

IL AMERICANO

by
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Based on the novel *A Very Private Gentleman*
by
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FADE IN:

1 **EXT. DALSLAND, SWEDEN- TWILIGHT**

1

A lake.

A forest.

A dacha.

A Saab outside the dacha.

A light within.

2 **INT. DACHA- NIGHT**

2

JACK (dark, fit, mid-forties) is staring at the embers of a log fire. He sips from a thick cut crystal glass of whiskey.

The impressive US Army Special Forces crest tattooed on the shoulder of his bare torso is at odds with JACK's quiet manner and the distinguished silver that flecks his hair and stubble. JACK is no longer young.

A creak behind him and his eyes flick over his left shoulder.

INGRID (34) is naked. With an intimate familiarity she kisses JACK on the top of his head, sits close behind him and wraps her arms around her lover, linking her slender hands across his upper chest.

Her head resting on his shoulder, her face beside his, INGRID and JACK watch the fire together in easy silence.

3 **EXT. WOODS- MORNING**

3

INGRID leads JACK through the trees. Her coat has a white fur collar. They are fresh-faced and warm from bed.

They head towards a vast and frozen lake.

JACK senses something in the woods.

Beneath the Conifers: impenetrable darkness.

JACK looks around.

Thick snow blankets the world and muffles any sound. There is not the slightest breeze.

INGRID

What are you looking for?

Her Swedish accent is sing-song.

JACK

Nothing.

His anxiety is evident.

INGRID laughs out loud.

INGRID

There are no wolves in the woods so
close to the city.

JACK smiles.

4

EXT. LAKESIDE- MORNING

4

They continue through the woods until they reach the
shoreline of the lake.

INGRID steps onto the ice.

Holds out her hand.

A beat.

JACK takes INGRID's hand.

Solid as stone, the frozen lake takes his weight.

They walk out, INGRID slipping and laughing.

The landscape is magical.

JACK begins to relax, slipping and swearing.

Suddenly, he stops.

There are footprints in the thin snow going out across the
lake.

INGRID

Snow-hare.

Beside the Snow-hare's prints are those of a man.

INGRID

A hunter?

JACK studies the two sets of tracks.

Those of the Snow-hare are heading *out* into the lake. The
man's prints are heading in the *opposite* direction, towards
the shoreline.

JACK spins around in the direction they've just come from.

No one.

Then, about ten metres inland from the edge of the lake, a low branch dips and a thick rug of snow falls from the branch.

JACK grabs INGRID, yanks her towards the cover of the lakeside trees and pushes her down into the snow.

She grunts, winded. He lies besides her.

We hear the CRACK of a bullet- so quiet it might be a bough snapping under the weight of winter.

It isn't.

JACK pulls a WALTHER PPK/S semi-automatic handgun from the pocket of his Parka.

Cocks it.

Waits.

Then bobs up and down once.

There's another CRACK from the trees.

JACK pinpoints the spot from the drift of BLUE SMOKE, almost invisible in the winter air.

There's someone in the shadows.

He rubs snow into his woollen hat, edges up until he can just see over the snow and pumps THREE SHOTS into the dusk under the trees.

We hear a muttering groan and then a sliding sound, as if JACK has just shot a tobogganist.

More snow slides off the trees.

JACK waits.

INGRID gathers her breath but loses her wits:

INGRID
You have a gun.

JACK keeps his eyes fixed on the trees.

INGRID
You have a gun! How do you have a gun? Why should you carry such a weapon?

JACK looks at her briefly but makes no reply.

She is busy thinking.

So is he.

INGRID

Jack?

He stands up slowly and walks inland towards the corpse that is just visible now in the shadows beneath the trees.

INGRID follows, frightened.

The MAN is slouched forwards in a drift of snow, his body cushioned in white softness.

JACK kicks the sole of his boot. He's dead.

INGRID

Jack talk to me!

JACK grabs his collar and turns him over.

He doesn't recognise him.

JACK fumbles at his buttons and rummages in his clothing.

In his breast pocket he finds a MILITARY IDENTITY PASS.

INGRID

Who is he?

JACK

A hunter.

INGRID

He's not dressed like a hunter. Why is he alone? Hunters always go in pairs. For safety.

Swiftly, JACK removes the bolt from the man's rifle and throws it far into the trees.

JACK

Go for help. Call the police.

INGRID sets off, stumbling up the track they have made through the snow.

JACK shoots her just once, in the nape of her neck.

She twitches in the snow, her blood staining the white fur of her coat collar.

From a distance, INGRID looks like a shot Snow-hair.

JACK approaches her.

And steps over her, trying not to look down.

Trying not to look back.

5 **EXT. DACHA- MORNING**

5

Outside the dacha is another MAN, standing by a black Mercedes-Benz sedan.

The second hunter.

He is holding an automatic pistol but he's not on alert.

JACK fells him easily with a bullet in the ear.

He removes the clip from his WALTHER and reloads it.

6 **INT. DACHA- MORNING**

6

JACK packs a few belongings in a holdall.

7 **EXT. DACHA- MORNING**

7

JACK smashes the CB radio in the Mercedes and removes the distributor cap from the engine, burying it deep in the snow.

Then he gets into the Saab.

And drives off.

8 **TITLES**

8

Over images of: JACK on a ferry to Gotland; changing clothes and vessels for Ystad; travelling by road to Trelleborg; catching the night crossing to Travemunde; driving to Hamburg and from Hamburg catching a train to...

9 **EXT. ROME- DAY**

9

At a fast food stand not far from the central train station, a middle-aged man is squirting ketchup on a hotdog.

It is Autumn, and without the usual mass of Summer tourists, LARRY stands out as an American.

JACK does not.

JACK
Blending in?

LARRY is shocked to see JACK but pretends the hot dog is the centre of attention.

LARRY
Jack. What brings you to Rome?

JACK
I closed the Stockholm account.

LARRY might be older than JACK but he doesn't seem it. His demeanour is sprightly.

JACK
But there were complications.

Then LARRY turns and walks, eating carefully. He is not a man who likes to get his hands dirty.

JACK walks beside him.

Both men keep a trained eye on their surroundings.

JACK
Collateral damage. Two shooters.
Unidentified. [A beat] And a girl.

LARRY takes a bite of his hot dog and casts a sideways look at JACK.

JACK is tired.

LARRY
There's a bar across the street:
the L'Aquila. Freshen up. Sit
tight. Give me two hours.

10 **INT. BAR- DAY**

10

JACK washes his face in the cramped bathroom at the back of the bar.

In the background, on the stereo, The White Stripes cover *One More Cup of Coffee*.

JACK stares at himself in the mirror. He looks exhausted.

11 **INT. BAR- DAY**

11

JACK is sitting at the back of the bar. He has a good view of the whole establishment: including the entrance and the door to the bathrooms.

He lights a cigarette.

LARRY comes in and sits opposite him.

LARRY
(genuinely shocked)
You started smoking again?

JACK exhales.

JACK
Guess so.

LARRY
Since when?

JACK
Since now.

The WAITER slides over and flicks a cloth at the table.

WAITER
Cafe?

LARRY
Due.

The WAITER disappears.

A beat.

LARRY puts an ENVELOPE on the table.

LARRY
Stockholm account. Final
installment.

JACK takes the envelope and puts it in an inside pocket.

LARRY is about to speak but stops.

The WAITER reappears and puts down two cups of coffee.

LARRY puts two cubes of sugar in his cup and starts stirring.

Then speaks low and fast:

LARRY
You can't stay here, Jack. You
won't see 'em coming, not in a big
city. But you can't go far, either.
If the gentlemen whose accounts you
closed belonged to Brink, Gallazzo,
Simenov- any of the first division-
you have four or five hours at most
before every airport, train
station, bus stop, toll booth and
ski lift from Stockholm to Skopje
is under surveillance.

JACK smokes.

JACK
So.

Not a question. An acknowledgement that LARRY knows exactly
what he's talking about. And JACK is listening.

LARRY

So. You find a hole- somewhere nearby- and you crawl into it and you stay put until *I* say it's safe to come out.

JACK's expression is as immoveable as a cliff face.

LARRY

Turn right outside the bar then second left. Via Spinetti. You'll find a silver Citroen C2 with Chieti plates. Check the glove box and follow the map. Castelvechio. It's a fucking fortress. Literally. And as dead as a graveyard. Anyone within a three to five mile radius you'll see 'em coming.

He pushes something across the table. A MOBILE PHONE in a cellophane bag.

LARRY

Get there. Stay there.

LARRY finishes his coffee and dabs at the corners of his mouth with a napkin.

LARRY

Do nothing 'till you get my call.

12

INT. CAR- DAY

12

JACK gets into a compact Citroen C2: nothing flash.

He opens the glove compartment and finds a PLAIN MANILLA ENVELOPE.

Inside the envelope is:

-a PASSPORT bearing Jack's photo in the name of *Edward Clarke*

-a DRIVER'S LICENSE in the same name

-and a MAP.

13

EXT. AUTOSTRADA- DAY

13

A long tunnel: one of the longest in Europe.

JACK at the wheel.

It seems like night: red stripes, strip lights, shadows.

Vast fans suspended from the ceiling shift the traffic fumes.

A button of light, expanding...

...as we burst into daylight.

14 **EXT. ITALIAN LANDSCAPE- DAY**

14

We're in another world.

JACK'S CAR is winding its way up a twisting mountain road towards...

...a ramshackle, lonely, desolate Italian HILLTOP TOWN.

The town sits beneath it's own castle. Medieval towers, gables, streets and church bells: framed by the snow-capped mountain peaks beyond.

This is not the Italy of E.M. Forster or of *Bella Tuscany*. This is the Italy where the Crusaders built their fortresses. The Italy where Sergio Leone conceived of his great Westerns.

A CHURCH BELL tolls...

15 **EXT. CROSS ROADS- DAY**

15

JACK stops the car.

At the crossroads is a SIGNPOST pointing to the town.

The sign reads:

CASTELVECCHIO.

16 **INT. CAR- CONTINUOUS**

16

JACK looks at the sign.

He looks up at the silent town, at the vast stone ramparts.

An OLD MAN comes out of a crooked medieval doorway, stares at JACK and disappears into another building.

JACK looks at the dead sockets of the windows, random beneath the rotting patchwork of rooves.

A DOG barks. The WIND hisses. The atmosphere is deathly.

JACK makes a decision.

And drives away.

17 **EXT. ITALIAN LANDSCAPE- DAY**

17

We see JACK'S CAR heading away from CASTELVECCHIO.

The CAR crosses a spectacular VIADUCT that spans a deep RAVINE.

The driver's window opens.

A MOBILE PHONE in a cellophane bag is thrown out.

It drops hundreds of feet down the ravine.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

18 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, MAIN SQUARE- DAY**

18

CASTEL DEL MONTE is a well preserved, happy looking little mediaeval town with a handful of tourists.

A chunk of time has passed.

JACK is sitting on a table outside a small BAR wearing dark glasses, sipping a coffee and reading a guide book. He looks like a tastefully dressed, well educated American tourist. He blends in. And no one pays him much attention as he finishes his coffee, pays his bill, gets up and leaves.

We follow JACK as he passes the parapet of the town ramparts and looks across the spectacular valley...

...towards the deserted CASTELVECCHIO.

19 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, OLD TOWN CENTRE- DAY**

19

At a leisurely pace, JACK passes a row of municipal rubbish bins just inside the fortified gates to the old town.

Hidden well behind the bins we catch sight of JACK's parked CAR.

20 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, TOWN SQUARE- DAY**

20

We're right in the heart of the mediaeval old town: like the stronghold at the centre of a castle.

JACK approaches a small family run bed and breakfast just off the main square.

The sign reads: "PENSIONE ABRUZZO".

21 **INT. PENSIONE ABRUZZO- DAY**

21

The internal courtyard is refreshingly cool.

In the centre of the courtyard is a FOUNTAIN made of marble shot through with black veins.

In the fountain stands an alabaster STATUE OF A GIRL. She's wearing a toga and holding a clam shell from which the water falls. The water is delivered by a two and quarter millimetre diameter pipe made of bronze.

As JACK crosses the courtyard he glances at the STATUE.

He finds it hard to tear his eyes away.

22 **INT. PENSIONE ABRUZZO, JACK'S ROOM- DAY**

22

A toothbrush in the glass by the sink.

The guidebook on the bedside table.

Apart for this, JACK has avoided unpacking: living entirely out of his holdall for some time.

From the holdall, JACK produces a pair of Leica 15x56 Geovid BRF Rangefinding BINOCULARS.

Through his casement window he has good view of CASTELVECCHIO.

He sweeps the town in grid formation: calm and methodical. This is a routine assessment.

JACK's POV: apart from the occasional appearance of an old man, woman or dog, the dead town across the valley is empty.

23 **INT. PENSIONE ABRUZZO, JACK'S ROOM- NIGHT**

23

JACK is lying on top of his bed, fully clothed and wide awake.

Taped to the inside of the wooden bed frame...

...is his WALTHER semi-automatic handgun.

24 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, OLD TOWN CENTRE- DAY**

24

Blinding SUN fills frame.

JACK is ostensibly photographing the sights: the mediaeval architecture, the square, the church.

25 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, CHURCH- DAY**

25

The CHURCH is at the top of town. A PRIEST, dressed in black, surveys the world below him:

Locals are going about their business, a few scattered tourists are enjoying their holiday. One 'tourist' catches the PRIEST's attention.

Perhaps it's his build. Or the fact that he's the only tourist on his own. Or perhaps it's the obsessive grid-like methodology with which JACK photographs the little town...

26

EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, ALLEYWAY- DAY

26

JACK turns casually down one of the town's many narrow alleyways.

The alleyway way bends left and right in a series of blind corners and dark tunnels, the street enclosed by arches, criss-crossed by flying stone buttresses and flanked by outside stairwells. It's a stalker's heaven- or hell- depending on how dangerous the prey.

JACK proceeds along the alleyway until he gets to a crossroads where FOUR NARROW ALLEYWAYS converge. Each alleyway leads uphill or downhill with varying degrees of steepness. JACK photographs each alleyway.

From an upstairs window he can hear the soundtrack of a game show on television. From another alleyway comes the sound of a barking dog.

No dog is visible.

Curious, JACK turns around, walking back the way he came.

The sound of barking gets louder.

On his right hand side, JACK finds a HIDDEN ARCHWAY.

The HIDDEN ARCHWAY resembles an archer's slit but is big enough for a gown man to slip through. Unlike a window, the 'slit' is actually just a crack in a triangular convergence of two separate and slightly overlapping ancient stone walls. The confluence of two stone surfaces makes the narrow gap between them very, very difficult to spot.

JACK slips through the HIDDEN ARCHWAY.

Inside is a courtyard.

27

INT. COURTYARD- DAY

27

Rotting doors lead to abandoned cellars and storerooms.

A MONGREL tied to a post is barking savagely, his leash keeping him inches from sinking his bared fangs into JACK.

JACK stares at the dog: a mysterious creature of fear and fury.

JACK reappears through the HIDDEN ARCHWAY and slips back into the narrow alleyway. It's like he's materialised from thin air.

He takes 2 PHOTOGRAPHS:

-first of the HIDDEN ARCHWAY

-and then of the street sign: VIA ROMANA.

Just then a MAN on an original 1970s DUCATI turns down the alleyway and drives towards him.

Casually, JACK continues walking.

The DUCATI gets nearer. The MAN ON THE DUCATI is wearing a black crash helmet with a tinted visor.

JACK picks up his pace.

The DUCATI is ten metres away.

JACK's right hand moves towards his pocket.

Five metres.

JACK's hand goes in his pocket.

Two metres.

BANG!

JACK drops to his knees.

BANG!

The DUCATI backfires for a second time.

A pause.

Still on his knees, JACK pretends to tie his right shoe lace.

The MAN ON THE DUCATI stops outside an apartment further up the alleyway, gets off his rickety motorbike and removes his helmet. He's a corpulent, ruddy faced Italian man in his late sixties.

He glances at JACK.

JACK stands.

MAN ON DUCATI

Buon giorno!

JACK

Buon giorno.

MAN ON DUCATI
Da dove provenite?

For an instant, the directness of the question catches JACK out.

JACK
 America.

MAN ON DUCATI
Ah! L'Americano!

JACK
Si. Il Americano.

JACK's pronunciation is good but his grammar is a bit rusty. Perhaps he's playing up on this. It suits the role of American tourist.

The MAN laughs enthusiastically emphasizing the correct grammar:

MAN ON DUCATI
L'Americano ! L'Americano!

A WOMAN'S VOICE comes from within the house- loud and angry- distracting the MAN ON THE DUCATI, who screams back passionately, enters his front door, and shuts it behind him with a hearty slam.

JACK walks on.

29

EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, TOWN SQUARE- DAY

29

JACK puts some coins in a CIGARETTE MACHINE.

The MACHINE takes his money but won't dispense his cigarettes.

He hits the refund button but nothing happens.

JACK checks the time.

And thumps the machine hard.

Footsteps.

