corruption. Backed by the girl who he kisses at the end of his movie. Sunset, fade to black, ending credits, romantic music.

VICTOR

Wow, what a short cut! Falling in love is childish? The world's just fantasy? The power of the US president belongs to Fantasy World?

Louise gets up and walks towards the door to switch the light on. Her finger points to the switch.

CONT'D

LOUISE

This is power. The Power that rules the world.  
Cook an egg: We use power! For production,  
transport, boiling water. That's how it goes.  
God bless America! Power is NOT hold by  
presidents but by those who switch the light  
on.

VICTOR

How smart! Switchers ruling the world. What  
about arts, music, dance, theatre, cinema?

LOUISE

Fantasy World! Made of dreams! Dreams make the  
world turn round. Consumption is nothing else  
than orchestrated collective dreaming.

(she points at the TV set)

Dreaming about a new flat screen,

(she points at her shoes)

a new pair of shoes,

(she points at the car park outside)

A new convertible for a date with a new girl.  
To watch a chilling movie about corruption and  
love. The power of dreams to maintain the  
power of those who cook your egg.

VICTOR

You want to make me believe that we are living  
in a sort of matrix, like the movie?

LOUISE

You just got a glimpse through the curtain.  
Now, you should stay in Fantasy World and draw  
a blank.

VICTOR

Like Delbert? Was he moved back to Fantasy  
World by that mysterious man in the chapel?

LOUISE

He calls himself Fox. Working for the French  
as memory eraser.

VICTOR

Why Delbert?

LOUISE

He intended to feed the press with some  
sensitive data.

VICTOR

John's death may then be considered as  
collateral damage? May I turn a collateral  
damage as well?

LOUISE

Not if you return to Fantasy World.

He stands up and moves towards the door to show Louise the red Mustang on  
the parking lot.

VICTOR

You see, I rented THIS-one hoping you would  
join me back in Fantasy World.

He leaves the room, walks towards the car park and looks back. Tears  
filling Louise eyes, but she shakes her head. Victor enters the car without  
looking back again. LOUISE's gaze follows the departing car. She puts  
sunglasses on as Fox appears from behind the corner.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

FOX

I bugged his car. I'll take my stuff and  
finish the job.

LOUISE

You'll finish nothing, it's over. I'm coming  
with you, let's go home.

INT. CAR MUSTANG - DAY

Victor steers along Blue Star Memorial Highway crossing again the railway.  
He takes his mobile.

INT. CAR MALIBU - DAY

FOX POV

Trailing the Mustang three cars behind. Fox looks at Louise beside him.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

FOX

You still believe I'm wasting my time?

INT. CAR MUSTANG - DAY

Victor on the phone with BARBARA MÜLLER. He follows a truck in dense  
traffic.

BARBARA MÜLLER (V.O.)

Your report is OK. And we got Waechter in  
Paris for all these millions.

VICTOR

He's the chap to get cuffed?

BARBARA MÜLLER (V.O.)

Somebody has to pay. DBI FRANCE files for  
insolvency.

VICTOR

But this is nonsense. The losses are paid off  
by French petrol giant ONZE.

Victor enters highway 99 south bound.

BARBARA MÜLLER

How naive you are. First option: they increase  
stock values by clipping a thousand jobs;  
Second option: the government re-capitalizes  
to save them. In both, DBI wins twice, because

(CONTINUED)

as you say: future benefits are stocked in the oil-sands. That's basic business. You make losses to double tax-free profits.

VICTOR

So, what was my part in the play?

BARBARA MÜLLER

Confirm the money circle and make out the usual suspect: Waechter!

VICTOR

Why keep me in the dark?

BARBARA MÜLLER (V.O.)

Good Question... To be honest: After the disaster with Delbert it turned out to be a smarter choice. And as you always enjoyed playing the cynical one, I probably imagined you not to overreact just now.

VICTOR

Thanks for trusting my emotional capacities. And Waechter pays for all...

