

DUBIOUS FREEDOMS OF TROPICAL FISH

An Original Screenplay

By

Brett Walpole

Adapted from the novel
by the same author

TITLES SEQUENCE

To the music, slow motion images of a young couple with their infant son drift by in a nostalgic memory montage. They play together inside an old farmyard barn, throwing hay into the air and at each other with sunlight streaming in through the gaps in the broken walls, and roof. The little boy runs out through the door into blinding sunshine.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. LONDON AERIAL VIEW - DAY

A long shot flies over London, taking in famous landmarks from above, most notably The Houses of Parliament. The shot picks out and homes in on a lone cyclist, cycling at speed through the city streets.

EXT. LONDON STREET - DAY

CAPTION :2030

A FEMALE COURIER CYCLIST (18) rides fast through the busy traffic weaving crazily through the cars and then pedestrians as she hops up onto the pavement. She skids to a stop outside a modern building, jumps off, locks her bike to a lamp post and takes a single package out of her pack before entering the building.

INT. LITERARY AGENT OFFICE, SOHO, LONDON - DAY

SUSAN JONES (Arty, Businesslike, 40) sits down at her desk with her coffee. The courier carrying the parcel knocks on her door.

SUSAN

Yep!

COURIER

One parcel to sign for.

Susan signs and takes the package.

SUSAN

Thank you.

The Courier leaves. Susan opens the box.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Mmm. Paris.

Inside is a large A4 envelope and a letter. As she reads the letter FRANCIS (30), a young English man, calmly speaks the words.

FRANCIS (V/O)

Hi, Susan. Please find enclosed the long promised and now finished biography of Raymond Dante. "Long A Sleeper" is not only a portrait of the man himself but a full scale investigation into his life and of course his mysterious death. This is the only copy that exists, in any format, so guard it with your life! It's also, rather 'hot'. I'm on holiday with Heather indefinitely but will check in if and when I get back. Cheers.
Francis Henderson.

Susan opens the envelope and removes a thick manuscript on the cover of which is written "Long A Sleeper", "The Unauthorised Biography of Raymond Thierry Dante". She flicks through it to the end and reads out loud.

SUSAN (V/O)

Looking back in the public record and having spent two years researching the minutiae which I have been able to uncover, it is my belief that Ray T. did, in one single stroke, set in motion the manufacture of his own end. Furthermore I believe that he did so willingly and in full knowledge of the consequences of his actions...

Francis Henderson's voice begins to fade in over the top of Susan's and he continues.

FRANCIS (V.O.)

...I have reasoned, rational and logical arguments to make this claim and all the evidence I need to prove to myself that they are the truth. I can only trust that my writing is of sufficient quality to persuade you of the same.

CAPTION : EIGHT WEEKS EARLIER

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FRANCIS AND HEATHER'S HOME, RICHMOND, LONDON - DAY

FRANCIS (30, crumpled casual appearance) is having a heated argument with HEATHER (28, smart and sharply dressed) in the living area of their home. Heather busily tidies the lounge whilst talking to Francis who stays in one place.

HEATHER

Are you serious?! What about me! Taking ten days holiday to go off all over the country. What about the trip to France we were talking about?

FRANCIS

I'll be gone seven days, tops we can do something nice when I get back.

HEATHER

You don't think! This is our life Francis! Two years you've been working on this book, your work at the paper has suffered, I've suffered. It's just a bloody book.

FRANCIS

I've got new leads, there are people who know things. I'm so near to finishing it Heather, I just need the last piece of the puzzle. All I need to do is follow up on the work I've done to date. You can see that can't you?

HEATHER

No, all I see is a man chasing a ghost. It all happened over a decade ago, its history, there's just a bunch of tales from nobodies who claim to to know something different from the last person, can't you just let go of it? Do what you want, I don't care. Take the car, I'll go stay with Mum for the week. You'll have more luck finding the holy grail than the truth about Raymond Dante.

Heather throws a cushion down onto the floor and walks out of the room. Francis stands motionless for a long time and then leaves the room.

EXT. FRANCIS' HOME - MORNING

Francis put his bags in the boot of the car and drives.

DISSOLVE TO:

CAPTION: 2018 : 12 YEARS EARLIER

The following is narrated by the voice over of Raymond Dante who speaks with a Canadian Accent.

INT. ARCHITECT OFFICES - DAY

RAYMOND DANTE (27) SITS AT A HIGH TECH TERMINAL IN AN ULTRA COOL MINIMALIST OFFICE SURROUNDED BY A GROUP OF EQUALLY PROFESSIONAL YOUNG PEOPLE. HE IS SMART, WEARING A SUIT AND TIE WITH A FASHIONABLE HAIR STYLE. A DIGITAL MODEL OF A BUILDING ROTATES ON HIS SCREEN.

RAYMOND

I was the chief Computer Aided Designer turning ideas into digital models and I was both happy and well paid. We'd just completed the build of the Reading Community Library and morale was high. The software I used was amazing and I could wield it like a ninja.

INT. DANTE'S APARTMENT - DAY

RAYMOND IS AT HOME AT THE WEEKEND LOUNGING AROUND. EATING PIZZA. ENTERTAINING HIS GEEKY FRIENDS. READING. DEBUGGING CODE AND WATCHING TV.

RAYMOND

My apartment wasn't much and I didn't have a girlfriend but as a geek I had just about everything else; books, music, movies, a games console, a few nerdy friends and a fat, lazy Tom cat called 'Jedi', he did nothing. Weekends were sometimes lonely. I read, watched TV and played around with computer software.

(MORE)

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

I'd worked at Google for a few months in my gap year, you never lose that coding itch. The 'WannaCry' virus of the previous year had be largely halted by a young 23 year old from Devon, later he'd been picked up by the FBI at Las Vegas Airport having been to the Def Con Hacking Convention. He was a hero.

ON TV THERE IS A LECTURE BY THE EX-DIRECTOR OF THE CIA FOCUSING ON CYBER CRIME STATING THE URGENT NATURE OF OF FACING THE THREAT.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

So when the next attack hit, they called it the "Houdini Virus" I gave it my full attention. The weird thing was some of the software architecture of the nasty little thing was identical to my Design software at work. I was all over it and suddenly I had the fix. With some trepidation but an equal amount of patriotism I sent my 'counter virus' to the appropriate authorities and went to bed. The next day all hell broke loose.

SUNDAY MORNING SUITED MEN ARRIVE AT DANTE'S APARTMENT INTERROGATE HIM AND SEIZE ALL HIS HARDWARE. WHEN THEY ARE GONE HIS PLACE IS IN A MESS AND HE IS LEFT SURROUNDED BY CHAOS.

INT. ARCHITECT OFFICES - MORNING

EVERYONE AT HIS WORK PLACE WELCOMES DANTE AS THOUGH HE HAS JUST WON THE LOTTERY WHEN HE ENTERS THE BUILDING AND THE OFFICES. HE IS A CELEBRITY. THERE ARE TV CAMERAS AND HE IS SOON ALL OVER THE NATIONAL NEWS ON ALL CHANNELS.

RAYMOND

Geeks and Nerds nationwide were being hailed as saviours, likened to Firemen and Doctors as they applied my solution to otherwise paralysed systems in hospitals, businesses and government buildings. I had saved lives, I had saved millions, maybe even billions of pounds.

DANTE IS ON THE PHONE NEARLY ALL THE TIME, SOMETIMES HOLDING TWO PHONES AT THE SAME TIME.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

MI5, MI6 were in contact regularly wanting details, I went up to that funny building on the Thames a couple of times for debriefing. The Prime Minister even called to thank me personally.

INT. DANTE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

RAYMOND'S APARTMENT IS NOW FULL OF MANY YOUNG PEOPLE AT A PARTY, EVERYONE IS DRINKING, DANCING AND HAVING A GOOD TIME.

RAYMOND

Of course it all died down after a while but I capitalised on my fifteen minutes of fame and felt that the party had only just started. I was THE GUY.

EXT. LONDON PARTY SCENE - EVENING

AT A NIGHT CLUB RAY IS DANCING WITH INCREASINGLY BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE. PEOPLE PAT HIM ON THE BACK, SHAKE HIS HAND AND HUG HIM. A TALL BLOND GIRL TAKES PARTICULAR INTEREST IN HIM.

RAYMOND

It was around then that I started going out more, especially up to London. I met Misha at some charity function. She told me that she had followed my 'little story' and asked me if I wanted to meet the following week at the Russian Tea Rooms in Fulham.

INT. RUSSIAN TEA ROOMS FULHAM - DAY

MISHA AND RAYMOND SIT FACING EACH OTHER IN A BOOTH. THEY TALK IN AN ANIMATED WAY, HOLD HANDS, DRINK TEA AND KISS.

RAYMOND

She was very Russian and very wealthy being the daughter of one billionaire, Yevgeny Konchalovsky, she'd been on TV and in Hello!

(MORE)

RAYMOND (CONT'D)
*Magazine so understood my recent
exposure to the press. Our
relationship developed naturally.*

INT. MISHA'S APARTMENT LONDON - DAY

RAYMOND WALKS THROUGH MISHA'S SUMPTUOUS AND CLEARLY VERY EXPENSIVE APARTMENT. LED BY MISHA THEY ENTER HER BEDROOM AND SHE SHUTS THE DOOR BEHIND THEM.

RAYMOND
I was introduced to a new way of living, a new way of thinking and a new way of loving. Everything had changed. Things got a little hazy around then as I was swept up in the moment. As Misha had majored in Psychology and Economics and as my father had worked as an analyst in the Canadian government I imagine we mostly talked about Politics. It was during those days that the MP for Reading West had stood down and when I showed an interest Misha suggested that I run for the vacant seat as an Independent. Why not? I could do anything I wanted.

INT. DANTE'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

RAYMOND AND MISHA HAVE SET UP AN OFFICE IN HIS OLD APARTMENT AND ARE SURROUNDED BY STACKS OF PAPERS AND FILING CABINETS. THE ROOM GRADUALLY FILLS UP WITH FRIENDS AND VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE BUSY ON PHONES AND AT COMPUTER SCREENS.

RAYMOND
I'd become a British Citizen as a teenager when we arrived in the UK so I was perfectly eligible. The cost of the campaign was to be among Misha's contributions, which was fine as she was my Election Agent and legally registered to vote. We worked on it night and day as we had only 19 days to file my nomination. It wasn't hard to get the ten registered electors needed as signatories due to my popular status in this constituency. I h'd been all over Facebook and made a lot of friends.

(MORE)

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

Our slogan was "On Line. On Air. On Message." Nomination submitted we had a further 18 days to take a run at it.

EXT. READING STREETS - DAY

DANTE IN A SMART SUIT AND MISHA LOOKING GLAMOROUS THEY WALK THE CONSTITUENCY WITH A GROUP OF FRIENDS, TALKING TO PEOPLE IN THE STREETS AND KNOCKING ON DOORS.

RAYMOND

The campaign was a model of social media planning combined with maximising my already glowing image in the area. Also my having helped design the local library went down a storm. Misha provided the magic dust that was liberally sprinkled around us and as a young enthusiastic group we appealed to the previously directionless Millennial generation who voted in record numbers. A record turnout and we smashed it!

INT. MISHA'S APARTMENT LONDON.

RAYMOND AND MISHA ARE ON HER BED WATCHING A HUGE TV SCREEN SHOWING AN INTERVIEW WITH RAYMOND IN READING AFTER HE HAS WON THE SEAT AND BECOME AN MP. THEY ARE DRINKING CHAMPAGNE.

RAYMOND

Its a hard feeling to explain. My standing for the position had been a minor news story but my winning as an Independent without the backing of any major party was truly newsworthy. Once again I was in the spotlight, in fact a much larger and more powerful spotlight, and I took to it like a duck to water.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MISHA KONCHALOVSKY'S HOUSE - DAY

Francis walks up to and knocks on MISHA's (30s, Blonde, Russian) front door.

MISHA

Francis! Come in, come in. My god, you look dressed for Winter, it's not raining is it, let me take your coat. Have you come far?

INT. MISHA KONCHALOVSKY'S HOUSE - DAY

Francis is led into the house.

FRANCIS

No, just from Richmond. Traffic was fine.

MISHA

The traffic, oh my god, its terrible, I hardly use the roads anymore.

FRANCIS

Thank you for agreeing to see me, its very kind of you.

MISHA

Kind, you're so old fashioned, I just love the press, you must know this.

FRANCIS

You do understand this is my own private project for the book, nothing to do with my job.

MISHA

The book, the magazine, the movie, its all the same, got to keep the masses entertained. Follow me.

They walk through a rather garishly but very expensively decorated house and sit at a table by a window overlooking an incredible garden. Francis removes a dictaphone.

FRANCIS

Is it ok to record? I have a memory like a sieve.

MISHA

Of course, record away. First Misha knows everything you want to know. I will tell you its all true and its all lies.

(MORE)

MISHA (CONT'D)

Forget everything you think you know, I will tell you everything. I will show you the man.

FRANCIS

Perhaps I could ask you a few simple questions first.

MISHA

There is no need, you want to know if Raymond could have taken his own life. Sure he could have, but it means nothing. He had drive and he had imagination, the final action would have been easy for him, just a continuation of strategy.

RICO SANCHEZ (25, Athletic) wanders in, wearing shorts and flip-flops.

RICO

Hey Misha. Excuse me. Do you know where I left my motorcycle keys?

MISHA

They're probably in the hall by the phone.

RICO

Can you not move my stuff, it's really annoying.

He leaves.

FRANCIS

Er.. the conspiracy theories, do you believe any of them yourself?

MISHA

Bullshit for teenagers and stoned students to have something to talk about.

FRANCIS

Well the Russia connection made a lot of waves afterwards.

MISHA

Oh Russia this, Russia that. People blame Russia for everything.

FRANCIS

And the mafia?

MISHA

You have to grow up Mr. Henderson.
The Mafia are far more interested
in drugs and organised crime.
Politicians mean nothing to them.

FRANCIS

You don't believe in the
allegations of collusion between
the Russian and British governments
then? The Election tampering.

Misha becomes very animated.

MISHA

The FSB, MI6, it's just absurd, it
doesn't make any sense. Why would
Raymond give his input into such
things? It's ridiculous.