JACK adjusts his position and checks the time again.

VOICE (O.S.)
 Can I help you?

The man behind him is reflected in the surface of JACK's battered ROLEX.

JACK
 I'm no good with machines.

JACK turns, smiling politely.

The PRIEST smiles back.

He is dressed in an ill-fitting, un-stylish black suit, a black silk stock and a deep Roman collar fraying at the edge. His name is FATHER BENEDETTO. He is older than JACK.

FATHER BENEDETTO
You are American.

This is stated matter-of-factly: like a man practising English.

JACK
Si.

FATHER BENEDETTO
You speak Italian?

JACK
Poco.

FATHER BENEDETTO
*Va bene! You stay at Pensione
Arbruzzo.*

Also a statement: this time with touch of triumph.

JACK is disconcerted but doesn't show it.

JACK
Not for much longer.

FATHER BENEDETTO
On vacation?

JACK
Working vacation.

This much is true- after a fashion. They speak in English unless otherwise specified:

FATHER BENEDETTO
Lavoro? Che genere de lavoro?

JACK
Photographer.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Va bene. Che genere de fotografia?

JACK
Pictures of the region.
Architecture, landscapes...

FATHER BENEDETTO
People?

He stands straight and smiles winningly.

JACK
No people. Sights and landmarks.
For guidebooks, magazines...

FATHER BENEDETTO
Ah! Magazine! Which magazine?

JACK shows no discomfort.

JACK
Actually it's a syndicate. Lots of
different publications. Um... *Casa*
editrice.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Va bene. So you must share a glass
of wine with me. *Questa sera*. This
evening.

A beat.

JACK is slightly thrown.

JACK
You're very kind, but I...

FATHER BENEDETTO
Certo. You want to know the truth
about Abruzzo? *A priest sees*
everything.

30

EXT. PAY PHONE, CASTEL DEL MONTE- DAY

30

JACK is using the local PAY PHONE.

LARRY (V.O.)
Do you have any idea how long I've
been trying to reach you? What
happened to the cell I gave you?

JACK speaks quietly, keeping an eye on the town square:

JACK
Did I forget to mention my
electromagnetic hypersensitivity?

LARRY (V.O.)
Don't get jumpy on me, Jack. That
cell was secure.

JACK lights a cigarette.

LARRY (V.O.)
I've got a job. It's a custom fit.
You don't even have to pull the
trigger.

JACK
Who's the client?

LARRY (V.O.)
Relax. She triple checks out. Plus
she comes to you. You don't have to
move an inch.

JACK
This is a small town, Larry. I
don't like small towns. I grew up
in one. Besides, I'm already
attracting attention.

LARRY (V.O.)
So will anyone who's trying to kill
you.

This is a good point.

JACK lights a cigarette.

JACK
I'll think about it.

LARRY (V.O.)
Think about this. I cleaned up your
shit and made you disappear. You
owe me my usual twenty percent
commission plus the first
installment. The rest is yours.
After this you're *free*.

On JACK.

Turning over the word.

31

INT. FATHER BENEDETTO'S HOUSE- MAGIC HOUR

31

The SUN is sinking behind the high mountains that overlook
the hilltop town.

JACK is wearing an immaculate white linen shirt.

He's sitting in a small walled garden snuggled at the rear of
a crumbling fifteenth century edifice, overlooked yet
secluded and trapping the last rays of the sun.

FATHER BENEDETTO pours two large glasses of brandy from a
globulous green bottle of ARMAGNAC and sniffs his drink like
a honey bee hovering over a bloom.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Que siamo! The quality of the
 brandy is good, the liquor is
 smooth and the glass warmed by the
 sun.

He pronounces *warmed* "war-med". His English is sophisticated but quaint, like an out-of-date book.

JACK sniffs his drink before he sips it. Not like a connoisseur: like a White House taster checking the safety of a Presidential beverage.

FATHER BENEDETTO
 (in ENGLISH)
 The only good thing to come from
 the *Francesi*, everything else...

FATHER BENEDETTO grimaces.

FATHER BENEDETTO
 The French are... *pezzi di merda*.
 This is not an American discovery.
 Italians have known this for
 centuries. [In ITALIAN] When Rome
 called France the province of Gaul,
 they were just the same. Arrogant
 sensualists. Their cuisine is fussy
 and their wine effeminate. Only
 their brandy is worthy of any
 attention.

FATHER BENEDETTO looks at JACK.

FATHER BENEDETTO
 (in ENGLISH)
 Forgive me. I speak too fast. You
 study our history?

JACK
 No.

FATHER BENEDETTO looks horrified.

FATHER BENEDETTO
 You come to Italy to make a guide
 book and you don't care about
 history?

JACK
 I take pictures, father.

A beat.

FATHER BENEDETTO
 Of course. You are American. You
 think you can escape history. You
live for the present.

A beat.

JACK likes this man. His shrewdness is disconcerting but humane.

JACK sips his brandy.

JACK
I try to, father.

32 **EXT. L'AQUILA- EVENING**

32

Suburban sprawl with a mediaeval heart. L'AQUILA is the capital of the Abruzzo region and the nearest big town to Castel del Monte and Castelveccio.

Like these two villages L'AQUILA is relatively isolated, nestled high up in the Appenine mountains.

33 **EXT. L'AQUILA, SHOPPING STREET- EVENING**

33

JACK comes out of a SUPERMARKET carrying two bags of groceries and turns quickly down a dark side street.

34 **EXT. L'AQUILA, VIA LAMPEDUSA- EVENING**

34

JACK passes a sign for a MODELLING AGENCY. It's a small, inconspicuous sign, but it catches his eye because its graphics are subtly lewd and it's attached to the buzzer of what is otherwise a purely residential apartment block.

Entering the apartment block is a beautiful twenty four year-old Italian girl.

CLARA.

She catches JACK's eye.

He walks on.

35 **INT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, PENSIONE ABRUZZO, JACK'S ROOM- NIGHT** 35

The remnants of a simple yet sophisticated meal: apple, pecorino cheese, honey and walnuts.

On his lap top, JACK has organised several weeks worth of PHOTOGRAPHS of CASTEL DEL MONTE into three categories:

1. Street plan
2. Exit routes/car
3. Exit routes/foot

Now he is cleaning and oiling his WALTHER PPK/S.

36 **INT. PENSIONE ABRUZZO, JACK'S ROOM- DAY**

36

JACK completes his morning exercises then showers and dresses. His manner is precise and methodical. Only a man who has lived alone for many years can live like this.

When his preparations are complete, he picks up his BINOCULARS and studies the nearby town of CASTELVECCHIO through his medieval casement window.

37 **EXT. CASTELVECCIO, JACK'S POV- CONTINUOUS**

37

The dead town has come to life!

There's a MARKET in progress. The central piazza is a hive of activity. Food, local produce, clothes and cheap CD stalls.

The market has attracted TOURISTS. Standing by a phone box not far from a cheese stall is an attractive WOMAN in dark glasses. She's rifling through her handbag, searching for something. Under her right arm is a rolled up copy of *Il Messaggero*.

We notice the front page of the Italian daily newspaper has been folded in half.

38 **INT. PENSIONE ABRUZZO, JACK'S ROOM- CONTINUOUS**

38

JACK lowers his binoculars.

Thinks.

Decides to proceed with caution.

39 **EXT. CASTELVECCHIO- DAY**

39

Moving through the busy market, JACK is also carrying a copy of *Il Messaggero*...

...with the front page folded in half.

He approaches the OLD WOMAN running a cheese stall.

JACK

Un po' di formaggio, per favore.

OLD WOMAN

Quale? Pecorino, parmigiano?

JACK

Questo.

He points.

JACK
E un po' di pecorino.

JACK glances casually around for the WOMAN.

She's sitting outside a CAFE about twenty metres away, chatting on her cellphone.

JACK pays for his cheese and approaches the cafe.

40

EXT. CASTELVECCHIO, CAFE- DAY

40

JACK sits at an empty table next to the WOMAN.

She finishes her call in English. She's well spoken. As she replaces the phone in her handbag, she knocks the newspaper off her table.

JACK picks it up.

WOMAN
Grazie.

JACK
Prego. You're welcome.

WOMAN
You're American.

JACK
"Amidst gathering clouds".

The WOMAN speaks quickly, purposefully, barely looking at JACK.

WOMAN
You're assuming I'm English or you'd never have mentioned the weather. In fact I'm Belgian but I went to boarding school in England. And am quite happy to converse on all subjects meteorological.

Judging by her stilted choice of words this is code.

A WAITER comes out and flicks a cloth over the table. It's nearly midday and the sun is hot. He speaks with a tired voice:

WAITER
Buon giorno. Desidera?

He's addressing the WOMAN.

WOMAN

Una spremute di limone. Per favore.

Her Italian accent is perfect.

WAITER

Signore?

The WOMAN looks at JACK for the first time, studying him, awaiting his answer as if a great deal depended on it.

JACK

Una gelata alla fragola. Per favore.

The final fail safe.

Now they can introduce themselves:

JACK

Edward.

WOMAN

Mathilde.

The identification process over, there is nothing more to do but get down to business- and conversation becomes suddenly awkward.

MATHILDE

It's hot. My car has no air conditioning. I asked for it, but...

She trails off.

JACK

What car did they give you?

Her HAZEL eyes flick over the crowd in front of the cafe.

She doesn't answer.

JACK clears his throat.

Then says quietly:

JACK

Range?

She takes a long time to answer. When she does, she does so over the rim of her half-empty coffee cup, scanning the crowd like a cheating wife customarily anxious not to be seen by her husband.

MATHILDE

One fifty to one seven five meters.

JACK
Time?

MATHILDE
Five seconds. Seven at the most.

JACK
Targets?

MATHILDE
One.

JACK
Fire rate?

MATHILDE
Rapid.

JACK
Magazine capacity?

MATHILDE
Large. Preferably 9mm Parabellum.

The WAITER delivers the *Spremuta* and the raspberry ice-cream.

The glass of lemon juice twists in MATHILDE's slender fingers.

MATHILDE
The weapon must be fairly light.
And compact. Possible to be broken
down into its constituent parts.

L'AMERICANO
How compact?

MATHILDE
As compact as possible.

JACK clears his throat.

JACK
You want a submachine gun to fit in
a lady's purse?

MATHILDE
A small vanity case would be
permissible.

JACK
A small briefcase would be
possible.

A beat.

JACK
X-rays? Camouflage: lap-top, DVD
player, MP3 or digital camera?

She's not sure if he's joking or not. Neither are we.

MATHILDE
Not necessary.

JACK
Noise?

MATHILDE
Silencer.

JACK
No such thing. You'll have to make
do with a suppressor like everyone
else. It'll dampen the decibels,
dislocate the sound source and
reduce muzzle flash. I *can't* make
you silent but I *can* make you
invisible as the Finnish phrase
goes, but only as long as you're
prepared to lose some range.

JACK scans the crowd.

On the other side of the square he spots a YOUNG MAN in his
mid-thirties with short blonde hair and slight sunburn,
hovering by a stall. Average height, slim, athletic build;
sunglasses, stone-washed designer jeans very neatly pressed
with a sharp crease.

JACK
Two o'clock.

MATHILDE
Excuse me?

JACK
By the clothes stall. Light blue
shirt, open at the neck, expensive
buff suede shoes. Is he with you?

The YOUNG MAN has disappeared into the crowd.

MATHILDE
I didn't see him. In any case, I'm
alone.

A pause.

JACK's jaw muscles grind.

MATHILDE
I can accept a slight loss of
range.

JACK
You want a weapon with the firing
capacity of a submachine gun and
the range of a rifle.

MATHILDE
Can you do it?

A beat.

JACK
Give me a month. To trial. Then a
week for final adjustments.

41 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, LANDSCAPE- TWILIGHT**

41

The sun is sinking.

It's hunting hour.

A FALCON hovers on the wind above the town, looking for prey.

42 **INT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, PENSIONE ABRUZZO- NIGHT**

42

JACK is lying on top of his bed, fully clothed but fast
asleep.

His eyes roll left and right beneath his lids.

He's dreaming.

In his right hand is a book of MEDIEVAL ITALIAN ART &
ARCHITECTURE.

Twitching in his sleep, JACK's grip on the ART & ARCHITECTURE
BOOK slowly loosens...

THUD!

As the BOOK hits the floor JACK opens his eyes, sits up and
rips the taped WALTHER from beneath the bed, pointing it at
the door.

Silence.

JACK's heart is beating.

43 **INT. PENSIONE ABRUZZO, JACK'S ROOM- MORNING**

43

JACK is looking through his BINOCULARS.

JACK'S POV:

...of a small yellow and blue Italian POST OFFICE VAN heading
up the winding alpine road towards CASTELVECCIO.

44 **EXT. CASTELVECCHIO- DAY**

44

With the market gone, the town is once more dead.

And provides no cover.

JACK parks his car not far from the town square, turns off the engine and gets out.

45 **EXT. CASTELVECCHIO, TOWN SQUARE, CAFE- DAY**

45

JACK is sitting in the CAFE where he met Mathilde.

He is watching the entrance to the local POST OFFICE.

He studies his WATCH.

It's been an hour and no one has come or gone from the tiny rural branch of the *Poste Italiane*.

JACK puts the correct amount of change on the table and gets up...

46 **INT. CASTELVECCHIO, POST OFFICE- DAY**

46

The shop is small and dusty.

So is the POSTMASTER.

JACK
Buon giorno.

The POSTMASTER grunts his reply, jutting his chin.

JACK
Il fermo posta?

The POSTMASTER turns to a rack of pigeonholes behind a sack of mail hanging in a metal frame like an old person's walking aid. From one pigeonhole he draws a bundle of general delivery envelopes held together by an elastic band. Some have been there for weeks. Months even.

POSTMASTER
Nome?

A beat.

JACK
Clarke.

Deftly, like a teller counting through a thick wad of banknotes he flicks through the mail with thin, wasted fingers.

POSTMASTER
Clarky?

JACK
 Clarke. *Una pacchetto.*

POSTMASTER
Pacchetto!

This makes all the difference. The POSTMASTER clicks again, disappearing behind the rack of pigeon holes...

POSTMASTER
Clarky, Clarky, Clarky. Ecco.

...and reappearing with a PACKAGE.

The PACKAGE is from an Italian PHOTOGRAPHIC SUPPLIERS.

JACK
Grazie.

POSTMASTER
Identificazione.

JACK flicks his eyes downwards. He has already put his PASSPORT on the counter.

The POSTMASTER scoops it up with bony fingers.

Looks from the picture to JACK.

JACK bears the scrutiny with a deadly straight face.

47

INT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, PENSIONE ARBRUZZO- EVENING

47

JACK unwraps the PACKAGE.

He removes:

-film

-photographic paper

-development fluids

-fixing solutions

Then:

-a solid, monolythic rectangular receiver made out of a single piece of lightweight alloy.

-a bolt assembly.

-a barrel.

Only with this final piece is the puzzle complete.

Laid out on the floor is a SOCIMI 821 SUB-MACHINE GUN.

Without touching it, JACK studies the weapon like a connoisseur looking at the hue of a wine. In particular he notices that the SERIAL NUMBER has been scratched off.

Then he moves slowly, assembling the weapon with precision engineered expertise:

-inserting the barrel into the front of the receiver and securing it with the nut,

-opening the sidefolding tubular stock and engaging the buttpad,

-snuggling the buttpad to his shoulder,

-looking down the barrel,

-and slowly squeezing back the finger-grooved TRIGGER as we

SMASH CUT TO:

48

INT. L'AQUILA, VIA LAMPEDUSA, CLARA'S ROOM- NIGHT

48

Our beautiful twenty four year-old Italian girl enters.

CLARA.

She sits on the edge of the bed, whose ageing metal springs squeak slightly, and puts her smoking cigarette in an ashtray on the bedside table.

She kicks off her slip-on shoes.

Slips off her panties.

Lifts her light cotton dress over her head and lies back on the bed in one practised motion.

JACK sits on the bed beside her.

He doesn't look at her.

ITALIAN GIRL

Amore?

She reaches up to touch JACK as we cut to:

49

EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, PAY PHONE- DAY

49

JACK is scanning the town square with his usual cautiousness.

JACK
Your source in Rome.

LARRY (V.O.)
Clean bill of health and no OC.
This was a straight favour with a
dollar chaser, Jack. The guy's got
a second cousin in NOCS on the
graft who filched him the Socimi.

JACK
I hope you paid below the odds. The
more you pay them the more cops
gossip in the locker room.

LARRY (V.O.)
No one's gossiping, Jack.

JACK watches FATHER BENEDETTO waving at him from the other
side of the square.

JACK
Yet.

50

EXT. TOWN SQUARE- DAY

50

FATHER BENEDETTO is sitting in his API three-wheeler.

This comical and endearing method of rural transportation is
a cross between a moped and a miniature pick-up truck.

In the back of the truck are a mass of writhing SNAKES.

The API is turning over but it won't start.

The bonnet is open. JACK is fixing the engine.