BARBARA MÜLLER (V.O.)

So what? Good Lord, come down from the moon! The game's over. Look at Waechter, our devote fellow in Paris: In jail he's got plenty of time to write a book! And maybe they'll even make a movie out of it! Take a week off. See you in 10 days.

She hangs up.

Victor is still driving on south bound highway 99 when he suddenly exits to U-turn under a bridge. He enters 99 north.

INT. CAR MALIBU - DAY

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

FOX

What the hell is he doing?

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Victor enters a gas station.  
His hand holds the nozzle while he refuels the car.  
He enters the store to pay.

VICTOR

How far is it from here until Toronto?

CASHIER

Toronto? Canada? You're jokin'? That's a huge trip. You better ask a trucker outside.

---

Victor arrives at an opened truck door. The driver in there is rolling a cigarette.

VICTOR  
Hi...

TRUCKER  
Hi.

VICTOR  
Toronto by car. Is it complicated?

TRUCKER  
For fun or you're afraid of flying?

VICTOR  
Fun. More or less.

The trucker lights his cigarette.

TRUCKER  
Aha, more or less. Ok man, exit 99 China Grade Loop. Dig these oil fields, Great show. Then...  
(He looks on a map.)  
Kern River Canyon, Highway 178, Las Vegas, and then straight to Toronto I'd say.

VICTOR  
Great, Thank you.

TRUCKER  
Welcome, an'hava nice trip.

VICTOR  
Sorry, may I have a cigarette?

TRUCKER  
Fuck, you're that kina man who's just lost a girl, are you?

Victor smiles like a teenager. The trucker hands him tobacco and paper.

TRUCKER  
Roll Ups. Keep it, you'll goddam' need'em.

INT. CAR CHEVY - DAY

FOX POV:  
Victor gets back into the Mustang and drives off. Fox idles his car close to the truck.

FOX  
Vas-y...

Louise gets out.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

LOUISE approaches the opened truck door.

LOUISE

Hi...

TRUCKER

Aha, now the girl...

LOUISE

The man who just left, what did he say?

TRUCKER

(With a bright grin)

Complicated love story?

LOUISE

Complicated, indeed...

INT. CAR CHEVY - DAY

LOUISE sits back in the car and closes the door.

IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

LOUISE

He just asked how to return to Toronto by car.  
What did I tell you? It's over. Let's go home.

FOX

OK.

EXT. OILFIELD ROAD - DAY

The red Mustang crosses the screen on China Grade Loop, a surrealistic desert road through an oil field covered by an infinite oil pump forest.

The Mustang stops; Victor jumps out of the car and lights a cigarette. He looks around. He is surrounded by pumps similar to nodding giant horse heads. He returns to the car and comes back with his video camera.

VICTOR'S CAMERA POV

Nodding pumps, dry grass on sandy ground. Victor pans around. The Mustang gets into the picture.

ON THE ROAD

INT. CAR MUSTANG - DAY/EVENING

VICTOR'S CAMERA POV

On the deserted road again, leaving China Grade Loop for Kern River Canyon.

---

Road-sign Highway 178. Victor is steering the car with one hand, filming landscapes with the other.

VICTOR'S CAMERA POV

Passing hills, a lake in the foreground.

---

Behind the windscreen in far distance: Sunset over the city lights of Las Vegas.

LAS VEGAS

INT. HOTEL ROOM MGM - NIGHT

Victor stands at the window overlooking the neon lit hotel car park. He pops his earphones in and listens to Mancini's "Slow Hot Wind". He digs the

panorama outside: Some last deep orange sunrays behind a black silhouette of desert hills. Suddenly he rips the earphones off and throws them with the mp3 player into a dustbin.

