NIR/NORTH



A Cinematic Story About the Iran-Contra Affair

K. L. Afrasiabi, Ph.D.
Author of: *After Khomeini*

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A story about the Iran-Contra Affair

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"Mesmerizing. This is a timely, thought-provoking story about what is undoubtedly the most serious national scandal since the Watergate. A must read for all."

Howard Zinn, Historian

On the tenth anniversary of the Iran-Contra Affair, troubling questions still remain. Focusing on the "twin operators," i.e., Oliver North and Amiram Nir, this story blends facts and fiction in a unique and creative way that sheds new lights on the scandal without ever being boring.

Although much has been written about North, so far little attention has been given to Nir, who was Israel's point man in the notorious arms-and-hostage conspiracies. The official story is that Nir died in a plane crash shortly before he was to testify in the Congress. Yet, there are some people inside the CIA who think he is still alive.

Set to Toronto, this is the story of two reporters searching for Nir as part of their effort to produce a documentary. Their investigations produces new and provocative insights about the Iran-Contra, and they are ultimately let to mysterious man who could be Nir. But, they are not the only ones looking for Nir, and what they learn can be dangerous.....

About the Author: K.L. Afrasiabi, Ph.D., is a professor of the Middle East studies at University Massachusetts and the author of: *After Khomeini* (Westview, 1994); *Shiraz Dreams* (Astro's 1993); *The State and Populism* (forthcoming), as well as numerous writings in international journals and newspapers.

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First Edition

I dedicate this work to that mountain of faith, my mother

Acknowledgement: I would like to thank my younger brother Mohsen, whose single-minded determination to get me interested in this project finally paid off in the summer of 1994. I also like to thank Mr. George Cave, a central Iran-Contra figure himself, who kindly took the time and the effort to read the manuscript and shed new lights on important aspects of the story for me. In addition, I am forever indebted to several people who gave constructive criticisms after reading this work: Mr. Paul Carvahlo who is a television reporter in Montreal; Mrs. Laura Bernierie, who runs the Harvard Square Screen Writers; my dear friends and colleagues, Howard Zinn, Mark Seiden, John Ambacher, and Rene Le Blanc . Finally I would like to thank Mr. John Emerson, the librarian at Harvard's Widener library for his invaluable support while I was conducting research for this work.

EXT. A flying airplane (Cessna T20). The insignia on the plane reads: Aerotaxis de Uruapan.

The subscript reads: **November 30, 1988. Western Mexico.**

Coughing sound of engine. The airplane descends rapidly. It crashes on a ranch as it tries an emergency landing.

Cut to
EXT. Aerial view of Toronto in the dead of winter, frozen lakes, inactive harbor, smoke from the factory chimneys joining the thick clouds, a flock of birds flying noisily away - - Day

Max (V.O. coughing)
You see, I never gave a fig about the Iran-Contra story until a month or so ago, when I came down to Toronto to help a friend with his assignment, ostensibly.

Cut to
EXT. A small funeral procession at a cemetery.

The subscript reads: **February 9, 1996.**

Priest (old, with a white beard)
May you rest in peace. May the lord receive you and offer you the reward of the just. May your wife and children live in your memory.

To the reader: **EXT.**= Outside. **INT.**= Inside. **V.O.**= Voice Over= Just the voice.

Cut to the grim faces of a widow and her two children. At a distance, a mustached detective, **Ron Wickowicz,** wearing a black leather raincoat, is leaning against a tree and coolly observing the procession. He lights a cigarette, turns his head. Offscreen sound of a car pulling over, followed by the opening and closing of its door. A man, **Max Le Blanc**, in his early forties, looking a bit run down, enters the cemetery, passes Ron and stops hesitantly several yards behind the group that is now breaking up, beating his gloves against the palm of his hand in a clear gesture of his indecision over whether he should step any closer. Max's searching gaze fixes for a moment on the widow and a female well-wisher, **Sue Ching**, hugging each other. Sue is in her upper twenties, has a neat appearance, is rather sharp looking. Sue notices Max and conveys a cold expression that is mixed with an anxious frown. A sad smile flits across Max's face, he and an older man, **Gerald Reid**, look at each other for a moment. Max turns around and starts walking out. Gerald's voice stops him.

Gerald (V.O.)
Wait a minute Max.

Gerald reaches Max.

Max
I 'm sorry I 'm late. (coughs) What did he die of?

Gerald
You mean you don't know?!

Max (nods negatively. They start walking)
No. Just got a message from him, a couple of days ago, that he needed my help with something.

Gerald
Did he mention what?

Max
Something about Mexico, that's all. So what caused it?

They exit the cemetery and approach the carevan of cars and limos.

Gerald
They say he took one too many tequilas. Was found dead in the bathtub of his hotel room -- in Michoacan somewhere.

Max
That's a shame. Well, Howie was a boozer all right.

Gerald stops at one of the limos, the driver opens the door.

Max (rather abruptly)
Well, so long.

Gerald
So, what are you up to these days?

Max
I 'm still in Montreal, doing a bit of this, bit of that, mostly

for independents.

Gerlad (shakes Max's hand)
Well, good luck to you Max. It's nice to see you again.

Gerlad goes inside the limo. The driver closes the passenger door and goes around and sit behind the wheel. Max is about to walk away when Gerald's voice freezes him.

Gerald
That's not how it happened -- you gotta know.

Max turns around and stares at Gerlad's face protruding the open window.

Gerald
We suspect foul play. You see, Howie was working a sensitive story.

Max(steps closer to the limo)
Really?! So his death wasn't in vain after all.

Gerald
I hope not. Say, when are you going back?

Max
Tomorrow -- morning.

Gerald (thinks)
Why don't you come down the station and we 'll chat for a few minutes, (grins sarcastically) like the good old days.

Max
You mean the bad old days. Fine.

Gerald (gesturing the driver to get moving)
See y (closes the window).

For a moment, Max simply stares at the moving limo, and then starts walking. A blue sedan stops in front of him. Max looks and sees Ron behind the wheel.

Ron
Need a lift?

Max
No thanks.

Ron drives away. Several automobiles pass by Max as he is walking and putting on his gloves.

Cut to
EXT. A four story TV station. The sign reads: CAW -- Day

Cut to
INT. A moving elevator. A sticker on the wall reads: One Hundred Percent Canadian.

The elevator stops and the door opens. Two crew men, wearing blue uniforms, enter. A joyful smile appears on the face of one of them -- he is a cameraman.

The Cameraman
Max! What the devil you 're doing here?

The elevator starts moving.

Max
Tim. What's new?

Tim
Same as usual. Overworked, underpaid. And what about you? Still chasing them college nymphs, ha, son of a gun?

The elevator stops at the third floor, and the door opens. Max, not too thrilled about the last remark, exits.

Max
Take care you son of a bitch. (Tim laughs)

Cut to
INT. A reception room

A middle-age secretary is working behind the desk. Offscreen shouting match between Gerald and a man. Max enters and closes the door behind him, walks toward the secretary.

Secretary
Mr. Le Blanc! How are you? Do you have an appointment...

The secretary is momentarily distracted by the noise from Gerald's room; Max answers.

Max
Yes.

Two men, one in his early thirties and looking upset, the other one in his mid forties and relatively calm and collected, emerge from Gerald's office and walk past Max.

The Older Man
Calm down. It's gonna be just as hot after the election.

The Younger Man
Sure. But it wont have the same effect.

The Older Man
What do you expect? That crook is the prime minister's golf buddy (They vanish in the hallway).

Offscreen sound of Gerald.

Gerald
Come in Max.

Max turns his face and sees Gerald, holding a cigar, at the doorway. Gerald closes the door after letting Max into the office (overlooking the newsroom).

Gerald (sitting behind his desk)
Sit down. Make yourself comfortable. (Offers Max a cigar and lights it for him). So, tell me. What kinds of things you 've been producing lately?

Max
Nothing worth mentioning. Just did a low-budget film on sports for a cable. (gestures with his cigar toward the door). Lots of new faces, ha?

Gerald
Ya. We had a major shake up a little while ago, got rid of some old farts and brought in lots of new talents loaded with ZED, that's for zeal, enthusiasm and dedication. But these kids are too apathetic. (Pushes the ashtray toward Max) They think I 'm running an American operation here.

Max (using the ashtray)
God forbid.

Gerald (Pointing proudly at the sticker on the wall that reads: One Hundred Percent Canadian)
Hell. This is probably the last station in the whole country that is all-Canadian owned.

Max
Ya, but for how long?

Gerald stands up and looks down at the activities in the newsroom.

Gerald
I thought you were working with CBC for a while. Weren't you involved with *Seeing Yellow*? By chance, I saw a rerun of it a couple of weeks ago and I thought I saw your name listed in the crew.

Max (exhaling)
Ya. I did some free-lancing for them right after I left here. What did you think of it?

Gerald
At first I thought it was powerful, but then half way through it became repetitive, lost its focus, originality.

Max
I wasn't too hot about the script either. I thought it needed more points of views and a better focus. But it wasn't my baby.

A buzz on the speaker.

Secretary (V.O.)
Excuse me sir. Michel is on the phone.

Gerald (smiles devilishly)
Just get her number and I 'll call her in ten, no fifteen minutes. And no more interruption please. (lights a cigar and turns his face toward Max) So how long you and Howie worked together?

Max
Oh, a couple of years. May be three.

Gerald
Refresh my memory. What kinds of stuff?

Max (putting out his cigar)
We did some crime reporting, some regional news.

Gerald
Any national?

Max
No, never. But I 've done some international issues over the past five years.

Gerald
Really? Like what?

Max
Well, I worked as a cameraman for a British crew covering the relief efforts in Rwanda. That was two years ago. And before that, did a similar shooting in Lebanon.
So what was Howie up to?

Gerald
That's right. I forgot you started as a cameraman -- that's pretty rare. (After a pause) The Iran-Contra -- scandal, gate, fuck up, whatever you want to call it? Did you ever deal with that?

Max
Iran-Contra?! No, that wasn't my cup of tea.

Gerald
What did you think of it, honestly?

Max
A black apostrophe in American history, that's all.

Gerald (nods his head)
I agree. I myself poked my nose into it once and didn't like the smell of it. I thought the whole thing was a con. But Howie wasn't on the same sheet of music with us on this.

Max
I 'm not surprised. He had studied at Columbia. What about it?

Gerald opens a folder and passes a large photograph to Max.

Gerald
Do you recognize this fellah?

Max (studying the face)
No. Who is he?

Gerald (stand up and lowers the blind)
Nir. Amiram Nir. Does it ring any bell?

Max
Nir. Sounds familiar. (Hesitantly) Isn't he the Israeli guy who was a go-between in Iran Contra?

Gerald
Uh, he was much more than that, apparently a real ball carrier. Very good Max. I 'm impressed. So you 're not out of the loop after all. Howie was preparing a piece on this guy.

Max
What for?

Gerald (throws his hands in the air)
I don't know. Maybe because he was fed up with our parochialism.

Max
But you okayed the project, right?

Gerald
Ya, no, the only thing I okayed was for him to do a special on the tenth anniversary of the Iran-Contra.

Max
What was the angle?

Gerald (pointing at the folder on his Desk)
Initially, it was supposed to be a Hard Copy imitation on the who's who of the scandal, to see where they 've ended up after all these years? But then, your friend and his assistant divulged their entire attention on this Nir guy?

Max
I wonder why? (Gazing at the photo again) Where is this guy?

Gerald
Was is more likely. (Picks up the remote and turns on the VCR and the Monitor) Watch this.

INSERT. The tape: Plane Wreckage- Day.

A male reporter in khaki suit is facing the camera and speaking in the microphone. Gerald increases the volume.

Reporter
...Near the village of Agostitlane, one hundred and twenty miles West of Mexico City. The pilot and Mr. Nir were killed instantly, his Canadian secretary and two other

passengers survived. Apparently, Mr. Nir was on his way to inspect an avocado plantation just a few miles down the road. (Insert of Nir photograph) This is a is a big blow to the special prosecutor of the Iran-Contra investigation who was counting on Mr. Nir crucial testimony. Now, with both the CIA director, Bill Casey (Insert of Casey's photograph), and Mr. Nir gone from the scene, we may never know the answer to some of the troubling questions of this scandal, such as who originated the idea of the diversion of money from arms-for-hostages to the Nicaraguan rebels? Colonel North, the White House aid now on trial, has stated that it was Mr. Nir idea to divert the funds. I am Alan...

Gerald silences the TV, then turns toward Max.

Max
Sounds like the case of a man who knew too much.

Gerald
Howie got a hot tip from someone in Mexico, an officer, who said he had solid proof that there was a fifth person on the airplane -- that went down eight nine years ago.

Max
I see. Poor Howie. That's what I call going down the wrong trail.

Gerald (peeking through the blind)
I 've put a detective on it, am determined to find out who killed him. You should have seen the cold shoulder his wife gave me this morning, like I was the killer. (Turns Around) In retrospect, it's easy to say that I could have put

my foot down and said no. But you know Howie. (Max nods in agreement) Actually, I think he was duped into this by his assistant.

Max
What happened to him (gestures throat cut with his hand)?

Gerald
She. No, she 's fine. I am dwelling on firing her right away. (A fleeting grin) But first I have to decide what to do with that cockamania project? Need someone to put it together. Can't let it die, for Howie's sake. (Pauses) Would you?

Max (bewildered)
Me?! What's wrong with your staff?

Gerald
Nothing. I 've got at least four internal candidates to do this. But.

Max
But?

Gerald
Well, I want to give you another opportunity. This could be your ticket back to this station.

Max
Appreciate the offer. But I don't think so.

Gerald
Why not?

Max
For one thing. I haven't forgotten how you guys cast a

dark shadow on my reputation.

Gerald
Don't blame me. I had just come on board and had to run an organization here. As I told you before, can't blame any one but your own predatory lust and your own self-reighteous attitude before that review board. Besides, you could have bite the bullet and stayed regardless.

Max
May be you 're right. The other thing is, frankly I 'm not too enthused about this project. The story is dry.

Gerald (interrupts)
Ya, but it's a little like reheating a gourmet leftover.

Max
What's in this for our viewers?

Gerald (Looks at his Watch)
Well, there is more to this than I have time to explain right now. Trust me. (Stands up, withdraws the video tape from the VCR and gives a bodily hint to Max that it is time to depart. Max stands up). Do me a favor and drop this off on Howie's desk, right below us, (max takes it) and while you 're there, sniff around and see what he 's been up to. Maybe that'll help you make up your mind.

Max
Sure.

Gerald (opening the door)
Don't forget. We pay above the union scale here (looks pleased that his last remark has perked up a sudden expression of interest on Max's face).

They enter the reception room. The secretary is chatting with Ron, sitting on the sofa.

Gerald
Thanks for coming. (whispers) Take the job if you can.

Max
Thanks for the cigar. I 'll let you know.

As Max turns to leave, Gerald waves at Ron to join him in the office. Ron gets up and smiles at Max as they pass each other.

INT. A small glass cased-in office next to the newsroom.

Max enters, drops the tape on the desk and looks around. On a wall there is a board filled with small cards pinned on it. Next to it is a book shelf on which are stacked the entire twenty seven volumes of Congressional reports on the Iran-Contra investigation and other books. Max glances at the titles: **The Iran-Contra Scandal. The Iran-Contra Connection. The Cover Up. Under Fire. Honored and Betrayed. Guts and Glory. The Secret Government. The Iran Triangle. The Profits of War. By Way of Deception. A Very Thin Line.**

Max stares meaningfully at a polaroid photograph of him, Howie and Sue in fishing gears, happily brandishing a large fish. He then scans the pile of photocopies on the left corner of the desk, picks up a few of them and examines their content. They are unclassified documents of the Iran-Contra affair.. His eyes stop at a memo, which is stamped "Top

Secret," and the circled line that reads: "Nir took over the operation." He goes on to the next page and finds another circled line of a document, titled North Chronology; skims through it and stops at the marked line that reads: "Israelis (or Nir all by himself)." As he is about to restore the papers in their original position, Max catches the sight of a newspaper clip pinned on the board; he reaches for it and untucks it. The title reads: Toronto Herald. The bottom article is circled in read. Its title reads: **The Death of Israel's Superagent in the Iran-Contra Gate Doubted**.