FRANCIS

Maybe he was forced, maybe he
didn't have a choice, maybe he got
in too deep and there was no way
out?

MISHA

Maybe, maybe, maybe. Perhaps!
Perhaps! Perhaps! If that's your
little theory its based on
paranoia, belief in some higher
power, some elite group covertly
influencing world leaders. As I
said you need to grow up.

She has become quite angry.

FRANCIS

It's just a popular story that
explains some of the facts.

MISHA

Next you'll be telling me the
little green aliens took him!

Misha takes out a cigarette and lights up. She sits back and
relaxes.

MISHA (CONT'D)

You know it was love at first
sight, me and Ray. I went to the
company, the architects where he
was working then because my father
was having a building designed.

(MORE)

MISHA (CONT'D)

I suppose you know of my father,
The great Yevgeny Konchalovsky,
everyone knows him, there aren't
many richer Russians in London.

FRANCIS

I imagine it was hard for the two
of you both in his shadow.

MISHA

You understand. But Ray was just a
computer aided designer then. It
was the cracking of the Houdini
Virus that made his name. You
can't imagine the scale of his
brief fame with that. I liked him
straight away and when we met
again, at a party I could see he
had taken life to another level off
the back of all that fame. It
wasn't me who suggested he run as
an Independent MP but I was with
him all the way.

FRANCIS

I remember reading that your father
didn't approve of your
relationship.

MISHA

No, that he didn't but I didn't
care, we didn't care but we won
that seat together. Our campaign
was genius, the country had never
seen social media used so
effectively. It happened so fast
and you know the winning feature,
the USP? He had helped design the
new Reading library, everyone loved
it an everyone loved him. He was a
winner at heart, no wonder people
would want to use him, but to kill
him... no not that.

Misha looks out of the window and is quiet for a long time.

FRANCIS

Did you know his parents? I'm
going to see his father later
today.

MISHA

Oh yes! Therese was an angel, a beautiful woman in every way. They say she died of a broken heart...

Again Misha, momentarily alert is suddenly quiet again for a while.

MISHA (CONT'D)

You'll love Pascal, he is a gentleman. You be sure to send him my love.

FRANCIS

I will do.

Misha gets up and the interview is obviously over. Francis takes his dictaphone and Misha offers a bejewelled hand which Francis shakes.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Thank you.

MISHA

Good by now Mr. Henderson. Best of luck with your book. I'm sure it will sell.

At the front door Misha kisses Francis on each cheek and he walks to his car, driving away.

INT. CAR - AFTERNOON

FRANCIS (V.O.)

Dante had killed himself, I was sure of that but why? Why would a man who seemingly had everything to live for, a man in the prime of his life who was riding on the crest of great success choose to end it all? All I could think was that he somehow had very little choice in the matter. But what is a fate worse than death? I hoped his father might be able to shed some light on the whole tragedy but I knew I would have to tread very carefully to avoid causing great distress.

(MORE)

FRANCIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Ten years may seem like a long time
for most but to a father who has
lost his son it may be as though it
had happened but yesterday.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOUSE OF COMMONS, WESTMINSTER, LONDON - DAY

RAYMOND DANTE IS STANDING GIVING HIS MAIDEN SPEECH IN THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS.

RAYMOND

*I felt like a loner, I felt like a
king but the place was some kind of
zoo. In my maiden speech my voice
faltered, my confidence broke, my
sentences took on unwanted
meanings, I tried to make myself
understood but the effect was far
from strong. I wasn't far off a
laughing stock and from that moment
on I decided to rebuild myself into
the type of animal necessary for
the task at hand.*

INT. MISHA'S APARTMENT LONDON - DAY

SPLIT SCREEN: DANTE IS SURROUNDED BY BOOKS AT A DESK AND ON
THE PHONE TO HIS FATHER. HIS FATHER IS SITTING IN A LARGE
CHAIR AND HIS WIFE IS BRINGING HIM A CUP OF COFFEE.

RAYMOND

*I spoke to my father, a lot. I
read political theory, as much as I
could and I began to develop a
political language that I hoped
would translate well to
Westminster. I concentrated on my
constituency and its needs. I
began to champion in myself the
idea of a more Direct Democracy and
the terminology that would create a
more modern approach than my peers.
This would be my strength, I
represented youth and the
Information Age, I would be a
beacon for those who wished to see
Parliament brought up to date.*

(MORE)

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

This all culminated in my secret idea - people should be able to vote via their mobile phone. It wasn't exactly a revolution but it was new and it had the chance to go viral over time. I called my project 'Democratisation of Digital Democracy' and it was just about ready when a week into the job I got my second ever call from the Prime Minister. Would I be available to meet with her at No.10 at the weekend. Needless to say I made myself available.

EXT. NO.10 DOWNING STREET, LONDON - DAY

DANTE WALKS TOWARDS NO.10. THE DOOR IS OPENED AND HE GOES IN HE HIS SHOWN TO A SIDE ROOM WHERE HE WAITS THE PM AND IS BROUGHT A CUP OF TEA. THE PM ARRIVES AND THEY SIT CHATTING.

RAYMOND

As I approached that door, I felt like I was walking through history, the quality was as if I was being televised, I walked in a funny way my knees weak. Inside was surreal but when the Prime Minister walked in I felt truly a fish out of water. It wasn't normal. Very quickly she came to the point. Would I like to head up a cyber-security think tank? I could hardly say no and soon found myself signing the Official Secrets Act. Business done she asked how I was settling in and if there was anything she could do to help. I blurted out my idea for mobile phone voting and she laughed. In that moment I felt like I was being used and consequently that I was dispensable, it was an uncomfortable feeling and I left that place not knowing my place in the world. Was I one of 'us' or one of 'them'?

INT. MISHA'S APARTMENT LONDON. - DAY

MISHA AND RAYMOND ARE HAVING DINNER. THE NEWSPAPERS ARE SPREAD OUT ON THE TABLE WITH VARYING HEADLINES - "ROGUE PLAYBOY DANTE", "RED RAY".

RAYMOND

I told Misha perhaps more than I should have of my meeting, but she was more concerned with the press she and I were getting, they having found out at last about our relationship. The fact is the British public had never seen the likes of us in political life and we were dividing opinions. The Summer recess in Parliament came not soon enough and we decided to get married.

EXT. MILLIONAIRES YACHT, MEDITERRANEAN - DAY

THE BOAT, MOORED JUST OFF AN ISLAND, IS FULL OF WELL DRESSED SOCIALITES AND BUSINESS PEOPLE. A RUSSIAN ORTHODOX PRIEST PERFORMS THE CEREMONY ONBOARD AND A PARTY ENSUES. DANTE AND MISHA ARE FERRIED AWAY IN A SPEED BOAT TOWARDS THE COAST OF THE ISLAND AND A FUTURISTIC GLASS AND STEEL HOUSE FOR THEIR HONEYMOON.

RAYMOND

We spent a week on that island and it was bliss, upon our return the wedding pictures were in all the glossy magazines. It was meant to be a small and low key affair but perhaps that's what it was for Misha's father and his billions. Needless to say my behaviour as an MP came under closer scrutiny and upon returning the UK everything seemed rather small and inconsequential.

EXT. CYBER THINK TANK, LONDON - DAY

THE SECRET LOCATION OF THE GROUP IS UNDER AN ARCHWAY IN EAST LONDON. A SINGLE DOOR AS AN ENTRANCE INSIDE IT IS AN ALADDIN'S CAVE OF TECHNOLOGY. THERE ARE PEOPLE INSTALLING THE EQUIPMENT, FOUR YOUNG PEOPLE DRINKING COFFEE AROUND A TABLE AND ONE MAN, SIMONS, GIVING ORDERS TO THE TECHNICIANS. DANTE ENTERS AND APPROACHES THE GROUP AT THE TABLE SHAKING SIMONS' HAND AS HE PASSES.

RAYMOND

My new job was well underway. I had four of the best young minds at my disposal as well as the attentions of a MR. SIMONS who was on loan from GCHQ. Our codename was 'Phantom' and our enemy, whoever they should turn out to be was 'Mirage'. Our theories and ideas were all researched from this base. Anyone with potential hostile activities towards the UK was under our microscope and we began by sending out a fake news rumour to all suspects to see what we might get back in return. Our encoded foreign transmission was simple enough - The British Intelligence Agencies were colluding with The Russian Secret Service, The FSB, to manipulate upcoming European elections. It was a good lie and we quickly knew it had been deciphered by The Chinese, The Russians, The Americans and The North Koreans. All we had to do was sit back and wait for the consequences.

INT. MISHA'S APARTMENT LONDON - DAY

MISHA IS AT HOME PLAYING THE PERFECT WIFE. DANTE COMES HOME AND THEY KISS BEFORE SHE SERVES DINNER AND THEY TALK, A SEEMINGLY PERFECT SCENARIO.

RAYMOND

At this time I got the feeling that Misha was unhappy but she was not willing to admit it let alone explain. Her behaviour was somehow cold, almost robotic. Later I came to understand that her father had spoken with her. I hardly knew Yevgeny but I would not say that he was a kind man and had occasionally seen him abuse his authority with his employees. I would not have liked to work for him but I later came to understand that via a torturous route an unwittingly this was in fact exactly what I was doing. MI6 knew it too.

(MORE)

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

The FSB would have files on Yevgeny, his early Mafia connections and subsequently his use to them on the International scene. I was walking into a lot of trouble.

EXT. SOUTHBANK, LONDON - DAY

DANTE AND MISHA ARE WALKING ARM IN ARM ALONG THE SOUTHBANK.

RAYMOND

Misha had become more sullen, depressed even. One day she suddenly came out of this trance and suggested that we go away together for a long weekend to New York. I said definitely not and upsettingly she went back into her shell, this time for good. Had we gone to New York, had I followed her lead, knowing what I know now, we may well have both been inclined to stay there, for good. As it was I went back to work, the only change I noticed in her was that she became more interested in details of my work. There was a strange line she crossed on just the one occasion when she referred to something technical that she could've possibly have know about from me. In that moment I knew she was spying on me. I went to bed certain that I was now under surveillance not just by her but by my own government.

INT. CYBER THINK TANK - NIGHT

DANTE AND JUST ONE OF HIS YOUNG ASSISTANTS, PETE ARE WORKING LATE UNDER THE ARCHES. HUDDLED AROUND A COMPUTER TERMINAL AND LOOKING AT A SCREEN SHOWING A THREE DIMENSIONAL NETWORK OF CONTACTS.

RAYMOND

I stayed cool for a few days and then a moment of truth came.

(MORE)

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

Pete called me over to a screen and we were looking at the Connectivity of various entities when he showed me some decoded data coming through from our FSB source. It said quite simply that MI6 and the FSB were now in a project together to manipulate the upcoming elections. Our fake news ping had come back with interest and there was no doubt it was now real, very real. I was in the middle, and I was over my head. I told Pete that this was ours and no one else's, certainly Mr. Simons was not to know.

EXT. CYBER THINK TANK - NIGHT

AS DANTE WALKS HOME A MAN DROPS HIS MOTORCYCLE HELMET, A DOG TIE TO A RAILING BARKS AT HIM, A YOUNG WOMAN TALKS INTO HER HANDS FREE PHONE, ANOTHER WOMAN IN STILETTOS WALKS SOME FIVE METRES BEHIND HIM. HE IS EDGY AND WALKS FASTER. AT A CORNER HE STOPS AND SHE WALKS PAST TURNING A CORNER. HE CONTINUES TO WALK.

RAYMOND

I felt paranoid. I was in possession of highly sensitive information, I was a public figure and I had a platform. Who would believe me? I was worried about Misha, I was worried about Pete. I had no idea how much GCHQ knew, probably more than me. How would I be dealt with? Would someone come to take me away? I thought furiously to formulate options, choices to be made if certain circumstances should arise.

INT. HOUSE OF COMMONS, WESTMINSTER, LONDON - DAY

DANTE IS TALKING IN THE HOUSE AND PEOPLE ARE NOW LISTENING TO HIM INTENTLY. NEWSPAPERS HAVE HEADLINES 'RADICAL RAY' AND 'REVOLUTIONARY RAYMOND'. THE PM TAKES HIM TO ONE SIDE OUTSIDE THE CHAMBERS.

RAYMOND

Parliament was now back in Session and I had no choice but to soldier on as if everything was normal.

(MORE)

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

My ideas were being very well received both by my peers and the press and the PM singled me out for special interest. She was suggesting a new position of 'Cyber Liaison Secretary' and urging me to run as part of her party in the next election. My successes were putting pressure on my secret information and of course at some point it came to a head.

INT. CYBER THINK TANK - NIGHT

DANTE AND PETE ARE WORKING LATE AGAIN. PETE CALLS HIM OVER AND SHOWS HIM THE SCREEN.

RAYMOND

All he said was 'You've had it mate'. Undeniably proof that I was under investigation by MI5, MI6, the works.

EXT. CYBER THINK TANK - NIGHT

DANTE WALKS HOME AGAIN. A MAN FOLLOWS HIM, MAKES GROUND ON HIM AND THEN EVENTUALLY PINS HIM TO THE WALL. HE TALKS INCHES FROM DANTE'S FACE AND THEN PUSHES A BUSINESS CARD INTO DANTE'S TOP POCKET.

RAYMOND

As I left that night I had the feeling that I was being followed again, although I tried to shake the feeling this time it felt more real, more immediate. One of his shoes sounded different from the other other and suddenly he was on me. He was big and ugly and Russian. He stank of alcohol. He told me in a thick accent that my own people would come for me, ask me questions that I couldn't answer, that my life would become dirt but if I rang the number he gave me I could live with my pretty Russian bride in Moscow. He told me to choose very quickly.

DISSOLVE TO:

I/E. PASCAL DANTE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

PASCAL DANTE (60s, tall, immaculately dressed) answers the door shortly after Francis knocks. He enters.

PASCAL

I hope you'll forgive me Mr. Henderson, I took the liberty of doing a little research by way of becoming familiar with you before I become too familiar with you, if you get my drift.

FRANCIS

Not at all, in a way I'm flattered.

