

"Balance"

by

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Logline: "How far would you go to stay in the place you loved?"

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FADE IN FROM BLACK SCREEN

"BOLERO" (REVEL) IS HEARD.

A small black circle of liquid swirling round anti-clockwise.

White cream is being poured into this black coffee. The white swirls mixing into black.

INT. BATHROOM. NIK CROSBY'S BEDSIT, EARLS COURT, LONDON. EARLY MORNING.

NIK CROSBY (28) takes a sip of his coffee. He wears a white bathrobe with shaving foam covering half his face.

He rests the coffee mug on the ceramic basin and brings the shaving razor to his face.

After two downwards strokes, the razor leaves a red mark on the white foam. He touches the cut and a look of absolute fear spreads across his face.

He continues shaving on his jaw line, deeper and deeper, peeling back the skin. A different jaw line is visible underneath his own.

MUSIC FADES OUT.

INT. ESCALATOR. EARLS COURT SUBWAY STATION. DAY.

Nik, now wearing a white jumper and light slacks, is standing on the downward escalator. On the wall to his right are rows of A4 sized advertisements. In every one ARCHIE MARINO's (59) face stares out, the black collar of his shirt visible and face bloody from a gunshot wound above the left eye. Nik is sideways on to the photos, heading downwards and unaware.

INT. TRAIN PLATFORM. EARLS COURT STATION. DAY

Nik waits on the platform in the morning rush hour.

The train, when it comes, is so busy he can't get on, but he seems to lack the energy to push like the other passengers and remains on the platform.

As the train pulls out. He watches his reflection zip past in the carriage windows. He stands alone, but in every fourth window is reflected Archie Marino, watching over his shoulder.

Nik looks down at his shoes unaware.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN. DAY.

Nik sits on the train, an open sketch book on his lap. He looks tired and depressed.

The train doors close from left to right, meeting in the middle, then open again.

Nik closes his palms over his face and opens them, mimicking the effect of the doors.

He repeats this action, when he opens his palms again, the view has changed to a sunny harbor.

EXT. MARBELLA HARBOR. COSTA DEL SOL, SPAIN. DAY.

"GOLDEN YEARS" (DAVID BOWIE) PLAYS.

Nik is sitting on the harbor wall, palms covering his face. He reaches down to collect his sketchbook and jumps off the wall, looking happy and relaxed.

EXT. MARBELLA HIGH STREET. DAY

Nik Crosby, book in arm, walks down the palm treed, sun-drenched street.

INT. SANTIAGO'S KITCHEN. DAY.

The grill pan of a cooker is on fire.

SANTIAGO (32) beats the flames with a damp tea-towel.

When the fire is out, he stares at the wall directly behind the cooker - a look of disbelief on his face.

EXT. MARBELLA HIGH STREET. DAY

Nik continues his walk, reaching into his pocket when he hears his phone ring. He answers and has a brief unheard conversation, a look of bemusement spreading across his features.

He turns unexpectedly down a small alleyway.

MUSIC FADES OUT.

EXT. SANTIAGO'S APARTMENT. DAY.

Nik stands outside a disheveled Marbella Piso building pressing the intercom.

The door is opened by Santiago holding a charred tea-towel and sweating heavily. He motions for Nik to enter.

SANTIAGO

It's a miracle!

INT. SANTIAGO'S KITCHEN. DAY.

They stand in the kitchen facing the cooker. Nik's begins to laugh.

NIK  
 You weren't kidding! This is  
 natural, you didn't do it  
 yourself?

(BEAT)  
 Shit on a stick!

The grill of the cooker is blackened but above it, against the faded white wall is a large carbon stain where the flames licked the paint. The carbon stain is a perfect image of Christ's face - similar to the Turin Shroud.

SANTIAGO  
 Say hola to our Savior!

NIK  
 You've got a Christ in your  
 cooker, man! Touch it...you might  
 get healing hands!

Nik's mobile phone rings. He answers it, talking inaudibly.

Santiago kneels before the cooker to clean the door, unaware of his mock holiness.

NIK (OFF CAMERA)  
 Fuck!

SANTIAGO  
 Que Pasa?

NIK  
 What time you make it?

SANTIAGO  
 Twelve, minus the quarter, why?

NIK  
 Shit! The bank's canceling my  
 cards at twelve. All of them!  
 Where's the nearest cash machine?

SANTIAGO  
 Telebanco over on Soriano, by the  
 school, but you'll never make it!