He gives a signal and FATHER BENEDETTO turns the ignition key
again.

This time the engine starts. FATHER BENEDETTO claps and
cheers.

51

INT. FATHER BENEDETTO'S KITCHEN- EVENING

51

Sixteenth century. Sombre wood panelling stained dark with
polish and smoke. Two paraffin lamps stand on a huge antique
sideboard, their frosted orbs engraved with scenes from the
life of Our Lord.

The room is filled with a dining table: a massive black
edifice of oak, five inches thick with six legs fluted like
the columns of cathedrals.

Using antique crockery, ancient copper pots and utensils like old fashioned instruments of torture FATHER BENEDETTO performs culinary alchemy: transforming flesh into meat, dough into bread, hard earth nuggets into vegetables.

He hums as he cooks: Opera arias. And Johnny Cash.

JACK sips from a glass of wine and watches FATHER BENEDETTO potter around the wood fired stove. The priest has his own wine which he sips as he works between bouts of humming.

52

INT. FATHER BENEDETTO'S KITCHEN- EVENING

52

JACK eats a bowl of chilled carrot and sorrel soup in silence.

FATHER BENEDETTO watches him, pleased to see his guest so absorbed.

As soon as JACK has finished, FATHER BENEDETTO invites him to help himself from the ancient tureen.

Then he bustles over to the stove, humming again.

JACK eats, studying a framed photo of FATHER BENEDETTO with his arm around a tough, corpulent Italian man in his mid-twenties. FABIO.

FATHER BENEDETTO returns to the table with a large covered dish issuing steam into his face.

He notices JACK's eye-line.

FATHER BENEDETTO
All the sheep in my flock are dear
to me, but some are dearer than
most. Especially those that have
strayed from the fold.

Off JACK's intrigued look FATHER BENEDETTO clarifies:

FATHER BENEDETTO
Fabio. He is a... [in ITALIAN] 'car
doctor'. But I suspect his practice
is not entirely sound. *Ecco!*

FATHER BENEDETTO whisks the lid off the covered dish revealing a stew of poultry carcasses covered in sauce.

FATHER BENEDETTO
*Fagiano. Pheasant. With sauce of
orange juice, orange peel,
chestnuts, garlic, Marsala wine
and... Come si dici in Inglese?
Brodo di Pollo. Chicken broth.*

FATHER BENEDETTO serves each of them with a complete bird and pours white wine into fresh glasses.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Also: salsify in garlic butter.
Mange-tout. Fried wild mushrooms
with truffle.

JACK helps himself to vegetables.

FATHER BENEDETTO watches him as he savours his first taste.

JACK licks his lips and sips some cold white wine.

The two men regard one another, the priest awaiting a verdict.

JACK
Sinful.

FATHER BENEDETTO shrugs.

FATHER BENEDETTO
The Holy Father eats better than
this.

The flash of a smile crosses the priest's face.

JACK
Have you ever wanted to be anything
other than a priest?

FATHER BENEDETTO
Have you ever wanted to be anything
other than a... *come se dice in*
Inglese...?

JACK
Photographer?

FATHER BENEDETTO
Photographer.

JACK
I do what I'm good at.

FATHER BENEDETTO
I'm sure you have other talents.
You have the hands of a craftsman,
not an artist. You are good with
machines. Yet you told me just the
opposite when we first met.

JACK hides his unease from the watchful priest.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Journalism cannot make you a rich
man.

FATHER BENEDETTO's eyes flick over the ROLEX.

JACK

No.

FATHER BENEDETTO

Perhaps you are rich already?

JACK

I'm not a young man. I have my savings.

FATHER BENEDETTO

(in ITALIAN)

My meagre income is subject to the vagaries of the stock market and with church attendance declining there's less and less money in the offertory. But if a man has God in his vaults...

He looks searchingly at JACK.

JACK

I don't think God is interested in me. Father.

FATHER BENEDETTO

(in ENGLISH)

I know better than to try to make a convert over pheasant and Trebbiano.

JACK is silent.

The two men continue eating.

Then casually:

JACK

What are the snakes for, father?

FATHER BENEDETTO taps the end of his nose in the universal sign for secrecy.

FATHER BENEDETTO

"The grave soul keeps its own secrets, and takes its own punishment in silence."

He has a twinkle in his eye. The priest is on a mission to extract the truth... and JACK knows it.

JACK is driving.

He checks the rear view mirror.

All clear.

JACK accelerates the CAR, driving it hard at the sidewalk.

The vehicle slams into the curb, mounting the pavement with a thump of crunching metal.

54

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE- DAY

54

Just east of the old city walls a dirt track meanders downhill through a series of small holdings, allotments and scrap metal yards.

The CAR moves slowly. We can hear the scrape of trailing metal.

JACK pulls up beside a high chain fence.

The DOGS on the other side start barking. This sets off other dogs in other scrap yards.

JACK gets out of the car and approaches a makeshift hut beside the fence. Before he's a metre from the door it opens and a tough, well-built, unshaven Italian man in his mid-twenties looks him up and down.

FABIO.

JACK
Sono un amico di Padre Benedetto.

Suspicion gives way suddenly to warmth:

FABIO
L'Americano?

JACK smiles politely.

JACK
Buon giorno.

55

INT. WORKSHOP- DAY

55

The metal door slides open. FABIO leads JACK inside.

At the back of the cluttered workshop is a blue ALFA ROMEO being resprayed white. Beside it, one half of a LANCIA is being welded to another.

JACK knows better than to stare. He follows FABIO through to...

56

INT. BACK OFFICE- DAY

56

Girly calendars, Italian style.

JACK

I'm taking pictures forty minutes north of here. Right up in the mountains. Father Benedetto said you might be able to help.

FABIO

(in ITALIAN)

You need models. For your photographs? Italian girls?

He winks at JACK. He's being friendly.

JACK

My publisher wouldn't stretch to a four by four and the park trails are playing havoc with my chassis.

The technical English is slightly beyond FABIO's grasp.

This suits JACK.

FABIO

(in ITALIAN)

Want me to take a look?

JACK

Not really. I just need something to work on a ruptured driveshaft.

FABIO

(in ITALIAN)

You're a mechanic?

JACK

Just a hobby. I tinker.

JACK looks at the TOOLS hanging on the walls and littering the work benches.

FABIO shrugs.

FABIO

(in ITALIAN)

Help yourself. [In ENGLISH] My garage is your garage.

JACK

I appreciate that.

FABIO gets on with work, sliding himself beneath the resprayed Alfa Romeo.

JACK picks out various implements, laying them on the work surface: drill, hacksaw, lathe, vice, mallet.

Behind an oil pan with a jagged hole in it he discovers several GEAR WHEELS with the teeth sheared off. He holds the biggest one up.

JACK

Bene?

FABIO is engrossed his work.

FABIO

Si! Si! Va bene!

JACK

Quant'e?

FABIO grins and growls. A gearwheel with no bite is useless to him.

FABIO

Niente!

JACK wraps the gearwheel in a sheet of oily newspaper and puts it in the sports bag with the tools.

At the door, he pauses.

That's when JACK sees it on the notice board. A *PHOTOGRAPH* of *FATHER BENEDETTO* and *FABIO*. FABIO is much younger in this photo: fourteen or fifteen years old. He's wearing an AS Roma football strip. Again: the priest has his arm around the boy.

JACK

Ciao. Grazie.

FABIO

Ciao, Americano!

57 **INT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, CHURCH- DAY**

57

FATHER BENEDETTO rings the CHURCH BELLS for Mass.

58 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, CHURCH TOWER- CONTINUOUS**

58

THREE CHURCH BELLS ringing: large, medium and small.

As the CLAPPERS hit the SOUNDBOWS we smash cut to:

59 **INT. JACK'S ROOM, PENSIONE ABRUZZO- CONTINUOUS**

59

JACK has laid out his newly acquired tools on the flag stone floor of his room.

Beside them is the SOCIMI SUB-MACHINE GUN.

Using the CHURCH BELLS as sound cover...

...JACK puts the GEARWHEEL on a flag stone tile and smashes it into five pieces with a four pound MALLET.

60 **INT. PENSIONE ABRUZZO- NIGHT**

60

By torchlight, JACK is fashioning CONNECTORS from the smashed steel gear.

It's very, very tricky work and his eyes ache in the poor light.

61 **EXT. ITALIAN LANDSCAPE- DAY**

61

JACK is wearing a knapsack. He's crossing a MEADOW and making his way towards a RUINED HAMLET. His manner is dark, purposeful, alert.

The grass is long and the trees offer deep shade. JACK stops. Everywhere there is a profusion of wild flowers.

His guardedness begins to evaporate. He has never seen anything so beautiful or utterly uncorrupted. He looks around, transfixed by delicate yellows and mauves, brash whites, harsh and brilliant crimsons, exquisite blues. The air is humming with insects, bees and butterflies.

JACK is transfixed.

62 **EXT. RUINED HAMLET- DAY**

62

JACK scrambles up towards the abandoned houses, sweating in the heat.

His original cautiousness has returned. Carefully, he checks the area for signs of recent disturbance. From the foot of the deserted hamlet he surveys the VALLEY with binoculars, monitoring every square on an imaginary grid for human activity. Satisfied that he's alone, he takes a deep breath of mountain air.

And scrambles back down to the valley.

63 **EXT. WOODS- DAY**

63

JACK has parked his CITROEN in the shade of a squat but ample WALNUT TREE. In the near distance is a LAKE.

JACK crunches over half-formed walnuts until he reaches a patch of soft grass beside the water.

This, he decides, is the perfect spot. He unrolls a blanket, kneels, and from his KNAPSACK he produces:

-a polystyrene cool box packed with ice and containing a chilled bottle of *Frascati*

-a loaf of course bread

-50 gms of *pecorino*

-100 gms of *proscuitto*

-a small jar of black olives

-an orange

-and a rolled blanket containing the disassembled parts of the SOCIMI SUBMACHINE GUN.

JACK sets the stopwatch on his weather beaten ROLEX.

It takes approximately thirty-four seconds to assemble the bastardised SOCIMI- including TELESCOPIC SIGHTS and SOUND SUPPRESSOR- and a further six seconds to press TEN ROUNDS into the magazine, slot it into the base of the hand grip, snuggle the butt to his shoulder and place his eye beside the rubber cup on the sight.

He's fast.

Carefully he surveys the lake. Settles on a CLUMP OF REEDS. And with the focus and dexterity of a surgeon, concentrates until his grip and aim are perfectly tense and still.

A beat...

...as JACK holds his breath. Then squeezes the trigger.

CHOOP!

CHOOP!

CHOOP!

Not the conventional "phut, phut, phut" of a movie silencer, but the genuine dampened sonic boom of a TAC 65 sound suppressor.

Through the sight we see the water churn at four o'clock to the REED CLUMP and four metres off.

From the knapsack, JACK takes a watchmaker's steel-handled screwdriver and adjusts the sight, then loads another ten rounds in the magazine.

CHOOP! CHOOP! CHOOP!

The reeds are clipped, the bullets slapping into the bank behind, mud spurting.

JACK adjusts again and reloads.

CHOOP-CHOOP-CHOOP-CHOOP-CHOOP!

The reed clump is shot to shit.

64

INT. PENSIONE ABRUZZO- DAY

64

The sound of CHURCH BELLS.

JACK is at work:

-modifying the SOUND SUPPRESSOR to make it more efficient

-filing the CONNECTORS until the trigger squeeze is softer

-adjusting the position of the TELESCOPIC SIGHT mountings

And finally:

-checking the balance of the weapon: JACK poises it on the edge of a ruler over the pencil mark he has determined to be the gun's centre of gravity.

The SOCIMI balances perfectly.

By now the sun is low and the light fading. JACK's eyes are sore and his fingers aching.

He sits on his bed with his hands on his knees, silent in the dying light.

65

INT. BROTHEL, VIA LAMPEDUSA- NIGHT

65

We're in the living room of a small apartment. It's simply and attractively furnished. There are 2 GIRLS: not obviously hookers.

The FIRST GIRL is on her mobile phone. Every now and again she glances at JACK. The SECOND GIRL approaches him for a light.

JACK

E Clara qui?

[Is Clara here?]

SECOND GIRL

Non e stasera qui.

[She's not here tonight.]

She loops her arm through JACK's.

SECOND GIRL
Volete una bevanda?
 [Would you like a drink?]

JACK shakes his head.

JACK
Forse un altro tempo.
 [Perhaps another time.]

66

EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE- NIGHT

66

JACK parks in his usual hiding spot and heads for his pensione.

A hundred yards ahead of him on the other side of the street is the same YOUNG MAN he spotted in Castelveccio.

Cautiously, so as not to spook him, JACK continues walking, passing his pensione and heading for the town square.

The YOUNG MAN is four parked cars away, leaning against a Fiat parked in front of a small pharmacy, his right hand on the roof, bending over as if speaking to the car's local occupant who appears to be giving him directions.

Twice he looks up and gazes along the street in both directions, casually, as if keeping an eye open for passing traffic in the narrow street.

...JACK side steps swiftly into the local bar.

67

INT. BAR- DAY

67

Crowded with locals. JACK orders a coffee.

Through the window he tries to keep an surreptitious eye on the YOUNG MAN. But the darkness outside throws back reflections of the bright neon-lit bar within.

One reflection catches our attention.

The Italian girl. CLARA.

She is drinking and laughing with friends, young Italians like her. She catches sight of JACK.

He turns away.

68

EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE- NIGHT

68

JACK comes out of the bar with his hand in his pocket.

No sign of the YOUNG MAN.

He slips down a side street.

69 **EXT. SIDE STREETS- NIGHT**

69

JACK slips from one side street to another taking full advantage of short-cuts, alleyways and crumbling walls. His route is circuitous. It betrays a perfect knowledge of the maze-like back streets of the town.

Eventually JACK peeps out of a tiny passageway half-way down his own street and on the opposite side of the road from his PENSIONE.

The entrance to the PENSIONE is clear.

JACK crosses the street and slips inside.

70 **INT. PENSIONE ABRUZZO- NIGHT**

70

We're in the corridor outside JACK'S ROOM.

JACK takes his right hand from his pocket.

He's clutching the WALTHER.

Slowly, he reaches his left hand upwards, towards the lintel above the door where he finds...

...a single FEATHER.

71 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- NIGHT**

71

From the inside of the room we watch four sturdily fashioned deadbolt locks slide open. Each lock is new and home made.

JACK enters, shuts the door, locks all four bolts. And sits on the bed.

72 **EXT. ROADSIDE PAY PHONE- MORNING**

72

A cluster of houses by the side of a main road: a bar, a restaurant, a phone box.

JACK puts a coin in the slot. *Two rings.*

LARRY (V.O.)

Jack?

JACK

I've got company.

JACK scans the area outside.

JACK

If he's not baby-sitting the Belgian contract then he's either a Joe, a cop or a shooter. He's not with The Company, they're fast: it's been three days and no TA. He's not intel: they're deep background and he *wants* to be noticed. He might be a cowboy but he can't be a cop: they work in pairs and he's alone. Strike *Guarda di Finanza*, State Police and NOCS: he's not Italian- he doesn't look like one, dress like one or behave like one. So who the hell is he?

A beat.

JACK

Larry?

LARRY (V.O.)

You got a long list of enemies, Jack.

JACK

What's he waiting for?

JACK hears the sound of an engine.

His hand moves to his pocket.

LARRY (V.O.)

Jack?

He watches a black VW SHARON pass. There's a family inside.

LARRY (V.O.)

Want me to help take care of this?

JACK

I can handle it.

LARRY (V.O.)

You sound spooked.

JACK

It's a bad line.

LARRY (V.O.)

Jack?

JACK

Yes?

LARRY (V.O.)

I appreciate the value of a pre-emptive strike in circumstances like these, I really do, but if you're going to go Generation Kill then do me a favour, OK, because I'm running out of bribe money. [A BEAT] *Make it look like an accident.*

73

EXT. TRAIN STATION- DAY

73

Little more than a halt: one platform, one track, one station building- locked and shuttered.

JACK steps out of his car.

No one around.

He checks his watch: it's exactly noon.

A TRAIN approaches.

It's a three-carriage local. It rattles round the bend in the track up the valley, diesel fumes pluming. There are no more than a dozen passengers on board.

MATHILDE is the only one to alight.

Her once brown hair is now BLONDE. She's wearing a light summer skirt and carrying a navy blue canvas sports bag.

They shake hands as the train pulls away, belching and honking as it rattles over the girders of an iron bridge and crosses some alpine rapids.

MATHILDE

Mr. Clarke. How good to see you again.

Something quaint, old fashioned in her diction. English with the hint of a Belgian accent.

JACK opens the boot of his car and she places her sports bag beside a WICKER PICNIC HAMPER.

MATHILDE

Refreshments?

JACK

The Carabinieri around here like roadblocks. It's cover.

She nods.

They get into the car.

As the JACK's door slams we smash cut to:

74

INT. CAR- DAY

74

MATHILDE's sunglasses reflect the alpine landscape.