PASCAL

Don't be, I've come to understand your style and from what I've read of your journalism and I'm afraid you are mistaken in a great many of your beliefs. Shall we sit here?

They are out on the patio of a neat garden.

EXT. GARDEN PATIO - AFTERNOON

FRANCIS

Do you mind if I record?

Francis holds up dictaphone which he places on the table between them.

PASCAL

As long as it doesn't stop you from listening. Good now about my son, what exactly is it that you want to know?

FRANCIS

Ah yes. It's hard to know where to begin.

PASCAL

Well you better start somewhere, there's only so much time in a day. Why don't you start at the end, the whole mysterious death thing.

FRANCIS

OK. Well. I've been working with the theory that Raymond, er, actually took his own life, because he was forced into an impossibly untenable position.

PASCAL

Rubbish. Never, he was a life junkie. He love it all, he would embrace any emotion strongly however positive or negative.

FRANCIS

You don't think anything could have tipped him over the edge?

PASCAL

No, nothing. He came to see me one morning, he had a back pack, he asked to borrow my car because there was something up with his and he went to the Isle of Arran in Scotland, we'd once been on a family holiday there. Apparently he hired a boat, I can only imagine it capsized in the storm that came in. It was a stupid accident, that's all there is to it. Took him from me and from the country.

FRANCIS

Just bad luck then.

PASCAL

No, I don't believe in luck, just poor planning. You're not one of these insane conspiracy theorists are you?

FRANCIS

Ah well, I wouldn't say insane. You look at the details and it seems there was a lot going on that we weren't told about at the time. It seems clear there were forces at work at the highest level. He was under a lot of pressure in Westminster at the time. I'm not saying there was a cover up but you know, its possible.

PASCAL

Let me show you something.

Pascal goes inside briefly and returns with a photo album.

PASCAL (CONT'D)

These are pictures of Raymond in his various plays. You see he was an actor in so many ways. He loved The Method, to really believe that he was someone else.

FRANCIS

It's been said that he was a gifted performer.

PASCAL

Of course and not just in public, he developed his characters they were real to him. There was an inner part to him that remained the same.

FRANCIS

I wonder sometimes if we don't all live our lives in bubbles, those of our own making and those imposed upon us.

PASCAL

My son was uniquely adept at surviving both within and outside of these bubbles, these worlds, whether they were made for him or whether he created them for himself.

The conversation comes to an end but Pascal begins to tell stories of Raymond's early years as a boy as Francis listens intently. The stories are illustrated by the photographs in the album the pages of which Francis turns slowly. There is laughter on the part of Pascal as he drinks wine and enjoys the opportunity for nostalgia. The time comes for Francis to leave. At the front door they shake hands.

PASCAL (CONT'D)

Remember, books are books, people are people...

FRANCIS

Thank you Mr. Dante, thank you so much. Goodbye.

INT. CAR - EVENING

Music plays as Francis Drives up the M11 towards to Cambridge.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MISHA'S APARTMENT LONDON - NIGHT

MISHA IS READING AN INTERIOR DESIGN MAGAZINE. DANTE WALKS TO THE BEDROOM, TAKES HIS CLOTHES OFF, HAS A SHOWER, BRUSHES HIS TEETH AND GOES TO BED NEXT TO MISHA WHO SLEEPS. DANTE LIES ON HIS BACK THINKING EYES WIDE OPEN.

RAYMOND

Just hearing her accent brought back that of my assailant and I went into a kind of psychosis that lead me as an automaton through my routine before going to bed. I could only think of one person who could help me, a very special person, an old flame named Gina Royce. We had been at Cambridge University together and I knew she knew people, she knew Americans.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE B&B MORNING - MORNING

He pulls up outside a Bed and Breakfast in Cambridge just as night falls.

INT. CAMBRIDGE B&B BREAKFAST ROOM - MORNING

Francis eats his full English Breakfast with great gusto then leaves the building to walk into the city centre.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREETS - MORNING

Francis walks through the city, looking at all the colleges, buildings, students on bicycles and tourists that he sees.

FRANCIS (V.O.)

What would he have been looking at when he was here? What would he have been thinking? Could he possibly have had any idea of the adventure that lay ahead in his life?

(MORE)

FRANCIS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Gina Royce will know, maybe she was
the only one that knew the real
Dante?

Francis goes down a small side alley and stops outside a
cafe. He pushes the door and a small brass bell rings as he
enters.

INT. GINA'S CAFE, CAMBRIDGE - MORNING

The cafe is full of an assortment of people, students, some
Japanese tourists, a thin African man. Jazz is playing over
the speakers. The walls are covered in beautiful
photographs. Francis walks up to the counter.

FRANCIS
A latte and one of those Danish
Pastries please. Also could you
tell me if Gina Royce is hear, I
have a meeting with her, my name is
Francis Henderson.

The BARISTA (20s, female) who is very busy replies as she
makes the coffee.

BARISTA
I think she's just out the back,
I'll let her know you're here.

Francis takes his order and sits at a table looking at the
photographs. Soon GINA ROYCE (40s, short, pretty) approaches
him.

GINA
Hello, Francis?

Francis stands up and offers his hand which Gina shakes
enthusiastically.

FRANCIS
Hi, Gina. Pleased to meet you.

GINA
I'm sorry, I was on the phone. Do
you mind if we go someplace else.
(Whispering) It's a mad house in
here.

FRANCIS
Sure.

Francis picks up his bag and they leave.

GINA

I know somewhere very special we
can go.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREETS - MORNING

They walk at a brisk pace for a short while before arriving
at an art gallery called Kettle's Yard. Gina flashed a
member's card and they go in.

INT. KETTLE'S YARD ART GALLERY - MORNING

Walking through an exhibition they arrive at a small
courtyard.

EXT. COURTYARD - MORNING

They sit down together on a bench.

GINA

Sorry for the rush. I'm afraid I
don't actually have that much time.
Can you imagine what happens in a
cafe if you run out of coffee?

FRANCIS

This is an interesting place, kind
of tucked away.

GINA

Exactly, that's why Raymond and I
used to come here, you know to
meet, away from it all. This is
about your book isn't it.

FRANCIS

Yes, yes it is. Is it ok to record
this?

GINA

Not a problem. First off, I have
to tell you, I'm not mad. Not
really, its just become a bit of an
act. Its' just that if everyone
thinks you are you might as well
have a bit of fun pretending to be
right?!

FRANCIS

Absolutely.

GINA

Right. Ray and I were together the whole time we were here, well on and off, we sort of used each other for well, for you know, this and that. There was a lot of love but when we graduated it all ended. I didn't see him again until I was 23. I was working in LA playing the violin in an orchestra for movie soundtracks. Sounds good doesn't it. He just flies in to LAX and calls me up all casual. He'd been travelling. We picked up where we left off and then he was gone.

FRANCIS

You got fairly trashed in the press when everything happened.

GINA

It was a ridiculous time. All that happened was I came forward because I said he must still be alive because he sent me something in the post, dated several weeks after they called off the search. No one believed me, no one believes me still. I was the crazy ex-girlfriend trying to have her moment of fame.

FRANCIS

That must have been very hard for you.

GINA

Oh, no, it was great. I got my picture in all the papers. The hard thing was knowing I'd never see him again. Our affair after he became an MP was very real and I saw a great deal of change in him over that time.

FRANCIS

Was it political life that was changing him?

GINA

It was like he was growing without developing.

FRANCIS

I'm sorry, did you just say he sent you something after the date of the accident?

GINA

Yes. Post-marked London, recorded delivery. It was a tobacco tin, we used to smoke together secretly, and it had a big old key in it and a cheque too, from him, it was his signature alright and for or quite a large amount. It helped me set up the cafe.

FRANCIS

How can you explain it?

GINA

Two days before it all blew up he called and we met in an hotel. He told me he wanted to go away with me, split with Misha and 'check out' as he put it.

FRANCIS

What was the key for?

GINA

I have no idea, something to do with luck. He kept mentioning luck, that he needed luck so I gave him my bracelet, it had twelve of these semi-precious stones in it. The next morning was the last day I saw him.

FRANCIS

Gina, do you believe Raymond ended his own life?

GINA

He certainly ended something. The only conclusion I can come to is that he is... 'missing'.

FRANCIS

You really believe he's out there somewhere.

GINA

You don't understand, that last time I say him he was already missing in some way, it was like something essential had been taken from him.

Gina starts to cry.

FRANCIS

Are you OK?

GINA

Not really, I've been living with a ghost all these years. I'm the one who should know for sure what happened to him, I don't, no one does and that's how it will stay, forever.

FRANCIS

We can stop here if you like, you've been so incredibly helpful.

GINA

No thank you Francis, it's been a blessing to get some of this out. Here, I want you to have this, I've been carrying it all this time, maybe it will be of some use to you.

Gina rummages around in her bag and pulls out a tobacco tin.

GINA (CONT'D)

I've always carried it.

She shakes it and it rattles which causes her to smile and laugh a little and then she hands it to Francis.

FRANCIS

Oh, I couldn't.

GINA

I want you to have it. Have you been to Cambridge before Mr. Henderson?

FRANCIS

No, this is the first time.

GINA

It's a lovely place, so old and mysterious but it keeps you young.

(MORE)

GINA (CONT'D)

I have to go now, those coffee
beans won't order themselves.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREETS - DAY

They get up and leave the courtyard and walk all the way back to the cafe where Gina opens the door with the bell. She leans over to Francis and talks quietly.

GINA

I'm not mad really, just got a bad
press.

FRANCIS

Goodbye Gina, thank you again.

Francis leaves and walks, removing the tin from his pocket and shaking it to give himself a little smile. He stops on a small bridge and opens it to see an old rusty key about three inches in length. He puts the lid back on and puts the tin in his pocket before walking back towards his car.

INT. CAR - DAY

Francis is on the M1 heading towards Scotland.

FRANCIS (V.O.)

I wish I'd told Heather about this
leg of the trip. Thought she
wouldn't have allowed me to go.
I've got to see where he died,
disappeared. There must be
something there, after all these
years, something, something of the
essence of the man.

During the long journey a lorry pulls out in front of him and he has to swerve. A little later a loose plastic bag blows onto his windscreen. He is tired and dozy and puts some music on to wake him up. Six and a half hours pass, the journey takes from midday to nearly 7pm. He stops a few times at petrol stations to stretch his legs. He eats junk food as he drives. Finally after taking more and more minor roads he arrives at Kilwinning on The West Coast of Scotland. Where he parks the car by a pub.

EXT. KILWINNING - EVENING

Francis opens the car door and the cold wind coming in from the sea hits him with full force. He gets out and walks.

FRANCIS (V.O)

He had been here, he had stayed here. Was this how it was when he had arrived? Just an accident. A man goes out in a small boat, a sudden storm comes in from nowhere, he capsizes and drowns. His body is never found.

Francis walks to his car, the weather is now calm, and he drives it onto the small ferry where there are ten or so other cars and several foot passengers.

EXT. FERRY - EVENING

The crossing takes just over half an hour. Francis stands near his car, looking out to the sea and the mountains rising up from it at his destination on The Isle of Arran.

INT. CAR - EVENING

Driving off the ferry Francis is soon on an open clear road. After a while he comes around a corner to see a few small buildings near a rock outcrop that juts into the sea. He arrives there and parks.

EXT. CAR - EVENING

Getting out of the car he walks to the extremity of the rock outcrop, where the water crashed against it.

FRANCIS (V.O.)

This is where. A lonely place to end it all. He hires a boat, he doesn't check the weather, he sets out, a storm comes in, he goes over, he fights, he swims, he sinks, he swallows, he goes under, he dies, he is lost, no one sees him again, ever.

Francis sits down on the rocks by the water and watches the sun setting.

FRANCIS (V.O.)

A tragic accident, just as his father says. The end of my book. The end of his life story...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MISHA'S APARTMENT LONDON - MORNING

DANTE LEAVES THE FLAT VERY EARLY GOES TO A STORE ALONG THE STREET AND BUYS 50 BAGS OF BEEF JERKY AND A MOBILE PHONE. HE CALLS A NUMBER FROM A PIECE OF PAPER AND TALKS. THEN HE CALLS ANOTHER NUMBER AND TALKS.

RAYMOND

I couldn't trust my phone so I bought a new one, I was going to need it along with the only food I could think of that would last as long as I needed. I called Gina who was pleased to hear from me to tell her I needed to meet with her later that day where she lived in Cambridge. Then I rang a friend of Misha's to tell her Misha needed to cheer her up and could she pay a surprise visit and take her shopping. I could risk calling my Dad, his phone may have been bugged too. I went back hoping Gina's friend would arrive soon.

INT. MISHA'S APARTMENT LONDON - MORNING

MISHA'S FRIEND ARRIVES AND THEY LEAVE TOGETHER, DANTE KISSING HER GOOD BYE. HE PACKS SPEEDILY ITEMS INCLUDING A TOOTHBRUSH, TOOTHPASTE, RAZOR, SHAVING GEL, BEARD TRIMMER, SPARE CLOTHES, LARGE RUBBISH SACKS, SLEEPING BAG, INFLATABLE MATTRESS A FIVE FOOT LENGTH OF ROPE AND THE BEEF JERKY. HE LEAVES DROPPING THE FRONT DOOR KEY IN A RUBBISH BIN NEARBY. HE GETS IN HIS CAR AND DRIVES.

RAYMOND

I had rehearsed everything the night before and knew exactly what I would be needing. There was no fear, paranoia or doubt anymore, just a determination to carry out that which I had planned. It was simple logistics but there was no room for error. I left that place with a purpose that resembled nothing of the way I had arrived there. The difference now was that I knew what I was doing.

INT. CAR - DAY

DANTE DRIVES TO HIS FATHER'S WHO OPENS THE FRONT DOOR AND LETS HIM IN.

RAYMOND

It was only an hour to my parents house. I thought of nothing as my plan was already set in motion and there was no more thinking to do. I had to see my father and mother, for the last time, but my mother was out, I was heartbroken.