Nik runs for the door, making a mock sign of the cross to the cooker.

NIK  
 I have to. That's all I got.

"MACHINE GUN" (COMMADORES) PLAYS.

EXT. MARBELLA HIGH STREET. DAY.

Nik runs at break-neck speed back down the high street. He weaves expertly through the slow moving crowds.

A man selling Lotto tickets steps forward unexpectedly, sending Nik and his sketches flying.

He stops to collect as many as he can and continues to run.

He has missed a sketch of his face. It floats to the road where a car drives over half of it, neatly dividing Nik's face into light and dark by the tire treads.

CUT TO

A long queue at the cash machine. Nik waits impatiently, but everyone is taking their time.

A policeman stands in the door of the bank. Nik checks the gun on the policeman's hip and looks at the queue.

The screen of the cash machine reads: "12:05 Your card has been retained. Please contact your bank."

MUSIC FADES OUT.

EXT. ECOFON LANGUAGE SCHOOL. MARBELLA. DAY

Nik enters the language school, waving to a female student smoking on the wall outside. Above the entrance portico is a large stone Albatross, its wings shielding the entrants from the sun.

INT. CORRIDOR. ECOFON LANGUAGE SCHOOL. MARBELLA. DAY.

Nik walks past a classroom. He pauses to look in.

Santiago is teaching at a whiteboard.

INT. STAFF ROOM ECOFON LANGUAGE SCHOOL. MARBELLA. DAY

The Staff room is deserted. Nik is at the photocopier, his face is half lit by the scan light as it moves from left to right, copying.

A television in the corner is showing Sky News, its volume low. Images of inner city London. A youth is being handcuffed under protest and bundled into a police van.

Nik turns up the volume.

REPORTER

...children as young as twelve have been arrested with semi-automatic weapons, given to them by drug-dealers, some children can earn as much as 1,000 pounds per hit...

Nik turns his back on the TV.

NIK  
I blame the teachers!

CUT TO

Archie Marino standing at a Urinal. Nik is pointing a gun at the back of his head.

He pulls the trigger. Flash.

CUT BACK TO

Staff Room. A bell rings. He gathers his books and is about to leave. He stops, remembering something. He goes into his satchel and takes out a jar of vitamin tablets. He takes one, looks round for a bottle of water. Can't find one. He screws up his face as he swallows the tablet dry.

The Television shows a man being bundled into the back of a police van. The face is visible as the door shuts. It is Nik.

INT. "VIBE BAR." VENUE NEAR CALAHONDA. INTERIOR. NIGHT.

Nik sits at a metallic table on the patio of the neon bar. He is doodling on a napkin next to three empty beer bottles.

Santiago enters with MARIA (24) on his arm. They join Nik.

SANTIAGO (TO MARIA)  
This is Nik. Olympic Sprinter.  
(TO NIK)  
You made it?

Nik points to the three empty beers and crosses his arms.

NIK  
I don't want to talk about it.

SANTIAGO  
Maria. Three beers my darling. I must console my friend the only way I know how.

Maria goes to get the drinks. Santiago pulls up two chairs.

Nik opens the bottle of vitamin tablets and takes one, washing it down with the beer. He offers the container to Santiago.

NIK  
Vitamin supplements, good for the immune system and building a thick skin, which I need one with you around...you want one?

Santiago shakes his head and waits for Nik to speak. There is an uncomfortable silence.

NIK

I'm fucked, San. The bank wants me shipped back to London in Carbonite.

Nik picks up a beer mat and starts tearing it into strips.

NIK

Plus, and this is the real cherry on the shit-cake, I've got to be out of the villa by next Friday. Christine's taking it back for the summer.

SANTIAGO

Ouch!

NIK

With my account frozen, I can't rent a new place. Not even back in London.

(BEAT)

Man, I can't go back there. Back to the folks.

CUT TO

INT. A SUBURBAN LOUNGE. EVENING.

Nik sits on a sofa in a staid but comfortable lounge. Either side of him on the sofa are his parents. They are all watching TV.

Nik stands up, putting his hands on each parents' knee for leverage.

NIK

Well, good night.

He walks out of the room.

EXT. A SUBURBAN GARDEN. NIGHT.

Nik closes the kitchen door and walks to a tent at the end of the garden.

He unzips the fabric door and closes it behind him.

The tent is dark and silent for a moment, then the sound of a gunshot rings out and the inside of the tent is momentarily illuminated with a flash.