Max starts reading the article.

Max (reads)
According to an intelligence source, the key Israeli.

Max stops and puts on his glasses, resumes reading, this time silently at first.

Max (reads)
...Nir body was delivered to a mysterious Argentinian by the name of Paulo Cruchet, even though he did not have an ID on him and told the Mexican police that it had been lost in a bullfight. The source suggests that Nir went to Geneva, where the plastic surgery clinics are very good, very private and very discreet. Hm.

Max folds the newspaper and puts it in his pocket. He then reads the labels on the video tapes piled on top of each other, randomly inserts one of them into the system hooked into the wall; puts the headphone on.

INSERT. Tape: A White House press conference.

A reporter
Can you tell us what Israel's role in this was?

Reagan
No, because there was none. Israel had not, did not, play any role.

The tape cuts to the press conference of the attorney general, Ed Meese.

Meese
We have found out that certain money from the Iranian transactions were illegally used for the purpose of funding the Nicaraguan resistance.

The tape cuts to Colonel Oliver North's testimony.

North
I must confess to you that using the Ayatollah's money to support the Nicaraguan resistance fighters was the right idea. Director Casey referred to it as the ultimate irony, the ultimate covert operation...In this kind of activity, you sometimes have no choice but to work with what you 've got. One cannot go to Mother Teresa and ask her to go to Tehran on your behalf...I did do it. I was given a mission and I tried to do it...I misled the Congress...I lied to the CIA, because that was the connection that we had worked

out with the Israelis, that no one else was to know.

The tape cuts to Senator Rudman.

Senator Rudman
The story will be told is a sad one. There will be evidences of illegal behavior and contempt for our democratic form of government. There will be stories of greed and incompetence.

The tape cuts to the (Congressional) testimony of an unnamed, hooded witness.

The Questioner (V.O.)
What was Mr. Nir position in the Israeli government?

Hooded Witness
He was the prime minister's chief adviser on terrorism. He was not a trained intelligence officer. I don't know what he was, but he wasn't a spy. He was carrying a loaded responsibility. No intelligence officer in his right mind would do that. He was posing as an American with the Iranians, but was wearing a Jewish chain and speaking with a Hebrew accent.

The questioner (V.O.)
Did the prime minister and or the Israeli intelligence, Mossad, know about Mr. Nir range of activities with Colonel North, such as their plan to acquire a high-tech Soviet tank -- illegally?

Hooded Witness
I think so. I mean, they certainly knew everything Nir did with respect to the TWA hijackers and the initiatives toward Iran. I doubt, however, that they knew of other operations, like buying arms from a Canadian company, and using that Danish ship, *Erria*, to broadcast anti-government propaganda into Libya.

The questioner (V.O.)
We have information that Mr. Nir controlled the Swiss account where the Iranian money was deposited and, furthermore, that he at some point opened three Swiss accounts for the contra leader Colero. Do you know what he did with the money, and how much was involved?

Offscreen sound of the door. Max turns his face and is surprised to find Sue, dressed in the same black outfit, staring at him. He stops the tape and removes the headphone, mumbling.

Sue
What are you doing here?!

Max
Nothing.

When standing up, Max's elbow hits the tapes and they drop on the floor -- he bends to pick them up.

Sue
Don't you dare butt into my project.

Max stands upright, swallows what he is about to say, and proceeds toward the door. Sue blocks it.

Max
Don't worry, I have no intention of tripping on your tale so you can cry harassment again.

Sue
Good. Then we understand each other.

Max
Parfaitement.

Sue moves to the side and allows Max to exit. She slams the door angrily.

Cut to
INT. A hotel room -- DAY

Offscreen sound of water mixed with Max's singing. Offscreen sound of telephone. Max emerges from the bathroom with a soapy face, picks up the phone.

Max (Into the Phone)
Hello. (Listens) Yes, I did. (Frawns and thinks) I don't know. I got a gut feeling it's a pure waste of time; they 've got nothing but false leads, (listens) Ya. You people and your cockamania ideas. Let me think about it. (Listens) I 'm not as foolish as my friend you know.

Max hangs up the phone and after a momentary reflection, picks up a beer from the refrigerator and then goes inside the

bathroom and resumes shaving, is so lost in his thoughts that cuts himself. Stops, stares at himself and the drop of blood descending his cheek, splashes his face with hot water, and then has a big sip of his beer, as if using a mouthwash.

Cut to
EXT. One of Toronto's busy streets -- Late Afternoon

Cut to a moving taxi. Max is sitting inside holding a cellular phone against his ear.

Max (V.O.)
Hi. Yes. That's me. I guess you can dump your problem in my lap. What the hell.

Gerald (V.O.)
Splendid. Just remember. You guys have only a couple of weeks to play with.

Max (V.O.)
Great. About the girl. Can you get her off my hair?

Gerald (V.O.)
No Max. She 's done all the research, will be an asset to you. I tried to straighten her this morning. Just do me a favor and don't send her any flowers, and keep your hands off her ass.

The taxi stops in front of a building. Max exits and after taking the change from the driver and putting his wallet in his pocket, proceeds toward the glass entrance door.

Offscreen voice of Max on the phone.

Max (V.O.)
Mr. Holloway? Hi. My name is Max Le Blanc. I 'm a reporter with CAW. I was wondering if I could ask you a couple of questions.

Holloway (V.O.)
What about?

Max (V.O.)
About an article you wrote a few years ago -- on Amiram Nir.

INT. The lobby
Max notices a short, chubby older man, i.e., Holloway, waiting by the information booth, approaches him and shakes hands with him. They exit the building.

EXT. The street's snow-covered sidewalk

Max and Holloway pace the sidewalk slowly together. Max helps Holloway to light his cigarette and then says something to him that makes Holloway halt suddenly and stare unbelievingly into Max's eyes.

Holloway
You gotta be out of your mind. Do you have any idea what you 're asking me?
You 're asking me to break faith with those people.

Max
No, no such thing. All I 'm asking is to see if this CIA guy is willing to talk to me, that's all.

Holloway
And why should I do you such a favor? You guys are driving us out of business.

Max
Let's say for the sake of a higher principle -- justice for a fellow journalist, a countryman.

Holloway
Do me a favor and don't throw that patriotic baloney at me. I 'm too old for this kind of shit.

Max
No, it's true. But if truth distresses you, we should probably not bother with it.

Holloway (angrily)
Have a nice day Mr. Le Blanc.

Holloway moves back toward the building. Max quashes his cigarette with his shoe and then waves at a taxi.

INT. TV station

Walking down the hall way, Max stops by the soda machine and picks up a soda after inserting a bill, then proceeds toward Howie's office, enters and is delightfully surprised that the desk is cleared, with the exception of a blue folder. He conveys a mixed expression when he notices a woman's jacket and a brown purse on the wall hanger to his left. Offscreen sound of a man.

A Man's Voice
Max.

Max turns around and smiles to the man, Phillippe, who is in his early thirties and has long hair and glasses, standing at the door; he is holding a thick folder in his hand.

Max
Phillippe. How are you?

Phillippe (steps in and shakes hand with Max)
Welcome aboard.

Max
Thanks.

They sit down.

Phillippe
So you 're back here again -- working with Sue. Unbelievable. The old man is up to his dirty tricks again. (Pauses) So, you think you can handle it?

Max
I 'll just treat this as a regular job with a partner.

Phillippe
No, I meant the Nir project.

Max (Notices the typed letter Nir on the folder, opens it and looks at the content)
I bet you 've had a hand in this. Am I wrong?

Phillippe
Just a little. That's Sue's baby really.

Max
You 're still in the research department?

Phillippe
Ya, as well as postproduction. You know me, I 'm a man of many hats -- you have to in order to survive in this environment.

Max
So I hear you guys are about to blow the whistle on the prime minister's golf buddy.

Phillippe
Who told you?! I can't believe it. You haven't even wet your feet and already know our deep secrets.

Max
Walls have ears Phillippe. Relax. The higher ups confided in me. I 'm curious. How big a noise do you think this will cause?

Phillippe
Saul, I don't know if you know him, he 's a new reporter, compares it to throwing a handgrenade in the Parliament.

Max (drinks)
No, that's an exaggeration.

Phillippe
You think so? I hope not. I 've paraded the headlines in my head so many times: TV Report Puts Telecommunication Overseer In Bed with An American

Company.

Max
Do you have enough facts?

Phillippe (opens his folder and selects a picture and shows it to Max)
We just spent two weeks trailing this guy's cruising in the Grand Caymen -- all the courtesy of a Yankee telephone company.

Max
Better yet. Subtitle it another NAFTA windfall.

They both laugh. Sue enters the room.

Phillippe (Looking at his watch, stands up and is about to leave the room)
Gotta go. Let's have a drink sometime. My office is two doors down.

Max (Closes the folder. To Sue)
Hi. How are you?

Sue
Fine. And you?

Max
Fine.

Sue shuts the door and sits down upright, looking composed and yet bitter.

Sue
I thought we understood each other.

Max
I 'm just here to help, for Howie's sake. Now, if you can think of some one else, that Howie would have preferred, just tell me and I 'll leave -- seriously.

Sue
I don't need any help. As soon as I saw you with that bastard I knew something like this was going to happen. He...

Max (interrupts)
You 're harboring false notions about me. I can't speak for Gerald, but I 've got mind of my own.

Sue (raises her voice)
I thought you and Howie were on non-speaking terms with each other because of what he said about you to the board? How come he didn't tell me that he is soliciting your help?

Max
Maybe because he knew how you would react.

Sue
How can you even think that we could work together after all that has happened? Don't you have any pride?

Max
I just heard some one say you can't always choose who you work with all the time. Reckon he 's right, as long as we can keep to our hat that is -- and forget the past.

Sue
Forget the past, ha? You 're nuts. I 'm not going to be suckered into this. No way. I 'll be a wreck all the time, I know it. Sorry. It's all yours. (she stands up and reaches for her jacket and purse, starts to leave).

Max (almost yells before she disappears)
How about one day at a time?

Sue turns around and looks at him mysteriously for a moment before she returns to the office.

Sue
You mean...?

Max
Precisely. The minute you feel uncomfortable -- legitimately uncomfortable -- I 'll leave and let you deal with all this by yourself. What do you say?

Sue (breathing deeply, puts her stuff back on the hanger)
All right.

Max
Good. Now that is settled, why don't you fill me in? First of all, why did you get on this Nir tangent?

Sue (Sue points at the blue folder).
All the essentials are in there. (Her facial expression shows a fleeting discomfort as Max deduces that she had already resigned to working with him prior to this conversation) We 've spent nine months on this so far, done at least two dozen interviews with key characters of the Iran-Contra --

in Washington, California, Israel, and Europe. Let me show you something.

Max closes the folder and passes it to Sue, stares for a moment at her large engagement ring. She withdraws two newspaper clips and puts them on the desk.

Sue
Check these out.

One is from the New York Times, dated December 3, 1988. The title reads: **Man Killed in Mexican Crash Is Indeed Iran-Contra Figure.** The other is a Washington Post front page, dated December 2, 1988. The article next to Nir picture has the heading: **Key Israeli Iran-Contra Figure Believed Dead in Plane Crash.**

Sue
You see. Totally different reports about Nir death. The Post says the plane went down in fair weather, that there were only two other passengers aboard besides Nir and the pilot, and, get this, that the pilot was injured. The New York Times, on the other hand, blames rainstorm for the crash, says there were three other passengers, and that the pilot had been killed.

Max
So which is the truth?

Sue
That's what Howie went to find out. I should have gone

with him.

Max
Why didn't you?

Sue
I couldn't. Had an engagement party -- arranged from months ago.

Max (as he reads the articles)
Congratulations. (Sips his drink) Why was he using a false name in a legitimate trip, and what was he doing in Michoacan? Is there an arms industry there?

Sue
Not at all. But...

She pulls out a second Washington Post clip, dated December 3, 1988. The article's heading reads: **Mystery over Israeli Grows in Mexico.**

Sue (reads)
In fact, Michoacan is a leading source for Mexican marijuana and heroin that is smuggled into the United States..

Max
Really?! What else?

Sue
The money. Remember the Iran-Contra hearings and all the talks of missing ten million dollars?

Max
Of course.

Sue
We have traced most of it from a bank in Zurich to a shady bank in here -- via an ever shadier bank in Nova Scotia.

Max
Interesting. How did you find out?

Sue
It's a long story.

Max
I like to know every thing.

Sue
I amused one of the bank employees -- woman to woman.

Max
I see. And who owns that money?

Sue
I 'm working on it.

Max
What about Nir? Is he alive you think?

Sue
My hunch says he is.

Max
What kind of guy is, was, he?

Sue
What do you like to know?

Max
Your view.

Sue
He was right out of one of Le Carre's novels, had a lot in common with Colonel Oliver North -- twin operatives, they used to call them, two halves of the same apple. They were almost the same age, similar rank, even similar build. And just like North, Nir had once been in a serious car accident. After the accident, Nir drives forty miles to a hospital carrying his eye on his hand. That's how they identified his body by the way -- the glass eye he wore since the accident.

Max (examining the papers)
Not a very solid evidence, is it? He was a journalist?

Sue
Ya, and a TV commentator. He then quit his job to campaign for the labor party, and once they won, he was awarded the head of counterterrorism -- because of his background he was shunned by his comrades, was considered the lone wolf of the intelligence community.

Max (points at the article)
Here it says Nir Canadian secretary was with him.

Sue
Ya, she claims their sharing the plane was a pure coincidence.

Max
Some coincidence.

Sue
She 's got a lake-front chalet near Woodstock. We spent a couple of days in the bushes checking it out, but didn't see anything unusual.

Max
What about Nir wife?

Sue
She 's the daughter of a big time publisher in Israel. Her house was broken into in 1991. The thieves took all of Nir secret files, including his chronology of the Iran-Contra affair. That's the hot item that the prosecutor, Walsh, was hoping to use against Oliver North and Reagan.

Max
It'd be nice to get hold of those files.. (is interrupted by the telephone sound, picks up the phone) Hello. (Listens) Yes. She is here. One moment please (offers the phone to Sue. She stands up and grabs it from his hand, looking somewhat nervous).

Sue
Hi honey. (Listens) Ya. Every thing is fine. I 'll be ready in ten minutes. Ciao. (Returns the phone to Max; he puts it down).

Sue (getting ready to leave)
I have to go now. If you 're up to it, check out the stuff we 've done so far. They 're in the editorial suite, on the upper shelf.

Max (To Sue before she disappears)
Thanks. By the way, is it still a struggle to reserve the suite? (Sue nods affirmatively) One last thing, what's your approach?

Sue (turns around at the door)
A mix of essay and interviews. What we were really hoping was to interview Nir. But that's wishful thinking I suppose. Good night.

Max
Good night (whispers after she leaves) princess. (Sue, just a step outside the door, hears the last remark and pauses for a moment, grinding her teeth, then she resumes walking. Max resumes reviewing the tapes).

Insert: The tape shows Sue interviewing a man.