INT. PASCAL DANTE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

DANTE SR. SITS HIS SON DOWN AND GIVES HIM A CUP OF COFFEE. THEY TALK. THEY EAT. THEY LOOK THROUGH PHOTO ALBUMS. AND MAPS. THEY DRINK AND THEN RAYMOND GOES TO SLEEP IN THE SPARE ROOM. THE NEXT MORNING HE WAKES AND LEAVES ALMOST IMMEDIATELY BORROWING HIS FATHER'S CAR. THEY SAY GOOD BYE WITH A HUG.

RAYMOND

My father knew I was in some kind of trouble but ever the diplomat he asked nothing except that which related to what I said, and to protect him I said nothing of my intentions. It was good because we talked about absolutely everything else, family, friends and stories of times gone by. All I told him was that I was going to The Isle of Arran, to get away from it all, it was a place where we'd once spent a holiday. Dad was kind and thoughtful and when I asked him the next morning if I could borrow his car he made no protest. I feared my car might be tracked by number recognition or even a device. He just kept telling me to take care, take care of everything that I loved. That's exactly what I was doing, securing my safety, that of my family and if you believe it of my country too. I cried most of the way to Cambridge.

INT. CAR - MORNING

RAYMOND DRIVES THROUGH CAMBRIDGE WITH ALL ITS COLLEGES. HE LOOKS ALL AROUND THEN PARKS AND WALKS TO KETTLE'S YARD ART GALLERY WHERE HE WAITS FOR GINA. SHE ARRIVES AND THEY HUG EACH OTHER FOR A LONG TIME. THEY WALK AROUND THE GALLERY AND TALK ANIMATEDLY. THEY SMOKE. SHE GIVES HIM HER TIN OF TOBACCO AND A BRACELET OF SEMI-PRECIOUS STONES.

RAYMOND

It was strange going back there but I knew the place so well, I knew how to get to The Kettle's Yard Gallery, where we used to meet in secret all those years ago. The nature of my secret was so heavy that I told Gina everything and she did not doubt me not once. There was a CIA operative she had dated in Los Angeles a long time back and I needed to know if she could still contact him, everything hinged on it. She promised to do her best and I knew she would. Whether she would be able to come with me was a question I couldn't answer yet. She gave me the tobacco she had an bracelet for luck. We parted with a long kiss and the future hanging in the balance.

INT. CAR - AFTERNOON/NIGHT

RAYMOND DRIVES NORTH TO SCOTLAND AS NIGHT FALLS. HE ARRIVES IN KILWINNING PARKS HIS CAR AND TAKING HIS BAG CHECKS INTO THE WHEEL INN PUBLIC HOUSE NEXT TO THE FERRY TERMINAL.

RAYMOND

It didn't matter if anyone recognised me, which on occasion they did, I was away from London, no one could reach me here and soon I wouldn't be around to be reached.

EXT. FERRY - MORNING

RAYMOND TAKES THE 9AM FERRY WITH HIS FATHER'S CAR AND LOOKS OUT TO SEE AS HE MAKES THE CROSSING. LANDING ON ARRAN HE DRIVES OFF THE FERRY AND CONTINUES TOWARDS THE HILLS.

RAYMOND

I remembered everything and swam in the memories of my boy-hood sensations. For a while I was happy in myself and accepting of the course I had chosen.

EXT. THE ALBION PUB - MORNING

HE ARRIVES OUTSIDE THE ALBION PUB AND TALKS TO A MAN STANDING BY A SMALL GROUP OF BOATS. SOME MONEY CHANGES HANDS AND RAYMOND BEGINS TO UNLOAD HIS SMALL BAG. HE GETS IN THE BOAT CALLED 'LUCY' AND SETS SAIL. SOME HEAVY WEATHER IS ON THE HORIZON. HE INFLATES HIS MATTRESS AND TIES IT TO HIS BAG AND IS SOON SPEEDING AWAY.

RAYMOND

This was the place for it. I hired a boat from a man named 'Jack' for fifty pounds, she was a pretty little vessel but I made no sentimental attachment to her from the outset. My luck was with me as the weather was brewing up a storm, I headed for the worst of it and made my preparations.

EXT. SEA OFF THE COAST - AFTERNOON

THE STORM COMES IN FAST AND RAYMOND IS SHOUTING WILDLY AT THE WIND. HE SWINGS THE BOAT AROUND AND HEADS BACK TOWARDS THE COAST WHERE HE AIMS FOR A ROCK OUTCROP. HE CRASHES THE BOAT WRECKING IT.

RAYMOND

I sailed for a long time, far out to sea and only when I was in the middle of the storm did I turn back for the coast. Fast approaching this crucial and most dangerous part of my plan I rose into a kind of madness that took over any further reasoning. Crashing the boat on the rocks it broke into pieces.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROCKY OUTCROP - EVENING

The shot comes back to present day as Francis is still sitting in the exact same place as where Raymond hit the coast, only now it is calm and tranquil and the sun is setting. Francis walks back towards the pub.

EXT. THE ALBION PUB - EVENING

Francis walks into the local pub just next to the rock outcrop.

INT. THE ALBION PUB - MORNING

As he is drinking from a coffee the LANDLADY (60s, Short) and LANDLORD are talking freely.

LANDLADY

We were here when it happened.

LANDLORD

Yep, only had the place a few months. First we knew of it was when old Bob showed up, said he'd found a boat crashed on the rocks.

LANDLADY

I thought it had just come loose in the night, the storm was terrible fierce. Then Jack woke up, he'd been sleeping on the couch that night, drunk as he'd got the night before.

LANDLORD

It had been Jack had hired him the boat, the fella, Dante that is just wanted it for the afternoon and he'd given him fifty quid for the hire. Jack spent it all on the drink and fell asleep. Weather was fine then, but no one to report him missing.

LANDLADY

Bob knew it was Jack's boat when he found it smashed the next morning. Poor man that Raymond Dante, lost his life out there, just off our bit of the shore.

The Landlady starts to cry a little and her husband puts his arm around her.

LANDLORD

It was all the TV that made it so much worse. They wouldn't let go of it, the story that is.

FRANCIS

I understand, you get fascinated with the question, it drives you. You have to learn to accept its just a job, just a story.

The landlady has pulled herself together.

LANDLADY

Tragic, a young man to go so early, so full of promise, such a man of the people.

Francis is now eating a meal at a window seat when BOB (50, large, bearded, wearing boots) walks in. The Landlord greets him.

LANDLORD

Hello there Bob.

BOB

You alright there Frank.

LANDLORD

This here's Mr. Henderson, come from London, writing a book on The Mr. Raymond Dante.

BOB

Hello there Mr. Henderson.

FRANCIS

Are you the same Bob who found Dante's boat?

BOB

One and the same, I'm supposing you'll be wanting to see, like all the other crazies.

FRANCIS

That would be just fine.

BOB

Come on then, it's only 'round the corner.

They leave the pub and walk to an old shack.

EXT. THE ALBION PUB SHACK - DAY

Bob throws away a large tarpaulin over the jagged crushed remains of the small boat which has the name 'Lucy' painted on what is left of the bow.

BOB
Fifty quid and no checking the weather leads to one joyride for one dead MP. Foolish as he was young.

Francis looks over it and then pulls out his phone.

FRANCIS
Can I take a picture?

BOB
Take as many as you like.

Francis takes lots of pictures from all angles.

BOB (CONT'D)
There's no charge for the viewing but it's sort of a custom to see your way to buying me a pint, or two.

FRANCIS
Certainly.

They leave and walk back to the pub.

INT. THE ALBION PUB - DAY

At the bar.

FRANCIS
What will you have?

BOB
A pint of Stones thank you. You not having one?

FRANCIS
Oh, I've got to drive.

BOB
Surely one for the road then.

FRANCIS

Ok, I'll try a pint of Stones too.

They sit in the corner drinking. Soon they are joined by JACK (50s, tall and slim) and drinking more.

BOB

You might as well be staying the night Mr. Henderson.

FRANCIS

I think that's wise, I'm going to get my bags.

Francis leaves to his car and comes back with his bags.

BOB

Jack here will tell you all you need to know about that young Mr. Dante. He's what you might call an expert on the matter. Won't get much better words for you book than from him.

Francis sits down.

FRANCIS

So you're the Jack that rented the boat.

JACK

That I am. What you've got to appreciate is that although your man may have been a master at navigating the psychological mine-field of Westminster, when it comes to navigating these waters he was a novice.

BOB

You do want to make some money out of this book don't you Mr. Henderson. I'm surprised at you because you don't seem to realise all the money is in the conspiracy theories.

FRANCIS

I've been looking for the truth.

BOB

The truth you say, very slippery thing the truth.

FRANCIS

If you want to know what I really think its that Raymond Dante deliberately and with foresight committed suicide.

They are all drinking more heavily with several empty glasses on the table.

BOB

Now you're talking, it's an idea isn't it. I suggest you put the truth on ice for a little while.

JACK

Aliens took him, put and simple. It's the only theory that makes any sense. He's alive in some mother ship somewhere and they're using his mind to control the governments of the so called free world.

BOB

That's more like it, that's what people want to read Mr. Henderson.

FRANCIS

Ah, he was just a fallible man, it was just an accident. If it had been anyone else it wouldn't have even made the News.

JACK

But they never found the body! You think I'm joking about The Aliens, there' a barn about thirty miles North of here where they beamed him up. You think I'm soft in the head don't you?!

BOB

Jack talks a lot of bull, but if you want a bestseller on your hands you should listen to him. He's got it all figured out I tell you.

Francis gets up and is clearly drunk, struggling to find his feet.

FRANCIS

I'm off to bed, thank you for your insights and wisdom gentlemen.

He walks wobbling away from the table.

JACK
Another one bites the dust.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Francis stirs and wakes with a hangover to realise he has not set his alarm.

FRANCIS
Damn!

He dresses quickly and packs his bag before leaving.

INT. THE ALBION PUB - MORNING

Francis heads for the door as the Landlord just catches him.

LANDLORD
Goodbye Mr. Henderson, no breakfast then?

FRANCIS
Er, no, I've missed the ferry. Do you know when the next one leaves?

The landlord looks at his watch.

LANDLORD
Not for another four hours. Two o'clock.

FRANCIS
I'll just drive this hangover off for a while then.

LANDLORD
Well it was good to meet you. Head North there's some lovely roads.

FRANCIS
Thank you. Goodbye.

LANDLORD
Bye then.

INT. CAR - MORNING

Francis drives. The roads are spectacular hugging the sides of the mountains and stretching out in a winding black ribbon through the valleys. Suddenly in an isolated place there is a loud bang and Francis loses control of the car.

It skid for a long time before coming to rest on the grass verge. Francis sits for a while catching his breath then gets out.

EXT. CAR - MORNING

He looks back there is a long trail of rubber laid down in a crazy track. He gets back in the car, leaving the door open.

INT. CAR - MORNING

He tries to start the car but there is nothing. He gets out of the car again.

EXT. CAR - MORNING

Taking out his phone he removes his AA card from his wallet and calls the number.

FRANCIS

Hi, I've broken down. I don't know what went wrong. I'm on the Isle of Arran. Yes, yes, about thirty miles North on the road from the Albion pub. Oh ok, I'll read a book or something. Thank you. Yes I'll stay with car. Thank you again.

Francis leans against his car and looks at the beautiful surroundings. The sky is clear save for a few whisky clouds near the tops of the mountains. In the near distance he sees a brown dilapidated barn. He looks at his watch and walks towards it.

EXT. BARN - MORNING

Within a few minutes he is next to it and walks around it. He looks through the windows and there is a door which he tries but it is locked. He walks all the way around it looking in the windows and then removes the tobacco tin from his pocket. He shakes it and it rattles.

FRANCIS

Luck Key.

He removes the key and tries it in the lock, it turns with difficulty, he opens the door and enters.

INT. BARN - MORNING

There is loose damp straw everywhere. Light comes in through the slats in the roof and walls. There is nothing in here.

FRANCIS (V.O)
Was he here?

Francis walks all around and then sits down with his back against a wall. Opposite him on the facing wall is a large rectangle, carved with a knife, containing a picture also fashioned with a knife of a tropical island. In the top left corner are the letters BBC and at the bottom SONY. Next to him on another wall he sees cuts in the wood marking off days and the words "Tobacco Key" carved underneath. He looks at the tin. Having been mesmerised for a while he looks at his watch and leaves closing and locking the door behind him. He walks back to the car. He looks over his shoulder several times.

EXT. CAR - MORNING

The AA MAN (20s thin Scottish) arrives.

FRANCIS
Boy, am I glad to see you!

AA MAN
Perk of the job, always being welcomed. Looks like you had a battle on your hands.

He looks back at the skids.

FRANCIS
Yeah, it just let out this huge bang, the wheels locked up, I wasn't even braking.

AA MAN
How fast were you going?

FRANCIS
Er, 50 maybe 60.

The AA man tries to start the car with no luck and then opens the bonnet. He removes the dip stick.

AA MAN
See that?

FRANCIS
What am I looking for?

AA MAN

Oil!

FRANCIS

I don't see any.

AA MAN

There isn't any. You're out of oil. You must have a leak and dumped it all some place back there. Your engine has seized sir.

FRANCIS

Can you get me going again?

AA MAN

Ha! No I'm afraid not. Your pistons and cylinders have got so hot without any oil that they've welded themselves together in the block. Short of a new engine you're going nowhere.

FRANCIS

Oh. What are my options?

AA MAN

It'll cost you more to repair than its value. I'm afraid its a write-off sir. I can load it up on the truck and dispose of it for you and get you on your way home. Where is home Sir?

FRANCIS

London.

AA MAN

Well you're in luck. If you get the ferry back to Kilwinning the train will take you all the way into Euston, I believe you change just the once.

The AA Man winches the car onto the back of his loader truck and they drive to the ferry.

EXT. FERRY - AFTERNOON

Now with just his bag Francis boards the ferry.

EXT. RAILWAY STATION - AFTERNOON

Francis boards the train and takes a seat.

INT. TRAIN - AFTERNOON

Francis stares out the window as the train hurtles along. He gets out his mobile phone which has only 5% battery remaining and types 'Tobacco Key' into his Google Search Engine. The Wikipedia entry comes up with 'Tobacco Caye' in Belize, Central America and under the images is one that is in startling likeness to the drawing on the wall in the barn. Francis looks up flights to Belize City and books on leaving from London in a few days on United via Houston. He calls Heather but as she answers the battery fails. He sleeps.