ON THE ROAD

INT. CAR MUSTANG - DAY

Victor drives on HWY 6 through the Colorado Mountains. The Mustang comes along an abandoned gas station. Victor maneuvers a U-turn and stops in front of the gas station. Whirling dust whisks by the side windows. Victor fetches his video camera and gets out.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

VICTOR'S CAMERA POV

The corner of a broken window.  
The rusty company emblem moving in the desert wind.  
The shadow of that emblem on the sandy ground.  
The red Mustang in front of the rusty pumps.

Victor films the red Mustang in front of the gas station. He stows the camera back in his pants, pulls a cigarette out of his shirt.

A match shielded by a hand against the wind, lighting a cigarette.

Victor squats behind the shack on the stony ground, smoking a cigarette, his gaze lost in the mountains. Sound of motorbikes coming across the road in front of the gas station.

INT. CAR MUSTANG - AFTERNOON

Victor drives along HW6 through the stony ochre mountains. In distance some low buildings. He passes a road sign "FOOD-GAS NEXT RIGHT".

The gas station approaches behind the windscreen. Four low buildings: the gas station, a restaurant, a motel and a store.

CAMEO COLORADO

EXT. CONOCO GAS STATION - AFTERNOON

Victor idles the car to one of the petrol pumps. In front of the office a dozen men and women in leather clothes around their motor bikes, drinking beer. He gets out of the car and walks to the office.

Behind the cashbox a Native American woman in her fifties, "Jenny" written on the nameplate on her chest.

JENNY

Hi. How much? Fill up?

VICTOR

Thirty's pretty enough. Are there any rooms left in the motel behind?

JENNY

I think so. It's calm tonight.

Victor hands her 30 dollars.

JENNY

Thank you, help yourself and have a nice stay.



VICTOR

Thanks. Good bye.

He steps out of the office and walks past the bikers back to his car.

Victor's Hand takes the fuel nozzle and sticks it into the tank neck.

VICTOR POV

The bikers in front of the office take off their leather jackets to compare tattoos. They laugh and start to push each other.

Victor plugs the nozzle back into the gas pump, enters his car, idles a few meters to park in front of the office next to the bikers. He leaves the Mustang, pulls his camera out and approaches the bikers, filming them. One of the bikers spots him.

BIKER

Fuck, this shithead's filming us like a damn' tourist attraction.

As Victor continues filming, the biker leaves the group. Victor stuffs the camera back into the pocket as the angry biker builds up straight in front of him.

BIKER

Before filming decent people you'd first kindly ask for permission.

VICTOR

Sorry, I didn't want to hurt you.

BIKER

Well, it doesn't hurt, but it's just not polite, you piece of shit.

VICTOR

Piece of shit is not really polite either...

BIKER

For you it's not polite, but for me it's appropriate. And if you don't understand the difference, we may talk it over.

VICTOR

I think we talked it over. Let me just add that each spoken word burns some 2500 neurons. Don't expose yourself to pointless risks.

BIKER

Ha-ha, you're goddamn funny! Now, to prevent you from burning any neurons again on your standard joke, I gotta burn them out of your brain for good!

VICTOR POV

The biker's fist hits Victor's face.

BLACK

SOUND: Hum of voices

VICTOR POV

Jenny, the woman from the gas station and the county sheriff - who looks similar to Tom Selleck - are bending over him.

JENNY

He comes to himself.

SHERIFF

Do you remember where we are?

VICTOR

Ah... You... You're... I've seen you before. You are this American actor. Magnum... Tom Selleck?

JENNY

(laughs loud out)

He'll be OK ...

SHERIFF

I'm the county sheriff. You had an argument with a biker.

(He helps Victor to sit)

He KO'd you and somebody snatched your car.

Victor wipes his eyes and looks around.

VICTOR

I'm in America...

SHERIFF

Welcome to America Mr. Foss.

VICTOR

You know me?

SHERIFF

Well, we found your wallet and passport in your jacket... You're here for vacation?

An ambulance arrives in front of the gas station. The rear doors open and a medic jumps out. The sheriff helps Victor up, who looks around again.

VICTOR

Where's my car?