A Man (subscript reads: Israeli Arms merchant)
Nir was a nuisance. The moment he came to the picture, I believe that was in 1984, he wanted to be in charge of everything, to be the sole conduit with the Iranians and the Americans. My friend David Kimche couldn't stand him. In London, they argued in front of the National Security Advisor Bud MacFarlane, over who should represent Israel in the negotiation with the Iranians. It was so embarrassing. But that was the least of Mr. Nir sins. Later on, Nir worked with Colonel North to set up a sting operation that led to our arrest in Bahamas.

Sue
What was the purpose of the sting operation?

The Arms Merchant

The Americans didn't want any Israeli footprint in their secret contacts with the Khomeini regime, so they shut us down in order to get their second channel with Khomeini going. Thank God the Iran-Contra scandal was revealed to the public, otherwise, we'd still be in jail rotting.... (Max fast forwards the tape until it shows another man identified as Tiny Ronald).

Tiny Roland

After Mr. Nir approached me and asked me to finance the arms deal with the Iranians, I went to the U.S. embassy in London and asked the ambassador if he knew anything about this? He didn't, and immediately contacted the secretary of State George Schultz who, I believe was in Tokyo at that time. My understanding is that Mr. Schultz was very annoyed when he heard that the Israelis and some people in the White House were doing things with Iran without his knowledge...(Max fast forwards the tape until it shows another man identified as Saudi Financier).

Saudi Financier (holding a white cat)

Oh sure. We met on numerous occasions, in Paris, London, Geneva, and God knows where else. Oh yes. Once in Washington too. That was in Fall 85, after Mr. Ghorbanifar and I had put down the money for the Iranian transaction. I remember I gave a lift to Mr. Nir back to Europe in my private jet. I liked that gentleman. He was very well-informed about the global issues, and knew all about the European casinos.

Sue

What else can you tell us about Mr. Nir?

The Saudi

Well. I remember he came to my fiftieth birthday party in Marbella, to convince me to put down even more money for the arms sales to Iran. I wish I hadn't listened to him. As you probably know, I borrowed from some Canadian financiers and never recovered most of my money. It almost drove me bankrupt. I 'm not blaming Mr. Nir though. How could I? I never speak bad about the dead. It is against our religion. Besides, the hostages were released, which was due to Mr. Nir efforts.

Another Man (subscript reads: Nir Assistant)

Colonel Nir was a complete patriot. He invested his life in Israel, and in the end all he was left with was himself. I warned him a couple of times that he could be facing disciplinary inquiries at some point in the future on the subject of his activities. But he didn't listen. He was deceived in loyalty. He never betrayed his countrymen. (Max fast forwards the tape until it shows another man identified as professor Shahin).

Professor Shahin

I think all this talk about Nir and North is wrong because it suggests that their behavior was the excess of an individual whereas they represented the programs of their respective governments; each in his own way was only carrying out their policy, and in the end was fried for it by their superiors. Undoubtedly, Nir fate was more severe, I think because Mossad, their CIA, never forgave him for keeping them out of a major international issue for the first time in Israel's history. (Max fast forwards the tape until it shows a uniformed officer identified as Israeli Officer)

Israeli Officer

I get sick to my stomach when I hear people talk about Nir

as if he was a legend. He was nothing but a self-serving opportunist, who always assumed to know what's best for Israel's national interest. He thought Iraq is a bigger threat to us than the Muslim fundamentalists. I wish he could be resurrected from his grave, just for a day, and could see that the hands he'd been feeding are now throwing bombs and stabbing us in the streets? Nir was a traitor if you ask me. I 'm not alone. Ask any body in Israel. (Max stops the tape and stands and leaves the room, walks past Phillippe room and after taking a few steps returns and enters it, sees the folder containing the picture Phillippe had shown him, opens it, withdraws one of the pictures, then leaves).

Cut to
INT. An attack shark in an aquarium tank, passing by a diver distributing food to the welter of Fish, Turtles, etc.

The subscript reads: **13 April, 1996.**

Cut to the close up of Max as seen from within the tank, i.e., a shark's point of view. Max's stare conveys the mystery of a mutual recognition.

INSERT. Double shot. Holloway face as he is eating at a restaurant, is displeased to see Mas

Holloway
What do you want? I thought we were through with each other.

Max
I thought you might be interested in swapping information.

Holloway
What do you got?

Max (brandishes the picture of the corrupt overseer of telecommunication)
A stinking fish -- big fish.

Cut to
INT. The same aquarium -- Max hears a man's voice from behind

The man
What do you see?

Max (Turns his face and sees an old, distinguished-looking man carrying a cane)
Peaceful coexistence. And you?

The man
The new world order, every one living in harmony. And what do we have instead? Total chaos. (Points at the sharks) You wonder what happens if they stop feeding them for a little while?

Max
Could be messy. But on the other hand, it could attract more tourists.

The man (smiles)
For that they need bigger sharks, perhaps a great White. That's what we had in the Russians for forty years you know. Now, with the rogue bear turned into a sand shark, we 're suddenly left with a two trillion dollars military-

intelligence complex and hardly any one to fight.

Max
My sympathies. So the terrorists, drug cartels and the feds chairman don't cut it, ha?

The man stares at Max and sizes him up for a second, then starts walking around the tank; Max follows him.

Max
I like to know if what you wrote, about that Israeli guy, Nir, is true or not?

The man
That was eight years ago. It is accurate, but may not be the truth, any more.

Max
Some say the CIA wanted him silenced.

The man
You 've been watching too many spy movies. Nir was nothing more than a blatherskite.

Max
What's that?

The man
Unreliable.

Max
Why?

The man
You 're better off asking this from the Israelis, or Nir himself, if you can get to him.

Max
I was promised you could give me some leads.

The man
Me or Promise? (Max looks dumbfounded). Is Nir all that you are interested in?

Max
Well, no. I 've got other questions. May be we can have a frank exchange. You'd be completely anonymous if you want.

The man
Well, some of us are pushing for a new spirit of openness by the agency. Personally I see no harm in your request. But this has to be approved.

Max
Of course; I 've heard about the old boys' network. Don't have much time though. I 'm working under a tight deadline.

The man (as he is walking away)
And we are all under a tightrope, Mr. Le Blanc.

Max
What is your name?

The man (turns around)
Call me Vince.

Max
Should I give you my beeper number?

Vince
We know how to find you.

Cut to
EXT. Outside the aquarium -- raining.

Max exits, crosses the street and heads toward a bookshop, using the newspaper to cover his head.

INT. The Bookshop

Max notices Sue sitting at a table next to the window, with her back toward him. He approaches her and, hovering over her for a moment, glances at the "I love you" etched on the postcard in front of her. She feels his presence and turns her face. He grins.

Max
Hi.

Max sits opposite Sue, puts the newspaper on another chair..

Sue
That was brief. How did it go?

Max
Ya. he left pretty abruptly. I couldn't get much out of him, except that (he sneezes) he is convinced Nir did not die in that plane crash. He might grant us an interview. We need

to prepare some questions.

Sue
No problem.

Max sneezes, wipes his nose, nods possitively to the waiter who asks him if he wants coffee.

Max
What about you? Were you able to talk with anyone in the Israeli consulate?

Sue
Just their press person. Was a pure waste of time, as expected. I don't know why you think we need more interviews? Did you read my revised script?

Max
Ya. I think it's good, for the most part.

Sue
For the most part?

Max
Ya. I don't mean to insult you, but I thought you lost your focus half way through the story. I mean, we gotta draw the line. Either we 're doing investigative journalism or straightforward documentary. You can't have it both ways.

Sue
Who says? (Max has no answer) You still haven't you told me how you convinced that editor to lead you to this guy?

Max
I just impressed him -- man to man.

Sue (unimpressed)
Before I forget. We got the editing suite for Thursday night.

Max
Thursday? I 've got an important meeting then.

Sue (stands to leave, tersely)
You mean at the Cock and Bull with Phillippe?

Max
All right Thursday night. Au revoir.

Sue leaves some bills, puts on her coat and then leaves. Max glares at her bodily movement, notices a woman watching his lustful look . He smiles at her, lifts his cup and walks toward her table, is about to say something when he sneezes repeatedly. The woman laughs.

Cut to
INT. A hotel room -- Day.

A camera man and a light person are setting up their equipments, lights. Max coughs and looks ill. The camera man tests the mics. Max and Sue are going over the questions.

Max (V.O.)
A few days later, we interviewed Vince. I had to cancel my rend zevouh on Thursday night. They of course weren't

happy about it, as if I cared.

Max opens the door and greets Vince. Vince enters and Max helps him with his coat and his hat. Vince and Sue shake hands. She introduces Vince to the camera man and the light person, and then directs him where to sit, hooks up the mic to his shirt. Max brings Vince a glass of water, puts it on the small table in front of him. The lights person turns on the lights and dims them so that only a shadow of Vince's face would show on the camera. Max stands behind the camera for a moment and gives the o.k. to the camera man after taking a peek at Vince through the camera. Sue sits on the chair facing Vince. Max clears his throat and stands in a corner. The camera man gestures with his hand, five, four, three, two, one, go.

Sue
Let's begin by introducing yourself. Who are you?

Vince
I am a senior officer of the Central Intelligence Agency, in semi-retirement.

Sue
What was your role during the so called Iran-Contra affair?

Vince
I ran the operation in Central America.

Sue
Can you elaborate?

Vince
My main tasks were to gather intelligence on the Marxist guerrillas in El Salvador, and the other one was to conduct a covert war against the Sandanista government in Nicaragua. Later on, I was transferred to our European desk.

Sue
What kinds of things did you do with respect to Nicaragua?

Vince
We helped organize the Contras, which was a guerrilla force, made up mostly of Somoza's national guardsmen, to fight the Sandanista army.

(archival footage of the Contras)

Sue
What else?

Vince
Well, we started this operation in 1981, two years after the overthrow of Somoza.

(archival footage of the Sandanistas celebrating their victory in Managua)

Vince (V.O.)
At first, the contras were just a rag tag army, very poorly organized, so we ended up carrying out some of their dirty works, to make life miserable on the Nicaraguans by, for

instance, blowing up their fuel tanks and mining their harbors.

(archival footage of blown up tanks and mines in the harbor)

Sue
Do you have any remorse about being part of an undeclared war on a tiny neighbor?

Vince (struck by the question)
Absolutely not. We couldn't tolerate a second Cuba in the hemisphere, which could have easily turned into a domino effect in El Salvador, Guatemala and elsewhere in our backyard if we didn't cause a political turnaround in Nicaragua. I don't think we owe any apologies for what we did there.

Sue
What about the CIA murder manual, the one that taught the contras how to assassinate judges and other civilian officials in Nicaragua? Do you have any regrets about that?

Vince
The Tayacana Manual. Well, that was part of our psychological warfare against the Sandanistas. I remember when the New York Times published excerpts of it. It caused quite an uproar in the Congress. I admit, as I did back then, that we were carried away a bit. That's what made Congress to slap us with the Boland Amendments.

Sue
These were the three legislations that tied your hands.

(archival footage of the House of Representative in session).

Vince
Right. The third one was the toughest. It passed in October 84. It cut off military aid to the contras for the fiscal 85. It could not have come at a worse time, cuz we were down to our last one million. We had fathered the contras into a growing force and now suddenly we were leaving them out in the cold.

Sue
Then what happened?

Vince
Then the White House and the NSC, National Security Council that is, came up with a rescue plan, to mastermind a private resupply operation with the help of a group of private benefactors, foreign governments, ex-CIA operatives, and a number of mercenaries and arms merchants. Their contingency plan had been already in place when the last Boland hit us like a hammer in the head. I remember everything so vividly; one day we got an unusual cable on our encryption device. I was inspecting the contras' training.

Cut to
INT. An office -- Day.*

A cable is received.

*To the reader: What you are reading here are Vince's flashbacks during the interview.

The subscript reads: **13 October, 1984. Military Base in Ilapango, El Salvador.**

A man, Vince's assistant, tears it and reads it, looks stunned. Vince, working behind a desk, raises his head and wonders what it says. The other man reads the cable: "All field stations are to cease and desist with action."

Vince's assistant
What does it mean?

Vince
It means the Congress is throwing us out of our propriety.

Offscreen sound of rain and thunder. Vince peeks through the blinds. A group of soldiers are pushing an army truck that has stalled in the mud. Vince turns around and pours himself a cup of coffee.

Vince's assistant
The guys are ready to take out the Mig-21s in Managua. What should I tell them?

Vince
You read the instruction. Just pass the word.

Vince sits down and sips his coffee, looking reflective, while his assistant is sending a message.

Vince (V.O.)
A few days later, we had visitors, Ollie North and a small entourage, came down with a suitcase full of money for Bastillo the base commander.

Cut to
EXT. A military airport -- Day

A private jet landing. Oliver North (carrying a briefcase) and a half dozen men, all wearing civilian clothes, exit the airplane. They are greeted by two military officers and by Vince and his assistant. All except the officers get on two military jeeps and drive away..

Cut to
INT. A small room.

Present are North and his men, Vince and his assistant. A large map of Central America is on a wall. A military map of Nicaragua is on the table in the middle of the room. Vince, with a pointer in his hand and moving it on the map is giving a presentation.

Vince (V.O.)
I gave'em a brief on the situation.

Sue (V.O.)
Who were the people with North?

Vince (V.O.)
There was General Secord and his men, a couple of veteran pilots from the Vietnam war, Charlie Cooper, Rich. Gadd, Bob Dutton and Buzz Sawyer. Chi Chi Quintero and Tom

Clines, who were Secord's men in charge of the supplies, Rob. Owen, North's liaison with the contras. He had come down before, to assess the needs of the contras; and finally there was that Cuban Max Gomez, also known as Rodriguez.

Sue (V.O.)
Gomez is the guy who interrogated Che Guevara, isn't he?

Vince (V.O.)
Yes. that's him. At the time, he was helping our advisers with the training of Salvadoran army against the insurgents. He had the best rapport with the local generals. North was now about to enlist him for the Nicaraguan cause.

Sue (V.O.)
Did you know Secord before?

Vince (after drinking water)
Oh, I knew him from the days when he and his Iranian partner were selling arms to Somoza. We had a complete profile on them, naturally. He and another general, Singlaub, had supervised our secret operations in Laos in mid sixties, and was stationed in Iran for four or five years before the revolution in the seventies. Since his retirement, Secord had been involved in the edges of the international arms market. His initial company, EATSCO, had been involved in a number of illegal arms transfers, to the Egyptian and Libyan governments. His partner, Edwin Wilson, a CIA renegade, had taken all the flak, serving a 52 year term, while Secord was cleared of all wrong doings. But we knew better. We had all read the book *Manhunt*, which is about the EATSCO fiasco.

Secord
You guys are acting like shoe salesmen. Let's get a real operation together and really do something.

Vince's Assistant
We 'll take a chance (looks at Vince for approval and receives a strong disapproval look instead)

Vince (V.O.)
After the meeting, I raised my concerns about Secord to North. I told him...

Cut to
INT. Vince's office -- Evening

Vince (to North)
Secord is bad news. I 'm not going to run this guy.

North and Vince are facing each other. Seated behind them are Owen and Vince's assistant. North listens impatiently.

North (writing in his notebook)
He was referred to me by your director, for good reasons I think. These guys are real pros, and you must cooperate with them whether you like it or not.

Vince
Sorry. I have my own instructions from the headquarter.

North (closes his notebook and yells)
God damn it. I 've been sent here by the White House and

I have a different set of instructions for you in addition to the one from the CIA. You 've heard the old man. He wants these contras body and soul together until Congress is swayed back into line a year or so from now. It's a crying shame that our government has turned its back on these people like this, don't you think?

Owen
Look Vince. We 're not asking much. The Enterprise will manage ninety percent of the operation, the supplies, drop offs, airplanes, funding, everything. You just take care of the other 10 percent, you know the logistics support, the flight vector information.