INT. FRANCIS AND HEATHER'S HOME, RICHMOND, LONDON - DAY

Francis and Heather are in their lounge standing a long way apart from each other.

HEATHER

I simply do not understand you Francis, you're not normal. I know what normal is, I'm a lawyer, I see all kinds of deviation from the norm, on just a human level.

FRANCIS

I'm sorry Heather but this thing has suddenly gotten much much bigger, bigger than me, bigger than the country. That's all there is to it.

HEATHER

What are you talking about? Bigger!

FRANCIS

It's kind of secret.

HEATHER

Secret, well that's just marvellous. Secretive behaviour is the start of a very slippery slope Francis, downwards.

FRANCIS

I'm going to Belize next week.

HEATHER

Excuse me?!

FRANCIS

Belize, its a country in Central America.

HEATHER

I know what it is, but people don't just go there 'next week'!

FRANCIS

It's for the book, I'll only be gone a week.

HEATHER

A week, what about me. What about your job. Newspapers like their journalists to do some real work every now and then so I've been led to believe.

FRANCIS

When I get back we can do the Paris thing together. I've a feeling the book will kind of write itself.

HEATHER

How are you going to pay for all this? Have you thought about that?

FRANCIS

Well its all on the card at the moment. We won't be paying for the car anymore, that's a bonus.

HEATHER

I don't think I need to talk to you anymore. You go off and be secret and think about what you may or may not be coming back to. I'm serious I'm not talking to you anymore.

Heather storms off into the kitchen and Francis is left standing alone in the lounge. The days go by with no words being exchanged until Francis is packed and ready to leave. by the front door with a taxi waiting outside. Heather gives him a kiss.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Good luck. Call me when you get there.

FRANCIS

Will do, bye.

It is raining heavily. Francis turns and leaves and gets in the taxi which drives away.

EXT. BELIZE AIRPORT - DAY

Francis' plane touches down in glorious sunshine and blue sky.

EXT. AIRPORT ENTRANCE - DAY

Francis exits the airport and approaches a taxi taking off his jacket as he does so.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

FRANCIS

The Majestic Hotel please. Thank you.

I/E. TAXI - DAY

The taxi passes through the outskirts of the city with all manner of people, traffic and businesses in motion in the hot and sunny weather. It pulls up outside the old character hotel, Francis pays and takes his bag with him into the hotel foyer.

INT. MAJESTIC HOTEL - DAY

Francis walks passed some gentlemen drinking in the foyer and checks in at the reception. A porter takes his bag and shows him to his room.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - DAY

He tips the porter and looks at the view from the window. He turns the radio on and snoozes for a while on his bed. When he has relaxed he leaves his room and goes down to the bar near the foyer.

INT. HOTEL BAR - DAY

He orders a beer from the BARMAN (30s, Belizean)

FRANCIS

A Heineken thank you.

The Barman busies himself and an American who is the only other person sitting in the bar moves to sit next to Francis and introduces himself as BILL (40, well built)

BILL

Hi, I'm Bill, what's a Brit doing in Belize? Didn't British Honduras become history the moment Belize was born?

FRANCIS

Hi, Francis Henderson. Yeah, it's a long way from home alright. I'm a journalist doing a piece on the infrastructure in the South.

BILL

That's a pretty cushy assignment, sounds more like a holiday. I went to London once, it rained for two weeks straight. I mean if I want rain I can go to Seattle right, see the Sonics shoot a few hoops.

FRANCIS

Actually its been really good weather in London lately, although I haven't been out and about much. Where in the States are you from Bill?

BILL

San Francisco. Yeah I know what you're thinking hippies and progressive education but they've got a great Football team too. You don't get Grid Iron in the UK do you?

FRANCIS

It's a minority sport.

BILL

Minority! I like it.

FRANCIS

How about you Bill, what are you doing here?

BILL

Oh business, Charity actually. We bring students down here show them how lucky they are. It's a teaching angle, an exchange programme.

FRANCIS

Well that gives me hope Bill.

BILL

Yeah, we're not all selfish capitalist imperialists with a view on dominating the world.

FRANCIS

What do you know of the political situation here?

BILL

Don't get me started. It's a can of worms. There's a lot of problems here, you'll find that with you story about the road building in the South. Oh yeah, something else, The CIA is here too...

FRANCIS

You sure?

BILL

Sure, I'm sure. I spoke to one here just the other night, sat right where you're sitting. Young guy, couldn't keep his mouth shut after a few drinks.

FRANCIS

What was he saying?

BILL

Started out with an assault on the movies, said they get it all wrong, next he was all over me about the government here, the bureaucracy. They just want facts, numbers, statistics. I guess I was a safe bet for a grilling.

FRANCIS

Well I've got to say its encouraging to hear you're not phased by all that nonsense. Sounds like you've got a worthy project on your hands.

BILL

Thank you Francis, that means a lot, to know you're better off in your own reality than some fiction I cooked up by someone else.

(MORE)

BILL (CONT'D)

Look I've got to turn in now my friend, early start I hope your work goes well, journalism is at its best when it throws a light on it all. You should be proud.

FRANCIS

Thanks.

BILL

Maybe we'll meet again, its a pretty small place.

Bill gets up and leaves after they have shaken hands, whistling as he walks away. Francis is left sitting at the bar.

EXT. MAJESTIC HOTEL - MORNING

Francis leaves the hotel with his small back pack and walks through the city streets.

EXT. BELIZE CITY STREETS - MORNING

As Francis walks a small BOY (10, Belizean) walks next to him smiling and when they reach a quiet spot he pulls out a flick knife.

SMALL BOY

Give me all your money.

Francis stops in his tracks, reaching in his pocket he pulls out some notes and gives them to the boy who disappears down a side street. Francis walks on but on finding an empty taxi gets in.

INT. TAXI - MORNING

FRANCIS

The harbour thank you.

The taxi drives through the city and arrives at the harbour.

EXT. HARBOUR - MORNING

Francis pays the taxi drive and walks towards then harbour walls and the boats of different sizes which are all moored up. He walks along asking various fishermen and sailors who keep pointing him towards the end of the harbour.

Eventually he reaches one Belizean CAPTAIN (40) who his loading a small boat with boxes.

FRANCIS

Excuse me, are you going to Tobacco Caye today?

CAPTAIN

Yes, I am sir.

FRANCIS

Excellent, can you take me?

CAPTAIN

No problem, you pay now.

FRANCIS

OK, How much?

CAPTAIN

Two hundred dollars.

FRANCIS

I'll give you a hundred.

CAPTAIN

You give me a hundred you stay here, you give me two hundred you arrive at Tobacco Caye.

FRANCIS

Ok, Ok.

Francis gives him the money.

CAPTAIN

We wait for someone, not long.

After some time ANN MARIE (37) a large Belizean Woman shows up carry many bags. She climbs into the boat, followed by Francis, the Captain starts the engine and they are soon underway leaving the walls of the harbour behind.

ANN MARIE

Are you English?

FRANCIS

Yes, how could you tell?

ANN MARIE

Your hat. Do you like cricket?

FRANCIS

Yes, I like Cricket.

ANN MARIE

I thought so.

Leaving the protection of the harbour, the engine is loud and the small boat packed to the gunnels bounces over the waves. Francis looks at the boxes Ann Marie has brought on board, one of which has a Golden Virginia label on it, the same as the tin which he carries. They have to shout to be heard.

ANN MARIE (CONT'D)

So why are you on holiday for just a week Mr. Henderson?

FRANCIS

I have some work to do in the South on the Mainland. I'm a journalist.

ANN MARIE

Oh.

FRANCIS

What do you do Ann Marie?

ANN MARIE

As little as I can! Ha ha! No, I cook, I clean, not too much to do, I'm the luckiest woman.

FRANCIS

How long does it take to get there?

ANN MARIE

About another hour.

The island of Tobacco Caye starts to come into view. The boat approaches and slows down.

EXT. TOBACCO CAYE ISLAND - DAY

It draws up to a small wooden pontoon and a couple of men are there to greet them, one a stocky Belizean, the other a white man with a large beard and a shaven head. They come to a stop and tie to the pontoon. The white man greets Ann Marie and they kiss after he has helped her from the boat.

ANN MARIE

Harry, this is Mr. Francis Henderson, he's from England.

HARRY, the white bearded man in his late forties extends an arm to Francis to help him out of the boat and talks in an American accent.

HARRY

Welcome to Tobacco Caye Francis, I
hope you enjoy your stay here.

Francis takes Harry's hand to help him out of the boat and
their eyes meet.

FREEZE FRAME:

FRANCIS

Thank you, nice little corner of
the world you've found for yourself
here!

HARRY

Well, we call it home.

Francis is now out of the boat and walks onto the island as
Harry, the stocky Belizean and the Captain begin to unload
its' cargo. Ann Marie leads Francis to his hut, one of five
on the tiny island.

INT. HUT - DAY

Francis puts his bag down on the bed. It is a very
rudimentary shack built of wood with only a small desk, chair
and a basic washroom. He washes his face and then leaves.

EXT. TOBACCO CAYE ISLAND - DAY

He walks amongst the palms away from the pontoon. The island
is an flat oval in shape 200m x 100m in size. At the far end
he comes across a young MAN and WOMAN by a hut who are lying
in hammocks in the shade reading.

FRANCIS

Hey there, you look extremely
tranquil.

MAN

Yeah, I think we managed to beam
down in exactly the right place.
Hi, I'm Russ.

FRANCIS

Ha, you can say that again, I'm
Francis.

WOMAN

Hello, I'm Jane. How long are you
here for?

FRANCIS

Just a week.

WOMAN

We've been here just five days,
have to leave tomorrow.

FRANCIS

Well, I guess I'll see you 'round,
to difficult to bump into people
here.

MAN

Not so easy to get lost either...

Francis continues his walk around the perimeter of the island. On the other side, he meets DREW (50s, American) who is sitting in a deck chair by a shack looking out to sea. As he approaches he sees the shack is a small bar.

FRANCIS

Looks like you might have exactly
what I need.

DREW

A customer, Jeez, I might actually
have to do some work! Drew
Henderson at your service.

FRANCIS

Francis Henderson at yours...

DREW

Good God, what are the chances,
we're probably related.

They shake hands.

DREW (CONT'D)

What can I get you Mr. Henderson?

FRANCIS

Something cold, a beer?

DREW

That I can do.

FRANCIS

I don't think I've got any cash on
me.

DREW

No need to worry, we can start a
tab.

Drew gets up and gets a beer from a fully stocked refrigerator in his shack bar.

FRANCIS

What do you do for electricity out here?

DREW

Ah, well I know a man, have you met Harry?

FRANCIS

Yes, briefly.

DREW

Well he's got a wind turbine and a whole bunch of solar panels at the other end, powers the whole place.

FRANCIS

How long have you been here Drew?

Drew looks at his watch.

DREW

I usually start work around 11am, so just a couple of hours now.

FRANCIS

Ha, no I meant on the island.

DREW

Oh, let me see, got here in '07 and.. what is it now, 2028, so 20 years give or take.

FRANCIS

Do you mind?

Francis motions towards another deck chair and sits down.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

How about Harry, he must have been here a while too.

DREW

Got here, in let me see, roundabout '21, that's right. I remember it well because it was my birthday, we got absolutely hammered, said he wanted to forget everything. I reckon he has too, as he never talks about his life before.

(MORE)

DREW (CONT'D)

Nice man, clever man, doesn't say much but when it does it's like he's reading it from a book or something. Best thing he did was marry Ann Marie, they love each other dearly.

FRANCIS

What did you do before you came here?

DREW

Soldier. Had that Gulf War Syndrome for a decade or so but it kind of went away after I got here.

FRANCIS

Well at least you've got a fellow American in Harry.

DREW

Ah, he's not American, he's from some nowhere place in Canada, near Montreal if I recall. He's got his kids speaking French, have you met them, great kids.

FRANCIS

No, I haven't met them yet.

DREW

How about another beer?

FRANCIS

Yep, that sounds perfect.

They drink, watching the sun move across the sky, laughing. At some point Francis gets up and walks into the sea just in front of him. He walks straight out and notices the tropical fish swimming all around him in the warm water in which he is now waist deep. He swims around this far side of the island where he sees some wooden shacks and Harry attending to a boat. He swims towards him.

HARRY

So you decided to take the plunge.

FRANCIS

It's beautiful in here.

HARRY

That's what this place is all about.

Francis walks ashore to within 10ft of Harry.

FRANCIS

Why a man would want to leave
everything behind just for all this
I have no idea!

HARRY

Ann Marie told me all about you,
why you'd want to leave London just
to come here beats me.

FRANCIS

Well I've got a week here then I
have to begin work.

HARRY

That's right the road building
problem in the South. There's a
lot of unhappy people down there.
Who exactly do you work for Mr.
Henderson?

FRANCIS

Reuters, call me Francis though
what with Drew being a Henderson
too.

HARRY

Been there long?

FRANCIS

Just a couple of years.

HARRY

Are you married Francis? Children?

FRANCIS

Heather talks about it sometimes,
we're just waiting for the right
time.

HARRY

Don't wait too long you might
finding yourself just waiting for
the sake of it.

FRANCIS

That's a big mast you've got there.

HARRY

It's for radio, I'm a bit of a
radio ham, got a satellite dish
too, just there.

FRANCIS

Wow, that's a big dish.

HARRY

Global media, Sports to Politics,
I've got it covered.

FRANCIS

I imagine you can sit back and
control the entire world from this
little paradise.

HARRY

Well Francis, welcome to the
island, if you need anything just
ask.

EXT. HARRY'S SHACK - EVENING

Harry and Ann Marie pass each other by their home.

HARRY

I'm going to be doing a little work
tonight. Don't wait up.

They kiss.

ANN MARIE

Ok Hon, I feel like an early night,
my feet are killing me.

Harry walks to his personal shack by the radio mast and
satellite dish and enters.

INT. HARRY'S SHACK - NIGHT

Inside it is an electronic grotto with digital equipment
lining the walls of the rather small interior. There are a
couple of large chairs one of which Harry sits down upon and
starts to power up his system. Soon he is online and types
in 'Reuters'. He looks through 'Current Personnel', he
continues his search. Sitting back in his chair he thinks
then opens a drawer and removes a large knife lying next to a
gun. He leaves the shack.