MATHILDE

You picked a beautiful spot.

She takes off her shades.

Her once hazel eyes are now GREY-BLUE.

She glances round the hire car's drab plastic interior.

MATHILDE

You would be hard pressed to make a
fast get away in this.

Perhaps she's nervous. Her attempt at humour isn't working
and she stumbles slightly on her grammar:

MATHILDE

I would have thought you to have
had at least an Alfa Romeo.

JACK

This attracts less attention.

MATHILDE

Is it far?

JACK

Fifty minutes.

She looks up through the sun roof at the high mountains over
head.

MATHILDE

Up there?

JACK nods.

She eases herself back, resigned to a long climb.

MATHILDE

The train was tiring. One has to
keep alert so much in cities.

Her eyelids are drooping.

JACK

I'll wake you before the turn-off.

She smiles gratefully. But does not shut her tired eyes.

The CLOCK on the dash reads 12:17

75

INT. CAR- DAY

75

JACK negotiates the alpine road, leaning into the steering wheel, shifting up or down a gear and glancing from the mirror to the road and back again

MATHILDE is asleep.

JACK scans her, taking in every detail: her low-heeled shoes are expensive but she wears no jewelry except a Seiko wrist-watch on a metal strap and a thin gold chain at her throat. Her tan is light, her breasts neat and her legs shapely and recently waxed.

But JACK doesn't look at her like an object of desire. He looks at her cautiously, with an expression that says: "this young woman is ruthless. If she were not, she wouldn't be alive."

That's when he notices the CAR in his rear view mirror.

It's too far behind to decipher the make or model and it weaves in and out of frame as JACK negotiates the alpine road.

MATHILDE wakes with a start. *The CLOCK on the dash reads 13:05.*

MATHILDE

Are we nearly there?

JACK

The turn-off's up ahead.

His eyes flick to the rear view mirror. Hers to the wing.

She spots the CAR behind. JACK catches her eye questioningly.

MATHILDE

I told you I work alone.

JACK slows just before the turn off and pulls over.

Then stops.

Now it's MATHILDE's turn to look questioning.

JACK

Just a precaution.

He gets out of the car and pretends to urinate.

The CAR behind passes at speed.

A blue Seat. The driver neither slows down nor looks in their direction.

JACK gets back in the car.

And turns off up a dirt track that disappears into the meadows.

76

EXT. WOODS- DAY

76

JACK parks his CITROEN in the shade of the squat but ample WALNUT TREE. In the near distance is a large LAKE. This is the exact spot where he came to test the weapon.

MATHILDE gets out of the car and stretches.

MATHILDE

Are those houses occupied?

JACK looks at the RUINED HAMLET on the hillside.

JACK

Derelict. I checked three days ago.

MATHILDE

We should check again.

JACK

I'll check alone. There are adders the mountains. And vipers. Your shoes.

MATHILDE

I'll be careful.

Her voice is curt. The trust she showed him in the car is gone now.

77

EXT. ITALIAN LANDSCAPE- DAY

77

They cross a meadow and make their way towards the RUINED HAMLET. The grass is long and the trees offer deep shade. JACK walks in front to ward off any snakes.

Everywhere there is a profusion of wild meadow flowers. MATHILDE has never seen anything so beautiful. Overwhelmed, she stops.

JACK stops. And watches her.

She undergoes the same transformation that he did.

Then she comes to, remembering herself... and walks on.

Suddenly... a four foot ASP VIPER slithers across JACK's path.

He claps his hands and the SNAKE writhes for cover.

JACK walks on. MATHILDE follows, pretending not to be frightened but walking closer to JACK now, scanning the long grass warily.

78

EXT. RUINED HAMLET- DAY

78

JACK scrambles up towards the houses, checking the area for signs of recent disturbance. MATHILDE follows.

From beside the end building JACK surveys the valley with a tiny pair of binoculars, monitoring every square on the imaginary grid for human activity.

MATHILDE

You have tested the gun here
before?

JACK

Yes.

Satisfied that he's alone, he lowers his binoculars. MATHILDE takes a deep breath of mountain air.

MATHILDE

It's beautiful here.

She is sitting on a loose stone wall at the edge of what was once a terraced field. Her dress dips between her legs as she leans forward and rests her forearms on her knees, tired from the journey and the long, hot climb.

MATHILDE

I wish everywhere could be this
tranquil.

JACK looks at her, sensing a kindred spirit.

JACK

You'd be out of a job.

MATHILDE

You don't like the peace?

JACK

It's hard to like something you
know nothing about.

79

EXT. WOODS- DAY

79

The WICKER PICNIC HAMPER is sitting on a rug by between the parked car and the lake. From the hamper, JACK removes:

-a polystyrene cool box packed with ice and containing a chilled bottle of *Aspirinio*

-a loaf of course bread

-two clods of *mozarella*

-150 gms of *proscuitto*

-100 gms of parma ham

-a large jar of pitted green olives

-a Thermos of sweet black coffee

-and, wrapped in cloth squares, the disassembled parts of the improved SOCIMI SUBMACHINE GUN.

As MATHILDE starts to assemble the weapon with easy skill, JACK checks the stopwatch on his ROLEX.

It takes her approximately twenty-eight seconds to assemble the bastardised gun- including TELESCOPIC SIGHTS and SOUND SUPPRESSOR- and a further three seconds to slot the empty magazine into the base of the hand grip, snuggle the butt to her shoulder and place her eye beside the rubber cup on the sight.

She's almost ten seconds faster than JACK.

He stares at her: not an alluring young woman with good legs and nice tits but an extension of the weapon itself and everything it means.

MATHILDE

Rounds?

JACK

I've made up two sorts.

He reaches into the PICNIC HAMPER.

JACK

Thirty lead and thirty jacketed.

MATHILDE

I should like a hundred of each.

It's an order: her voice is emotionless.

MATHILDE

And fifty explosive.

JACK

Not a problem.

He hands her the practise ammunition in two small cartridge boxes: the shells snug in little plastic trays.

JACK

Will mercury do?

She smiles almost imperceptibly.

MATHILDE

Mercury will do very nicely.

She puts the gun down butt-first, leaning it against the side of the car.

MATHILDE

I have made my own targets.

She reaches into her BLUE CANVAS SPORTS BAG and removes several pieces of folded cardboard strengthened with split bamboo cane.

Without speaking she sets off through the alpine blooms. In her wake flutter a confetti of butterflies and grass crickets, honey bees sizzling frantically as her loose summer skirt sweeps across the flowers.

JACK

Watch out for vipers.

He keeps his voice down but she hears him nonetheless, waving with her right hand: the hand holding the AMMUNITION BOXES. She's no fool.

Neither is he. He has the gun.

At ninety meters distance she stops beside a pile of smooth stones- a boundary cairn- overgrown with little purple trumpet blooms.

She unfolds the cardboard. At this distance all we can make out is a silver-grey shape against the stones.

Returning to the car she picks up the weapon.

MATHILDE

Muzzle velocity?

JACK

At least three hundred and sixty miles per hour. That's including twenty off the top for the sound suppression.

Impressed, MATHILDE looks at the marks on the metal where the serial number has been removed with acid.

MATHILDE

Socimi?

JACK

Eight-two-one.

MATHILDE

I've not had one before.

JACK

You'll find it easy. I've re-balanced it for the longer barrel. The fulcrum is two centimetres forward of the grip now. Which won't matter if you're firing- and I'm guessing you are- from a fixed position.

No answer.

JACK

No major recoil issues. You should be able to hold onto any target. Even the smallest.

MATHILDE puts two jacketed rounds into the magazine and stands with her feet apart, braced. The breeze beneath the walnut tree ruffles her summer skirt and presses it against her legs.

CHOOP! CHOOP!

For a moment longer she holds on the target then lowers the gun, holding it under her arm like a lady on a shire hunt would hold a 12 bore.

MATHILDE

You've done a good job, Mr. Clarke.
Thank you. Thank you very much.

She makes a minute adjustment to the telescopic sight, with her fingernail. She can't have turned the vertical screw more than one notch.

Then she fully loads and fires again.

CHOOP-CHOOP-CHOOP!

JACK lifts his binoculars and looks at the target. It's the unmistakable outline of a BOEING 747-400, about one and a half metres long. Painted against the cut-out is the upturn at the end of the wing. The front doorway is shaded in. Standing in it is the SILHOUETTE OF A MAN. In the centre of his head are three small HOLES.

With the magazine containing the remaining 28 jacketed rounds, MATHILDE takes aim again.

CHOOP-CHOOP-CHOOP-CHOOP!

Through his binoculars, JACK can see the empty space where the target's head used to be, the scarred stones behind and the little scraps of cardboard floating on the warm air.

JACK

Good shot.

MATHILDE says nothing. She fills the magazine with lead rounds, snaps it in place and hands the weapon to JACK.

MATHILDE

Go to the stones and fire near me.

He's taken aback.

MATHILDE

Say...

She looks round for a target.

MATHILDE

...into the bush with the yellow flowers. Two bursts. Five seconds apart.

Slowly, JACK walks down to the stones, turns and looks back. The CITROEN is well hidden in the deep shade of the walnut tree. So is MATHILDE. In the poor light all he can see is her dress and her blouse. He wipes the sweat from his eyes and shuts them tightly.

This is not just a weapon test... it's a test of trust.

He opens his eyes again.

MATHILDE turns to face him as he shoulders the weapon.

He aims the SOCIMI at the YELLOW FLOWERS right beside her.

Holds his breath.

And pulls the trigger.

CHOOP! CHOOP!

MATHILDE remains untouched.

So do the YELLOW FLOWERS.

Troubled, JACK blinks rapidly and counts to five.

Then he fires again.

CHOOP! CHOOP! CHOOP!

Through the sight, we see two stems of YELLOW BLOSSOM fall sideways.

Relieved, JACK walks slowly back to the car.

MATHILDE

The sound suppression is superb. I couldn't place the direction of fire.

From her sports bag she removes a plain brown MANILLA ENVELOPE.

MATHILDE

I shall require the rounds and the weapon by the first of next month. In the meantime would you tighten the adjusting screws on the sight, they are too loose. And lengthen the stock by three centimetres. I also want a sixty round magazine.

JACK

You'll upset the balance.

MATHILDE

I'm prepared to accept that.

JACK

Then I'm happy to oblige.

MATHILDE

What about the a case?

JACK

A briefcase. Samsonite. Standard pattern in black with combination locks. Is there a number you'd prefer?

She thinks.

MATHILDE

Eight-two-one.

JACK

Eight-two-one.

MATHILDE hands him the ENVELOPE and disassembles the weapon.

JACK wraps the SOCIMI parts up in their cloth squares and places them in the bottom of the PICNIC HAMPER.

MATHILDE

What do you want done with these?

She has collected up the spent CARTRIDGE CASES.

JACK

Throw them in the lake.

She walks down to the water and hurls the brass cases in.

FISH rise.

Again, the beauty of the place transfixes her.

By the time she turns back, JACK has laid out the picnic.

MATHILDE
How thoughtful.

She picks up a bottle of wine.

MATHILDE
I don't know Italian wine.

JACK
Aspirinio. Like Mosacata but
frizzante.

Deftly he uncorks a bottle.

And pours it into the grass.

JACK
It wouldn't look right if the
picnic wasn't touched.

MATHILDE
You chilled the wine. I thought...

JACK
It *had* to be chilled. They're
Italian cops.

MATHILDE
(disappointed)
You think of everything.

JACK
I'm paid to. Don't move.

She freezes.

JACK points slowly.

On her tanned forearm is a BUTTERFLY.

MATHILDE
Wow.

They both stare at the insect, transfixed.

MATHILDE
It's so beautiful.

JACK
Parnassius apollo. It's endangered.

She looks up at him. Like it's a revelation she says:

MATHILDE
You *like* coming here.

JACK
It serves its purpose.

MATHILDE
You've never taken a woman here
before?

JACK is momentarily taken aback.

JACK
No.

The BUTTERFLY flits away.

MATHILDE
(sadly)
Perhaps you do not have a woman in
your life. It is not easy for us to
keep relationships. Not in our
world.

JACK
I have an acquaintance.

A beat.

She waits for him to say more.

He doesn't.

MATHILDE
Friendships are transitory. It
is...

Suddenly, there's movement in the bushes.

JACK snatches up his BINOCULARS. MATHILDE scans the tree
cover.

JACK
Wild boar.

He hands her the binoculars. And hurriedly packs up the
picnic.

80

INT. CAR- DAY

80

Her sunglasses back on, MATHILDE watches the meadows slip
backwards in the nearside wing mirror as the car bumps back
down the alpine track.

MATHILDE
I wish you hadn't brought me here.

Again... a real sadness.

JACK glances at her.

MATHILDE

This is the sort of place I wish
I'd discovered by myself. Then
maybe one day I could have retired
here. But you already know it.

JACK is touched.

JACK

I'm much older than you. By the
time you've retired I'll be dead.

81 **EXT. RURAL TRAIN STATION- DAY**

81

The CITROEN pulls up.

82 **INT. CITROEN- DAY**

82

The YOUNG WOMAN's manner is once more tense and formal.

MATHILDE

We will meet as before?

JACK nods.

The distant sound of a DIESEL ENGINE. The train is
approaching.

MATHILDE

On the first of next month?

He nods again.

MATHILDE

Around noon?

Not even a nod this time: just a slow blink.

MATHILDE opens the door, runs around to the boot and grabs
her canvas sports bag. Then returns to the passenger side of
the car and looks in.

MATHILDE

Thank you for a lovely day. *Mr.
Butterfly.*

She leans in..

*...and kisses him lightly on the cheek, her lips light and
quick on his stubble.*

MATHILDE

You must take your mistress to the
meadow for a picnic.

She closes the car door, walks onto the platform and vanishes onto a waiting carriage. The TRAIN honks and belches, moving off down the track in the direction from which it came.

JACK watches it go.

And drives off.

Confused.

83

INT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, LOCAL BAR- NIGHT

83

Two OLD MEN drinking beer at the bar. Two more at a table, playing Scopa with old fashioned Trentine playing cards.

Sitting at the back of the room, JACK stares at a shot of Grappa.

Above him, mounted on the wall, is a TELEVISION. On the TV is a Western: Charles Bronson and Henry Fonda in ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST.

JACK downs his shot, gets up and walks over to the bar. Pays.

The BARMAN nods at the screen.

BARMAN
Sergio Leone. *Italiano*.

JACK turns and looks.

HENRY FONDA in close-up, is about to shoot a red headed BOY of seven in the head.

JACK stares. *Just at the moment that the gun goes off...*

...JACK turns away.

BARMAN
(in poor ENGLISH)
You like cow boy movie?

JACK thinks.

Then shakes his head.

JACK
Hokey.

84

INT. BROTHEL, VIA LAMPEDUSA- NIGHT

84

CLARA and JACK are naked.

JACK tries to kiss her on the lips but CLARA turns away: just enough to let him know this is against the rules.

JACK kisses her neck. Her breasts. Her stomach.

As he moves his head between her legs, her fingers (already ensnared in his hair) tighten their grip, stopping him from going further.

JACK looks up at CLARA, across her belly, and she looks back at him, her expression fixed yet curious.

Against her rules but not, we sense, against her wishes, JACK kisses CLARA softly, tenderly, deeply until she is moving against his tongue, using her sex like a mouth to kiss him in return.

They make love, breaking each of Clara's two remaining rules in turn. First: JACK puts her in a position she initially resists. Then: he kisses her.

CLARA comes, not wanting to.

Suddenly, preoccupied, JACK does not.

85

INT. BROTHEL, VIA LAMPEDUSA- NIGHT

85

JACK is in bed with CLARA.

CLARA

Morboso?

She looks at him.

CLARA

(with certainty)

Morboso.

JACK

Morboso?

CLARA

Morboso is like... when you can't stop thinking about something.

He stares back at her: wordless.

CLARA

Or someone.

A long pause: her eyes searching his. JACK sits up, lights a cigarette and stands by the window, looking through the blind, down into the street.

JACK

You needn't act.

CLARA

Act?

CLARA watches him, confused but fascinated.

JACK

You might have to act with your
other clients but you don't have to
pretend anything at all with me.

She lights herself a cigarette.

JACK

I want you to be yourself with me.
Be as indifferent as you like. I
came here to get pleasure, not to
give it.

He hands her CASH.

She counts it.

CLARA

Maybe I pretend very well. I got
more tip than the other girls
usually get.

He walks to the door.

Pauses.

JACK

I don't sleep with the other girls.

And leaves.

86

INT. JACK'S ROOM- NIGHT

86

JACK is asleep.

He is not alone.

In the bed beside him:

INGRID.

Pale as death.

Eyes rolled back in her sockets.

* * *

JACK wakes up suddenly, gasping.

The bed is empty, the sheets twisted and damp.

87 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE- DAWN**

87

SUNRISE...

...over one of the most desolate and beautiful landscapes in all Italy.