CUT BACK TO

INT. "VIBE BAR." VENUE NEAR CALAHONDA

Nik shakes off the vision.

NIK

No fucking way am I going back.

SANTIAGO

Claro. So what you gonna do,  
Nicky boy? What's the plan?

NIK

Get drunk. Usually works.

SANTIAGO

Si.

Maria returns with the drinks. They chink glasses.

MARIA (TO NIK)

Why you look so sad? Look around  
you!

Nik takes in the crowd of tanned, laughing revelers. The  
table waitresses in hot pants and push-up bras.

NIK (TO MARIA)

It's a great life. But it all  
costs money, and I'm out.

MARIA (TO NIK)

Maybe you can make some easy  
money. You know, a cute English  
boy like you.

SANTIAGO (TO MARIA)

Hey, remember who drives you home  
later. Not this Cabron, I think!

(TO NIK)

I have some friends, if you're  
willing to take a little risk.  
Maybe...

MARIA (WINKING)

What is this?

SANTIAGO

Man talk. C'mon Let's get drunk.  
No more long faces tonight.

Maria motions to Santiago that she is going to dance.

She moves to the dance floor, past ALEX ROCCAS (29) and a  
group of heavy looking South American men sat at the table  
nearest to the exit.

Nik catches Alex's eye. He smiles, she doesn't.

An altercation breaks out between one of the men and a fellow drinker at the next table. CARLOS ROCCAS (39) opens his jacket to reveal what looks to Nik like a gun. The other man quickly sits back down.

Santiago follows Nik's gaze.

Alex sees Santiago and smiles. He waves back.

SANTIAGO

Hola Alex!

He swivels back round on his chair and shakes his head at Nik

NIK

You know her?

SANTIAGO

Si. I know her well enough not to know her any better, entiendo?

NIK

How do you mean? She's hot!

SANTIAGO

...And the hombres with her. Do they look hot too? How hot will they look with their boots in your arse? Ha!

NIK

I don't follow.

SANTIAGO

That's Alex Roccas.

Nik is non-plussed.

SANTIAGO

Roccas? God Nik, you need to be more plugged in if you are going to make money here. Smoking the Roccas?

NIK

She's Mafia? Come off it Santiago, you're putting me on. She looks about twenty.

SANTIAGO

Not Mafia. She's from Cali, not a nice place to be from.

NIK

Italian?

SANTIAGO  
Colombian. Don't get on her  
nerves. Having no money is one  
thing ; having no head is another.

They finish their drinks and move inside to get more.

CUT TO

At the bar Santiago buys Nik a Tequila.

SANTIAGO  
This is on me, amigo. To business.

Both slam back the large measure and hit their glasses on  
the metallic bar.

CUT TO

Over at another table Alex Rocca also slams down a shot  
glass. She looks out to the car-park where a motorcycle  
is pulling up. She leaves the table.

EXT. CAR PARK. OUTSIDE THE BAR. NIGHT.

The Biker takes off his helmet and goes to kiss Alex. She  
pulls back.

ALEX  
Did you do it?

The biker shrugs his shoulders.

BIKER  
Aw, come on Alex, you weren't  
serious were you? I won't do that,  
not even for you. Baby cakes!

He moves to kiss her again. She takes his arm of her, a  
look of haughty disgust.

ALEX  
Weak! I knew it. No, I bored with  
you now. Go!

BIKER  
But you promised. You said...

ALEX  
I change my mind. You are guilty  
of the worst kind of stealing.  
You steal my time.

BIKER  
You game playing bitch!

The Biker raises his hand.

Alex looks over at her table. Carlos stands up. She holds up her hand to him.

The Biker lowers his fist and gets back on his bike.

Alex shrugs and returns to her table. She pats Carlos on the shoulder and laughs.

ALEX

I go dance.

She walks into the bar.

INT. VIBE BAR. NIGHT.

Nik is on the dance floor while Santiago talks to a man in the corner of the bar, something can be seen changing hands.

Maria approaches Nik and rubs her body playfully and innocently against him. He looks a little embarrassed at first but she encourages him by putting his hands on her thighs. He gradually relaxes and gets into it.

Santiago breaks it up.

SANTIAGO

You get fresh with my girl?

(BEAT)

I'm joking with you, Nik. There's something I want to show you, follow me, you gonna like it!

Nik and Santiago move to the Veranda at the back of the bar where it is more discreet. The music is quiet enough for conversation.

Santiago produces a block of silver foil. He looks around him and then opens it up to reveal a large block of brown resin. He passes it under Nik's nose.