EXT. TOBACCO CAYE ISLAND - NIGHT

With the stars out in a clear sky and lit by a full moon
Harry walks with determination towards Francis' shack. He
arrives, looks in the window and then opens the door quietly.

INT. FRANCIS' SHACK - NIGHT

Harry approaches the sleeping Francis and then carefully puts the knife to his neck waking him. Francis is immediately petrified.

HARRY

You don't work for Reuters. Who are you?

Francis doesn't say anything.

HARRY (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

FRANCIS

My name is Francis Henderson I'm writing a biography of Raymond Dante. You, you are Raymond Dante.

HARRY

I don't like liars Mr. Henderson.

FRANCIS

I know. I just want the truth.

HARRY

I want you off this island tomorrow.

FRANCIS

OK.

HARRY

If you mention what's you think you've found here to anyone, anywhere there will be lethal repercussions. I have contacts worldwide. I can reach you. I can reach your loved ones. Do you understand?

FRANCIS

Yes.

HARRY

Say I understand.

FRANCIS

I understand. I do.

HARRY

Good now go to sleep.

FRANCIS

OK

Harry removes the knife and leaves.

EXT. TOBACCO CAYE ISLAND - NIGHT

Harry walks through the island's palm trees holding the knife in one hand that glints in the moonlight.

INT. FRANCIS' SHACK - MORNING

The sunlight streams through the window. Harry bursts in carrying a snorkel mask and some fins waking Francis.

HARRY

Mr. Henderson, do you know how to scuba dive?

FRANCIS

No, no I don't.

HARRY

Would you like to learn?

FRANCIS

I don't know, I guess so.

HARRY

Would you or would you not like to learn to scuba dive? Basically you don't have much of a choice.

FRANCIS

Yes, yes, I would like, to learn.

HARRY

Good, be ready to go in ten minutes.

Harry leaves, leaving the door open.

EXT. PONTOON - MORNING

Harry is by the small boat waiting for Francis. Francis gets in the boat and Harry starts the engine. They speed out into the vast blue ocean. After some time a large vessel at anchor appears up ahead and they close on it quickly. When they arrive they are helped aboard up some rope ladders by a few members of the crew.

The name of the boat in bold orange letters is "Quotidienne".
A rangy German man with a beard called KLAUS (30) helps
Francis on board.

EXT. RESEARCH VESSEL - MORNING

HARRY

Klaus here will sort you out.
Klaus, this is Francis, give him
the basic course. We're not going
deep. Don't worry Francis you're in
good hands, I assure you.

FRANCIS

Yeah, I assure you.

KLAUS

Seriously its easy. Come with me.
Do you have any heart complaints,
ear, nose or throat disorders? Any
history of madness in the family?
I'm joking.

Francis walks with Klaus.

FRANCIS

So what's this, you run dive
holidays?

KLAUS

No, this is a research vessel.
Scientific research. We're studying
the coral bleaching phenomenon.

FRANCIS

Bleaching? Bleached by what?

KLAUS

The temperature of the ocean has
risen and the corals can't handle
it, coral reefs the world over are
dying out.

FRANCIS

That's crazy.

KLAUS

Not as crazy as the people who
can't accept that Climate change is
a fact. Right lets get you kitted
out.

They have arrived at where all the scuba gear is stored.

KLAUS (CONT'D)

I'm just gonna lay all this on you real quick, it's the best way. It's just like riding a bike, but underwater, but you're weightless and you're breathing compressed air and there are sharks and stuff like that. I'm just joking you. It's kind of like being an astronaut. Ok this is your regulator...

Harry and Francis are at the back of the boat fully kitted up. Francis notices a large knife strapped to Harry's thigh.

FRANCIS

What's the knife for? You're not going to kill me are you?

HARRY

No, I'm not that kind of guy. This is just for, for just in case. Trust me.

FRANCIS

Mmm. Trust.

They jump off the back of the boat.

INT. OCEAN - MORNING

When under Harry makes front on eye contact with Francis and makes the OK signal before signalling to go down. The only sound is that of the bubbles coming from their regulators. They move effortlessly through the clear blue water. The corals are a rainbow flood of intense colour and there are extortion tropical fish everywhere only a few metres below the surface. Barracudas mix with Angel fish and Moray eels. Moving forward they come to an area of coral that is white and dead, the contrasts are extreme. They return the way they came. A giant stingray launches itself from the sand below and flies right in front of Francis. Near the boat Francis sees a shark in the distance causing him to scramble aboard the back of the boat in some state of panic. He takes off his mask and regulator. Harry is close behind him.

EXT. RESEARCH VESSEL - DAY

FRANCIS

There was a shark!

HARRY

Yeah, I saw him too a little Short
Finned Mako, they're the fastest
shark in the ocean. You were lucky
they're fairly rare.

FRANCIS

Lucky! Lucky I wasn't eaten!

HARRY

We're all lucky to be alive
Francis.

KLAUS

Ha! Just when you thought it was
safe to go back in the water.

FRANCIS

That's right. Laugh at the first
timer English guy shark bait!

They are all laughing and then with great release Francis
sees the funny side of it too and begins to laugh.

HARRY

So what did you think?

FRANCIS

It was out of this world!

HARRY

It's an ecosystem, everything
depends on everything else.

FRANCIS

Harry, how long have you been doing
this?

HARRY

I stopped counting the months after
a year, then I stopped counting the
years. You can't imagine how much
there is to be learned here. We
know so little.

FRANCIS

You're Canadian right?

HARRY

Born and bred.

FRANCIS

So what were you doing before all
of this?

HARRY

I'd rather not talk about before this Mr. Henderson, not right now. What matters most is this, this is what is happening now and I'd ask you to respect this.

Harry gets up and leaves.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Come on, we'll have some lunch.

Francis gets up. The crew of the vessel assemble in an area inside.

INT. RESEARCH VESSEL - DAY

Francis, Klaus, Harry and the three other members of the crew gather around a table. CHEZ (28, Australian), ROM (30, Maori New Zealander), CALLUM (40, Irish) who is the chef are all talking as they sit and the food is brought by Callum to the table.

HARRY

Francis here is an Englishman, from England. Makes his living writing so he says.

CALLUM

Best thing to do if you catch an Englishman is to throw him back overboard. They don't make for very good eating, too tough and stringy.

They all laugh except for Francis.

ROM

Francis, is it true that in England it is illegal to wear a hat indoors?

Francis laughs.

FRANCIS

No, that's not true, there's no such law but I guess it's polite to take your hat off in someone else's house.

HARRY

Rom's point is interesting though. English class system is very much alive in many ways.

CHEZ

Everyone knows that except the English.

HARRY

The English have no way of looking at themselves anymore. No mirror to give them an idea of who they are. They see only the differences between themselves, no identities.

KLAUS

And you're wrong Callum. I imagine and Englishman would make for very good eating, sweet and tender like rare roast beef, nice with some horseradish. Do we have any horseradish?

FRANCIS

I'd put good money on any one of you hardened sailors eating each other set adrift for long enough. Personally I wouldn't eat any of you... certainly if there wasn't any horseradish.

They all laugh and the meal continues with much noise. The beers are brought out.

EXT. RESEARCH VESSEL - EVENING

Francis approaches Harry who is dangling his feet in the water over the back of the boat drinking a beer.

FRANCIS

I was wondering if you were in a frame of mind to talk about politics, maybe its a pet subject of yours.

HARRY

Ha! Truth is there's very little need for it out here, perhaps that's why I like it so much. That shark you saw.

FRANCIS

I'll never forget it.

HARRY

Thirty-Five miles an hour top speed and it eats only other fast fish, tuna and swordfish mainly. It's designed that way, top of the food chain predator, like Man. I'm not sure but I guess if you removed it completely they'd just be a lot more tuna and swordfish. You removed something from the bottom of the chain, like what the corals support and the whole chain might collapse.

FRANCIS

Without Man the ecosystem might be better off.

HARRY

Something like that. That shark though, you were afraid of it.

FRANCIS

Terrified.

HARRY

You knew nothing of it, it's feeding habits.

FRANCIS

I'm sorry but it was a natural reaction.

HARRY

Fear is universal. What if you learned of such a shark in the sphere of politics? Would you fear it? Would you wish to study its nature? Would you avoid it? Would you want to kill it?

FRANCIS

I would probably just want to get out of the water I was in.

HARRY

Exactly. But once you are in the water you too are part of its ecosystem, in such a system it might not be so easy to 'get out of the water'. If you live in a bubble you have to burst it from the inside. I wonder what kind of fish you are Mr. Henderson.

FRANCIS
I might be a frog.

HARRY
Ha! In both worlds, at some point
you have to decide in which one you
belong. I'll see you tomorrow
Francis.

Harry gets up to leave. As they have been talking the sun has set and Francis is left sitting at the back of the boat looking at the stars and reflections of the moon over the waves.

EXT. RESEARCH VESSEL - MORNING

Harry and Francis climb down into the small outboard boat and are soon bouncing the waves back towards the island. After mooring at the pontoon Harry puts his arm on Francis' shoulder.

EXT. PONTOON - MORNING

HARRY
As soon as you've freshened up,
meet me by my hut, next to the
Satellite dish. I'll have Ann Marie
make us some coffee.

FRANCIS
Sure, will do. And thank you for
yesterday, I'll not forget that.

A little later Francis is walking to Harry's hut when he passes Drew who is drinking a large smoothie.

DREW
Hey, buddy, can I make you one of
these, perfect breakfast?

FRANCIS
Thank you, maybe later.

DREW
No worries, later.

Francis arrives at the hut to meet Harry who is adjusting the radio mast.

FRANCIS
Hi.

HARRY
Hi. Please go in.

They go into Harry's shack.

INT. HARRY'S SHACK - MORNING

Francis looks around at the vast array of electronics.

HARRY
Please have a seat.

Francis sits down, followed by Harry who faces him.

HARRY (CONT'D)
It's clear to me Francis that if I were to tell you that Raymond Dante came here shortly after he went missing and that I befriended him. That he told me his story in confidence, before disappearing as quickly as he had arrived, you wouldn't believe me.

FRANCIS
No, no I wouldn't.

HARRY
Having thought about our situation I have found it to be of the utmost importance that you do believe me and that is why I have brought you here, to this, my little studio.

FRANCIS
Well, its quite impressive I have to say.

HARRY
Impressions are one thing. The reason you're still here is that I want the whole story to be told. However, I must remain anonymous, merely a source you have stumbled upon. If you disclose my identity or my location it will cause myself and my family great inconvenience and you will regret having done so. You will cease to exist, more permanently than Raymond Dante. The strings I can pull are very long. Are we clear?

FRANCIS

Yes, completely.

HARRY

My memory of the facts are quite clear but many of your readers will not believe them, this may simply become yet another of the many conspiracy theories. But there will be at least two people in this world, you and I, who will know the truth has been spoken. There will be a definitive version of events. I'm going to record what happens here and give you a printed transcript. I hope that will be satisfactory to you.

FRANCIS

That sounds just fine.

HARRY

Good, then we may begin.

Harry leans back in his chair and flicks a switch. A green light comes on and Ann Marie walks through the door with a tray of cups of coffee and some cake.

ANN MARIE

I hope you like ginger cake Mr. Henderson. I made it myself.

FRANCIS

Thank you yes.

She puts the tray down and turns to leave.

ANN MARIE

You two have fun now.

She leaves and shuts the door. Harry coughs and begins to talk. It is quiet save for music. We see images around his shack, all the equipment he has, all the memorabilia of his new life, photos of his new including photos of the research ship. Ann Marie comes and goes twice bringing more tea and cake as time passes speeded up and Harry gesticulates and expresses himself with great passion. His story then begins to be told visually in a flashback with his narration in voice over.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SEA COAST ROCKY OUT CROP - EVENING

The action continues from the point where Raymond's story left off in the middle of a storm, crashing his boat into the rocks. Again the narration is Raymond's voice over.

RAYMOND IS THROWN CLEAR INTO THE SEA TIED TO THE MATTRESS AND HIS BAG. HE STRUGGLES TO SWIM IN THE LARGE WAVES BUT CLIMBS ASHORE AN EXHAUSTED WRECK.

RAYMOND

Once I was in the water it was a struggle for my life. You could say Raymond Dante's life ended there and that I believe is the official story but my life was still very real and I fought to keep it.

EXT. ISLE OF ARRAN ROAD - NIGHT

IT IS POURING WITH RAIN AND RAYMOND IS WALKING WITH HIS BELONGINGS ALONG THE ROAD. HE IS AWAY FROM ANY CIVILISATION, HIKING THROUGH THE DARKNESS, THE WIND STRONG IN HIS FACE. HE WALKS THROUGH THE NIGHT ARRIVING AT A LARGE BARN OUTHOUSE AT DAYBREAK. THE STORM HAS BY NOW SUBSIDED. HE ENTERS THE BARN BY TURNING A KEY IN A LOCKED DOOR.

RAYMOND

Surviving mostly on adrenaline and stamina I walked through the bleak darkness of the storm towards my destination. My hope was that there would be no cars driving by who might stop to pick me up, but there was nothing here, I was at the end of the world. The place I had chosen was another memory from childhood which I'd located with my Father on a map, I could only pray that it would still be there and to my joy as the sun came up and I'd walked well over 20miles I found it. I went in, surrounded by emptiness and peace and collapsed.

INT. BARN - MORNING

DANTE SLEEPS. WHEN HE WAKES HE EATS SOME JERKY AND FINDS WATER IN A TROUGH OUTSIDE.