North
And It's all perfectly legit (throws a document on Vince's desk).

Vince reads the heading: **Legal Basis for Covert Operation in Central America**. He reads the rest quietly.

North
As you can see, our counsel has determined that Boland is in fact a compromise. It lets you guys provide defensive intelligence to the contras.

Owen
We 'll never ask you about the Sandanista army's formation at the front, promise.

Vince's assistant
Pardon my ignorance. But I thought the NSC has nothing to do with operation and is just into policy planning.

North
The NSC is to serve the president and in accordance with his desires. We can get into operation any time there is a strict requirement. We 've decided that Boland applies to the intelligence agencies and doesn't cover the NSC. Besides, we 've got presidential authorization.

Vince
Who's going to man the planes?

North
We 're getting three top notch British pilots, so we 'll be covered in case something goes wrong.

Vince
And how the hell you 're gonna fund this operation? Unless you come up with several millions in a couple of weeks, there won't be a force to help.

North
We 're working hard on a new source of bridge funding. You just deliver your ten percent with logistics.

Vince stands and looks out through the blinds. Contra soldiers are training.

Vince (V.O.)
So we were back into the game just as we were asked to keep hands off.

Sue (V.O.)
Did you stay with the ten percent rule?

Cut to
INT. The interview room

Vince
More or less, but only after I went over to Washington to confer directly with Director Casey and Charlie Allen, the national intelligence officer. The timing was bad. Director Casey had too many heads under his hat. For one thing, he was upset that because of a couple of moles in the CIA and the navy, we were losing the intelligence war to the Soviets.

Sue
You mean Howard, Polard, and the Ivy Bellers operation, right?

Vince
Very good. I can see you 've done your homework. And on top of all that, they were also busy with the hostage situation in Lebanon. A dear friend of mine, our station chief in Beirut, Bill Buckley, had been kidnapped by the hizbollah in March 84. Charlie took me with him to a hostage location task force meeting. The *hizbollah* had sent us a tape.

Cut to
INT. A crowded corridor -- Day

Charlie Allen and Vince are pacing the corridor in fast steps.

The subscript reads: **14 December, 1984. CIA Headquarter, Langley, Virginia**.

Allen
Bill is devastated. He feels personally responsible for what's happened to Buckley.

Vince
It wasn't wise to send him there after the rumors that his cover is blown, was it?

Allen
No, I agree. But it was all Buckley's own doing. He lobbied Bill hard for the assignment. You have no idea Vince. It's the damnedest thing I 've ever seen. People are selling information, selling hostages, selling their rings, their clothes, selling their letters from them.

Vince
I thought we had a firm policy of not negotiating with the kidnappers?

Allen shrugs. They reach a door guarded by a security man. He opens the door for them. They enter a dark room and join several other men who are sitting glued to an amateur tape. Vince notices Casey in the dark, watching with an impassioned face.

The tape shows the torture and interrogation of Buckley administered by two hooded men. He is tied to the wall. The banner on the wall reads: Death to America. Buckley screams in pain when they burn his body with cigarette and pull out his finger nail. One of the torturers waves a thick manuscript in front of the camera and boasts: 400 pages. The camera switches to the torturing of Buckley. A younger man in the room holds his mouth and rushes out.

Buckley
Please help me. Bill, please, don't let them kill me.

The tape ends. The lights go on. Silence in the room. Vince stares at Casey. Casey removes his glasses and wipes them with a handkerchief, mumbles under his lips.

Allen
Where is North?

A Man
He 's in London, checking the bona fide of a Saudi prince who's got ties with both the hizbollah leader Sheikh Fadhlollah and the Iranians.

Casey (To the man next to him)
What have you got Azzam?

A Man (his ID reads Drug Enforcement Agency)
The kidnappers are the same people who've been running opium out of the Middle East. We 're in touch with a couple of Lebanese who are part of their network. My men have met with them in Cyprus and are telling me that these guys can deliver the exact location in exchange for two hundred thousand.

Another Man
Ross Perot's man is willing to put down the money.

Allen (To Azzam)
Talk to North first. He 'll arrange the money for you.

The DEA agent starts writing.

Casey
If you have to write things down, you don't belong in this business.

The DEA agent drops his pen.

Allen
Can we trust your sources?

The DEA officer nods affirmatively, but with a slight doubt.

Casey
What about the Israelis? Has anyone talked to them lately?

Allen
Ya. I talked with Nir earlier today, he 's their new guy in charge. They are very skeptical about the DEA's sources, Nir thinks we 're about to be taken to the cleaners. He says the hostages are being moved every other day and that it is easier to talk with the kidnappers' Iranian paidmasters than to attempt a risky rescue.

Casey
Ya. Since 81, the Israelis are telling us to work with the Iranians, so we can get close to their military. What does this guy, what's his name?

Allen
Nir. Amiram Nir.

Casey
What does he say about Bill's confession?

Allen
He says it's been cited in Tehran, 400 pages and all. They 're working on getting a copy. I hope he 's wrong, otherwise, we 're in deep trouble. God knows how many agents are now exposed.

Casey
We have no choice gentlemen but to assume that Mr. Nir information is correct. Let's bring in everyone who's been even remotely in contact with Bill.

Casey puts on his glasses and gives a grin of acknowledgement to Vince.

Casey
I just spoke with the old man and he 's pretty upset about the whole thing. The press and the hostage families are becoming quite a nuisance. He tells me he doesn't care if he has to go to Leavenworth to get the hostages out. I 'm suppose to go back to an NSC meeting and give him some concrete news. Any ideas what I should tell him? (silence) Has the Delta force finally got its asses off Fort Bennings Paul?

A General
Yes they have Bill. We 're also thinking of sending an additional special op. team from Texas to join the navy seals already positioned on Saratoga.

Casey looks slightly pleased, stands and leaves the room, followed by the others.

Vince (V.O.)
That was the first time I had ever heard the name Nir.

Camera Man
I 've gotta change the tape. Let's take a break.

Cut to
INT. The interview room

Vince
Good idea. My legs are getting numb.

Vince gets up and walks around the room, goes to the bathroom. Max coughs repeatedly. Sue brings him a glass of water. Max drinks it and thanks her.

Sue
Are you alright?

Max
Ya.

Sue (whispering)
Interesting stuff. But to what use?

Max
We 'll worry about that later. Just do me a favor and bracket those moralizing questions.

Sue
You don't edit the questions I ask.

Max
I 'm just asking you to stay objective.

Sue
Fine.

She writes down something. Vince enters the room and returns to his seat.

Vince
I 'm ready.

Sue takes her position. Max gestures go.

Sue
What was your reaction when the World Court condemned your government for violating the sovereignty of Nicaragua?

Vince (sternly)
I don't think that's a relevant question.

Sue
O.K. Let's go back to Project Democracy? How was it funded?

Vince
Through a variety of private and foreign government donations. At the time I was kept mostly in the dark

about the funding aspect. Of course, here and there I would hear things, things like King Fahd of Saudi Arabia has pledged one million a month.

(Archival footage of King Fahd and president Reagan at a photo opportunity in the White House lawn).

Vince
That Israel and Taiwan were doling out some undetermined sum, and that the Sultan of Brunei has donated 10 million dollars.

(Archival footage of the Sultan).

Sue
That's the 10 million that was lost in a wrong account, right?

Vince
Don't be naive my child. No one ever loses ten million nowadays, especially the pros.

Sue
Can you elaborate?

Vince
Well, the money was deposited in the account of a private Swiss citizen, and was eventually returned to the Sutlan. (Laughs) The swiss kept the interest on the 10 million though.

Sue
I see. Let's move on to the private benefactors. Who were

Vince
They were conservative tycoons such as the Hunt brothers, Coors, O'Boyle, Mrs. Garwood, and the rest.

(Archival footage of these individuals appearing together at a Congressional hearing)..

Vince
North was working with Spitz Channel who did a marvelous job of raising over ten million, thanks to the efforts of the great communicator, Reagan, who declared the contras are on a par with our founding fathers.

(Archival footage of Reagan at a contra fundraiser galla at the White House).

Reagan
I am a contra too.

Colero
Viva Reagan

Sue (V.O.)
And what role did Colonel North play in fundraising?

Vince (V.O.)
Oh, he went to every rotary club from De Moins to San Antonio to rally support for the contras. I happened to attend one of them.

Cut to
EXT. An indoor meeting -- Day.

The subscript reads: **April, 1985. San Antonio.**

A festive environment. Balloons that read: Support the Contras. Workers with the T. shirts that read: Stop Communism in Central America. Guests wearing buttons that read: If you like Cuba, You 'll love Nicaragua. North is speaking at the podium. Next to him is a large screen.

North
I am happy to report that because of the funding by patriotic Americans like you, the resistance has grown from 9500 personnel in June 1984 to over 16000 today, all with arms.

Cheers from the crowd.

North
The bad news is that we 're dealing with a very dangerous enemy. The Sandanistas have (the slides of Sandanista army on the screen) a standing army of 68000, another 2000 militia, over 110 T-54 and T-76 tanks, over 300 armored personnel carriers and 20 attack helicopters, as well as 100 pieces of heavy artillery."

Someone shouts
And over 300 supporters in the Congress.

The slide picture of Congressman Boland. People boo.

North
This year alone, 37 Cuban aircrafts have landed in Nicaragua, laden with weapons. Some of these weapons have been then shipped to the leftist guerrillas in El Salvador. This is, my friends, what we are up against. It is a very serious situation that requires immediate sacrifice on our parts. We need an additional 15 to 20 millions from the current donors. I seriously hope that you can come through with this. Thank you. God bless America."

The end of North's speech. The audiences stand up, applauding enthusiastically. Vince observes the crowd from a corner, holding a glass of champagne. An older man with a Texan accent approaches Vince. They shake hands and chat.

The Texan
Help me out Vince. I like to contribute. But my son who is a law student tells me that what these guys are doing down there is a violation of international law, that it is a violation of the neutrality act. Is it?

Vince
Well, they 're not delivering people into the combat area, if they are delivering only goods, even if it is arms, that is legal as far as the neutrality act.

The Texan
I see. In that case I better write a check.

The man withdraws his checkbook and bends on the table next to them to write. Vince notices the amount: $160,000. He

looks back and sees North answering the question of a potential benefactor.

North
Let me tell you something, and I want you to spend some time thinking about it. This town, and the entire state of Texas is closer to Nicaragua than it is to Washington. And they 've got Soviet advisors down there scheming to cut the distance even shorter.

North approaches Vince, picks up a glass from the tray of a waitress. They are joined by a younger man in immaculate outfit. North introduces them to each other.

North
Vince. This is Rich Miller. He 's in charge of PR for us.

Vince and Miller shake hands.

Miller (to North)
Well done Ollie. Look at them, they 're all loosening their pockets.

North
So what's up?

Miller
Next week the networks auction their time for commercials during prime time. The benefactors' group is prepared to commit only two million. We should let them know by

tomorrow whether or not they should proceed.

North
Absolutely. See if you can raise it a bit higher. We gotta go more forcefully after those bleeding heart liberals who're up for reelection.

Miller nods and leaves.

North (addressing Vince)
How did I do?

Vince
I 'm impressed.

North
It's too bad I can't say the same thing about the boys down there.

North smiles and walks toward an old couple approaching them. Vince observes them from his position.

Sue (V.O.)
What was North complaining about?

Vince (V.O.)
Lots of reasons. For one thing, no matter how North tried to look upbeat in the public, project democracy got off to a rough start, very little of it our fault. Of course, it's not a secret that my boys didn't like the operation. They saw the necessity, but didn't want no part in it. The pilots from

Great Britain turned out to be inexperienced, one of them didn't even know how to fly an airplane, and were sent home. In June 85, North authorized the use of American pilots. But even they had a terrible time making successful drops, especially to the southern force.

Cut to
EXT. A cargo airplane flying in rough weather -- Night

Cut to
INT. Inside the cockpit.

The pilot (Charlies Cooper)
Where the fuck are they?

The co-pilot (Richard Gadd)
Is that a bonfire?

Cooper
Where?

Gadd
There.

Cooper
Ya. But there's suppose to be three of 'em. Let's make a radio contact.

Gadd
Hello, hello, Charlie to Blacky, donde esta? (no reply).

Gadd
We may not even be in the right area. The fuckin CIA. They 're so fuckin incompetent, at least they could give us an infared system.

Cooper
You 're wrong. Those bastards just don't wanna cooperate man, otherwise they'd give us the best flight vector information in the world.

Gadd
What should we do?

Cooper
Let's drop'em and hope for the best

Gadd
You 're crazy. Seven hundred thousand dollar worth of stuff and you just wann.

Cooper
Just do it.

Gadd moves to the back and helps the kicker in dropping off the supplies.

Vince (V.O.)
We were blamed for everything, even the play of mother nature.

Cut to
EXT. A flying cargo airplane (Insignia reads: Southern Air Transport) -- Early Morning

Pilot (Dutton)
How much longer?

Co-pilot
We 're almost there (in his speaker) Hey Hugh, get your ass moving.

Dutton
I can't fuckin believe that. Look.

The co-pilot looks down and sees a white sheet of fog covering the ground.

Co-pilot
What the fuck. Let's go around a couple of times.

Dutton
Can't risk it with that much fuel. We should have got the C-7 operating.

Co-pilot
Fuckin CIA, why didn't they tell us there's gonna be fog all over the place?

Cut to
EXT. The Airplane
Supplies being dropped off the airplane.

Sue (V.O.)
Who owned those airplanes?

Vince (V.O.)
As far as I know, Secord and his friend Hakim had set up a very elaborate network. They worked through this company called Lake Resources, which controlled the contra's bank accounts in Switzerland, where all the donations were deposited. Then, they registered a company by the name of Udall in Panama, which bought four five airplanes with the money from those donations, which in turn leased out these planes to Southern Air transport in Miami. And their guys would fly these planes from Miami all the way to Honduras and sometimes to inside Nicaragua and back. It was a pretty long trip.

Cut to
INT. The interview room

Sue
And hectic -- I suppose.

Vince (nodding)
It was. That's why they needed to land somewhere and refuel before heading back. With huge bribes to the military leaders in the area, they got operating rights - in El Salvador and Guatemala. But finally it got to be too burdensome with the local customs, and then they decided to build their own airfield in Costa Rica, in Santa Elena.

Sue
Did the Costa Ricans knew what the purpose of this airfield was?

Cut to

EXT. An uncompleted airstrip -- Day.

A few policemen are keeping watch.

Vince (V.O.)
Oh sure. Their policemen, Costa Rica has no army, ended up guarding the airfield. But that was before their election in mid 85, when Arias came to power. Things got complicated a bit afterward. One of their planes was too heavy. It got stuck for three days. They had to send a couple of smaller planes to carry its load. Suddenly there was too much commotion on the airfield and the Costa Ricans just about had it with us.

Cut to
INT. Vince's office -- Day

Vince is working behind his desk. The door opens and Vince's assistant hurries inside. He is out of breath.

Vince's assistant
Guess what I just heard on the radio.

Vince
What?

Vince's assistant
The minister of Interior has just announced that he will be holding a news conference to talk about suspicious flights in and out of Costa Rica that are violating their sovereignty.

Vince
Oh no. He can't. Get me North on the phone. Call him at his home.

Vince's assistant operates the coded phone, hands over the phone to Vince.

Vince
Hi Ollie. Sorry to wake you up. We 've got a real emergency. The minister of...

Vince (V.O.)
The next day, the minister cancelled his press conference. Later on, Ollie claimed to have spoken directly to President Arias and threatened to cut off the U.S. aid to them if they revealed anything about what and who was behind the airfield. The Costa Ricans' main complain was that the strip was being used for other purposes.

Sue (V.O.)
You means drugs?