88 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- DAWN**

88

In the gun-metal light of dawn, fiddly work:

-cartridges taken apart

-tiny holes drilled in the nose to a depth of precisely 3mm

-the hole half-filled with mercury

-and plugged with a drop of liquid lead.

JACK is converting jacketed ammunition into EXPLOSIVE BULLETS.

89 **INT. CHURCH- DAY**

89

Outside, the sun is merciless. Inside, JACK has taken refuge in the cool of the church. He is alone. He is not praying. Just staring impassively at the gaudy crucifixion: at the thorns and the nails and the running blood.

Footsteps. JACK checks for reflections in his watch.

It's FATHER BENEDETTO: dressed for Mass.

FATHER BENEDETTO
I've been looking for you.

He mops the sweat from his brow with the hem of his Soutane, takes JACK by the arm and leads him to one side, away from the light of the candles.

FATHER BENEDETTO
A man was here asking questions about you.

A beat.

JACK
Here?

FATHER BENEDETTO
He came to the church this afternoon.

JACK
What did he want?

FATHER BENEDETTO
To know where you live. He said he
was a friend from Switzerland.

JACK
Switzerland?

JACK thinks.

JACK
And you told him?

The priest looks at with complete disdain:

FATHER BENEDETTO
Of course I do not tell him. How do
I know him? He is maybe the police.
Certainly he is no friend. A friend
would know your pensione.
Besides...

FATHER BENEDETTO leans close and whispers:

FATHER BENEDETTO
Friends do not carry guns.

FATHER BENEDETTO glances shrewdly at JACK, his eyes searching
into him.

FATHER BENEDETTO
If you live in Italy, and you are a
man of the cloth, you meet many
people. Besides, I lived once in
Naples. If you live in Naples you
know the difference between a fat
wallet and a... *custodia per armi
di spalla*. How you say in English?

JACK
Shoulder holster.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Si.

JACK glances up and down the aisle.

OLD LADIES are dribbling into church in twos and threes.

The BELL for mass starts ringing.

JACK
You're a true friend, father.

FATHER BENEDETTO
I am a priest.

JACK turns to go.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Signor Clarke?

Again the priest leans close, holding JACK by the elbow in a gesture of austere confidence.

FATHER BENEDETTO
I make a mistake. He did not say he was from *La Svizzera*: Switzerland. He said- forgive me the names in Italian are so similar- *La Svezia*: Sweden.

90

EXT. CHURCH, ROOF- DAY

90

THREE BELLS are ringing in the tower. Beneath them, a row of mediaeval GARGOYLES (dragons, griffins, dogs and devils) look down over the little town, their faces frightening or frightened.

JACK is among the gargoyles, leaning over parapet, his eyes made huge by a pair of tiny binoculars, surveying the town below, checking each square of the grid for a glimpse of the YOUNG MAN.

Nothing. Then he notices:

Parked in the shadow of a spreading chestnut tree not far from the main square. An AUDI...

...with the YOUNG MAN we spotted in Castelveccio market sitting at the wheel.

91

EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, STREET- NIGHT

91

The YOUNG MAN comes out of a shop.

This is the first time we've seen him up close. In his early thirties, he's wearing a dark brown leather jacket and expensive jeans. His blonde hair is cropped short, and there's the hint of a botched prison-cell tattoo visible just beneath the collar of his shirt.

The YOUNG MAN opens a small silver tin and a single deft movement removes a portion of SNUS (Swedish chewing tobacco) and inserts the it between his top lip and gum.

It is a strangely sinister act.

Then he blends in with the tourists, milling down the Corso and round the square heading towards...

92

INT. BAR- NIGHT

92

JACK is sitting in the window, making himself as visible as possible to the world outside.

He downs a Grappa: then gets up to pay for it. His movements are slow and leisurely.

The BARMAN hands him his change. And a small white ENVELOPE.

JACK is not expecting this.

BARMAN
(in ITALIAN)
Someone left this for
"L'Americano". This afternoon.

JACK looks at the ENVELOPE.

JACK
Grazie.

He turns casually away from the BARMAN's prying eyes and opens the envelope with extreme caution.

Inside is a folded CUTTING. It's from the Swedish Daily newspaper ÖSTERSUNDS-POSTEN.

JACK unfolds the cutting. We catch a glimpse of:

-Ingrid's dacha.

-A police line.

-Three dead bodies in the snow: the two hitmen and the girl.

Heart racing, JACK slips the cutting in his pocket.

Grabs three SUGAR CUBES from a silver bowl on the bar.

And leaves.

93

EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, TOWN SQUARE- NIGHT

93

The YOUNG MAN is watching a PUPPET SHOW in the middle of the square. The PUPPETEER is using glove puppets and the Punch and Judy style performance involves Punch fucking Judy with a grotesquely carved, outsize sex organ. There is a large crowd gathered.

JACK leaves the bar, turning left and walking purposefully down the street.

The YOUNG MAN follows.

94

EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, CORSO FREDERICO- NIGHT

94

It's a hot summer night and there are more tourists than usual.

The YOUNG MAN uses them as cover.

JACK turns down a dark, deserted alleyway.

The YOUNG MAN hesitates.

His right hand moves casually to his jacket pocket.

And he follows.

95

EXT. ALLEYWAY- NIGHT

95

We're with the YOUNG MAN as he stalks his prey through the mediaeval maze of streets...

We end up in the narrow alleyway that JACK photographed on his first day in town.

Up ahead, *disappearing round a distant bend*, we catch a glimpse of JACK, his heels CLACKING on the cobbles.

The YOUNG MAN follows swiftly, his trainers silent. He gets to a crossroads where FOUR NARROW ALLEYWAYS- all identical- converge. The YOUNG MAN is unsure which alleyway to take.

The streets are empty.

He listens.

From an upstairs window he can hear the soundtrack of a late night film on television. It's a romantic film, the violins muffled and sad with longing.

From another alleyway comes the sound of SAVAGE BARKING. The YOUNG MAN looks around for the source of the barking, but the streets are empty.

Suddenly, the barking stops.

The YOUNG MAN looks confused.

From his right hand jacket pocket we hear the unmistakable CLICK of a cocking mechanism.

96

EXT. COURTYARD- NIGHT

96

We're recognise the secret courtyard: the one reached by means of the hidden archway.

With one hand, JACK feeds another SUGAR CUBE to the MONGREL.

With the other hand, he holds his WALTHER behind his back...
...and cocks it.

97

EXT. ALLEYWAY- NIGHT

97

The YOUNG MAN is waiting at the far end of the alleyway, hugging the wall, scanning the CROSSROADS ahead, unsure which of the four possible alleyways holds his prey.

JACK emerges from the HIDDEN ARCHWAY and walks quickly up behind him.

JACK has removed his shoes and his bare feet are silent.

He has thirty metres to cover. The gun hangs heavy in his right hand. It's fitted with a TAC 65 SOUND SUPPRESSOR. He raises his right hand.

Twenty metres.

The gun is pointing at the YOUNG MAN.

Fifteen metres.

His finger takes up the slack of the trigger.

Ten meters.

Then:

A DUCATI turns into the alleyway behind JACK, its headlights on full beam.

JACK drops his right hand and thrusts his silenced WALTHER deep into his jacket pocket.

The YOUNG MAN looks his way.

JACK is outlined by the moped's beam of light.

The two men are face to face, within spitting distance.

The DUCATI hurtles towards the YOUNG MAN.

The MAN ON THE DUCATI is wearing a tinted BLACK CRASH HELMET.

The YOUNG MAN's eyes widen with fear.

BANG!

The DUCATI misfires.

Mistaking the sound for gunfire, the YOUNG MAN drops, rolls and fires back.

We hear the sound of a single suppressed shot: CHOOP!

The BULLET grazes the FRONT SUSPENSION of the DUCATI and lodges in the REAR COWLING.

The MAN ON THE DUCATI swerves and crashes, hitting a stone staircase.

JACK looks around.

The YOUNG MAN has disappeared.

The MAN ON THE DUCATI is out cold.

The front wheel of his DUCATI turns slowly, squeaking.

CHOOP!

A bullet hits the road not far from JACK.

CHOOP!

Another bullet hits the wall behind him.

Swiftly, JACK grabs hold of the battered 1970s DUCATI...

98 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, MEDIAEVAL MAZE- NIGHT** 98

JACK rides the classic DUCATI, turning left and right without hesitation, through archways, down steps, dropping level by level, cursing in time with his jagged breathing until...

99 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN- NIGHT** 99

JACK emerges from the bottom of the town and races away on the winding road.

Silence. All we can hear are the crickets.

Then the sound of a car.

An AUDI tears past us, following JACK out of town.

100 **EXT. ALPINE ROAD- NIGHT** 100

JACK is heading for the mountains. He takes the first corner at 70 MPH.

The AUDI gleams black in the moonlight. Gaining on him.

101 **EXT. ANOTHER ANGLE- NIGHT** 101

JACK takes the next bend at top speed, his classic 1970 1000cc engine howling.

The AUDI slows, then powers through the bend, accelerating.

102 **INT. AUDI- NIGHT** 102

The YOUNG MAN puts his foot down.

The SPEEDOMETER climbs.

103 **EXT. ALPINE ROAD- NIGHT** 103

The AUDI comes up swiftly behind Jack's DUCATI and tries to ram him.

JACK dodges the AUDI, swerving from one side of the road to another.

104 **EXT. VIADUCT- NIGHT** 104

A soaring concrete bridge spans a plunging alpine valley.

The AUDI overtakes the DUCATI, then swerves left, trying to crush JACK against the concrete barrier that masks a three hundred and fifty foot fall.

JACK breaks hard and the AUDI misses him, smashing into the concrete barrier amidst a shower of sparks and screeching metal.

The AUDI follows the DUCATI into...

105 **EXT. ALPINE TUNNEL- NIGHT** 105

Long, dark, neon-lit... and blind curved.

The AUDI comes up fast behind the DUCATI.

Jack swerves the DUCATI onto the other side of the road.

The AUDI swerves left and tries to crush JACK into the left-hand wall of the tunnel.

Suddenly, a CAR comes round the bend.

What happens next happens fast:

JACK swerves left and skids into a SERVICE LAY-BY, narrowly avoiding the CAR.

The lay-by is small and JACK has to slide the DUCATI on it's side as he crashes it into the box-like space.

The lay-by is too small for the AUDI.

The AUDI and oncoming CAR collide.

The AUDI's crumple zones buckle as both vehicles' bonnets concertina like a road safety test.

The AUDI has air bags. The oncoming CAR does not.

On impact, its DRIVER goes through the windscreen of his own car and onwards, through the windscreen of the AUDI.

The wreckage is awesome.

Deep within the mangled metal of the two cars...

...the YOUNG MAN groans and twitches.

JACK appears at the crumpled window of the AUDI.

He reaches through the broken window, grabs the YOUNG MAN by the head...

...and breaks his neck.

106 **EXT. WOODS- DAWN**

106

JACK washes away the worst of the dirt and the blood in a MOUNTAIN STREAM.

107 **EXT. ROAD- DAY**

107

JACK on the DUCATI.

Turns off at a sign for L'AQUILA.

108 **EXT. L'AQUILA- MORNING**

108

L'AQUILA is the nearest and largest town in the region. It's also the location of the Via Lampedusa brothel.

JACK comes out of a pharmacy and quite literally bumps into CLARA.

He winces with pain.

CLARA

Buon giorno!

JACK

Buon giorno.

CLARA

You are hurt?

JACK

I'm fine.

CLARA

What's wrong with you?

JACK
It's nothing really. Just a broken
rib. *Un costollo rotta?*

CLARA
Stronzo! Let me help you!

JACK
I came off my bike.

CLARA
But you have to go to the hospital!

JACK
No, no, no. I have pain killers. I
just need a strong cup of coffee.

CLARA
I know a place which make the
strongest coffee in L'Aquila.

Her limpid brown eyes twinkle.

109

INT. CLARA'S APARTMENT- DAY

109

A small, simply furnished bedroom with a bed, a desk and a
chair.

As he sips a large cup of strong black coffee, CLARA cleans a
vicious welt on his right shoulder blade.

*As the dirt and blood come away she reveals an exquisite
tattoo...*

...of a BUTTERFLY.

CLARA
*Ve bene. Tutto posto. Signor
Farfalla.* [Good. Everything's OK.
Mr. Butterfly.]

His eyes open wide and he turns to her quickly.

JACK
Why d'you call me that?

A beat.

CLARA
You have a tattoo. On your back.

Of course.

He relaxes.

But not completely.

110

EXT. CASTELVECCHIO- DAY

110

The situation at the beginning of the movie is perfectly reversed.

From the relative safety of CASTELVECCHIO, JACK watches CASTEL DEL MONTE through binoculars:

-The Phone Box.

-The Bar.

-The pensione D'Abruzzo.

No sign of the police. No sign of any Shadow Dwellers.

111

EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, TOWN SQUARE- SUNSET

111

JACK is in his usual phone box. His manner is quietly purposeful.

JACK

How did he know I was here, Larry?

LARRY (V.O.)

You think I hired him?

A beat.

LARRY (V.O.)

Are you out of your fucking mind, Jack?

JACK

I doubt it.

LARRY (V.O.)

After everything I've done for you? The car, the cell phone (which you threw away), the safehouse, the fake passport? Someone has to pay for this shit, Jack! I have to pay for this shit. It comes out of my commission. You're my lousy profit margin. Why the fuck would I take a contract out on my own profit margin? You're not thinking straight. I was the one who told you to leave town! I told you to come to Rome! God damn it you've got a job to do! Why the Hell would I...

WHAM!

Something smacks into the phone box at high speed.

JACK drops to his knees and reaches for his WALTHER.

Outside the phone box three TEENAGERS are kicking a FOOTBALL around.

112 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- NIGHT**

112

TINS of fruit drops: three kinds: *black cherry, pineapple* and *lemon*. Each tin is emptied of its fruit drops.

Twenty rounds of ammunition- each round packed in silica- fit exactly into each tin.

Lead rounds in the black cherry, *jacketed* in the pineapple and *explosive* in the lemon.

JACK re-seals each tin with sellotape.

113 **EXT. L'AQUILA, CORSO FREDERICO II - DAY**

113

The colonnades of this popular pedestrian street are crowded with window shoppers, tourists taking coffee, old men discussing politics and office girls walking hand in hand and chattering like songbirds.

JACK is in dark glasses. He's sitting in a coffee shop under the colonnade sucking a fruit drop and reading a copy of *Il Messaggero*.

C.U. we see he's studying a small column concerning the murder of two prostitutes in the nearby city of Chieti.

JACK spots CLARA walking along the corso. She's with a girl he has not seen before. ANNA. ANNA is small town girl with a keen sense of fashion. She and CLARA are hand in hand.

CLARA sees JACK and speaks to her friend.

They cross through the throng of boulevardiers.

CLARA

My friend Anna. This is my friend
Signor Farfalla.

CLARA's eyes twinkle mischievously.

The girls cease to hold hands and ANNA offers hers to JACK. JACK half rises like the perfect gentlemen, folding his newspaper and accepting ANNA's greeting.

JACK

How do you do?

ANNA

I am very well thank you.

Ah. This is to be an impromptu English lesson. JACK acquiesces gracefully.

JACK
Will you take a coffee with me?

CLARA
That would be very good.

He indicates two empty chairs.

JACK
Prego.

CLARA moves her chair to sit closer to JACK. Under the table, her knee presses against his.

ANNA also moves her chair nearer to JACK: but her motive is to move it out of the sun. She is not flirting.

CLARA
Anna is learning English.

JACK
Have you been to England?

ANNA seems momentarily confused.

ANNA
But you are...

She looks at CLARA.

ANNA
Lui Americano?

JACK
I am.

JACK glances at CLARA.

How much has she told her friend?

ANNA
Ah. I have not been to England only to France. But I would love to go to America.

The WAITER comes over.

JACK
Due cappuccini e un cafe corretto.

CLARA
Anna is like all Italians. She thinks America is like in the movies. Little Italy, "West Side Story", "Chicago".
(MORE)

CLARA (cont'd)
 I tell her in these times America
 is like here, there, anywhere. The
 streets are not... pave-ed with
 gold.

She beams happily at JACK. He smiles back at her.

JACK
 If not with gold, than at least not
 with enough medieval cobbles to
 loosen every-self tapping screw in
 a Fiat.

JACK beams. Neither girl understands. But everyone smiles
 happily.

The WAITER brings the coffee and CLARA insists on paying.

JACK
 Where do you come from, Anna?

ANNA frowns. JACK plays teacher.

JACK
Dove abita?

ANNA
 Ah, yes! I live in Via dell'
 Argilla. Nearby to Clara.

JACK briefly wonders what else he could teach her. He scans
 both girls and decides CLARA is the prettier. CLARA seems to
 sense this. She smiles to herself.

JACK is touched.

114

EXT. CORSO FREDERICO II, L'AQUILA- DAY

114

We cut wide and watch JACK talk inconsequentialities with the
 girls. They stand to go. JACK rises.