HE LOOKS AROUND, THERE IS ONLY A FEW PIECES OF OLD FARM MACHINERY. WHEN NIGHT FALLS AGAIN THE MOON SHINES THROUGH GAPS IN THE ROOF. THE NEXT DAY HE SEES ALL THE NATURE AROUND ON A BEAUTIFUL DAY BUT IS CAREFUL TO REMAIN INSIDE. HE SITS CROSS LEGGED AND MEDITATES WITH SOME BREATHING EXERCISES. AS HE DOES SO THE IMAGES OF HIS PARENTS PLAYING WITH HIM AS SEEN IN THE TITLE SEQUENCE PLAY THROUGH HIS MIND. THE DAYS PASS AS HE MARKS THEM OFF WITH A KNIFE ON THE WALL. HE VENTURES OUT AT NIGHT TO TAKE APPLES FROM A NEARBY TREE. HE DOES NOT SHAVE AND HIS BEARD GROWS QUICKLY. HE LOOKS LIKE A TRAMP. HE SHAVES HIS HEAD TO THE SKIN AND TAKES A PHOTO ON HIS PHONE AND SENDS IT TO GINA. HE TALKS TO HIMSELF IN A CANADIAN ACCENT GOING OVER THE SAME SENTENCES OVER AND OVER. HE EXERCISES, PULL UPS, LUNGES, PRESS UPS, LIFTS, JUMPING, STRETCHING. THE DAYS PASS. HE DRAWS A TV SCREEN ON ONE WALL AND SITS LOOKING AT IT FOR HOURS. HE MARKS OFF THE DAYS AND AFTER A MONTH HE IS READY TO LEAVE.

RAYMOND

Mainly during that time I slept and reimagined who I was. It was pure waiting and finding ways to pass the time. My dreams were unbroken and during the day I worried only that I might be discovered by a farmer or the police. It was a self imposed solitary confinement, I explored my surroundings and I explored my mind. At the same time I was shedding memories, ideas and histories so often I began to forget myself, as I had hoped. It came time to change my appearance and once I had I sent the photo to Gina who would need it. My new Character was Canadian, not difficult as I had only to tap into the linguistics and accent from my youth. Gina replied telling me it was good to proceed and that we could meet at the place and time we had agreed in a week. My heart soared. I smoked some of the tobacco Gina had given me and constantly played with the bracelet. The day came when I packed my bag and left my temporary home in search of another.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

DANTE IS WALKING WITH HIS THUMB OUT. A CAR PULLS UP AND A LITTLE OLD LADY GIVES HIM A RIDE.

THEY DRIVE FOR A WHILE TALKING AND GO PAST THE ALBION PUB WHERE DANTE'S FATHER'S CAR IS NO LONGER THERE. THEY CONTINUE DRIVING UNTIL THEY ARRIVE AT THE FERRY. DANTE GETS OUT AND WAITS FOR THE FERRY. SOON HE IS A FOOT PASSENGER ON THE FERRY AND ARRIVES ON THE MAINLAND AND THE TRAIN STATION WHERE HE BUYS A TICKET AND BOARDS A TRAIN LEAVING FOR EUSTON. THE TRAIN RIDE IS LONG BUT EVENTUALLY HE ARRIVES AT THE LONDON TERMINAL, WALKING WITH HIS BACK PACK THROUGH THE STATION.

RAYMOND

Now it was crucial that I not be recognised so I put my reinvented self to the test. The little old lady who picked me up had no idea and it was here that I heard first a report of the Death of Dante, she was quite an expert and told me of how the man had obviously died tragically in the accident. I was weirdly fascinated with the facts of the story, I was just a Canadian traveller. The Albion car park was empty and my father's car was no longer there, the space where it had been hammered home the reality of my new condition. The lady dropped me at the ferry terminal and I was alone amongst others, waiting felt harder than ever. Once we left that island and were in motion on the waves I began to feel more human and by the time I'd bought my ticket to Euston I was almost just another stranger.

INT. TRAIN - AFTERNOON

DANTE IS SITTING BY THE WINDOW OF THE TRAIN READING A NEWSPAPER. THERE ARE JUST A FEW PEOPLE NEAR HIM WHO GROW IN NUMBER AS THE TRAIN TRAVELS TO LONDON. HE LOOKS UP OCCASIONALLY.

RAYMOND

I learned that everyone was devastated by my death and also that I was not officially dead yet, the investigation being still ongoing.

(MORE)

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

There were quotes from Misha and various government officials but there were already big questions being asked of certain people in positions of power regarding apparent security breaches. The fact was his death had saved my skin. The people on that train, the public would probably never know the truth. The hustle of their business increased as we neared the capital and I began to dread my forthcoming tube trip. Already I wanted to be away from people of every kind and permanently so.

INT. UNDERGROUND TRAIN LONDON - EVENING

DANTE IS SQUASHED IN TIGHT ON THE TUBE WITH ALL MANNER OF OTHER PEOPLE.

RAYMOND

I loved England, I loved these people but I couldn't say the same of those who governed them and their secretive ways. I felt in no way that I had betrayed anyone of them, I'd merely removed myself from the situations and conditions of their lives. All I could think of now was Gina and freedom.

EXT. STARBUCKS CAFE, STATION CONCOURSE - EVENING

DANTE BUYS A CUP OF COFFEE AND SITS OUTSIDE THE CAFE, LOOKING AT HIS WATCH. TRAVELLERS RUSH BY EACH OTHER IN SPEEDED UP MOTION CREATING A VAST MELEE OF HUMAN TRAFFIC ALL AROUND THE PEACEFUL DANTE. THEY SLOW TO A STOP AND A TALL MAN APPROACHES DANTE AND THEN SITS DOWN OPPOSITE HIM. THE MAN PUSHES ACROSS AN ENVELOPE THAT DANTE OPENS WHICH CONTAINS A NEW CANADIAN PASSPORT WITH DANTE'S PHOTO IN IT FOR A HARRY THOMPSON.

RAYMOND

I was three hours early, I must have had three or four coffees. Again I waited watching all the people rushing by to wherever it was they might be going, everyone was coming from somewhere, everyone knew where they were going.

(MORE)

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

I was coming from nowhere and my destination had yet to be confirmed. Finally an American talked to me, introducing himself as Bill Chapman. He asked if I was Gina's Canadian friend, when I said yes he told me Gina wouldn't be coming with us. My last act as Raymond Thierry Dante was to write a cheque to Gina which I placed in my empty tin and gave to Chapman, whether he gave it to him I'll never know.

INT. AEROPLANE - DAY

HARRY IS SEATED AT A WINDOW SEAT WITH BILL CHAPMAN NEXT TO HIM.

RAYMOND

I remember very little of the next few days except that we flew from Heathrow via Atlanta City to Belize City Airport. He brought me all the way here, debriefing me along the way.

EXT. SMALL BOAT AT SEA - DAY

HARRY IS RIDING IN THE BOAT NEXT TO BILL CHAPMAN CAPTAINED BY A BELIZEAN MAN AT THE MOTOR. THE SKY IS HUGE AND CLEAR AND THE OCEAN IS CALM AND VAST. THEY APPROACH TOBACCO ISLAND AND THE PONTOON.

RAYMOND

I have lived every day on this island always fearing that someone like you would show up one day. You see Mr. Henderson, I am nothing but a ghost, you have followed me here, but I have followed in your footsteps too. You have your story and I have become a man with no story at all. Please write what you may with the conditions that we have discussed. I believe that concludes our business together, I have much to be getting along with so please excuse me.

INT. HARRY'S SHACK - EVENING

Harry flicks his recording switch on his bank of electronics, stands up and leaves the shack, Francis is left sitting there. After several moments he leaves too.

EXT. DREW'S BAR - EVENING

Francis walks to Drews bar as the sun is setting. Drew sees him coming.

DREW
Ah, have you had a pleasant day in Paradise?

FRANCIS
I've been with Harry all day.

DREW
Has he been telling you his crazy stories?

FRANCIS
In a way.

DREW
Then you'll be in need of some refreshment I imagine. A beer?

FRANCIS
Rum.

DREW
Now you're talking.

Francis sits down in one of two deck chairs. Drew returns from the bar with a whole bottle of rum and some glasses.

DREW (CONT'D)
This is the best stuff, turn you into a sea captain before you know it.

They drink looking at the sun going down.

FRANCIS
You ever been married Drew?

DREW
Just the three times.

FRANCIS

So, where's Mrs. Henderson, at least the last one?

DREW

It's hard to say.

FRANCIS

I see, so just on you own now then?

DREW

Best way for me. Are you planning on any such foolhardiness?

FRANCIS

Maybe, I'm not sure. Heather might want to get married, and have a baby I'm not sure how to find out.

DREW

Ask her, find the right moment, the right place, see how your luck is.

FRANCIS

You make it sound easy.

DREW

It is easy, maybe it was too easy for me, sounds like you've been thinking about it properly, wise man. Don't listen to me about anything. Only fools rush in.

FRANCIS

I'm going to stick around for the rest of the week, I was thinking of writing a novel.

DREW

You're in the right place, no one to disturb you here. What's your book about, you know just a rough sketch, if you don't mind that is.

FRANCIS

It's an allegory.

DREW

What's that when it's not on holiday?

FRANCIS

Ah, its an extended metaphor.

DREW

No. I'm afraid I'm still not with you yet.

FRANCIS

It's kind of when you compare one story with another to make a point.

DREW

So what are you comparing with what?

FRANCIS

The world of politics with the underwater world.

DREW

Yeah, ok. And what point are you trying to make?

FRANCIS

The world of politics has its own self-regulating eco-system like life under the sea. Everything effects everything else, everyone has their place, sometimes a very dangerous place.

DREW

Very little need for a politician out here, what would they do?

FRANCIS

Politicians individual actions however small can have very large consequences at very large distances.

DREW

If you ask me, if politicians are like fish, they aren't fish in the sea, they're in an aquarium, happily swimming around making no difference to anyone whatsoever.

FRANCIS

Well that's another angle, it's about freedom, how much freedom they have, how they use it or abuse it.

DREW

Fish in the sea can go wherever they please but they do stand to get eaten, out of the blue, just like that, by other bigger fish.

FRANCIS

That's right, but in a fish tank they're relatively safe, from being eaten that is.

DREW

Unless you put a bloody great big hungry fish in there and it just goes around eating all the other fellas.

FRANCIS

You'd be left with just one big fish all on its own, swimming around in circles.

DREW

Seems a bit sad, I'd want to take him out and put him in the big blue ocean, let him have his freedom, let him go where he wants, let him work for his food. No kind of a life for a fish being on his own. I never liked zoos.

FRANCIS

Well at least we get to see something of the exotic in them, at least for a short time.

DREW

Hey, funniest thing. Thought you might shed some light on it. Not long after you got here, Harry comes out for a drink late. He got fairly hammered and started going on about something called "The Houdini Hijacking". Kept saying how he'd created it, released it on the world. Said people had died and it was all his fault. Said it was the beginning and end of his life. Do you know anything about that?

Francis stops mid-drink as realisation sweeps across his face.

FRANCIS
Well I'll be...

He pauses for a long time, before taking another drink.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
No, that sounds... I don't know
maybe it's something personal to
him, we all carry a burden.

DREW
Never seen him like it. Probably
some Canadian thing. Whatever. More
rum Mr. Henderson?

FRANCIS
Cheers Mr. Henderson.

They drink into the night until Francis wobbles back to his
shack and stumbles his way in to go to sleep.

INT. FRANCIS' SHACK - MORNING

There is a knock at the door and Francis rolls over stirring
slowly.

FRANCIS
Er, yes, come in.

Harry opens the door and walks in holding a cardboard folder.

HARRY
Here's the transcript of our chat
for you, I printed it off so that
you can finish your book. I kind of
assumed that you'd be finishing it
here.

FRANCIS
It seems like a good place to
write, if that's ok with you?

HARRY
It's a free country Mr. Henderson,
well relatively speaking.

Harry throws the folder on the bed.

HARRY (CONT'D)
Good luck.

FRANCIS

Thank you.

Harry turns and leaves. Francis sits up and picks up the folder, flicking through the contents. He gets out of bed reading the words on the page just as they were spoken by Harry.

EXT. TOBACCO CAYE ISLAND - MORNING

Francis runs out into the ocean and dives in taking a liberating swim. The tropical fish swim around him, he floats on his back, swims breast-stroke, crawl and back-stroke. Then he walks back ashore.

INT. FRANCIS' SHACK - MORNING

Francis dries himself off and finishes getting dressed. When he is ready he puts his laptop out on the desk and sits down to write.

EXT. TOBACCO CAYE ISLAND - DAY

A MONTAGE SET TO MUSIC SEES FRANCIS' ACTIONS OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS: HE WRITES, HE SWIMS, HE DRINKS SMOOTHIES WITH DREW. AT NIGHT HE DANCES WITH ANN MARIE AND HERS AND HARRY'S CHILDREN WHO ARRIVE ON THE ISLAND. HE DRINKS WITH DREW AND HARRY AND THEY ALL SNORKEL TOGETHER, HARRY POINTING OUT THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF FISH. HE RECHARGES HIS LAPTOP AT HARRY'S SHACK AND WRITES MORE AND MORE AT A GREAT PACE ENJOYING THIS AS MUCH AS HIS OTHER ACTIVITIES. IN A QUIET MOMENT IN THE EVENING HE HANDS OVER THE TOBACCO TIN WITH THE KEY IN IT TO HARRY WHO PUTS HIS HAND ON FRANCIS' SHOULDER AND THANKS HIM.

FRANCIS (V.O.)

I'd never written so much, so creatively and so fast for so long. It flowed and the fictions I conjured up to fill in that which I was sworn not to tell had truths of their own woven throughout. I lived and I loved life. Harry was alive too and when I told him I had seen Gina he smiled, when I gave him the tobacco tin and the key he thanked me and when I told him his father was the most proud of any son that any father could be his tears turned into laughter.

(MORE)

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

Ann Marie was I discovered the heart of the world he had made for himself and their children were a joy. We danced, we sang, we drank and we ate and I believe we became better people because of it. To finish my biography I wrote all through the night on my last night and eventually I was finished.

INT. FRANCIS' SHACK - NIGHT

Francis is typing the last part of his book, as he types he reads to himself.

FRANCIS (V.O.)

The complete story of this man will never be fully known and will remain forever a mystery. This is fitting as he was to both friends and adversaries as enigmatic as he was original. Maybe the best we can do, those of us who still find him of great fascination is to continue to believe, perhaps in one of the many conspiracy theories. Perhaps one of them is true, perhaps in one he is still alive and living some kind of life that would appear to us as a dream world which one can only imagine to be playing out in a land so very far away. Long live Raymond Thierry Dante.