Vince (V.O.)
You see, we were asked to see to it that these planes could take off and land in Miami without inspection. Now, of course, that was a dream situation for the drug cartels, who saw to it that they 've got friends with some contra leaders, who were dying to find some sources of creative financing. It was well known that a couple of the operatives, like Hugh Vernon, a kicker with the dropoff operation, was planted by the Medelin cartel.

Cut to

EXT. Miami International Airport

A cargo plane lands and moves inside a Hanger.

Vince (V.O.)
We were asked to look the other way and ignore everything. It wasn't easy. Some of us tried to make North aware of the situation.

Cut to
INSERT. Vince's office -- DAY

Vince and his assistant are working.

Vince's Assistant (sending a message and reading it at the same time)
Surely you know some of the planes in this operation are tainted. Nice boys they 've got running this operation. Damn. O.k. Let's try again (tries again, while Vince looks on from his desk).

Sue (V.O.)
What was his response?

Cut to
INT. The interview room

Vince
Nothing. I 'm not even sure he received it. Cuz he had so many balls in the air at any one time. For us, however.

Once, we found out what was going on, we tightened the screws around those people a little -- you know, sniffing around, asking questions and even interrogating some of them. And when we saw that wasn't enough, someone tipped off the customs and they arrested Mario Colero, the brother of Contra leader, Adolfo Colero.

Cut to
INT. A hanger
Custom officials taking a man into custody and seizing bags of cocaine from an airplane.

Vince (V.O.)
Naturally, the contras and Secord were furious at us. He complained to Casey about me.

Cut to
INT. The interview room

Sue
What was Casey's reaction?

Vince
Oh, I was eventually transferred to a European desk, but then someone tipped off the newspapers about North's hairbrained operation. The article led some members of Congress to request information about North's activities from the NSC adviser, Bud McFarlane.

Cut to
INT. A meeting room -- Day

Subscript reads: **National Security Situation Room -- The White House.**

North, McFarlane, Poindexter, and three aids are in the room. They are all reading the NYT. The article title reads: **Nicaraguan Rebels Getting Advice From White House on Operations.**

North
I bet it's Vince's doing.

Bud
You can't be sure. There are far too many people involved at this point; the leak could have come from anywhere.

North
No, not with such precise details. He and Castillo were the only ones who knew I had advanced knowledge of the attack on Enrique Express ferryboat (continues reading the paper).

Sue (V.O.)
What was that about?

Vince (V.O.)
Oh, just another ambush gone sour.

Cut to
EXT. A river surrounded by jungles -- Day

A ferry boat loaded with Sandanista soldiers and Indian peasants advancing haltingly. The soldiers are singing.

peasants advancing haltingly. The soldiers are singing.

Subscript reads: **July 4, 1985. Near El Rama, Southern Nicaragua.**

Offscreen sound of machine gun. A mortar fire from a helicopter hits the boat and sets it on fire. The soldiers and peasants jump in the water. Two of them are dragged out by the contras soldiers firing from the left bank, the rest try to swim to the right bank; a few are killed by the canon fire from the helicopter. Offscreen sound of another helicopter. It appears out of blue and catches the first helicopter's pilot by surprise. The two helicopters fire at each other and maneuver above the river. The second helicopter downs the first helicopter and then attacks the contra soldiers, who flee into the jungle.

MacFarlane (V.O.)
Do we really want to keep Congress in the dark? This I think is the central question.

Cut to
INT. The situation room in the White House.

Poindexter
I think we all agree that it is politically unwise to inform them.

MacFarlane
I 've gotta write a reply to Representative Hamilton. Let's go over what I wrote: "I can state with deep conviction that no official or unofficial related with any member of the

NSC staff has been involved regarding fundraising for Nicaraguan democratic opposition."

Everyone nods his head approvingly.

North
Can we replace the contra helicopter that was downed last month? I asked the stupid Colero not to use it, that he should save it for bigger operations, but he didn't listen.

MacFarlane
I don't think it's legal. Let's wait a week or two. What else?

North
We also need to authorize more foreign aid to the Guatemalans. They 're raising the tab for their cooperation with Project Democracy.

MacFarlane
We 'll do. (Asks North) What 's the latest with the hostages?

North
I think we can get them out for one million a piece. That's their bottom price, same as what the French paid to get their guys out. According to them, the price can't be negotiated because of the number of people requiring bribes.

MacFarlane
I sent my emissary Ledeen to Israel last week. He 's come back with some curious news. He is told they can arrange for a dialogue with the Khomeini regime, on the condition we don't tell the CIA. What do you think John?

Poindexter
I think it's worth looking into. Do George and Casp. know?

MacFarlane
Ya. We talked after the Tokyo meeting. Schultz thinks we should show a positive but passive interest in this. Casper, on the other hand, is totally opposed. He thinks talking to Khomeini is like inviting Qadafi to the White House for a cozy chat. Thy both think the Iranians are making these overtures because we 're hurting them with our arms embargo and they 're losing the war to Iraq.

Poindexter
I don't know about that. The CIA says they 're winning and I agree with their assessment over the State Department's any time.

MacFarlane
Let's raise the issue in the next RIG meeting.

Vince (V.O.)
RIG was the restricted interagency group that coordinated the administration's policy, so they would all speak with the same voice on the issues.

The meeting adjourns.

North
I 'm sorry, I forgot. I 've gotta be in Central America, for a regional meeting.

MacFarlane
For God's sake, excercise absolute stealth. Stay invisible if

EXT. At an intersection in Washington D.C.-- Day

The subscript reads: **October 10, 1985. 11:30 AM.**

Oliver North, holding a briefcase in his hand, is about to pass a street. A large group of demonstrators, shouting slogans against the U.S. policy on Nicaragua, pass by. Their signs read: Stop the War in Nicaragua. No More lies. Peace Now. CIA out of Central America. The marchers chant: "What do we want? Peace. When do we want it? Now."
The marchers are jeered by a couple of construction workers on top of a building under construction. They yell: Go home, commie lovers. The rest of the public is more sympathetic however. One of the marchers approaches North, passes a leaflet to him.

Female Marcher
Can you sign this petition to Congress to stop the White House's covert war in Nicaragua?

North
Sorry, I don't think Congress likes to hear what I have to say.

North crosses the street and enters a building (Office of the Old Executive Building), shaking his head as he reads the flyer.

INT. Inside the building.

On the office's door is written: Room 392. Colonel Oliver North. National Security Aid.

North enters. His secretary, **Fawn Hall**, and a man, **Bernard**, a courier for the NSC, are talking to each other by the xerox machine at the far end of the room. Fawn has just finished with copying and gives the originals to Bernard. They both turn their faces when North enters.

North
Hi Bernie. Hi Fawn.

Bernard and Fawn answer hi. North stops at Fawn's desk, picks up the half a dozen or so pink messages and checks them out. Bernard gives back a document to Fawn and puts the rest in his carry on.

Bernard
You can keep this. It's a system 2.

Fawn looks at it and shakes her head.

Fawn
Oh, I thought it's system 4, highly classified.

Bernard proceeds to leave the room.

Bernard
See you tomorrow.

North turns around and gives the leaflet to Bernard.

North
This is For Your Eyes Only. Make sure it gets to the president immediately.

Bernard looks at it for a moment and then laughs, and then stares at the batch of messages in North's hands.

Bernie (as he is leaving)
Gee, Colonel. How many messages do you reckon to receive in a day?

Fawn
More than he has time to read, that's for sure. (asks North) What was that?

North
Just a joke.

North enters his office.

Fawn
Silly.

North drops his briefcase, Fawn follows him in and brandishes the cassette tape in her hand.

Fawn
Gotta go and drop this off to Secord's secretary. I wish this KL-43 device wasn't so complicated. Why can't they come

up with the codes that are good for more than a month? Uh, don't forget you 're having lunch with the mayor of Barcelona at 12:30.

North (looking at one of the slips)
Right. So Father Dowling called, ha?

Fawn
Ya. He sounded very desperate. Said the package for Father X hasn't arrived.

North
Do me a favor. Call Rich and tell him to take care of it ASAP. Also, ask him if he has given the five thousand to Chi Chi yet?

Fawn nods her head and closes the door. North listens to the messages as he is reading the cables neatly piled on his desk. His eyes stop on the cable that reads: **Company's inability to move 81 millimeter assets in grenades. Worth 350 k.**

North
Damn it.

A Female Voice
Hi honey. It's me. I think we 've found a buyer for the house. Love you.

Secord's Voice
This is Dick. We 've got problems. Looks like Ron Martin has got his hand on our packing list. He 's threatening to blow our cover unless we let him a share of the pie. Call me as soon as you get in.

Colero's Voice
Hey. Mr. Barnaby. Donde esta? This is Adolfo. Where are the maps?

Vince's Voice
Hello Colonel. This is Vince. I 'm sending the smaller maps you asked for. You can pass it to Colero and do the job. Another thing, we just intercepted Gomez talking about the operation with unauthorized people on his KL-43. I 'm very upset about it. Tell him, he must give it back.

Dutton's Voice
Hey Ollie. This is Fred Dutton. Both C-7s are under repair and the stuff in Miami is too big for the C-123s. Bermudez thinks we we 're delaying just with his forces. I think you should talk to the guy. He 's pissing me off.

North looks up a number and dials it.

North
Hi, Vince. Thanks for the maps. I owe you one. Listen, I need to ask you another favor. I need transportation to fly some stuff over to the plantation.

Vince's Voice
No, you can't do that.

North
How would you like to trade one of your aircrafts with mine? I 'll trade it with you cheap.

Vince's Voice
You 're out of your goddamn mind.

Vince hangs up.

North
Scumbag.

North reclines on his chair for a moment, then opens a Federal Express envelop and withdraws the content, a batch of travellers' checks. He opens his ledger and writes down some numbers, then starts to sign the checks, calls Fawn on the speaker.

North
You haven't left yet? Do you remember how much we 're giving to Cruz each month? Is it ten thousand or five thousand?

Fawn's Voice
Five thousand. Remember, it's always half what Adolfo receives.

North
Thanks. What would I ever do without you?

Fawn's Voice
Michael Ledeen just called. He wants to come in and read the daily intelligence reports.

North
That's fine. I 'm not answering any phone calls.

North hangs up and resumes signing the checks and writing in his ledger.

Fawn's Voice
It's the Israeli guy, Nir. He says it's urgent.

North
Put him on.

Nir voice
Hello Colonel.

North
Hello Ami. Where the hell are you? What's that noise?

Cut to
EXT. A desert road -- Day

Nir is inside a tank, his head is protruding out. The line from his phone is hooked to the telephone wire on a post. He is looking at the two tank crew cooling themselves off by throwing water on each other outside the tank.

Nir
I 'm in my tank. I 'm a captain in the reserved armored division, didn't I tell you? Listen, how would you like to hijack the Palestinian hijackers - of Achile Lauro?

INSERT. Archival footage of the ship.

North
Really?! Where are they?

Nir
They 're at a military base outside Cairo.

North
I thought they had left Egypt. That's what president Mubarak has told us.

Nir
He 's obviously lied to you. Cuz we 've just intercepted his conversation with his generals. He sounds very pissed off that they didn't tell him these guys had killed an American passenger and thrown his body overboard. We lucked out because looks like Mubarak is too impatient with all the buttons he has to push on the secure phone you guys gave him. Is using an unsecured phone.

North
This is terrific news. May be we can lay our hands on those murderers.

Nir
Exactly. No one can then accuse your president of being tough on rhetoric, but short on action. I 'm going to the headquarter. I 'll call you from there.

Nir hangs up and then orders his men in hebrew. They jump inside and the tank moves in the desert.

Cut to
INT. North's office. North dials a number.

North
Charlie. Guess what? We can pull a Yamomato on the

P.L.O. terrorists.

INT. A computer-filled Room with busy operators.

Charlie Allen and Casey's deputy, **John McMahon**, are listening to the Arabic voices and the immediate translation by a translator.

Translator
You son of a whore. I will quash you fucking face with my boots once this is over. You will pay for this.

North and another man, Michael Ledeen, hurry inside the room. Charlie gestures to keep quiet.

Allen
That's president Mubarak. He 's been fuming at his generals all day.

McMahon
They 're negotiating with the Tunisians for a landing right, so far without success. Mubarak wants to get rid of the four hijackers as soon as possible. he is afraid we 'll find out the truth.

North proceeds to a desk and dials a number.

North
Hello, Ami? Son of a bitch, you were right.

Nir voice
It's no good if they can't fly out of Cairo. I suggest you guys give a call to Tunisia. If you can cut a deal with them -- that they promise a landing right and then renege when the aircraft is in the air, you know.

North
Then those terrorists' asses are ours. Talk to you later.

North hangs up the phone. Allen is on another phone, pauses and addresses North.

Allen
It's the old man.

North
Where is he?

Allen
At a cake factory outside Chicago (gestures North to pick up the phone).

North
Good afternoon, Mr. President. Yes that is correct. (listens) I understand Schultz's concern that intercepting the aircraft would be a violation of international law. But our position is that these guys are murderers and Egypt is committing a worse violation by letting them go. (Listens) No, I 'm afraid that's not a good move sir. President Mubarak is determined to live up to his promise of handing over the hijackers to the PLO. I personally think it's about time we did something so no one can look at us like a pitiful giant any more. (listens) Yes. Sir. I 'll do my best.

North hangs up the phone and gives a victory thumb to Allen.

North
Gotta get McFarlane call the Tunisians. Wait a minute, assuming we intercept, where should we land?

McMahon studies the electronic map on the wall, uses a pointer that moves from Cairo to the mediteranean, toward Tunisia and back.

McMahon
There are two choices. Either Athens, or our airbase in Signolla, Sicily.

Translator
Bingo. They got the o.k. from Tunisia.

North
Great.

North dials a number.

North
Hi. Ami. Did you hear?

Nir voice
Yes, Ollie. I guess I better start working on the evidences you need to prosecute Abu Abass and the others. You gonna need a lot of classified material for extradition --

where's the destination?

North (looks at Ledeen)
Italy. We 've got someone here who knows the people in the government.

Nir
Good luck.

EXT. Air Force One in the Air - Day, cloudy

Subscript reads: **4:32 PM**

North's Voice
Mr. President. The bird has flown.

Reagan's voice
Let's bring it home.

Two F-14 Tomahawks take off from the aircraft carrier Saratoga.

A Voice
Roger. This is the United States navy. Please change course and follow our direction.

An Arab Voice
Roger. Order received. We will follow you.

Cut to

INT. A fine restaurant -- Night

A group of men and women dinning. Present is Anderotti, the Italian foreign minister.

Subscript reads: **10:30 PM**.

A waiter brings a message and delivers it to the minister's aid. He reads it and stands and comes to the minister, whispers in his ear. The minister excuses himself and leaves with the aid to the lobby, picks up a phone.

The Foreign Minister
Hello. Mr. Ledeen? Oh yes. From the military exercises last year. Sure I remember. How are you? What a surprise. What? Right now? I have to call the prime minister.

The minister looks at his watch.

The Foreign Minister
I 'm afraid the prime minister is an early sleeper. Sometimes it is hard to get through to him. (listens) They 're running out of fuel you said? We better waste no more time then.

Cut to
EXT. A military airport -- Crack of Dawn.

The Egyptian airplane, escorted by the F-14s, lands.

Cut to

INT. The situation room in the CIA.

North, Casey, Allen, McMahon and others celebrate as soon as they hear the pilots' voice "roger, mission accomplished." Every one congratulates North. Some one hands over the phone to North.

Nir voice
Nice going Ollie. Real Nice.