CLARA
 Perhaps we will have a drink
 together soon? I am free...

Her words sound rehearsed. She considers a crowded timetable.

CLARA
 ...on Monday.

JACK
 Great. I'll see you then.

CLARA
 But Eduardo... Where would you like
 to meet?

Again: rehearsed. JACK is not expecting this. CLARA looks at him mischievously. ANNA is listening.

JACK
How about our usual place?

CLARA
Our usual place?

She feigns complete perplexity.

CLARA
I forgot. Where is our usual place?

JACK
You've forgotten?

CLARA
Remind me.

The twinkle in her eye. She's testing him. JACK is the perfect gentleman.

JACK
Maybe we should try something different.

CLARA
Where would you like to try,
Eduardo?

A beat. JACK spots a restaurant on the opposite side of the road.

JACK
Locanda Grapelli?

There is no warmth in his suggestion. But CLARA doesn't care.

CLARA
Locanda Grapelli! Si!

She looks genuinely delighted.

ANNA
This is the best food in the area.

JACK
Good.

CLARA
Seven?

JACK
Seven.

CLARA
Locanda Grapelli.

JACK
Locanda Grapelli.

CLARA
You'll be there?

JACK
I'll be there.

CLARA
See you then, Eduardo.

JACK
See you then, Clara. It was a
delight to meet you Anna.
Arrivederci.

ANNA
Arrivederci, Signor Farfalla.

There is an unmistakable twinkle in ANNA's eye. How much she knows is uncertain. She kisses him swiftly and softly on the cheek.

CLARA does the same on the lips. Behind the mischief in her eyes is something doubtful. Has she gone too far?

115 **EXT. DOWNTOWN L'AQUILA- DAY**

115

JACK visits three stores:

-In a PHOTOGRAPHIC SHOP he buys half a dozen FILM PROTECTION BAGS.

-In a HABERDASHERS he purchases several packets of HOOKS and EYES like the kind you find on brassieres.

-In a OFFICE SUPPLY SHOP he buys some custom made headed notepaper, invoice books, notepads, envelopes, metal pens, a calculator and a mobile phone.

116 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- NIGHT**

116

JACK opens a black combination lock SAMSONITE BRIEFCASE and lines the bottom and sides with the lead-lined film protection bags, cut to fit.

Into the base of the briefcase he glues pre-shaped pieces of firm grey plastic foam. These form the pockets into which he slots the constituent parts of the SOCIMI SUBMACHINE GUN. They fit perfectly.

Over this JACK uses the HOOKS and EYES to clip a false bottom: a tough card cover onto which are pasted the custom made headed notepaper, invoice books, notepads and envelopes.

To the briefcase's central divider he adds the metal pens, a calculator and a mobile phone. He sets the combination to 821. Then shuts and locks the BRIEFCASE.

This done he sits on the bed and stares at the case. With his work complete, he is struck by a terrible sense of emptiness.

117

EXT. PARCO DELLA RESISTENZA - JUST BEFORE DAWN

117

A small park not far from Castel Del Monte's town square.

It is just after dawn. The pine trees and the poplars are silent. The sun is not yet up but the day is light. Sparrows hop about, searching for crumbs.

JACK, ravaged by lack of sleep, wonders about like the demon of a lost darkness, looking for his hole down to the underworld.

FATHER BENEDETTO

Buon giorno!

He's twenty meters away, his hand raised in half-welcome, half-benediction.

They greet one another and FATHER BENEDETTO falls into slow step with JACK. The priest walks with his hands behind his back. JACK with his hands in his pockets.

FATHER BENEDETTO

I walk here to meditate. Once a week, Wednesday, the farthest one can travel in the week from the Sabbath. The trees are like the Stations of the Cross: by certain trees I thank God for certain favours he has granted me, or certain gifts he has made to me and all men. For example, here by this pine, I thank him for the many friendships I have and ask him to look after those of my friends who are troubled.

They reach a Cypress tree and FATHER BENEDETTO bows his head in prayer. After a while he says:

FATHER BENEDETTO

Some walk here in the cool of evening. Others come at night.

There is a slight sadness in his voice as he says to himself:

FATHER BENEDETTO

I wonder how many bastards have been made here?

He gives a small sideways glance at JACK.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Perhaps you'll stay and settle here
yourself?

JACK
What makes you think I'm leaving?

FATHER BENEDETTO
You told me as much when we first
met. Besides, those who seek for
peace seldom find it. They're
always moving on, looking
elsewhere. [A BEAT] And they are
usually sinners.

JACK
All men are sinners.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Some are greater sinners than
others. And those who seek peace
have *much* sinning in their history.

JACK
I don't seek peace. I never have.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Until now.

JACK
Perhaps. Perhaps I'll stay. The
valley. The villages. The
mountains.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Forgive me. This is the priest in
me speaking. And the friend. But
you have done much sinning, Signor
Clarke. You still do.

JACK
I see a whore. She's young enough
to be my daughter.

FATHER BENEDETTO
I do not refer to the sins of
carnality. But to the deadly
sins...

JACK
Aren't all sins equal?

FATHER BENEDETTO
We are not discussing theology, my
friend, but you. You like this
town, this valley.
(MORE)

FATHER BENEDETTO (cont'd)
You should like to remain here and
find your peace at last. Yet you
cannot. There is something you
cannot ignore. Some force. Some
enemy.

JACK is silent.

FATHER BENEDETTO
You want to speak but you dare not.
You know no one sufficiently well
to share your history with them.
You know I am trustworthy yet still
you are cautious.

FATHER BENEDETTO stops, compelling JACK to stop too- and face
him.

FATHER BENEDETTO
What job do you do, Signor? Are you
on the run, as they say?

JACK
Who says?

FATHER BENEDETTO
It's an expression, no?

JACK
Everyone's on the run from
something.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Some men watch *some* of the shadows.
You watch them all.

JACK
I've done nothing I didn't have
good cause to do.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Do you wish to tell me?

JACK
For what reason?

FATHER BENEDETTO
For your own sake. Perhaps I can
pray for you?

A change of pace.

JACK
I make things. Artifacts.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Counterfeit money?

JACK
Why do you say that?

FATHER BENEDETTO
You work in metal. You are given
some steel by Fabio, the car
doctor.

JACK
You know a lot about me.

FATHER BENEDETTO
I know only what you do in the
town. People talk to me. I am their
priest and they trust me.

JACK
And I should too?

FATHER BENEDETTO
Of course.

They stare at one another.

JACK wants to confess. He does not know why.

But he doesn't. He does something we're not expecting:

JACK
Fabio. The 'car doctor'. Was he
conceived here father?

FATHER BENEDETTO is motionless.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Why do you ask me that?

JACK
He looks like you. Even more than
he does in the photos you keep of
each other. Where was he conceived,
father? Under one of these trees?
At night? Like all the other
bastards?

There is a very, very long pause. FATHER BENEDETTO stares up
at JACK with extraordinary intensity.

FATHER BENEDETTO
I do not remember, Signor. It was
twenty-five years ago.

FATHER BENEDETTO walks. JACK follows. A gust of wind makes
dust swirl from the gravel path. The two men do not speak
again until they reach the next set of Cyprus trees.

FATHER BENEDETTO

In the end it is I who confesses to you.

JACK

Expecting me to reciprocate?

FATHER BENEDETTO

Perhaps. For your own good. You cannot doubt the existence of Hell. You live in it. It is a place without love. As for me, I go about my daily duties because the town requires it of me. Some know what you know. Perhaps I have no right to wear these robes. But I do have a heart full of a father's love. Something close to His heart! And for that I am both grateful and happy.

On JACK.

FATHER BENEDETTO

What do you have, my friend?

Another gust of wind. The priest looks up into JACK's face.

The assassin's eyes are red and stinging. Perhaps its from the dust.

118 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- EVENING**

118

JACK dresses very carefully for dinner.

It is clear he wishes to make a favourable impression upon CLARA.

119 **EXT. LOCANDA GRAPELLI- NIGHT**

119

Stone steps lead up from the street to large paved veranda that overlooks the town. Overhead a canopy of vine and jasmine. Above that a sky full of stars.

Of the thirty or so candle-lit tables that dot the veranda, more than half are occupied by romantic couples.

JACK scans the tables and checks his watch. It's shortly after seven pm and there's no sign of CLARA.

He waits. Then turns to leave.

CLARA (O.S.)

Ciao.

She kisses him once on the lips. She's hot and flustered. She's been rushing.

CLARA
I did not think you would come.

JACK
I wasn't sure you meant me to.

CLARA looks doubtful. It's the same look she gave him at the cafe. She is breaking the golden rule of prostitution. Getting involved. Her heart is pulling one way and her head another.

CLARA
Certo.

A WAITER approaches.

WAITER
Per due?

Judging by his disapproving tone, the WAITER seems to know what CLARA does for a living. CLARA senses this immediately.

CLARA
Si.

120 **EXT. LOCANDA GRAPPELLI- NIGHT**

120

CLARA and JACK sit at a table overlooking the town.

The WAITER lights their candle and deposits two menus peremptorily.

CLARA
*Una bottiglia di acqua minerale non
gasata et... una Parasini, per
favore.*

Completely ignoring her, the WAITER addresses JACK with a wink.

WAITER
Menu in Inglese?

A beat.

JACK
No, grazie.

WAITER
Tedesco? Olandese?

CLARA
(to the WAITER)
He speaks Italian. So do I. Listen:

She repeats her order, articulating each word emphatically, like a teacher to a slow school child:

CLARA
*Una botiglia di acqua minerale et
 una Parasini, per favore.*

She isn't upset. It's just her way of letting both men know that she's in charge.

The WAITER turns to her, deferring to her strength of character.

WAITER
Gasata?

CLARA
Non gasata.

He nods with some genuine deference and leaves.

CLARA sighs.

CLARA
 (mostly to herself)
Cittadina.

JACK
 Small towns.

JACK smiles. CLARA smiles back. They have this contempt in common.

The WAITER reappears and pours a thumbful of wine. It is pale red in colour and *frizzante*. At CLARA's insistence, JACK tastes it. It is dry and has a tar-like aftertaste.

CLARA
*Parasini. From Calabria. It is
 good, you will agree?*

JACK
 It is. Very good.

He looks at her and- for a brief moment- he undergoes what is a unique experience for him: a positive longing to repeat this brief moment many times in the future.

CLARA catches the glow of his warmth and blossoms.

CLARA
 Can I ask you something, Eduardo?

JACK
 Sure.

CLARA
 You are married?

JACK

No.

A beat.

JACK

I doubt any of the couples here are. With the exception of the Germans at table seven. She's wearing a wedding ring and they haven't spoken a word to each other for eight and half minutes.

CLARA

I was sure this was your secret.

JACK

What makes you think I have a secret? I'm an ordinary man. I cough. I fart. I earn a living.

JACK observes a GYPSY selling roses.

CLARA

I do not think you are an ordinary man. I think you are a good man. But you have a secret.

The GYPSY approaches, offering CLARA a ROSE. She refuses firmly.

CLARA

He thinks we are a couple.

JACK signals to the GYPSY and buys CLARA a ROSE.

JACK

Why spoil the illusion?

She looks at him and smiles.

CLARA

(in ITALIAN)

As long as we know it is an illusion.

Her smile is only a little bit sad.

Still, JACK doesn't know what to say.

They are saved by the appearance of the WAITER.

WAITER

Buona sera. Desidera?

CLARA orders, full of Italian charm, putting JACK at his ease. He watches her contentedly: the way she talks and moves.

121 **EXT. CORSO FREDERICO- NIGHT**

121

JACK and CLARA are walking. He has a cigarette in his mouth. They look like film stars. CLARA slips her arm through his. They say nothing. The pedestrian shopping street is thronging with other couples.

122 **EXT. COFFEE BAR- NIGHT**

122

The coffee bar has an outside section. CLARA and L'AMERICANO are seated in a throng of happy youngsters Clara's age. JACK is the oldest person there.

The WAITRESS brings two glasses of PROSECCO. She puts a small silver bowl of raspberry ice cream down in front of JACK. In front of CLARA she puts down an extravagant ice cream sundae. CLARA grins at her sundae like a little girl. She's a bit drunk.

CLARA

Wooooow!

She eats, savoring the ice cream. JACK watches, savoring her pleasure.

JACK

How is it?

CLARA

Bitchin'.

JACK

(amused)

Bitchin'?

CLARA

It's- *come se dice*- 'slang', no?
Eco.

She scoops a spoonful dripping with nuts and chocolate sauce and holds it out to JACK.

JACK

No thanks.

CLARA

Come on, Eduardo!

He hesitates. He eats.

CLARA

It is good, you will agree?

JACK

(his mouth full)

I will agree.

CLARA
(sensing his teasing)
My English is nice!

JACK
It's bitchin'.

CLARA
(defending herself)
You know how to swear in Italian?

JACK
Sure. *Bastardo. Imbecile.*

CLARA
"Imbecile?" Eduardo! Try: *Mangia
merde e morte: tuo cazzo un
brufolo.*

JACK
Eat shit and die, pimple dick?

CLARA hiccups.

CLARA
Perdone!

JACK
I guess I've led a sheltered life.
Of sorts.

CLARA
Shell-tered?

JACK
Too much work.

CLARA's CELL PHONE starts to ring. It's on silent, but the screen is flashing, just visible where it sticks out of her handbag. CLARA looks down at the phone.

CLARA
Too much work.

She turns the phone to silent. And looks up at JACK.

CLARA
I don't apologise, Eduardo.

JACK
For what?

CLARA
For this I do. My job.

JACK
Never apologise.

He means it.

A beat.

CLARA
Except this job is full of *testa di*
cazzo.

JACK
Mine too.

CLARA
Lei?

JACK
Si.

CLARA
But you are too young to...
pensione?

JACK
Retire.

CLARA
Si.

JACK
Liar.

CLARA
No!

JACK
Would you be flattering me if I
wasn't a client?

He's put CLARA on the spot.

JACK
Am I a client?

CLARA takes a deep breath.

CLARA
This say yes.

She points at her head.

CLARA
This...

She points at her heart.

CLARA
This cannot be for sale. But I am
not want to... *come se dice?*

JACK
Give it away.

She looks at him.

JACK studies her, searching for his own feelings.

CLARA
Stronzo! I buy you a present!

She fishes about in her handbag...

...and produces a SILVER BOX.

JACK unwraps the shiny paper. Inside is a plastic case like the sort you put engagement rings in. Inside the case is a BADGE, hand-painted, depicting the symbol of the region: the eagle of L'Aquila. JACK sticks the BADGE in his lapel.

JACK
Grazie.

An embarrassed beat.

CLARA kisses him.

JACK
Grazie, Clara.

CLARA
Prego. Eduardo.

A pause.

CLARA
My apartment is not far from here.

123 **INT. CLARA'S APARTMENT- MORNING**

123

JACK opens his eyes.

Sits up.

He's shocked to have slept so deeply.

CLARA must be in the shower.

He looks around at the little room casually, like a curious lover.

Opens the top drawer of the bedside cabinet.

Finds a VIBRATOR.

Opens the bottom drawer.

Finds a RED PURSE.

Inside the RED PURSE...

Finds a BERETTA DOUBLE-ACTION MODEL 21A BOBCAT.

Just at that moment CLARA comes out of the bathroom.

JACK shuts the drawer and pretends to be asleep.

124

EXT. PAY PHONE- DAY

124

JACK has driven to the remotest phone box he can find: not far from the entrance to one of the region's four national parks: beside a lake, below a mountain range and approached by a long, straight, empty road.

No one could possibly creep up on him here. Nevertheless, as he talks, JACK makes his habitual and continuous 360 scan of the area.

LARRY (V.O.)
We're moving the drop.

JACK
Where?

LARRY (V.O.)
We don't know yet. I'll call you ten am on the day with a venue. Give you enough time to make the noon delivery.

JACK
I don't deliver, Larry. I *never* deliver. It's too dangerous. *She* comes to *me*. I know the town. That's what we agreed.

LARRY (V.O.)
I told 'em. I told 'em if there was even the slightest chance security had been breached, you'd have dealt with it immediately.

A beat.

JACK
Breach? What breach?

For the first time in the movie we cut to LARRY at home:

125

INT. LARRY'S APARTMENT, ROME- DAY

125

LARRY is sitting in a high back leather office chair before a large, imperial mahogany desk. In front of him are two banks of screens.

The first bank displays 3 CCTV views: (1) the entrance to his apartment block (2) a staircase and (3) the entrance to his apartment itself.

Another bank of screens shows 3 NEWS CHANNELS: (1) CNN, (2) BBC WORLD and (3) AL JAZEERA.

LARRY

Our pretty young Belgian client and her associates think someone on your long list of enemies might have put a tail on you.

JACK (V.O.)

Not possible.

LARRY

Course not, Jack. But if, for the sake of argument, it was possible- I'm thinking it could be Galazzo. Or Simenov. Or Italian undercover.

JACK (V.O.)

Cops?

LARRY

The crooked kind.

JACK (V.O.)

How come I'm still here?