SHERIFF

One of the bikers took it. The medics just arrived for a quick check, and then we'll make a report for the insurance. Where did you intend to travel?

The medic takes Victor's arm and walks him to the ambulance. The sheriff escorts them.

VICTOR

I was on a business trip. I added some extra days to cross the States back to Toronto.

SHERIFF

I see.

The doctor helps Victor climb into the ambulance; the sheriff hops in behind them and closes the doors.

Jenny comes out of the store, walks to the ambulance and knocks on the rear door. The door opens on the sheriff.

JENNY

Everything OK?

SHERIFF

We've finished here. But Mr. Foss needs a bed for tonight and a car for tomorrow.

VICTOR

How do I get to Palisade?

JENNY

I'll take you there tomorrow morning.

(to the sheriff)

May I invite you for a coffee?

SHERIFF

Thank you Jenny, but I gotta move on. Bye.

He makes a sign and leaves the ambulance.

JENNY

(grinning)

Bye Mr Magnum...

INT. EAGLES NEST MOTEL - NIGHT

VICTOR POV

He spots his face in the mirror of a decrepit bathroom, brushing his teeth with his fingers.

---

He's fully dressed in his grey suit, lies on a dusty quilt on the bed and stares at the ceiling.

NEAR PALISADE

EXT. HWY 6 - DAY

An old yellow orange tow truck comes along the highway.

INT. TOW TRUCK - DAY

VICTOR POV

He glances at Jenny driving the old tow truck.

JENNY

... it's in good shape and even if you get nothing out of it in Toronto, it's cheaper to buy that car than renting one for a one way trip and paying expensive drop off fees.

VICTOR

850 Dollars you said?

GRAND JUNCTION  
COLORADO

EXT. CAR MERCHAND - DAY

A white rusty Ford LTD from the early eighties leaves the car park. Behind the windscreen Victor's amused smile. He enters the main road and accelerates. The car loses a hubcap.

## ON THE ROAD

INT. OLD FORD LTD - DAY/NIGHT

VICTOR POV

Victor drives on HW6 through the sunny mountains.

---

NIGHT on Highway 6: The city lights of distant Denver.

---

DAY on Interstate 80: The plains of Nebraska under heavy clouds. Steam blows out from the engine under the hood of Victor's car.

EXT. SERVICE STATION - DAY

Victor, still dressed in his grey suit, looks over the shoulder of a mechanic at the steaming engine. The mechanic looks back to Victor and shakes his head.

---

Victor crosses the huge parking approaching a truck. He knocks at the door. The door opens. The door closes again and Victor walks towards another truck.

UP SOUND: ROCK MUSIC

INT. TRUCK - DAY

VICTOR'S CAMERA POV

The driver empties his soda can to sing the song off his lungs. He shakes his head to the rhythm. Victor pans on the road. They cross Platte River, Nebraska.

I-80 REST AREA  
NEAR GRINELL,  
IOWA

INT/EXT. PICKUP /- EVENING

The driver, a young farmer, exits the interstate and stops near a small building with restrooms.

DRIVER

OK, here we are...

Victor gets out of the pickup.

VICTOR

Thanks for the lift. Good bye.

The pickup drives off. Victor looks around. He walks towards some parked trucks. Behind he spots an old station wagon. He strolls towards the car. The passenger door stands wide open, on the passenger seat a girl in her early twenties. We follow Victor's gaze. A lovely face, riddled pants. She is rolling a cigarette. Victor approaches.

VICTOR

Hi...

GIRL

(without really noticing him)

Hi.

VICTOR

Excuse me, where are you headed?

Now the girl is screening him and his expensive but dirty suit. She lights her cigarette.

GIRL

(with an ironic smile)

You lost your driver and the stretch limo?

VICTOR

Something like... Somebody robbed my rental car...

GIRL

Nasty somebody! And now you want a lift to the nearest city?

VICTOR

You wouldn't happen to be travelling to Toronto?