North (Into the phone)
Thanks to you Ami (continues talking, salutes the others with his champagne glass passes onto him by a man)

Vince (V.O)
That was a major coup for Ollie North, and a major turning point in the whole hostage area. The administration had proved its toughness and could now take the risk of negotiating with the Iranian and Lebanese hostage takers. I ran into director Casey a few days later, at North's office. A former defence minster of the Sandanistas had just fled to Costa Rica. I wanted to share with North what we had gotten out of him.

INT. North's office -- Day.

On the door is written: Room 349. Colonel Oliver North. Director of Counterterrorism, National Security Council.

Vince looks around at the boxes. Fawn greets him.

Fawn
We 're moving. I hate it, but we 're getting two floors, and two new aids from the vice president's task force on terrorism.

Vince
Great.

Vince is let in by Fawn and is surprised to see Casey sitting across the desk from North, watching the world news. He nods at Vince and Vince sits down and looks at the TV, showing pictures of the Palestinian hijackers transferred from the aircraft to police vans under heavy security.

The reporter
...Despite the lack of any movement on the 7 hostages, President Reagan's popularity has risen overnight to more than 50 percent, a huge jump from the high 30s following the October 83 military assault on Greneda, which the administration called a foreign policy plus.

Casey asks North to shut off the TV.

Casey
Aren't the people here wonderful? high quality, lots of brains. Tell me Vince, why do you think we 're here, really?

Vince
Patriotism?

Casey
No, no, on. We have a chance to establish our own foreign

policy. We are on the cutting edge. We are the action agency of the government.

Vince withdraws a file and gives it Casey. Casey glances at its content and then passes it to North to read.

Casey
What's your impression of this guy? Do you believe him?

Ollie
He has passed the polygraph test, twice. His claim about the deep division between President Ortega and the defence minister Borges is probably true.

Casey
They 're trying to sell President Ortega as a moderate to us, what a sham. Any ways, What's your assessment of the Contra's capability?

Vince
Well, they 're definitely growing. But they 've got problems. They 've gotta standardize their weapons, and need to unify commands if they ever wanna establish a beachhead inside Nicaragua.

North
What they need is a southern front in Costa Rica, to distract the Sandanista's from the northern front at the Honduran border.

Vince
A southern front?

North
What do you think?

Vince
Gee, Ollie, it sounds o.k. to me. You know, of course, that would mean working closely with Pastora. Colero won't like it. He considers Pastora worse than the Sandanistas, I think so too. Pastora is a real nut case. He 's going around, telling every one that the CIA has cut a deal with the KGB to abandon the resistance.

Casey
I hear General Singlaub is working on Pastora to bring him into line. Pastora is a real asset, don't forget. He 's got more charisma with the Nicaraguans than all the other Contra leaders combined. We gotta tell'em they should put their differences aside and unify. I want you to go and see our new ambassador to Costa Rica before he leaves the States, and convey the message to him in person.

North
I would do it myself, but I 'm on my way to Europe. Gotta debrief a hostage that's about to be released.

Vince
Ya, I heard about that. I also hear there is a contra reorganization meeting in Miami -- on Wednesday night.

North
That's right. Why don't you attend, really?

Vince
Will you be there? (North nods) I guess, they don't call

you worker bee for nothing. (as he is about to leave) About Gomez and Martin.

North
I know. We have to bring that son of a bitch Gomez here for questioning. Martin is not a threat. We just have to throw a bone or two at him and he 'll stop barking at us.

Casey (to Vince before he leaves)
Another thing. Let's get the boys off Seacord's back. I know you don't like him, but try smoothness if you can. We 're not working at cross purposes you know.

Cut to
EXT. A hotel -- Evening

INT. A conference room.

A dozen or so people, including Secord, Dutton, Gomez, Quintero, Clines, Bermudez (contra commander), Colero and Cruz (contra political leaders), and Vince and another American, are waiting for North. Vince goes to the balcony and stares at the beautiful sunset and the ocean. Bermudez follows him.

Vince
So, how do you like the shipment that Clines ferried to you last week?

Bermudez
That son of a bitch is not an arms merchant, he 's a flesh peddler.

Vince
Why do you say that?

Bermudez
He 's charging us nine dollars for three dollar hand grenades . If they weren't WWII grenades and didn't explode prematurely, may be I wouldn't complain. But it's all shoddy material. Wrong belts for the 7.62s, and G-3 rifles have been misfiring. Three of my men have died because of 'em. We want to buy from General Siglaub, who as you know, doesn't charge any mark ups, but North insists that we buy from Secord. I don't know why. Can't you talk to him?

Vince
I 'll see what I can do.

North and another man, David Walker, enter the room and are greeted by Colero.

Colero
Here comes Mr. sparkplug.

Colero and North, who looks tired and sleepless, embrace each other. Vince and Bermudez come inside.

North
Adolfo Colero. This is Mr. David Walker. He 's here to teach you how to get rid of the Hind helicopters.

Bermudez
You just give us a couple of surface-to-air missiles and we 'll take care of it.

Walker (with a British accent)
You don't need missiles.

Bermudez
No? How come?

Walker
Cuz it's easier to destroy those bloody helicopters on the ground than in the air.

North
First things first. We have more general problems to tackle gentlemen.

They all sit down.

North
Let me start by saying that the White House is very angry at the fact that some people are lining their business, squandering the precious resources, exporting luxury goods instead of arms, and so on and so forth. Do I need to remind anyone that we are not dealing with a bottomless pit, that we have to be very careful with our money?

Colero
If you are referring to my brother, I promise he 's off procurement.

North
I 'm glad to hear that. So let's move onto other issues. Fred why don't you give a brief first.

Dutton
Well, we 've made 9 drops over the past month and a half.

Bermudez
And at least half of them have fallen into Sandanista hands.

Dutton
Well, I wouldn't go that far. I have personally delivered three shipments.

North
You did personally?!

Dutton nods.

North
Don't do it again. You and Cooper know too much.

Dutton
The problem is that sometimes the FDN forces are three days walking distance inside the border, and we can't risk flying to the west of Lake Nicaragua where the Sandanistas have set up a new base armed with Sam missiles.

North
I 've just received a cable asking for 1500 doses, and I don't even know what we are supposed to deliver to the

southern force.

Bermudez
That's for mountain leprosy. Chamora's and Pastora's solders are having a terrible time with it. It's a very desperate situation.

North
I see.

Bermudez
Colonel. I 've got a list of problems that I think you should be aware of. First of all, the airplane you gave us is a joke. It's too old, the payload is too small, and can't carry large equipment.

North
Well, the aircraft has been donated and there's nothing we can do about that.

Bermudez
We want to buy arms from Singlaub. His weapons are better and cheaper.

Secord (interrupts)
That's out of the question.

North
I agree. What else?

Dutton
General Bastillo does not allow a two ship formation.

North (writes down)
I 'll talk to that son of a bitch when we meet at the Cosmos

Club - next week.

Colero
This whole thing about working with Pastora, my men don't like it.

North
I understand how you feel, believe me. But I think you should give the guy a chance.

Colero
You don't give the devil a second chance.

North
What do you think Vince?

Vince
I tend to agree with Adolfo. Hull is telling me Pastora is about to throw the towel and call it quits. I think we should forget about him, unless of course, if he makes too much noise against the FDN - and the CIA.

Colero
Have you forgotten how he took some journalists as hostage for a whole week?

North
That was just for forty eight hours. He admits he made a mistake. I still think you guys should cooperate. This is a direct order from the White House. Are we clear about that?

All the contras grumble. The meeting continues.

Vince (V.O.)
North could be so naive sometimes. He had no idea how deep the blood feud between the contras and Eden Pastora ran. They would never forgive his Sandanista past.

Cut to
INT. The interview room

Sue
You 're referring to the La Penca massacre, aren't you?

Vince
Oh, the contras had a different name for it. (chuckles) They called it the hamburger case.

Sue
Who was the culprit?

Vince
He was a Chilean, a member of Pinochet's secret police, contracted by the contras. Somehow he was able to ferry the same boat that other journalists took across the river to attend pastora's press conference.

Cut to
INSERT. Archival footage: Several journalists and cameramen getting inside a small motor boat. The boat begins its journey on the river surrounded by jungles on both sides.

The Chilean agent is sitting next to a female, Linda Fraser, in the back row. They smile at each other. The Chilean holds tightly to his camera.

INSERT. Archival footage: The boat arrives at its destination. A small sign reads: La Penca. The journalists disembark and are escorted by two men in military uniforms inside a shack. Commander Zero, Eden Pastora, is inside. Pastora begins the interview by criticizing the contra leaders and the CIA.

The Chilean puts down his camera under the table and proceeds to walk outside.

INSERT. Archival footage: Pastora and the journalists are in the midst of the Q & A when suddenly a loud noise is heard and the cameras go blank, followed by shrieks of pain and the fuzzy pictures of the carnage. Pastora and other wounded taken on stretchers.

Vince (V.O.)
That son of a bitch had nine lives. A couple of those journalists, including an American were killed or severely injured, but Pastora escaped with cosmetic injuries.

Sue
You sound as if you wish he had died.

Vince
Well, let me put it this way, I wouldn't have shed any tears if he had.

Sue
And the CIA, especially your man in Costa Rica, John Hull, had nothing to do with this, of course?

Vince
No. And I don't like the drift of your questions.

Vince stands and unhooks the mic and puts it on the chair.

Sue
Sorry. I didn't mean to...

Vince shakes his head negatively.

Vince
There is nothing to apologize for, if that's how you feel. (To Max) I 'll like to see the takes from this before you do anything, don't forget.

Max
Of course.

Vince puts his hat on and exits with a farewell grin on his face. Max wants to follow him but stops himself.

Sue
I can't believe it.

Camera Man
A grumpy old fart, aint he?

Max (To Sue, coolly)
Now you 've done it.

Sue throws her hands in the air in a gesture of defenselessness.

Sue
I 'm sorry. I happened to know one of the victims, from Ryeson. (ruefully) The hamburger case. Ha. I am sure he had a hand in it

Max
You 're always so goddamn sure -- about everything.

Sue stares at him meaningfully for a moment and then, almost in tears, picks up her purse and with a disguised self-control leaves the room. Max and the other two men stare at each other.

INT. The editing room -- Night

Sue and Phillippe are working together. Max is reviewing some documents at another corner.

Sue (asking Max, unhappily)
You just want the part on Achile Laura, right?

Max
Ya. The rest is public knowledge.

Sue (murmurs)
Me or a Promise? What a weird thing to say.

Phillippe
Who said that?

Sue
Vince. The CIA guy.

Phillippe (moving his chair next to Sue's)
Let me see.

She lets him use her headphone. After a few seconds, Phillippe, smiling triumphantly, returns the headphone to Sue.

Phillippe
He didn't say promise. He said Promis -- without E. That's the name of a super computer that tracks the terrorists around the world.

Max
No kidding.

Phillippe
Ya. It's supposed to be so effective that makes Orwell cry in his grave. I hear our immigration has just purchased one from the Israelis.

Sue
They 'll never let us use it.

Phillippe
It might be possible. If (points up, meaning Gerald) uses his connections, why not?

Sue and Max look meaningfully at each other.

Phillippe (stands up and walks toward the door)
I 'll be back in five minutes.

Sue (To Max)
That would be something. Uh, by the way, I found the stock footage on La Penca. Do you want to see it? (Max nods with a delay, conveying that this will be for his private use only)

Sue stops working. She tries to get a new cassette into the system, but it is stuck. Max stares at her buttock and has a flashback.

Cut to
INT. The same room - Night

Sue, looking younger and wearing a tight skirt, is struggling with the machine. Max, also looking younger, and wearing a mustache, is working at the other end of the room -- he notices Sue's frustration.

Max
Don't push it. It'll break.

Max stands up and comes behind Sue and then puts his hand on her hand.

Max (almost in bodily contact with Sue)
See. It's very easy. First turn the scroll switch off, and this one on, and it'll slide right in. There. (Sue smiles).

Sue
You really picked these up from your dad?

Max
Ya, he was a fixer -- cars, , VCRs, cameras, toilettes, everything but TV. I once asked him why? He said because TV is a medium, neither rare nor well-done, which is what he really liked.

Sue (without looking at him)
How do you like it?

Max
Hot, and spicy.

Cut to
INT. The editing room

Max
So, when are you tieing the knot, if you don't mind me ask?

Sue (gratified that she has fixed the problem, responds with a pause)
Next May.

Max (pointing at the explosion scene on his monitor, but with an obvious twist of irony)
That's brutal.

Phillippe reenters the room, carrying a newspaper with him, looking demoralized.

Sue
What is it?

Phillippe (throws the newspaper on the desk, drops his body on a chair)
I knew someone else would get to it if we didn't air it now. I knew it.

Sue and Max examine the headline of the newspaper, Toronto Herald. It reads: Telecommunication Deregulator Bribed by An American Company.

Phillippe (Tersely to Max)
I still prefer your heading though.

Sue (To Max)
You knew about this?! (Max nods and moves his chair back toward the opposite wall)

Phillippe
I feel bad for Saul.

Sue
Ya. I heard he worked very hard on this.

Phillippe
Well, I just heard that Gerald has terminated him. Thinks he tipped 'em off cuz of his partisan politics.

Sue
What does Saul say?

Phillippe
I don't know. I guess I better go and find him (leaves).

Sue (giving a suspicious and half-accusatory look at Max, yells at Phillippe)
Wait.

EXT. Outside the TV station -- Late Night

Max exits the building and waits for a taxi. A blue sedan stops in front of him. The driver is Ron Delory. Another man, **Shaw**, is sitting in the front.

Ron
Need a lift somewhere?

Max peeks inside to see who is asking. He shakes his head negatively. Shaw brandishes a badge. Max pauses for a moment and then opens the door and gets inside the car. The car speeds away.

Cut to
INT. The car

Ron
This is the second time you refuse my offer. I 'm beginning to think you don't like me, Mr. Le Blanc.

Max
I thought you'd be hunting for suspects in Mexico right now, Mr.

Ron
Delroy, Ron. No, I prefer working out of the computer terminal -- new age detective work. This is Shaw Peddle, my ex-partner, from our CIA.

Shaw
Don't worry Mr. Le Blanc. I 'm a friend of your boss. He wants us to show you something.

Max
Where are we going?

Ron (Sarcastically)
To the promiseland.

Shaw
Looks like your prayers have been answered.

INT. A computer Room Manned by Several Operators.

Max, flanked by Ron and Shaw, enter. They proceed toward the glassed-in large cubicle in the back of the room. Ron opens the door and invites Max in. Inside, there are two working. Max's eyes catch the sight of the computer insignia: **PROMIS II.**

Shaw
This is Sid. (Sid and Max acknowledge each other.) Why don't you show him what you got?

Sid looks at his monitor and presses the print. Shaw picks up the print outs.

Sid
We 've got two suspects after checking all the relevant variables.

Shaw nods his head approvingly, passes the papers to Max. Max looks at them and then looks at Shaw for explanation.

Shaw
Nir. Aren't you looking for Amiram Nisker Nir?

Max
Nisker?

Ron
Yes. That was his original name before he changed to Nir. He was a man of many names I understand. Miller, Ben Yousef, Weber, and God knows what else. The main point is that one of these two suspects could be him.

Max
How do you know that?

Shaw turns to Sid for explanation.

Sid
PROMIS, is hooked to Interpool, has a huge database that gives us access to the public information -- airlines' reservation lists, the local telephone and gas database, and even that of some banks. For example, your name is Le Blanc, right?

Sid types Max's name, presses a few keys.

Sid
Well, you are one of eighteen Max Le Blancs in the country, but the only one in Ottawa, where you reside, right? Well, let's see. Let's try your credit history first. There, you see.

Ron
Looks like your visa is a few months overdue.

Sid
And now, let's do a global on your travel itinerary over the past, say, three years. There.