EXT. TOBACCO CAYE ISLAND - NIGHT/MORNING

Francis shuts down his computer and leaves his shack, it is still dark but with his fins and mask and snorkel he wades into the calm moonlit water. As he swims various shadows of fish dart this way and that and as the sun rises, its rays penetrating the surface through the water and down to the sand the colours of the fish come alive all metallic and vibrant. At last he walks ashore removing his fins and mask and returning to his shack.

EXT. HARRY'S SHACK - MORNING

Francis knocks on the door and Harry is inside.

HARRY

Come in.

FRANCIS

Hi. I wonder if I might ask you one last favour?

HARRY

Sure, what is it?

FRANCIS

I'd like to book a flight, to Paris and a hotel reservation if that's possible.

HARRY

That will be a pleasure, and easy too.

They sit down together and using the internet find a flight via Miami and Francis is able to book a room at The Grand Hotel du Palais Royal in Paris. Francis gets out his credit card but Harry stops him.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Let me take care of that.

FRANCIS

It's a lot of money Harry.

HARRY

Well, that's relative. Let's just say its my way of investing in a personal interest.

FRANCIS

You know it will really help, I'm not sure how much juice there is left in this piece of plastic.

HARRY

If I told you where the money comes to pay for all this you wouldn't believe me. But I'll tell you this, they won't miss it in the slightest. There you go.

Harry types in his credit card details.

FRANCIS

Thank you so much. Can I write a quick email too?

HARRY

Knock yourself out. I'll be by the boat.

FRANCIS

Cheers.

FRANCIS (V.O.)

Dear Heather, I've had the most amazing time but can't go into details. Can you meet me at the Grand Hotel du Palais Royal, the one we went to just after we met. Can you get away? I'll be there this Thursday. Meet you at Midday in the foyer? I love you Heather. Francis.

He presses SEND and leaves, taking his bags to the boat by the pontoon where Harry and Drew are waiting. Ann Marie is already in the boat.

EXT. PONTOON - DAY

Drew and Harry say their good byes with a hug.

HARRY

Take it easy Francis, I hope your book is a success. And look after that transcript you wouldn't want it to get in the wrong hands! Seriously, watch your back, there's all kinds predators out there, whatever waters you swim in.

FRANCIS

Look after yourself Harry. Don't worry about a thing with me, I'll send you a copy of the finished book when its published, it'll make you laugh, I can promise you that.

DREW

Always go after the big fish dude, even if they are the fastest!

FRANCIS

I get you Drew, I really do. Rum will never be quite the same again!

Francis loads his bag aboard and sits down opposite Ann Marie. The Belizean man sitting at the stern by the motor unties the boat and accelerates away. They wave back to the shore and are soon out of sight.

INT. BOAT - MORNING

Ann Marie talks loudly over the motor.

ANN MARIE

So you're going to see your girlfriend heh!

FRANCIS

Yes, Paris, a hotel that has a lot of memories for us both.

ANN MARIE

Oh, memories. I'm thinking you have some lovely sweet memories with this lady friend. Are they lovely?

FRANCIS

Yes they are at that, it's where we spent our first time away.

ANN MARIE

You going to ask her to marry you?

FRANCIS

Well, yes, I was thinking about it. Just feel I need a bit of luck.

ANN MARIE

Luck, oh luck is easy. Take this.

Ann Marie removes the bracelet of coloured stones from her wrist and hands it to Francis.

ANN MARIE (CONT'D)

You give her this when you are feeling all lovely in Paris and tell her its story. She can't say no.

Francis takes it.

FRANCIS

Thank you so much, it means a great deal.

EXT. BELIZE CITY HARBOUR - DAY

They arrive at the harbour and having helped Ann Marie out of the boat Francis walks with her.

FRANCIS

Could you tell me if you know of a Printers? You know a place to print out documents from my computer.

ANN MARIE

Walk with me there is one nearby where I am going, I can take you there.

FRANCIS

Thank you. I've wanted to say, you have an amazing husband Ann Marie, quite a man.

ANN MARIE

Oh, he's a fine man that's for sure, only one problem he's not American and he's certainly not a lovely British man from England. Canadians are the very oddest, so secretive and dark, but I like that...

Ann Marie smiles at Francis as they continue to walk. Soon they arrive at the Printers where they say their goodbyes.

ANN MARIE (CONT'D)

Good luck Mr. Francis Henderson, you'll be ok, you just treat that young lady friend of yours with respect and maximum loving.

FRANCIS

I will do Ann Marie thank you for everything. Good Bye.

ANN MARIE

Good bye, and good luck.

Francis skates the bracelet on his wrist and Ann Marie walks on as Francis walks into the Printers.

INT. PRINTERS, BELIZE CITY - DAY

Francis walks up to the counter.

FRANCIS

Hi, I'd like to transfer a file from my computer to a USB stick and print out and bind a document please.

ASSISTANT

Certainly Sir, we can do all that for you.

FRANCIS

And also I'd like to send the printed document is the Post Office near here?

ASSISTANT

We can do that for you too sir. We have a FedEx collection every day.

FRANCIS

Excellent.

Francis removes his laptop from his bag, powers up and finds the file. Shortly he has his USB copy, which he holds onto, and the printed document which is put in a large brown envelope, the package being addressed to The Grand Hotel in Paris.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Can you send it Express? As fast as possible.

ASSISTANT

Not a problem Sir. If you'd just like to sign here.

Francis signs and pays with almost all of the cash he has left. He walks out of the Printers with a smile and puts the USB in his top pocket. He hails a cab which takes him all the way to The Majestic Hotel.

INT. MAJESTIC HOTEL - DAY

Francis checks in and goes up to the very same room that he had before. He dives onto his bed and snoozes for a while, only to be woken with the window shutters banging in the wind. Looking at his watch he leaves the room.

INT. MAJESTIC HOTEL RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

He sits and order some food, steak and chips and eats greedily with a beer. He's just about finished eating when suddenly he is greeted by Bill who walks up to his table.

FRANCIS

Bill!

BILL

Hello Francis. Did you have a nice holiday?

FRANCIS

Incredible, great to unwind, even did a little scuba diving. Amazing the fish I saw, you wouldn't believe it.

BILL

How's Harry?

FRANCIS

Great Man, we got on like...

BILL

Yeah, he's a crazy old fool really.

FRANCIS

You know him?

BILL

Did he tell you his story?

FRANCIS

How do you know him?

BILL

I've got to level with you here Francis. My name is Bill Chapman, I work with The CIA.

Bill gets his badge which Francis inspects closely.

FRANCIS

Well, I may never see another one of them again.

BILL

Let's hope not. Harry's ours, he's been working with us for, well for quite a while now, he's a kind of independent analyst.

FRANCIS

What's this got to do with me?

BILL

We've had a tag on you for quite a while now, ever since some of your ideas in certain newspapers caused a fuss.

(MORE)

BILL (CONT'D)

When you booked your ticket to Belize a little flag came up on our system next to your name. I'm here to make sure you understand the nature of our problem.

FRANCIS

I'm sure I can't be of any use to you Bill.

BILL

Look, Harry is a very special person but he's one of us, you do appreciate the significance of the special relationship between our two countries?

FRANCIS

I'm a journalist writing a book, I've just been out here doing some research.

BILL

I know what you've been doing, I know. I can't stop you doing whatever it is that you think you want to do, it's a free country, well just about. But I have to tell you I have an agent going through your room right now for any sensitive material that might compromise life this side of the pond. You understand don't you?

FRANCIS

I don't think you have a right to do this in this country.

BILL

Oh, you'd be surprised what my rights are when compared to yours. I'm afraid I'm going to have to check you over personally. Don't be a stiff ass Brit about this, I have to do what I have to do, it would be silly to kick up a fuss.

Bill opens his jacket to reveal a gun in a shoulder holster.

BILL (CONT'D)

It won't take a minute and then you'll be free to go about your business as you please. Could you stand.

FRANCIS

Free to go you say. You want to do
this here?

Francis stands up. Bill completes a comprehensive frisk,
looking through his wallet and finds the USB stick in his
pocket.

BILL

I'm afraid I'm going to have to
confiscate this.

Bill hands back the wallet and room key.

BILL (CONT'D)

Hey there's no hard feelings
Francis, can I buy you a drink?

FRANCIS

I wonder what drives you to choose
your particular line of work?

BILL

Just think of me as a kind of
policeman.

FRANCIS

Ah yes, serve and protect. And who
are you protecting at the moment
Mr. Chapman, Me? Harry? Your
country? Who is supposed to protect
us from you?

BILL

There's very little I can do about
what you write but you have some
responsibilities here. For your own
personal safety I must ask that you
refrain from exposing the details
of Harry's location, indeed
everything about your little trip
to this country.

FRANCIS

I would give you my word, but I
have already given it to Harry, my
story will be just that, a story.
You'll have nothing to be worried
or embarrassed about. Good bye Mr.
Chapman, if you don't mind I'd like
to go to my room now to see what
else you've stolen from me.

Francis leaves. Bill looks resigned and dejected and goes back to his drink at the nearby bar.

INT. FRANCIS' HOTEL BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

As Francis goes into his room a large man in a suit leaves carrying a hold-all bag, they brush shoulders. Francis goes through his bag and belongings to discover that his computer, his phone and the transcript of Harry's spoken story have both gone.

FRANCIS
No computer, no phone, no
transcript.

He sits down on his bed.

EXT. BELIZE AIRPORT - DAY

Francis' plane takes off.

EXT. CHARLES DE GAULLES AIRPORT - DAY

Francis' plane lands.

EXT. THE GRAND HOTEL, PARIS - DAY

Francis steps out of a taxi with his bag and walks through some huge revolving doors in the The Grand Hotel du Palais Royal in Paris. He looks around and reminisces.

FRANCIS (V.O.)
Yes, this I remember, just as it
was.

He walks to the check in counter.

FRANCIS
Bonjour.

HOTELIER
Bonjour Monsieur, comment ca va?

FRANCIS
Ca va bien. Do you speak English?

HOTELIER
But of course.

FRANCIS

I have a double room booked, my name is Francis Henderson.

HOTELIER

Let me see. Ah yes. Room 517. I will have someone to help you with your bag. This is your key.

FRANCIS

Also I'm expecting a package in the next few days, could you let me know when it arrives.

HOTELIER

Certainly Monsieur.

A Porter takes Francis' tatty back with some amount of disdain as to its dirty state, and then shows him to his room.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - DAY

They enter, Francis tips the Porter who leaves Francis to survey his room and the beautiful view over the city from the window of the fifth floor. He touches the bracelet around his wrist and walks around. He looks in a full length mirror to realise how dirty, scruffy and unkempt he has become. Looking in his wallet he pulls out several rough and crumpled travellers cheques.

INT. HOTEL CHEQUE IN - DAY

Francis approaches the Hotelier at the check in counter.

FRANCIS

Excuse me, do you cash travellers cheques here?

HOTELIER

But of course.

Francis hands over the grubby cheques and the Hotelier looks at him dubiously before giving them to another assistant who changes them for cash. He then gives the money to Francis.

FRANCIS

Merci Monsieur.

HOTELIER

C'est rien.

He walks out on the street which is bustling with Parisiennes both young and old. Everyone is stylish and talking casually as they walk. Francis walks passed many high end shops before stopping at one called 'Blanc Bleu' which has a nautically themed window dressing. He enters.

INT. BLANC BLEU SHOP - DAY

Wandering through the shop in such a downtrodden state Francis gets looks from the hip French assistants. He goes about trying on various outfits, sailing jerseys, striped T-shirts, chinos and boating shoes. Eventually having what he needs he pays for his merchandise and leaves the shop with a very large white and blue paper bag and a great smile on his face. He walks back through the hotel to his room.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - DAY

Francis runs a long, deep bubble bath using all of the supplied gels, soaps and foam. There are bubbles overflowing the bath onto the bathroom floor. Noticing the sand still in his shoes he undresses and climbs in. He fully soaks himself washing his hair twice and relaxing fully. After having dried himself off he puts on all his new clothes and shoes and looks at himself in the mirror.

FRANCIS

A proper sea captain. Maybe more
of a yachtsman. Certainly a Navy
type on vacation.

Francis leaves the room and heads towards the hotel foyer.

INT. HOTEL FOYER - DAY

He takes a seat at a table where there are various newspapers and picks up a copy of 'LE MONDE' which he opens in the middle.

FRANCIS (V.O.)

Ah yes, the French perspective on
the world of current affairs.
Perfectly adequate, if you can read
French that is.

Francis looks through the pile of papers to find an unopened copy of The Times.

FRANCIS (V.O.)

Mmm, yesterday's news. Far more
interesting than no news at all.

After a while he begins looking at his watch, more and more often. Also he begins looking at the revolving door every time anyone leaves or enters through it. It makes a distinctive and loud 'whooshing' sound every time it revolves. Midday comes and goes. Francis plays with the bracelet. More time passes and Francis begins the Times Crossword at the back of the newspaper with a pen he picks up from the table.

FRANCIS (V.O.)

Never had much luck finishing one of these, still a first time for everything.

He is soon filling in the crossword puzzle and has completed it except for the last clue. He is so involved in it that he has stopped looking up at the revolving door, although it continues to make its sound every time someone leaves or arrives. He is scratching his head with the pen as a woman walks up behind him whom he doesn't see. He talks aloud to himself.

FRANCIS

Come on you can do this. Nine letters, beginning with 'F': Make Up Material. Make Up Material

HEATHER

Fabricate.

Francis turns around in his seat and stands up.

FRANCIS

Heather!

HEATHER

Hello stranger, I was hoping to bump into someone like you here.

They embrace and kiss. A FedEx man comes through the revolving doors, passes them and heads to the Hotelier at the check-in counter.

FEDEX GUY

Package pour Monsieur Henderson.

HOTELIER

Merci.

The Hotelier takes the package, signs and then immediately rings a bell and calls out to Francis.

HOTELIER (CONT'D)
Monsieur Henderson! Package!

FADE OUT.

FIN

CREDITS :

ELLA FITZGERALD "I LOVE PARIS IN THE SPRINGTIME"