GIRL

Nope! Cleveland, if it helps to take another rental car or flight from there. But I'd first check if we're fine with taking a stranger for a hike.

VICTOR

Sorry, I didn't introduce myself. I'm Victor Foss, married, 2 adult daughters. I'm a financial expert on a business trip. Now you know everything.

He shows his brightest smile as she screens him again. At this very moment a casually dressed woman of 50 appears just behind Victor.

WOMAN

I didn't know financial experts could run out of money.

VICTOR

I didn't run out of money! I just ran out of personal transport.

GIRL

Somebody snatched his rental car.

The mother opens the rear door of the car to hold it wide open.

MOM

Hop in Mr. Finance and tell us what happened...

She pushes him on the rear seat.

GIRL

You trust him?

MOM

(she walks around the car and takes  
place behind the wheel)

I'm adult, vaccinated and divorced. Look at  
his face...

She closes the door and opens the window.

VICTOR

Something about my face?

MOM

Looks honest. And it's a nice face.

GIRL

Mom...!

MOM

(starting the engine)

So what! It's still a long way to drive and I  
gotta stay awake. By the way, I'm Ellen... And  
this is my daughter Kate.

The car drives off...

VICTOR (V.O.)

I'm Victor...

ON THE ROAD

INT. CAR - EVENING

VICTOR'S POV

ELLEN

(her eyes in the mirror)

Now, how does a financial analyst debark in  
the middle of nowhere?

ELLEN'S POV

VICTOR

(his face in the mirror)

I had an argument with a biker; he knocked me  
out and took my car.

ELLEN

And stored his Harley in the trunk? Gets  
already confusing! Just start from the very  
beginning, we've got plenty of time.

VICTOR

I work on a stock market fraud for a Munich  
based firm. I mean Munich in Germany. Well,  
finally it's not a stock market fraud, well,  
it IS, but not as I thought...

ELLEN

Don't begin a story with "Finally". So you are  
German?...

FADE TO

EXT. NEAR CHICAGO - NIGHT

Interstate 88. In background the city lights of Chicago. Some trucks pass by. Then the car.

We see Victor and Ellen behind the windscreen. Victor is talking while Ellen drives. Kate on the rear seat, eyes closed, listening to music.

EXT. NEAR SOUTH BEND, INDIANA - NIGHT

Victor and Ellen behind the windscreen. Victor drives and continues talking to Ellen.

The rear lights of the car roll away into the dark.

VICTOR (V.O.)  
But as I fell in love with her I couldn't see  
her double game.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Victor is driving, Ellen on the passenger seat and Kate sleeping on the rear bank.

ELLEN  
How that?

VICTOR  
Love is blind...

ELLEN  
No, I mean falling in love.

VICTOR  
I walked it through again and again during the  
past days... Do you want to drive again?

They pass a road sign announcing the Knut Rocket service station.

ELLEN  
Gas and coffee first.

EXT. SERVICE STATION - NIGHT

Victor comes out of the Fast Food carrying 2 coffee cups and joins Ellen on the terrace. He sits in front and hands her a cup.

VICTOR  
Kate sleeps a lot. Like my daughters.

ELLEN  
(sipping her coffee)  
It makes me crazy, especially at noon...

VICTOR

That's what I've thought over these past days: work, wife, kids. To get personal: I locked myself up into habits and duties. That's a choice but I became cynical. Well, I can't stand my kids having grown up. Because now they do it THEIR way and it makes me crazy HOW they do. Like kissing a different boyfriend every three weeks... But they happen to remind me when I was 20, when I had MY way to choose. Nothing was certain but everything was possible. Wasn't it thrilling? You know, after all these years THIS happened again to ME.

ELLEN

You fell in love with Louise because you feel like 20?

Victor stands up to walk up and down...

VICTOR

No, I fell in a feeling of freedom. The freedom you feel when you're far away from home. Far away from the usual. And NOW, that's a feeling I want to keep.