Ron (Looking on)
I thought you were traversing the globe al the time, Mr. Le Blanc?

Max
You 've been misinformed. All right you made your point. (Ron shrugs)

Shaw
We 've been monitoring Mr. Nir secretary, very affluent secretary I must add.

Sid (Punching some keys)
This is her bank account.

Max puts on his glasses and looks at the monitor, mumbles.

Max
A pretty hefty savings.

Shaw
That's just from one account. She 's got five others, all at shady banks and trusts. We think she 's investing the ten million that's been missing from the Iran-Contra coffer. But I 've got more interesting stuff on her.

Sid (punches more keys)
She 's had a company at her chalet. See, this is her electrical bill. There. you see, her February bill shows almost zero, that means she was hardly around. And her water bill. There, again, very small for February, but much larger for January, compared even to December or November. This shows that she probably had a guest that month.

Max
So she had a company. Could have been her girl friend.

Sid
I don't think so. First of all it's a recurrent pattern over the past two years. This is an itemized bill for this month. You see, it shows a discrepancy here, could mean that she either has had a washer overflow or been taking a shower with someone else -- since Friday. Must be the French in her.

Max
Could be any man, any sex.

Shaw
Yes, of course. We appreciate differences here -- except that this coincides with the arrival of a man from Cyprus to our

country (Sid punches a few keys, the picture of a man appears on the screen). Daoud Kuttab (Sid gets a print out. Shaw passes it to Max).

Shaw
You figure, Nir would have an easy time getting his hands on a couple of false passports. He flies to Cyprus or Athens probably with an Israeli passport, and from there to here with the one from Cyprus. That's a common practice with their intelligence people, I gather.

Max
Why did you say two suspects?

Sid
The other guy is Ahmád al-Jabir, from Jordan. There is no record of him leaving Jordan. He has arrived here by bus, from Boston (punches a few keys; the picture of another man appears).

Max
No, this guy is too young to be Nir. (Stares at the first picture).

Ron
So what do you think? The nose gives him away doesn't it.

Max agrees tentatively.

Shaw
Makes sense. If we 've got a heaven for runaway warlords and draft dodgers, why not him?

Max
Are you going to arrest him?

Shaw
On what charge? Tricking the Americans and the media? Get serious. The best we can do is to charge him with carrying a false passport. And what would we achieve by that? Probably nothing, except that he would move his money out of Canada and put it in Grand Caymen.

Ron
Hell. We need capital. The more, the merrier.

Max
Appreciate you sharing this with us.

Ron
Thank Mr. Reid.

Shaw (to both of them)
Be careful. We don't know who else might be after this fellah? (To Ron) You think you can handle it?

Ron
Piece of cake. So long. Let's go Mr. Le Blanc. We got business to take care of.

Ron
Thank Gerald.

Shaw (to both of them)
Be careful. We don't know who else might be looking for this fellah? (To Ron) You think you can handle it?

Ron
Piece of cake. So long. (To Max) Let's go Mr. Le Blanc. We don't want you to miss your deadline.

Ron and Max proceed toward the exit. Outside, Max stops to use his cellular phone.

Max
I like to keep my assistant out of this. She 's too opiniated for this line of work.

Ron
I don't care. That's entirely your business. I 'm just gonna be your guardian angel. I 'll wait for you in the car.

Ron and Max proceed out.

Max
I like to keep my assistant out of this, if you don't mind. She 's too opiniated for this line of work. (Takes out his cellular phone and stops) I have to call her though.

Ron
I don't care. That's your business. I 'll wait in the car.

EXT. Aerial View of Ontario's scenic Countryside; traces of snow here and there; bright yellow afternoon sun, crisp air, flying loons above a picture-perfect, quiet lake; dim sound of hunting rifles; a brown canoe anchored in the middle of the lake.

Cut to
The long shot of the canoe. Its sole occupant, a middle-aged man wearing sun glasses and a round hat, is snoring while barely holding onto the fishing pole. He raises his head excitedly when noticing the sudden twitching of the rod.

Cut to
Aerial view of the lake. Offscreen sound of the man.

Man's Voice
Honey. I got something.

EXT. The thickly-varnished lake-side patio of a modern chalet.

A tall, blond woman, lying on a beach bed and covering herself with a colorful blanket, is reading and correcting a speech entitled "Future of Intelligence.". She raises he head and looks toward the lake, smiles. The man, paddling toward the beach, stands up and triumphantly brandishes his catch. Offscreen sound of the door bell. The woman nervously turns her head toward the interior.

EXT. The front door (has a screen door).

Max's hand presses the door bell. He turns his face and scans the two cars in the red-brick driveway; Ron blue sedan is barely visible beyond the entrance. The door opens; Max looks and sees the woman.

Max
Hello. I 'm from *the Canadian Voice*. Can I have a word

with Mr. Kuttab please?

Woman
I 'm sorry. You have the wrong address.

Max
I was a good friend of Ami.

The woman pauses for a slight moment before responding.

Woman
I 'm sorry. I don't know what you are talking...

She is interrupted by the offscreen voice of the man from the canoe, travelling all the way from the patio.

Man's Voice
Let him come in.

The woman hesitantly opens the screen door and Max steps inside.

Cut to
INT. The finely-decorated living room.

Max and the woman cross the living room and enter the patio. Through the large, half-open glass door, we can see the man busy cutting the fish with a large knife.

EXT. The patio.

The woman pushes the door to the side and gestures Max to

go outside and, when he does, she closes the door from the inside and for a moment stares warily at the two men.

The Man (still busy with the knife)
Lovely day, isn't it?

Max
It sure is.

The Man (half glancing at him, chops the fish's head)
The fish stinks from the head. So what can I do for you Mr.?

Max
Le Blanc. Max Le Blanc. I 'm told you might like to comment in our program on the business climate in Cyprus, and other related matters.

The Man (stops for a moment; quietly)
Why do you intend to spoil my time Mr. Le Blanc? I 'm here for a recovery. You see, I had a bad accident and was in a coma for some time.

Max
I 'm sorry to hear that Mr.?

The Man (turns around, removes his hat and stares at Max)
Pat. My friends call me Pat. What other related matters?

Max
It's up to you.

The Man
You are a radio reporter?

Max
Radio and TV.

The Man
I see. And how did you know Ami?

Max
We were part of a pool of foreign reporters who had been invited by the Iranians to go and see their latest victories against Iraq. I believe that was in 1983. They had just retaken the port city of Khoramshar.

The man
Uh yes. Ami told me all about it. He said it was a completely charred city. What else?

Max
We sort of lost contact after that. But I remember him talking about his friend in Cyprus very distinctly. In fact, I didn't even know his true identity until very recently. So, when I heard through a source that you worked for him, I said to myself: You can't let this opportunity bypass you. Gotta go and ask him about Nir. You see, I was perplexed by him, his motives.

The man throws the fish on the gas grill, then opens the ice chest and reaches for a beer.

The Man
Would you like a beer? (He throws one to Max) Would

you like to stay for supper. I was thinking of going and catching a couple more of these.

Max
No, thanks. I don't want to...

The Man
Nonsense. (Yells) Honey?

The woman opens the glass door.

The Man
Mr. Le Blanc and I are going for some more fish. You take care of this (points at the grill. She shakes her head affirmatively).

The man steps down on the beach and waves "come on" at Max. Max follows him to the canoe, sits inside it while the man pushes it to the water. Max notices a gun strapped to his waist. The man jumps inside the canoe and picks up the paddles, throws one at Max.

The Man
Let's go. I feel lucky today. (Distant sound of a rifle)

The Still rod in the water.

The Man
So what is it you like to know?

Max is slightly cold and his face shows that he is somewhat concerned.

Max
You had a bad accident?

The Man
Yes. Awful. I almost died. Now I 'm reborn. God I love the smell of this place.

Max
What can you tell me about Ami?

The Man
What do you like to know?

Max (withdraws a small tape recorder)
Do you mind?

The Man
Not at all.

Max
I like to know about his role in the Iran initiative. And how did he first get mixed up with Oliver North? I don't suppose you know the answers.

The Man (lighting a cigarette)
But of course. We were very intimate friends. He told me everything. Let me see, if I can remember correctly, it all started in 84 a couple of months after he had taken up his new assignment in the prime minister's office. Somebody referred him to this Iranian arms merchant who had deep ties with the Khomeini people.

Max
You mean Ghorbanifar.

The Man
Yes. What a chameleon. Nir was told that Ghorba is their asset, but in actuality, Ghorba was his own asset. Used others by letting them use him. It wasn't easy for Ami to bring Ghorba to his camp. Had to bribe him, threaten and impress him.

Cut to
INT. A casino -- Night

The subscript reads: **London, December, 1984.**

Nir and Ghorba, a hefty middle aged man with the look of a bazaar merchant in an expensive suit, are playing roulette. Ghorba throws the dice and is dismayed that he did not win. They move to an empty table, order drinks from a waitress. Nir withdraws a photo from his pocket and puts it on the table. Ghorba puts on his glasses and examines the photo carefully.

Insert. Photo of Nir and Robin, Israel's Prime Minister.

Ghorba returns the picture to Nir with an amicable smile.

Ghorba
I 'm sorry I underestimated you Mr. Nir. With your young and tender age, I thought you were bluffing.

Nir
That's o.k. You 're not the first one questioning me. So, what do they need?

Ghorba
Everything. The situation is very desperate. The spare parts you 've been supplying since 81, you know the jet tires, etc., just won't do. Saddam Hussein will finish us off by Spring if you don't help us.

Nir
Come on, it's not that bad. We get reports...

Ghorba (interrupts)
I swear to Allah (the waitress puts down the drinks. She smiles back to Ghorba)

Cut to
EXT. A hospital building -- Night, rainy

The Man's Voice
A couple of months later, Nir went to Wiesbaden to meet Colonel North, who had come to debrief a hostage, Reverend Weir I believe. But, no. I 'm sorry that was another hostage, because I remember clearly that Weir was released immediately after the delivery of the Tow missiles in September 85.

Cut to
INT. A quiet hospital coffee shop

Nir and North are sitting by the window and eating and talking to each other.

Nir
Look. We have a tactical coincidence of interest with Khomeini. He is tieing down Saddam Hussein. And the last thing we wanna see is an Iraqi victory.

North
But that's crazy. You 're asking us to go against our own policy, which I 've been going around like a travelling salesman selling to our allies.

Nir
I understand that. But the situation of the Gulf war provides the rationale for action on our part, especially if we want the hostage out. You see, we 've concluded that there is no choice but to deal with the most extreme factions in Iran, because they are controlling the captives' fate.

North (thinks)
So what are you proposing?

Nir
Allow us to ship four to five hundred TOW missiles and some eighteen twenty Hawk missiles to Tehran, that's all. The only requirement Israel has is a guarantee that we'd be allowed to replenish these from Pentagon.

North writes in his small notebook; stands up, shakes had with Nir (who also stands up).

Nir
Good to see you Mr. Nir. I will convey the message and we 'll see what happens.

Nir
I 'm instructed to tell you that we 're going ahead regardless of whether or not you cooperate.

Cut to
EXT. The lake

Max
What was the American response?

The Man
Uh. They researched Nir proposal and after a couple of meeting with Ghorba, in London and Paris, gave the go ahead, to deliver 508 tows to the Iranians.

Max
Were they?

The Man
Yes. Although there was a bit of miscounting on their part. But the real screw up was with the second shipment -- of the Hawk missiles.

Cut to
INT. A military hanger -- Night

An unmarked airplane pulls inside the hanger, surrounded by unshaved revolutionary guards, headed by an impatient officer.

The Subscript reads: **November 25, 1985, Mehrabad Airport, Tehran.**

Cut to
INT. Inside the airplane, loaded with boxes and huge cartons.

The officer and several of his subordinates hurry in and start opening the boxes. The officer's eyes spark when he sees a Hawk missile, uses a tool to lift the cover and as soon as he sees a Star of David etched on the missile, he screams.

The Officer
Een yek bazieh taghalobieh (This is a cheating game).

Cut to
EXT. The lake

The Man (Laughing)
It was such a disaster, that first shipment. The Iranians had paid for eighty Hawks and received only eighteen cuz that's the maximum the plane could carry. The worse thing was that they wanted an improved version of Hawk missiles and Nir gave them Hawk-I model, thinking the I stands for improved, but it didn't (keeps laughing. Stops). He was misled by the Israeli generals who were opposed to the initiative. The Iranians were so angry that they threatened to kill a few hostages in return. So Nir hurried to Washington for a meeting with North.

cut to
INT. A bar -- Night

The subscript reads: January 2, 1986.

Nir and North are sitting at the bar. A Report about

Nicaragua on TV stalled right above their head, i.e., they cannot see it. It shows a downed airplane and then flashes the picture of an American handcuffed and surrounded by Sandanista soldiers. The subscript reads: John Hassenfus.*

Nir
You 've got to send 80 Volkswagen** to the old man in Ireland. He promises to deliver his part of the bargain this time.

North (quietly)
The agency objects to this but is overruled by NSC. We found a way, through the Economy Act, for my uncle totransfer the V.W.'s to you after we secure payment from your old man.

Nir
I also hear that the old man wants to talk, a quid pro quo concerning items other than cars and money. Speaking of money. There's some leftover from the transaction.

North
How much?

Nir
Close to seven hundred and fifty (quietly) thousands. It's yours if you want it.

---

* Hassenfus, upon his arrest, made damaging confession that subsequently unravelled the Contra affair. In reality, North was in Frankfurt for a meeting with the Iranian "second channel" when he learnt of the Hassenfus mishap.

** Volks wagons was the code word for Tow missiles; Ireland was the code word for Iran; the old man refers to Khomeini.

North
To do what with it?

Nir
Anything you wish Colonel. (Spark in North's eyes).

The Man (V.O.)
That was the beginning of the diversion of funds from Iranians to the Contras.

Cut to
EXT. The lake

Max
I thought Ghorba first suggested that to North. (The man shakes his head)

The Man
You 're right. He had mentioned the use of the "profits" from the sale of the stuff to fund things like Angola and Nicaragua during the course of a meeting in Paris, on March 7, 1986 I believe.

Max
But North and the Americans didn't like Ghorab, am I correct? I hear that Ghorba even lied about his name.

The Man
Ya, you 're right. But it wasn't anything personal, really. The Americans wanted to cut him off in order to get their own channel moving. But Nir was opposed, he had so much riding on that guy. In fairness, on the polygraph, Ghorba at least kept his name right.

Cut to
INT. North's office

Nir and North are arguing with each other; a third man, **Donald**, is merely observing.

The Subscript reads: **January 14, 1986.**

Nir
We can't close down the operation. There's too much at stake.

North
You gotta find a better source. This guy Ghorba is a pathetic liar. MacFarlane hates him.

Nir (as he is about to leave)
You 're not running him for Congress.

North (to Donald, after Nir leaves)
What do you think Don?

Donald
I think the Israeli option is one we have to pursue even though we may have to pay a price for it. You read Fuller's report, didn't you? He agrees.

North looks at the report on his desk. It is marked "Top Secret." The heading reads: Toward a Policy on Iran.

Donald
About the diversion. I looked into it. You could make it look like Ayatollah's private contribution to the Contras.

North (excitedly)
Yes, why not? You 're a genius Don. It would be similar to third country support, instead of the Saudis giving it, it would be the Iranians. Fantastic.

Cut to
EXT. The lake

The Man
It was, of course, a fantasy, and North and others at NSC were simply deluding themselves to keep their operations alive. Well, you probably know the rest.

Max
Not really? Tell me about the second channel. Was Nir involved in that?

The Man
No, not at first that is. After sending a few arms shipments to Iran through Israel, including that famous trip to Tehran in May 86, North and company decided to go it alone, to keep Israel's footprints out of this as completely and as fast as possible.