LARRY

The Belgians think they're planning to wait for the drop and exterminate you *and* Mathilde in one swoop.

With the help of his DESKTOP computer LARRY is comparing the scrolling share prices on CNN with the fluctuating value of the US DOLLAR.

JACK (V.O.)

Where the hell's this information coming from?

LARRY

I'm fucked if I know, Jack. If you want my opinion, they're just being jittery. I told 'em you were the most security conscious professional I know. I told 'em *no one* gets close to you.

JACK

They don't.

LARRY (V.O.)
 I told 'em if we couldn't trust you
 to keep a tight lid on operations
 the who could we trust?

JACK
 They can. They can trust me and so
 can you.

JACK is tense. Every word is carefully enunciated:

JACK
 I've never jeopardised an operation
 in my life.

LARRY (V.O.)
 You don't have to tell *me* that,
 Jack. *For Christ's sake, you closed*
your own girlfriend's account...

ECU on JACK.

127 **INT. LARRY'S APARTMENT, ROME- DAY**

127

The words are out before he can stop them.

LARRY
 Jack? [A BEAT] Jack? I'm sorry.

He rubs his eyes, wearied by his own insensitivity.

LARRY
 That was, um.... I'm just saying
 you can be relied on.

Silence.

LARRY
 Jack?

CLICK.

128 **EXT. PAY PHONE- DAY**

128

JACK has hung up.

He is lost in fearful thought, jaw muscles grinding.

129 **EXT. CHURCH, ROOF- NIGHT**

129

Amongst the GARGOYLES...

...JACK, looking through his miniature binoculars.

His POV:

Of CLARA seated in a cafe talking to a slick, tough YOUNG ITALIAN MAN in a suit.

He is showing her photographs. Of what- we cannot see. CLARA looks very, very serious.

The YOUNG ITALIAN MAN leaves. JACK watches him get into a smart black ALFA ROMEO containing two other ITALIAN MEN. Rome plates.

When he looks back at the cafe, CLARA has gone.

130

INT. PENSIONE ABRUZZO, JACK'S ROOM- DAY

130

JACK opens his PICNIC HAMPER and in it he puts:

-a polystyrene cool box packed with ice and containing a chilled bottle of *Aspirinio*

-a loaf of course bread

-two clods of *mozarella*

-150 gms of *proscuitto*

-and his *WALTHER PPK/S*.

131

EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE- DAY

131

CLARA is waiting on the *Via Strinella* near the entrance to the *Parco della Resistanza*, sheltering in the shade of a tree.

She is holding the RED PURSE. At her feet is blue plastic bag rounded out by a watermelon.

JACK pulls his CAR into the curb.

CLARA
Ciao, Eduardo!

She opens the passenger door, leans in and kisses JACK long and full on the lips.

JACK
Put them in the back. We've got a way to go.

She puts the plastic bag in the trunk.

Inside the trunk is the PICNIC HAMPER.

132

INT. CAR- DAY

132

CLARA climbs in and fastens her seat-belt.

She puts the RED PURSE between her legs. JACK glances at the RED PURSE.

And drives.

CLARA
Where we go?

JACK
Swimming.

CLARA
How far do we go? To Fanale?

JACK
An hour. And we're not going to the sea, we're going to the lakes. In the mountains.

CLARA
For a... *come se dice*... you have in the back...

JACK
A picnic.

CLARA
A pick-nick! We are going for a pick-nick. Just the two of us.

She looks at him.

CLARA
I have practise my English, Eduardo. I love to have pick-nick. It is a beautiful day, isn't it?

JACK
It is.

133 **EXT. ALPINE ROAD- DAY**

133

The CAR negotiates a familiar hairpin bend.

134 **INT. CAR- DAY**

134

CLARA is station hopping.

She finds some LOU REED. She loves LOUD REED.

JACK is concentrating on the road.

CLARA
Is it more far?

JACK
Ten kilometres. Another twenty
minutes.

She pauses to work out the mathematics. She's smart. And
puzzled. But she's not frightened. Not yet.

CLARA
Twelve kilometres? In *twenty*
minutes?

JACK
We're going off the beaten track.

She looks confused.

JACK
Lontano. Fuori mano.

CLARA laughs.

CLARA
You will speak Italian. One day, I
will teach you.

135 **EXT. ALPINE TRACK- DAY**

135

JACK turns off the main road and onto an alpine track.
This is the same route he took with the Belgian woman.
The CAR bumps and tilts on the rough terrain.

136 **INT. CAR- CONTINUOUS**

136

CLARA is startled by such an insignificant track.

CLARA
Where are we going?

Now she's anxious. This is not what she expected.

JACK
You shall see.

CLARA
I think it is good we should stay
close to the road.

JACK
There's no need to worry. I've been
here before several times. Taking
photographs.

He swings the wheel suddenly to avoid a large boulder and the
Citroen pitches as if struck by a wave.

CLARA clings to the door with her right hand, her left hand dug deep into the fabric of the seat to steady herself.

JACK
You're not afraid of coming into
the wild with me, are you?

CLARA
No!

She laughs tensely.

CLARA
Of course I am not. Not with you.
But this...

She snaps her fingers.

CLARA
...*sentiero*!

She waves her hand in the air.

CLARA
You should have a jeep. A Toyota.
It is not good for a... *berlina*.

It's as if the increased danger of the track diminishes her English.

JACK
This is a Citroen!

He strikes the steering wheel hard with the palm of his hand.

JACK
This was made by the French for
taking potatoes to market. Besides,
I always come here in this car.

CLARA
You sure?

JACK
Of course. I don't want to walk
back to town any more than you do.

CLARA
I think you are crazy. This will go
to nowhere.

JACK
I assure you it does.

She pouts her reply. The TRACK disappears into a WOOD and runs out altogether, giving way to grass.

CLARA
Now there is no road!

JACK stops the car and turns the engines off.

Sudden silence.

CLARA lets go of the seat.

CLARA
Is this where we go?

They are surrounded by trees.

JACK
No. Not quite. We go another
hundred metres, through the wood.
But from here we just roll forward.
No motor. No sound. And you'll see
a wonder.

She grips the seat again.

JACK
You won't need to hold on. I'll go
slowly. Just relax and look.

He eases his foot off the brake and the car begins to move forward, the springs squeaking slightly. After 50 metres JACK twists the steering wheel slightly and applies the brakes. They roll gradually down to the outer edge of the woods and come to a stop beneath a familiarly squat but ample WALNUT TREE.

Beyond them is the LAKE, the MEADOWS and the RUINED HAMLET. The hidden valley is a riot of colour, the blooms and blossoms more brilliant than we've ever seen them. By the edge of the lake stands a HERON, still as fence post.

CLARA gets out of the car, dumbstruck. JACK gets out too. He watches her... then swiftly checks the ruined hamlet through his miniature binoculars. Deserted. By the time CLARA turns towards him, the binoculars are hidden.

CLARA
No one comes here?

She speaks so quietly JACK can barely hear her.

JACK
No.

CLARA
Just you.

JACK
Yes.

CLARA turns away, unbuttons her blouse and drops it on the grass. She is wearing no bra. On her back dapple the shadows and patches of sun eking through the branches of the walnut. She kicks off her shoes, which curve through the air... and unzips her skirt. It falls to the grass. She bends and steps daintily from her knickers. Then turns to face JACK.

JACK cannot take his eyes off her. Dizzy, he steps forward without meaning to.

CLARA

Well?

She is coquettish- and tosses her auburn hair to one side.

CLARA

I am going to swim in the lake. Are you coming?

She doesn't wait for his reply, but turns and runs through the grass towards the water.

JACK

There are vipers! *Vipera! Marasso!*

CLARA

Maybe! But I am lucky!

The HERON flies off, rising from the reeds with an ungainly flapping.

CLARA

(shouting)

He is an Italian bird! We disturb his siesta!

Quickly, JACK glances inside the CITROEN.

The RED PURSE is nowhere to be seen.

CLARA

Come, Signor Farfalla!

JACK undresses. As he removes his clothes, he stalls for time, using the cover of undressing to search for the RED PURSE.

We can see it wedged under the passenger seat.

Due to the design of the car, JACK cannot.

CLARA

Come!

JACK turns to face the lake. He is naked. Yet with the caution of years he does not remove his shoes until he reaches the water's edge.

CLARA is standing in the middle.

CLARA
Stand by me.

He obeys her order. He walks out to her and she takes his hand under the water, holding it out in front of them.

JACK spots it resting on the smooth stone of the lake-bed. Brassy and gleaming. A SPENT SHELL. He covers it with his foot.

CLARA
Keep still. Watch.

As the ripples of his arrival peter out in the reeds, TINY FISH appear in a shoal to gather about their hands. They hover like slivers of glass just under the surface then move in to nibble at the skin on their fingers.

JACK
If we stay here for a year, they'll devour us.

CLARA
It is said that if these fishes bite at two hands holding, then love is good for the people.

He looks at her and for a moment he forgets the awful plan in his head.

She kisses him, pressing herself against him, her skin and body as pure and warm as the water.

He tries helplessly to pull away.

JACK
Maybe we should...

CLARA
Do you make love in the water?

JACK
I haven't.

She places her arms around his neck and raises her feet from the smooth stones, wrapping her legs around his waist. She tries to push herself onto him but he resists.

CLARA
What's wrong?

He doesn't know what to say. She looks at him: confused, searching.

JACK
Let's eat.

He walks towards the bank. She follows. The tiny fish dart around them for a few moments then flee for the reeds, travelling with the waves made by their departure.

137

EXT. LAKESIDE- DAY

137

CLARA is lying naked on a blanket.

Beside her is the RED PURSE.

Through sleepy, half-closed eyes she is watching L'AMERICANO.

From her POV, JACK is kneeling behind the open PICNIC HAMPER, unpacking the food and wine. The LID of the basket obscures his hands.

CLARA

Eduardo.

JACK looks at her.

CLARA

Is this your real name?

A beat.

JACK

Is Clara yours?

CLARA

Si. Yes.

She looks at him. Waiting for his reply.

JACK

Edward is my real name.

CLARA

Ed-ward.

She doesn't believe him.

CLARA

You are sure you are not married,
Eduardo?

JACK

Quite sure.

About this he's telling the truth.

CLARA reaches for the RED PURSE.

From behind the picnic hamper lid we hear the CLICK of a cocking mechanism.

CLARA hesitates for a moment.

JACK watches her intently.

She reaches into her purse.

JACK is expressionless.

When CLARA withdraws her right hand she is holding a tube of SUNTAN LOTION.

A beat.

JACK watches as she commences smoothing it into her skin, rubbing it around her breasts, pushing them aside, pressing them upwards. Then she caresses the lotion into her belly and down her thighs, bending at the waist as she works it into her shins.

CLARA

Will you put this on my back?

She proffers him the SUNTAN LOTION.

JACK stares at her baking body, transfixed by its terrible and perfect beauty.

Hidden behind the LID of the picnic hamper...

...his trembling right hand grips tightly to his WALTHER.

A long pause.

CLARA

Eduardo?

He's frozen.

CLARA

Amore?

Time seems to stop.

ECU on JACK.

Suddenly, CLARA sits up.

CLARA

Eduardo, what's wrong?

JACK swallows.

When he speaks his mouth is dry.

JACK

Nothing.

When he moves towards her, he is holding nothing in his hands.

He takes the tube of SUNTAN lotion.

JACK (V.O.)
Dear Father Benedetto...

And begins to run it into CLARA's back.

JACK (V.O.)
I promised myself that I would
write to you- as your friend- to
say goodbye.

138

EXT. WOODS- DAY

138

SLAM!

JACK shuts the boot of the car.

He scans the lakeside.

No sign of the picnic.

No sign of CLARA.

JACK (V.O.)
Everything I've ever done...

Then he spots something.

On the ground, not far from the car.

He walks over and picks it up.

It's one of CLARA's shoes.

JACK (V.O.)
I've done for a reason.

JACK is staring at the SHOE.

JACK (V.O.)
I never thought the day would come
when I'd run out of reasons.
Reasons to worry. Reasons to run.
Reasons to pull the trigger.

JACK turns and walks over to the car.

CLARA is in the passenger seat.

JACK (V.O.)
Maybe that day's come.

JACK gets into the Citroen.

JACK (V.O.)
Or maybe I've just found a reason
to change.

And hands CLARA her shoe.

CLARA
Grazie, Eduardo.

JACK
I still don't understand. What's
the point of a gun if it's not
loaded?

CLARA
One of the girls borrow it to me
after the second hooker in Chieti
is murdered. With some of the
clients it make me feel safe. I
don't tell the police, of course,
but... *Madonna*, Eduardo. How they
do to these two women! A police
agente from Rome show me
photographs. They show photographs
to everyone in *Via Lampedusa*.

CLARA shivers with disgust.

CLARA
Non capito... how one person hurt
another in this way.

JACK looks lost, like a man drained of all resolution.

JACK
Does the gun make you feel safer
with me?

CLARA
You are not a client.

JACK
Then why's it in your purse?

CLARA looks unhappy.

CLARA
I have to work tonight, *amore*.

Silence.

JACK looks away.

JACK (V.O.)
Maybe this is suicide. Cops often
put the graft on working girls.
Perhaps the girl I told you about,
Clara, has sold me out.
(MORE)

JACK (V.O.) (cont'd)
Maybe she's a cop herself, or maybe she's a hired gun. Then again, maybe Clara *is* who she says she is and my Belgian clients will take the gun, shoot me themselves and keep the money. Always a risk in my profession. Or perhaps my trusted colleague in Rome no longer trusts me. Perhaps even you, Father, with your connections in Naples...

CLARA
What will you do?

JACK
I guess I'll go to work too.

CLARA
And after that? Tomorrow and the next day.

JACK
I can't stay here forever.

As the words leave his lips he thinks how much he wishes he could.

JACK (V.O.)
It's not that I've given up on life, Father. Just the way that I was living it. If you can call it living.

CLARA
I want always to stay here.

JACK
It's time to go home.

CLARA
Let me come to your home.

JACK
I can't, Clara. One day...

She's upset but decides not to press her demand.

JACK (V.O.)
If I had one request, Father, it would be this. That it's not Clara who finally pulls the trigger. But whoever it is...

CLARA kisses him and simply says:

CLARA
Stay forever here.

JACK (V.O.)
*...by this time tomorrow I'll be
 dead.*

Fade to black.

FADE IN:

139 **EXT/INT. CHURCH- DAY**

139

A POSTMAN hands the mail to FATHER BENEDETTO.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Ciao Fabio, come stai?

IL POSTINO
Bene grazie, Padre.

We follow FATHER BENEDETTO inside as he rifles through a bunch of church circulars. One LETTER catches his eye.

He opens it and starts to read aloud:

FATHER BENEDETTO
 Dear Father Benedetto. I promised
 myself that I would write to you-
 as your friend- to say goodbye...

140 **INT. JACK'S ROOM- DAWN**

140

JACK stands by the door in a impeccably pressed suit, the black SAMSONITE BRIEFCASE in his hand.

He surveys his room. All evidence of his existence has been meticulously tidied away.

FATHER BENEDETTO (V.O.)
 Everything I've ever done...

JACK leaves.

Only thing is left behind:

The book of MEDIEVAL ITALIAN ART & ARCHITECTURE on the bedside table.

FATHER BENEDETTO (V.O.)
 I've done for a reason.

141 **EXT. AUTOSTRADA- DAY**

141

The sun is shining. The mountains young and sharp and beautiful. The CAR moves swiftly across the viaduct that spans a spectacular gorge and plunges into a long tunnel.

142 **INT. CAR- CONTINUOUS**

142

JACK watches the road. On the long straights he looks backwards and forwards.

143 **EXT. SERVICE STATION- DAY**

143

JACK comes off the autostrada on a slip road and pulls into a forecourt consisting of several rows of Agip and Q8 pumps, a convenience shop, a repair garage and a cafe.

The car park is not large. JACK parks the Citroen facing the EXIT. There is a single bar across it but this is raised.

JACK double checks the magazine in his handgun is full and slips his WALTHER into his jacket pocket.

Stepping out of the car he looks around the car park. It's only a quarter full and ominously quiet. Somewhere in the distance we can hear a sound: *creak, creak, creak, creak...*

JACK takes the BRIEFCASE from the rear seat and walks away. He makes a show of locking the car but doesn't.

As he approaches the CAFE he passes the GARAGE. We see the source of the *creak, creak, creaking* sound: a SIGN for engine oil, on hinges, revolving slowly in the breeze.

144 **INT. AUTOSTRADA CAFE- DAY**

144

Empty.

JACK sits at a table at the back of the cafe. From here he can see both entrances: the public entrance and the service entrance and also the door to the bathrooms. Through the window, he has a good view of the garage forecourt and the slip road to and from the autostrada.

JACK places the BRIEFCASE on a chair beside him and puts a PAPER BAG on the table next to the sugar dispenser. He checks his watch. It is two minutes before noon. He orders an *espresso*.