Ellen stands up to and moves towards the car. Victor follows.

ELLEN

Then why not try to find her again?

VICTOR

I misunderstood her last video message. Well, just now, I got it!

ELLEN

We'll drop you at Cleveland Airport. It's on our way.

CLEVELAND,  
OHIO

EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

ESTABLISHING

The station wagon stops at the drop off area in front of the departure terminal.

We see Victor shaking hands with Kate. He leaves the car; Ellen opens her door, hugs Victor briefly and enters the car again. The car drives away, Victor waves his hand to say goodbye. Then he enters the building.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Victor is sleeping. A stewardess wakes him up to fasten his seat belts as the flight approaches Toronto.

(UP SOUND GUITAR BLUES)



TORONTO

EXT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL - DAY

FOX POV

Fox plays a blues on a folk guitar in his car parked on the opposite side of the hotel and observes a cab appearing in front of the hotel. Victor jumps out, walks towards the entrance and enters the hotel.

Fox takes his mobile.

CONVERSATION IN FRENCH (SUBTITLES OVER)

FOX

He's back.

UNKNOWN (V.O.)

Go for it.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - AFTERNOON

Victor leans on the reception desk.

VICTOR

My bags are still in the storeroom?

RECEPTIONIST

Oh Mr. Foss. Do you want the same room again?

VICTOR

That would be great.

INT. HOTELROOM - DAY

The door opens on Victor entering the room with his luggage. He closes the door behind him, drops his suitcase where he stands and pulls his mobile to switch it on. The mobile remains off. No battery. Victor plugs the charger in, sits down on the bed and dials.

VICOR

Hi Louise, I'm back.

LOUISE (V.O.)

Hi Victor. How are you?

VICTOR

I've a question. There's something I'd like to verify. I think I finally understood the video on your phone. At least I believe so.

LOUISE (V.O.)

Come over, I'm at home.

---

Shower on Victor's face.

---

Victor comes out the bathroom, a towel wrapped around his hips. He walks towards the bed table, takes his mobile and dials again.

VICTOR

Hi Susanne. We have to talk.

SUSANNE (V.O.)

You're OK?

VICTOR

(looking out the window)

I'm OK. But I need some more time in Toronto.

SUSANNE (V.O.)

How long?

VICTOR

(observing the traffic in the street)

I don't know. What I do know is that I don't want to return to live with you in conjugal remains. I simply want to try it again.

SUSANNE (V.O.)

What...? What do you want to try again?

VICTOR

A new start. Where nothing is certain but all is possible.

SUSANNE (V.O.)

Wow! ... Do you want to leave me, or do you just need some extra time to get through your teenage crisis?

VICTOR

I'm sorry, I'll call you when I'm through... Bye

He hangs up.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - AFTERNOON

Elevator doors open on Victor who crosses the lobby to the reception desk.

VICTOR

Call me a cab please.

(UP SOUND GUITAR BLUES)

EXT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL - EVENING

FOX POV

Victor comes out and gets in a cab. Fox places his guitar on the seat beside, turns the key, drives off and trails at a distance.

INT. CAR - EVENING

FOX POV

He follows the cab through dense traffic.

Fox breaks as the distant cab stops in front of Louise's apartment building. Victor climbs out the taxi and rings at the interphone. Fox stalls the engine. He leaves his car as the taxi drives away.

INT. LOUISE'S BUILDING - EVENING

Victor calls for the elevator.

EXT. LOUISE'S BUILDING - EVENING

Fox approaches the entrance with a folded newspaper. Through the door he perceives the elevator doors close on Victor. He lays the paper down and takes a thin metallic wire out of a pocket. Fox slides the wire around the entrance door lock from up to down. He pulls, the door opens. All in a matter of seconds. He picks up the newspaper and hurries towards the staircase.

INT. LOUISE'S BUILDING - EVENING

Fox climbs the stairs two by two.