Cut to
EXT. Andrews Airforce -- Day

The subscript reads: **September 14, 1986.**

Two Iranians, one younger and shorter, the other one older and taller, are received by North and his two assistants.

The Man (V.O.)
So, the Iranians sent one of their men, a cousin of their next president, to Washington.

Cut to
INT. A hotel room

North and the "cousin" are in the middle of a relaxed conversation. The older Iranian is looking on with a serious face; North's assistants are sitting bored.

The Man (V.O.)
North took a liking of the cousin. He even took him for a tour of the White House. But first, he wanted to impress him with his religious knowledge.

North
You know, the other day, I was reading a Quran, and I can't tell you how struck I was by its similarity with our Bible. I mean the story of Noah, Abraham, Moses -- it's all there.

The Older Iranian (whispering to one of North's assistants)
What's with this guy? I just left a country full of preachers, and I come here to listen to one more? (the assistants grin)

North and the cousin end their meeting. They shake hands

and North and his assistants leave.

Cut to
INT. A moving car

North and his assistants are listening to the bugged conversation on the phone.

North (sitting in the back busy reviewing his notes, raises his head)
What are they up to?

First Assistant (laughing)
They want action. They 're calling all the escort agencies in the belt way area. They all say it's too far.

North
Let's make our guests from the holy government happy. We 're their hosts. (They all laugh)

North (to himself)
Now all we need is to stop the Israeli arms merchants and then we 're all set.

Cut to
EXT. The lake

Max (flips the tape)
You 're referring to the sting operation, right?

The Man
Right.

Max
Did Nir know anything about it?

The Man
No, absolutely not. In fact, he was very angry at North when he found about the cousin so he went to North's office to complain...

Cut to
INT. North's office, adorned with a large Contra poster -- Day

Nir and North are sitting facing each other.

Nir
Ollie, you can't do this to me. I thought we had a joint operation. After all that I did for you.

North
O.K. Ami. You can be a part of it. But it's not gonna be your operation from now on. We 're coming in directly into this. We 're giving some soft intelligence to the Iranians to sweeten the pot.

Nir
Ghorba is threatening to blow the whistle if we bypass him.

North
Can't you do anything about him?

Nir
Like what? I really think he 's still the best contact we 've

got with them? (North shakes his head in disagreement)

The Man (V.O.)
After that, Nir and North's friendship suffered, and more so after the sting operation went into effect.

Max (V.O.)
Tell me about that?

Cut to
EXT. A street in New York -- Day

A well-dressed middle-age man, **Cyrus Hashemi**, is walking in the sidewalk.

The subscript reads: **April 21, 1986.**

The Man (V.O.)
The plan was simple. They arrested this Iranian, Cyrus Hashemi, who was in the illegal arms business to Iran with his brothers, and forced a deal on him: to act as their bait to nail down the private Israelis who sold arms to Iran. But first they had to open a big account in this guys' name.

Cut to
INT. A bank.

Cyrus is sitting in front of a bank manager, signing a paper. Then he withdraws an envelop and gives the banker a certified check. The banker swallows with a delightful yet anxious expression on his face when he sees the written amount: ten million dollars. Cyrus leaves after shaking hand

with the banker.

Cut to
EXT. An airport -- Day

The subscript reads: Bahamas

Four men, all Israelis, exit a light airplane and before they have a chance to enjoy the air and the scenery, they are picked up by the local police, who ferry them into their cars and drive away.

The Man (V.O.)
In addition to those guys, they arrested a couple more guys in New York, including a former Israeli general. Things were beginning to go from bad to worse for Nir. So many people thought he was in on this with Ollie North, partly because they still continued talking to each other.

Max
Why?

The Man
Well. They were forming new partnerships over new operations just as they were parting ways on the Iranian operation. Besides, the Israelis were released after the story leaked into open. The guy who really bore the brunt of the sting operation was that sucker Cyrus.

Cut to
EXT. Outside a high rise

The Subscript reads: A London Suburb

Int. A car

Two Israeli undercover agents are sitting inside a surveillance van, monitoring a conversation.

First Agent
Who is that?

Second Agent
A couple of U.S. Customs officers.

Offscreen sound of men wrestling, dropping things on the floor, and a man begging for help.

A Man's Voice
Make sure he swallows it.

The Israeli agents stare at each other meaningfully. One of them removes the headphone and reclines on his chair.

The Agent
Looks like they did our job for us.

Cut to
EXT. The lake

Offscreen sound of two gun shots. The man looks anxiously in the direction of the chalet. Max notices the rod's movement, turns his head to tell the man and is struck by

the sight of the hand gun in his hand.

The Man
Those weren't rifle shots (checks his gun, puts it back in, drops the fishing pole in the water and then quickly grabs the paddles)

The canoe moves to the side of the chalet. Max follows the man, who is now holding the gun with his finger on the trigger, moving quietly forward. When they reach below the patio, the man gestures Max to stay behind and jumps up and moves inside. Max's back shivers when he notices the burnt fish on the grill. Max follows the narrow pathway on the side of the house, reaches the front of the house and then walks toward Ron's car. From the rear, he sees Ron head resting on his chest like a man who has fallen sleep. Max moves to the side of the car expressing a sudden relief from anxiety, but the moment he looks inside to utter something, discovers blood splattered on the windshield, and Ron head blown by a bullet. Max opens the door and notices Ron handgun barely obvious under his thighs, removes it and heads back toward the house, opens the screen door and notices the other door is slightly open, hesitates for a moment and then is about to enter when the sound of repeated gun fire freezes him in his position for a moment, and then he steps inside. Offscreen sound of two bullets.

EXT. Aerial view of the chalet, surrounded by parked police cars, ambulances and a helicopter with its searching light scanning the chalet's vicinity.

Cut to

A car pulls in and the doors open. Gerald, Sue and Shaw exit. The police allow only Shaw to pass through. Sue looks to her right and sees a female reporter giving a live report.

The Reporter
....We have a very sketchy notion of what's happened here. All we know so far is that four people, one woman and three men, are killed and a fifth man has been wounded. An unconfirmed, and I underline unconfirmed, report is that two of the men killed are Iranians travelling with Arab passports...

Max is carried out of the chalet on a stretcher. Sue runs past the police and approaches Max as he is about to be put inside an ambulance by two medics.

Sue
Max.

Max
How are you princess? (she smiles)

One of the Medics (To Sue)
It's his right shoulder. He 'll survive.

Sue wants to go with Max but is barred by the medics. They quickly close the door, jump in the front and get moving. Gerald walks to Sue and puts his arm around her, both gazing at the ambulance.

Max (V.O.)
It was a shity spectacle, killing the man who had hired me

to find Nir for him. Needless to say, I would have never tipped off those people if I had the slightest inclination that they were assassins. Collecting debts they said. Innocent me. Now I 'm suddenly a hero, which is the most despicable thing that can happen to a man.

A Man (V.O.)
Is this why you 're telling me all these?

Cut to
INT. A two-bed hospital room with dim lights on -- night

Max and his roommate, an old man, barely keeping awake, are lying side ways and staring at each other; Max's chest is all wrapped up. The old man searches for an answer in Max's eyes. Lying on his back, Max mumbles.

Max
I don't know. Good night (closes his eyes).

Cut to same room in the morning. Max opens his eyes and sees that the bed next to him is polished empty. A nurse comes in with the food tray and after putting it in front of him leaves. Max starts eating and drinking with a renewed sense of energy. The telephone rings. Max picks up the phone.

Max
Hello.

Sue (V.O.)
Hi Max. How are you feeling?

Max
Great. Couldn't be better. They 're releasing me tomorrow.

Sue (V.O.)
That's fabulous.

Max
So, is everything arranged?

Sue (V.O.)
Yes. But.

Max
Come on. No more but. I thought we 've been through that by now. Did you get the permit?

Sue (V.O.)
Ya. It came in yesterday. Are you sure? I mean, you can barely walk, let alone travel nine thousand miles.

Max
When are we flying?

Sue (V.O.)
Next Thursday.

Max
That's plenty time to recuperate, and prepare for the holy land.

Max hangs up, reaches for his jacket and withdraws a blood

stained paper, looks at the handwritten content. The heading reads: The Future of Intelligence. And the second line reads: Graduating Class, National Defense University, May 2.

Cut to
INT. An Airport terminal.

Sue and her fiance are hugging each other good bye, while Max, his shoulder strapped, is at the boarding gate observing them nonchalantly. For a moment, Max and Sue's fiance stare at each other ambivalently. Max proceeds toward the gate, followed by Sue.

Cut to
INT. A flying jet -- Night.

Sue is half-sleep. Her fingers play nervously with her engagement ring. Max's eyes are glued to the movie screen; he finishes his drink and then gets up and goes to the lavatory and washes his face, stares in the mirror for a moment and then returns to his seat, sees that Sue is up.

Sue
How is the movie?

Max
Pretty dull (offers the headphone, but Sue refuses. Max asks the passing stewardess for another drink). So. Who is this guy Nathan?

Sue
He worked for our affiliate in Montreal for a while. Is a friend of Gerlad.

Max (tersely)
Every body is a friend of Gerald.

Sue
Except us. You know, he is no dummy. He told me you had placed a call to their hotel room before going to the chalet.

Max
Really?! Why did he consent to this trip then?

Sue
What choice does he have? To get rid of you when all of a sudden you 're an overnight celebrity? (Both shake their heads).

Max
At this point I just care about the truth.

Sue
What if Nir doesn't show up at the ceremony? Should we can the whole program then?

Max
Then we 'll trace him some other way.

Cut to
EXT. An airport parking lot. Max, Sue, and a slim, middle aged man (Nathan) are walking toward an old Volvo. Nathan deposits the luggage in the trunk. They all get inside. The car starts moving.

Nathan
So I hear you were a close friend of Howie. So was I. What a shame. He was a beautiful man. (Max nods)

Max
Sue tells me you knew Nir.

Nathan
Yes, sort of. We collaborated on a couple of stories when both worked for a newspaper here -- until his ambition got the better of him and he moved on to bigger things -- through his friend, the head of Shin Beth. (Pauses and shakes his head negatively). It just doesn't make sense.

Max
What?

Nathan
Your suspicion that he is still alive. I mean, the whole world knows he is dead. You should have seen his funeral. More than ten thousand people participated, including two prime ministers. (Laughs) They will all look like complete idiots, after all those lavish eulogies, if he suddenly turns up alive.

Max
Well, this is a land of miracles, isn't it?

Nathan
It sue is Mr. Le Blanc, it sure is.

Sue (asking Nathan)
What about the pass to the University.

Nathan (as he pulls inside a hotel parking lot)
I 'm working on it. Don't worry. There 's plenty time between now and tomorrow afternoon. Beside, there's always the fake passes.

Max
All we need is a quick shot of him. That's all.

Cut to
INT. A small lecture hall -- Day

The subscript reads: The National Defense University

The room is filled with Israeli and Arabs. They are listening attentively to the speaker, i.e., Nir.

Nir
...If three years ago, some one would tell me that I would be addressing a joint class of Jewish and Palestinian graduates, I would laugh to his face. Your presence here is a vivid reminder of the dramatic changes in world affairs...

Cut to
EXT. A moving Volvo. Nathan is driving. Next to him is Max. Sue is sitting in the back.

Cut to
INT. The lecture hall.

Nir
...If I regret anything at all, it's the way we deluded

ourselves about our enemies. Sometimes I think we lied to ourselves, gobbled up dumb intelligence, in order to resist change. We concealed the wretchedness of the status quo, even from ourselves. And we scarcely paused to ask ourselves how much longer the end may justify the means...

Cut to
EXT. At the entrance of the university. Nathan has stepped outside the car and is arguing with two guards, one of whom is inspecting the passes very carefully.

Cut to
INT. The lecture hall.

Nir

...It is essential in the new environment for people who do our work should remain reconciled. I dare say you wouldn't be here if we were still in the Cold War system and its black and white propaganda machine. We won the Cold War between us, Jew and Palestinians. We both won, and that's all that matters. What matters is that a long conflict is over. What matters is hope. Thank you.

As Nir finishes his speech, he receives a warm applause from the audience. Several people approach Nir to chat with him.

Cut to
EXT. The University entrance. A shouting match has ensued between Nathan and the guards, who are ordering him to turn the car around and leave or to get arrested. Nathan grudgingly obeys, sits inside the car and throws his hand in

a gesture of hopelessness.

Cut to
INT. The lecture hall.

Nir is still chatting with the people. At a door, an Israeli officer, the same one who had expressed anti-Nir remarks in the taped interviews, is observing Nir. A Palestinian, wearing an Arab scarf, asks Nir to autograph a book, and just as Nir is about to give him back the book, the Palestinian draws a dagger and stabs Nir in the stomach and then runs away. A quick commotion is ensued. The Israeli officer pursues the assailant and shoots him without a warning as he is about to jump over the fenced wall. Nathan's Volvo, driving by at the same time, comes to a screeching halt. Max quickly picks up the camera from the trunk and starts filming. The officer notices him and yells "stop." Max jumps in the car and they speed away. The officer looks at one of his subordinates, who speaks in his walkie talkie.

Cut to
EXT. A quiet road -- Evening

The Volvo appears in front of a check point. Bright smiles appear on the faces of the two plain clothes officers who are waiting in their car. The guards order Nathan and his passengers to exit and line up against the car. The two officers approach them. They inspect first the car and then the papers.

First Officer (older, mustached and mean-looking)

Canadian, ha? You 've violated the curfew, did you know that? (Starts searching their bodies)

Nathan
This is uncalled for. I 'm a national reporter.

First Officer (now searching Sue)
Shut up. We know who you are (deliberately touches her breasts).

Max reacts by punching the officer, which lands him on the ground. He is attacked by the other officer and one of the guards who punch and kick him under their feet. Sue shouts at them to stop and Nathan is held back by one of the guards, and is beaten unconscious when he frees himself and tries to save Max.

The First Officer (removing the film from the camera)
That 's enough.

Cut to
INT. A hotel room with open windows -- Night

Max is resting on the bed, half-conscious. Sue emerges from the bathroom with a warm towel and puts it on his head. Max opens his eyes and stares at her. Their eyes glue to each other for a moment. Max touches her face and then her hair with his hand, admiring her beauty. Sue wants to resist for a moment but, instead, reciprocates by touching Max's face. He lifts his head to kiss her, and she gently pushes him backward then leans forward to kiss him. He undresses her shirt. She reaches for the light switch and turns it off. Through the thin curtain, the stars glow in the clear sky. After love making, they savor the moment, both of them lost in thoughts.

Max
I love the smell of this place. It reeks of authenticity.

Sue
Ya, that's the word. (Looks at her ring)

Max
I am puzzled by you. Frankly, I thought you 'd write me off completely once you found out I had ties to those trouble makers.

Sue (half-startled, raises her head, turns the light on)
I suspected it, but didn't want to believe it. How did you get mixed up with them?

Max
I met one of them in Beirut. He called me the day Howie had died, said he just wanted the money Nir owed 'em. I somehow believed him.

Sue
I see. (Sighs) I don't care. You know why, because I had a revelation when I saw you on the stretcher, as if suddenly every thing came to a proper perspective -- about us I mean. It suddenly hit me that...

Max
What?

Sue
That I love you.

Max (draws her to his arm and kisses her)
Me too. But I 've known that for a long time. God I

missed you.

A long moment of silence passes.

Sue
What now?

Max (sighs)
We 're back at square one I suppose. We 'll sort things out tomorrow on the way back.

Sue (after a pause)
I 'd rather stay for a couple of more days, by myself, to think things over.

Max (hesitantly as he is turning around to turn the light off)
Sure.