His nerve-heightened senses take in everything: the sound of the cicadas, the buzz of the neon strip-lights and the *creak, creak, creak* of the engine oil sign outside, endlessly revolving.

JACK's eyes flick outside to the forecourt.

We hear the cafe door open.

And in an instant, MATHILDE is at his table.

She is dressed in a tight black skirt, a simple blue blouse and a dark blue jacket. Her hair is neatly styled, her make-up immaculate and heavier than we've seen her wear before. She looks exactly like the kind of woman who might carry a Samsonite briefcase.

MATHILDE

Hello. I see you have brought it in from the car with you.

She speaks quietly: her voice low and attractive.

JACK

All there, as agreed.

MATHILDE

What's in the paper bag?

The WAITRESS comes over with Jack's coffee. MATHILDE orders another for herself.

JACK

Sweets. For your journey.

She opens the bag and takes out one of the TINS.

She can immediately feel that it's heavier than it should be.

JACK

I guessed you'd have a sweet tooth.

MATHILDE

That is most thoughtful of you.

The polite phrase sounds even more polite with her slight Belgian accent.

The WAITRESS returns with the second *espresso* and MATHILDE pays for them both.

JACK watches as she stirs her coffee to cool it. She's nervous.

JACK

I suppose I'll read about this in the Times or the International Herald Tribune. Or *Il Maessagiero*.

For a moment she is pensive.

MATHILDE

Yes, I expect so.

She drinks her coffee, holding her cup in mid-air and looking out the window.

JACK follows her eye-line to check she's not signalling to an accomplice.

The FORECOURT is still empty.

Creak, creak, creak, creak...

MATHILDE looks at JACK. Her expression is impossible to read. Perhaps it's tinged with sadness. She drinks the rest of her coffee.

MATHILDE
I'm just going to the ladies. Wait here.

She picks up the CASE.

There is nothing JACK can do about this. She has taken him off guard and grasped the initiative.

All he can do is wait.

145 **INT. AUTOSTRADA BATHROOM- CONTINUOUS**

145

MATHILDE enters a cubicle, opens the CASE, bypasses the stationary, lifts the false bottom and checks the SOCIMI parts are present and correct.

Then she loads a magazine.

146 **INT. AUTOSTRADA CAFE- DAY**

146

MATHILDE returns from the bathroom.

MATHILDE
Shall we go.

Not a question, a command.

JACK is obliged to stand up.

147 **EXT. AUTOSTRADA, CAR PARK- DAY**

147

MATHILDE walks towards a large FORD.

She is carrying the BRIEFCASE.

JACK has his right hand in his jacket pocket.

MATHILDE
You won't need your piece.

The slang word belies her. For an instant she has forgotten her Belgian accent. She sounds American.

JACK
You never know.

She stops beside the FORD.

JACK still has his hands on the Walther.

MATHILDE
OK?

JACK
Sure. You?

MATHILDE
Everything's just fine.

She definitely sounds American now.

Her RIGHT HAND slips into her pocket.

JACK twists his wrist upwards and thumbs the cocking lever.

MATHILDE
Final payment.

She hands JACK an ENVELOPE.

MATHILDE
Buy yourself a retirement clock.

Her American accent shows that she's letting her guard down. Maybe it's designed to make JACK do the same.

It doesn't.

JACK
How do you know I'm retiring?

She leans forward and kisses him lightly and quickly and on the lips.

MATHILDE
Have you taken your girl up to the meadow yet?

JACK doesn't answer. His whole body is tense for the bullet that he knows is coming. Perhaps there is a second person in the car.

Just then...

...a COACH pulls into the car park.

It stops with a hydraulic hiss and dozens of TEENAGE KIDS descend.

MATHILDE looks both irritated and relieved.

MATHILDE
(whispers to JACK)
Do it.

She gets into the driver's seat of the FORD and swings the BRIEFCASE into the back.

MATHILDE
Goodbye, Mr. Butterfly.

JACK tenses as MATHILDE raises her hand in farewell.

The FORD pulls away and disappears down the slip road onto the autostrada.

JACK watches it go.

Thumbs back the lever on his Walther.

Gets into his Citroen.

And opens the ENVELOPE.

-No wires.

-No tricks.

-Just a HUNDRED THOUSAND US DOLLARS.

JACK stares at the money. He isn't supposed to be alive. For a while he stays put. He shuts his eyes in the sunshine and listens to the laughter of the teenage kids. To a girl calling: "Amore!" To the cicadas. To the distant rush of traffic on the autostrada.

SMASH CUT TO:

148 **EXT. AUTOSTRADA- DAY**

148

JACK drives fast...

...turning off the highway beneath a sign for L'AQUILA.

149 **EXT. L'AQUILA- DAY**

149

At the end a small street, JACK parks his car like a true Italian: illegally.

Runs towards CLARA'S APARTMENT.

And rings the buzzer.

No answer.

JACK rings again.

Still nothing.

Shouts up at her window:

JACK
CLARA!

150 **EXT. AUTOSTRADA, CAFE- DAY**

150

We're at another roadside service station.

LARRY comes out of a Kentucky Fried Chicken.

He climbs into the passenger seat of the FORD.

MATHILDE drives off.

151 **INT. FORD- DAY**

151

LARRY is dusting bread crumbs off his shirt.

He's about to get his hands dirty and he doesn't like it.

LARRY
Not only did you *not* kill him, you
gave him my fucking money?

MATHILDE
What else could I do? There were
kids everywhere. Besides he's
suspicious.

LARRY
He's *paranoid*. That's why I'm
paying you the GDP of a small
country to get *close* to him. You
could have got him in the sack. You
should have got him in the car
park. Now you're going to have to
take him out long range!

MATHILDE
I prefer it that way.

She is a trained assassin. She respects JACK.

MATHILDE
The Socimi is the perfect weapon.

LARRY
Let's hope his workmanship is up to
scratch.

He slams a full magazine into the butt of a STERLING SUBMACHINE GUN.

LARRY

Sweden turned Jack into a liability. Three stiffes: two shooters and an innocent civilian. I can't afford a mistake like that again. Europol are crooked but they aren't cheap. Jack's supposed to make me money. Not run up cleaning bills.

MATHILDE

He made short work of the last guy you hired.

LARRY

Never mind Larson. He didn't stand a chance, not against someone as paranoid as Jack. The Swede was only there to take Jack's heat off you. So don't fuck this up again.

He grabs a TIN of fruit sweets.

LARRY

Mind if I help myself?

LARRY opens the tin to find it full of AMMUNITION.

LARRY

Shit.

He looks around the Ford.

LARRY

Is there any actual candy in this gas guzzler?

152 **EXT. AUTOSTRADA- DAY**

152

JACK turns off under the sign for CASTEL DEL MONTE.

153 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, CHURCH STEPS- DAY**

153

The town square is jam-packed with cars and coaches.

Hundreds of tourists and locals have gathered on the church steps. There is even a camera crew.

The church doors open and FATHER BENEDETTO steps out to a huge cheer.

Behind him, LOCAL MEN are carrying a larger than life painted wooden STATUE OF SAINT DOMINIC.

Draped over the saint's shoulder and wrapped around his neck are around twenty five or thirty live SNAKES- local *Viperi*- each one several feet long and as thick as a skinny forearm.

A local BAND strikes up as the STATUE is carried down the steps, FATHER BENEDETTO leading the strange annual religious parade around the town square, followed by a group of ALTAR BOYS.

154 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, STREET- DAY** 154

The giant FORD pulls up outside the town's only proper HOTEL. MATHILDE gets out carrying the SAMSONITE BRIEFCASE.

155 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, TOWN SQUARE- DAY** 155

JACK is looking for someone. The square is so tightly packed it's hard to see, let alone move.

Then he spots her.

CLARA.

She's on the other side of the square, standing on the stone steps beneath a STATUE OF AN EAGLE. Her friend ANNA is beside her, taking photographs of the parade with a small digital camera. JACK moves towards CLARA.

ANNA, through her viewfinder, is the first to notice him. She points JACK out to CLARA. CLARA waves at him. She says something to ANNA and descends into the crowd. JACK and CLARA squeeze their way through a sea of bodies towards one another as we cut to...

156 **EXT. HOTEL ROOF- DAY** 156

MATHILDE emerges through the fire escape door and walks to the edge of the roof.

She opens the black SAMSONITE CASE and unpacks the top layer of office paraphernalia to reveal the disassembled parts of the SOCIMI SUBMACHINE GUN.

Expertly she assembles the bastardised gun- including TELESCOPIC SIGHTS and SOUND SUPPRESSOR- slotting a full magazine into the base of the hand grip, snuggling the butt to her shoulder and placing her eye beside the rubber cup on the sight.

157 **EXT. POV FROM TELESCOPIC SIGHTS- DAY** 157

In the centre of the CROSS-HAIRS:

JACK and CLARA meet.

She kisses him. It is a long and loving kiss.

The CROSS-HAIRS find the centre of JACK's head.

158 **INSERT:** 158

MATHILDE'S FINGER... taking up the trigger slack.

159 **EXT. TELESCOPIC SIGHTS- DAY** 159

Other HEADS...

-TOURISTS

-LOCALS

-KIDS on their PARENTS' SHOULDERS

...keep blocking our view of JACK.

160 **INSERT:** 160

The TRIGGER FINGER, hesitating.

161 **EXT. TOWN SQUARE- DAY** 161

We're right in the midst of the crowd.

JACK and CLARA have to shout at one another above the noise of the band.

JACK
When can I see you?

CLARA
I have to work tonight.

Their happiness clouds over. But the clouds pass quickly.

CLARA
You come to my apartment after.

JACK
If I asked you would you come away with me?

CLARA
Come away with you?

JACK
Why not?

CLARA
Together?

JACK
Together.

CLARA
Where?

JACK
Wherever. Then when we're through,
we could come back here. For good.

CLARA
To live?

JACK
Where else?

CLARA
Forever?

JACK
Forever.

A pause.

JACK
Unless you have other plans.

CLARA
Other plans?

She swears in Italian. Obscenities. Then throws herself
around JACK and squeezes him with all her strength. There are
tears in her eyes.

CLARA
I love you, Signor Eduardo
Farfalla.

He looks at her.

JACK
I...

162

INSERT:

162

The TRIGGER FINGER squeezes.

The SOCIMI SUBMACHINE fires.

An EXPLOSIVE BULLET travels down the chamber at approximately
360 miles per hour headed straight for JACK's temporal lobe.

Only it never gets there.

The gun jams.

A chamber explosion is a nasty thing. Instead of shooting out of the barrel, the round explodes in the cannon's chamber.

Hot shrapnel fragments like a land mine, ripping into MATHILDE's hands, forearms and face...

163

EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE, TOWN SQUARE- DAY

163

A loud BANG pulls JACK and CLARA apart. Amidst the noise of the festival, no one else seems to notice.

JACK looks in the direction of the HOTEL ROOF.

CLARA

What's happening?

JACK

Someone got what was coming to them.

He turns to her:

JACK

Go to your apartment and pack. Wait 'till I get there. Don't answer the door to anyone but me.

CLARA

Eduardo, please?

JACK

Trust me.

She looks at him.

CLARA

I trust you.

She wants to, but she doesn't.

JACK

Clara. My name is not Eduardo.

CLARA

No?

JACK

My name is Jack.

CLARA

Jack.

She looks worried.

CLARA
You promise you're not married?

JACK
I promise. Take this.

He hands her an ENVELOPE. It contains his final instalment.

JACK
Look after it. In case.

CLARA
(perplexed)
In case?

He wants to say it but he can't bring himself to.

In case this is goodbye.

JACK
Now go.

164

EXT. STREET- DAY

164

LARRY is waiting on the corner of the town square.

He is dialling and re-dialling a number in his mobile phone, scanning the crowds around him.

In the two seconds it takes the TAXI to pass by, JACK steps free of a row cars on the other side of the street.

As LARRY comes into view again, JACK sees the STERLING SUBMACHINE GUN in his hands.

And LARRY sees JACK.

LARRY'S FINGER tightens on the trigger.

L'AMERICANO throws himself to one side.

There is a quick burst of popping explosions: ripping along the line of parked cars.

PANIC erupts.

JACK is about to fire back at LARRY but LARRY takes cover behind a TOURIST and fires back another brief burst.

JACK is hit in the shoulder. He drops his gun...

...and retrieves it just as LARRY fires again.

SCREAMS spread through the holiday crowd like a wave of fire moving down the street and spilling into the town square.

165

EXT. TOWN SQUARE- DAY

165

JACK runs into the square.

LARRY pursues him, firing for a third time.

The buzz of spent rounds and the crack of muzzle fire echo around the square, bouncing off the walls and confusing the crowd.

People start to run in different directions- everyone heading for the maze of alleys that surround the main square.

ALTAR BOYS scatter. So do the LOCAL MEN carrying the STATUE OF SAINT DOMINIC. The STATUE tumbles and smashes. Escaping SNAKES writhe. FATHER BENEDETTO takes cover.

The two LOCAL CARABINIERI in their Land Rover get caught up in the chaos. Confused, they turn on their SIRENS.

LARRY spots JACK in the crowd and fires a fourth time.

One TOURIST is killed outright, another injured

JACK dives for cover behind the STATUE OF THE EAGLE where he spotted Clara.

Bullets ricochet.

LARRY

You're too old for this life, Jack.

LARRY struggles for breath as he reloads.

This is JACK's chance.

LARRY

You get sentimental then you fuck things up.

Rolling along the steps to the statue of the eagle, JACK spreads his legs, faces LARRY and fires the customary TWO PRECISION-ENGINEERED SHOTS that make up a military-style execution:

The first shot hits LARRY in the heart. LARRY is thrown backwards against a parked car, accidentally altering his arc of fire as slugs bounce off the steps beside JACK, chips of marble stinging against his calves.

Again, JACK takes aim.

A beat as his finger tightens on the trigger.

HEADSHOT. Half LARRY'S FACE is wiped out of existence. What's left of him slides down the parked car onto both knees. His hand flashes to his mangled throat then drops. He falls forwards and his STERLING clatters on the cobble stones.

Complete silence.

Not even the sound of a siren.

The town square is empty.

Except for FATHER BENEDETTO hiding in the wreckage of the broken STATUE.

Jack's WALTHER hangs ominously by his side.

FATHER BENEDETTO stands unsteadily.

Like lightening JACK spins, instinctively raising his WALTHER and zeroing in on FATHER BENEDETTO. His face is devoid of all emotion. He is a bloody machine looking at a potential target.

We hear SIRENS.

Across a slew of dead bodies, JACK keeps the gun pointed at FATHER BENEDETTO.

FATHER BENEDETTO stands stock still, facing JACK.

The SIRENS get louder.

JACK
What will you tell them?

A beat.

FATHER BENEDETTO takes something from inside his Soutane.

And holds it up with a trembling hand.

JACK'S LETTER.

FATHER BENEDETTO
I will tell them that the man who wrote
this letter is my friend.

FATHER BENEDETTO smiles sadly.

FATHER BENEDETTO
Jack.

FATHER BENEDETTO shuts his eyes, muttering a quiet prayer.

The SIRENS get closer.

We hear Carabinieri screeching to a halt and clambering out of their cars, cocking submachine guns.

When FATHER BENEDETTO opens his eyes again...

...JACK has disappeared.

- 166 **EXT. CASTEL DEL MONTE- DAY** 166
- Using his meticulous knowledge of the alleyways and lanes that make up the medieval heart of the town, JACK avoids the CARABINIERI and, stealing a bicycle, makes it onto the main road before a road block has been set up.
- 167 **EXT. L'AQUILA, COACH STATION, LEFT LUGGAGE- DAY** 167
- JACK collects a sports bag from a LOCKER.
- 168 **EXT. L'AQUILA, COACH STATION, BATHROOM- DAY** 168
- JACK washes the blood from his hands.
- 169 **EXT. L'AQUILA, COACH STATION, MAIN HALL- DAY** 169
- When he emerges from the bathroom JACK is wearing the clothes of a fifty year-old American tourist from the mid-West with glasses and a baseball cap.
- He checks the time of next bus to Rome.
- Then glances at his watch.
- He has thirty minutes.
- 170 **EXT. L'AQUILA, STREET- DAY** 170
- JACK walks towards Clara's APARTMENT BUILDING.
- Two hundred metres up ahead, two OFFICERS of the Guardia di Finanza wait in an unmarked car.
- JACK walks past Clara's APARTMENT BUILDING.
- And keeps walking.
- 171 **EXT. L'AQUILA, COACH STATION- DAY** 171
- The BUS for Rome is barely half-full.
- Blending in perfectly with a group of middle aged American tourists, JACK boards the steps, purchases a ticket and takes a seat at the rear.
- 172 **EXT. AUTOSTRADA- DAY** 172
- A long tunnel: one of the longest in Europe.
- JACK alone at the back of the BUS.

It seems like night: red stripes, strip lights, shadows.
Vast fans suspended from the ceiling shift the traffic fumes.
A button of light, expanding...
...as we burst into daylight.

THE END.