---

Victor comes out the elevator and rings at the door.

---

Fox continues climbing the stairs.

---

Noise of steps behind the door. The door opens on Louise. Victor tries a smile.

VICTOR

Hi Louise.

LOUISE

Hi Victor.

VICTOR

I don't know where to begin...

---

Fox still climbs, breathing heavily.

---

Louise screens Victor for a moment, and then shows a bright smile.

LOUISE

Well, what about beginning by coming in.

At that very moment the door of the staircase opens on breathless Fox.

LOUISE

What the hell Fox!

Victor turns around. Fox approaches and unfolds the newspaper. He holds it up for them to read the headline: TRADER ARRESTED IN PARIS. BANK LOSES BILLIONS IN RISKY INVESTMENTS...

FOX

(with a strong French accent)

'av iou seen zis? I ouas pretty shuar zat iou  
would meet again.

Fox still holds up the paper and takes Victor by surprise when he suddenly opens his jacket, takes out an injection gun and shoots into Victor's neck.

VICTOR

(touches his painful neck)

The memory eraser. The MAN IN GREY - Hah-hah,  
man in black was already taken...

Fox drops the newspaper and calls the elevator. The doors reopen.

FOX

Ouiz ze stuff I 'aav given iou, iou ouill  
foarget even about iouar sense of 'youmor...

He puts the injection gun back in his pocket while entering the elevator.

FOX

(elevator doors are closing on him)  
...ouell, I 'ope iouar 'eart ouill stand it...

Louise stares at the closed elevator, then at Victor: Sweat shines on his forehead.

LOUISE

Victor! You're OK?

VICTOR

How far away is it to your sofa?

He slowly goes down in front of her. She sits down beside him and takes his head on her knees.

LOUISE

I'll call an ambulance.

He looks up to her.

VICTOR

On the road... again...

VICTOR POV

Louise dials on her mobile. The image gets blurred, begins to wobble then fades to BLACK

LOUISE (V.O. in far distance)

Quick! An ambulance! A man had a heart attack.  
359 Bleecker Street... (The voice fades out)

EXT. CITY STREET - EVENING (AS SCENE 1)

Sunset over the skyline of Toronto. A wide road. An ambulance chases by with wailing sirens.

INT. AMBULANCE - EVENING (AS SCENE 2)

Paramedics try to revive Victor: oxygen mask, heart massage. The paramedics shout to drown the wailing sirens.

PARAMEDIC 1

Ok, let's try the defibrillator again.

PARAMEDIC 2

(He bends down with two electrodes,  
the uploading defibrillator whistles)  
CLEAR! One - Two - Three...

He places the electrodes. Victor shakes.

EXT. AMBULANCE - EVENING (AS SCENE 3)

The ambulance chases through the city. In foreground the flashing red warning lights on the roof of the ambulance.

FADE TO WHITE

SOUND: The regular beeps of a heart-beat monitor.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A bright sun illuminates a hospital room. Victor opens his eyes. Louise is sitting on his bed. She takes his hand.

LOUISE

Hi Victor, I still owe you an answer. My video message was to protect you. And I wanted you to remember me as I'd like to be, because I still want you to like me.

Victor remains silent, holding her glance.

LOUISE

Come on! ...Please...

Victor looks at her, perplexed.

LOUISE

We have to finish the job! Now I know how to do so.

(she warmly puts his hand in hers)

You remember Chuck's words: Make a movie! He was right: that's the best way to infiltrate collective dreaming and fuck Fantasy World.

Victor still looks at her, more and more perplexed. She looks into his eyes and then understands.

LOUISE

You don't remember me...

Victor shakes his head. Louise looks at him for a long while, Victor returning her gaze.

LOUISE

I got something to fix it again...

She carefully puts some headphones on his ears. Mancini's "Slow Hot Wind". Victor is surprised and screens her for a long moment...

Then he begins to smile...

FADE OUT

ENDING CREDITS