NIK

That smells good.

SANTIAGO

You know it. Fresh from Kif, Morocco this morning.

(BEAT)

Make one.

Nik opens his tobacco pouch and gets busy with the cigarette papers.

Santiago watches him, pleased.

SANTIAGO

You have a European driving license, yes? How do you fancy a little sight-seeing, with all expenses paid?

NIK

All expenses, huh?

SANTIAGO

Yes. A most generous expenses allowance.

NIK

And where will I be seeing these sights?

SANTIAGO

Let's just say, I have a friend who has a large furniture van full of unusual chairs. He gets nervous driving in Europe, preferring Moroccan roads.

Nik lights the joint and inhales deeply.

NIK

Understandable.

Maria puts her glass down on their table.

SANTIAGO (TO NIK)

We'll talk about it after class Monday.

Nik looks over his shoulder and watches Alex dance like a feral cat.

INT. NIK'S CLASSROOM. ECOFON LANGUAGE SCHOOL. DAY.

Twelve students wait patiently. Nik rushes in looking disheveled.

NIK

Good morning. I am so sorry I'm late. Please give me a moment.

He sets up his books and looks at the register of names. His red eyes and sallow skin show a man coming down from a heavy weekend.

NIK

We should have three new students joining us. Er, Jose-Miguel, another Luiz and...Alex.

He looks up from the register to see Alex Roccas leaning on her chair at the back of the room.

She fixes him with a Basilisk stare.

Nik writes "PAST PERFECT TENSE" on the whiteboard. A general murmur comes from behind him.

ALEX  
I do this already.

NIK  
Alex? You moved up from Pre-Int?  
I don't think you have looked at  
Past Perfect?

ALEX (MECHANICALLY)  
I have done this already.

NIK  
I guess you have then. Can I have  
a word in private.

Alex gets up and joins Nik in the corner of the room. He tries to maintain his authority in the jaws of her intense cold gaze.

NIK  
Look, Alex, You only moved up a  
level this morning. This topic  
is on the syllabus for this level.  
I have to teach it.

ALEX (SOFTENING)  
I know, but it so easy for me. I  
want learn faster. I need good  
English now.

NIK  
Have you considered private lessons?

ALEX  
With you?

NIK  
No, I don't do private lessons,  
but one of the other teachers I'm  
sure will...

ALEX  
No! I want you...I can pay...How  
much you want for private lesson?

NIK  
I'm flattered, but it's not about  
the money, I'm under contract to  
work exclusively here - I can't  
do private tuition.

ALEX  
So you say no to me?

NIK  
I'm afraid I have to.

Alex is standing very close to Nik, There is a heat of chemistry between them. Nik is thinking.

NIK (CONSPIRATORIALLY)  
OK. But not here, away from the school, and you can't tell the Director of studies, I'll be in big trouble if they find out.

ALEX  
Tonight at nine. La Lonja beach bar.

She returns to her seat before Nik can answer.

INT. STAFF ROOM ECOFON LANGUAGE SCHOOL. MARBELLA. DAY

The evening sun slants in through the blinds, hitting the clock on the wall and dividing it into shadow and light. The time reads 6.

Nik is packing up his brown leather satchel.

Santiago creeps up behind and gooses him.

SANTIAGO  
Crosby, Pills and Hash!

NIK  
Did you speak to your friend.

Santiago looks pleased with himself.

SANTIAGO  
From now on you call me Sant San!

Nik visibly breathes out and rubs his thumb and forefinger questioningly.

SANTIAGO  
Two thousand Euro. Algeceras to Paris. Be ready Thursday morning.

NIK  
San, you are a fucking life-saver.  
You don't know how much this means to me.

EXT. LA LONJA BEACH BAR. SUNSET.

Nik sits at a table nursing a beer. His sketchbook is open and he is drawing the fisherman with their rods on the shoreline.

He slams the book shut in disgust, reaches into his pocket and unscrews his container of vitamin tablets.

He takes one, washing it down with the beer, and watches the dusky figures walking beach in the setting sun.

One of the silhouettes looks familiar. He leaves the table and walks towards it. It is Alex, staring out to sea. She is holding a dog-lead.

NIK

Alex?

ALEX

Buenos tardes, Nik. Do I forget the time?

(LOOKS AT HER WATCH)

It's so beautiful at sunset, don't you think?

NIK

The lesson. We can't really do it here, can we?

ALEX

Por que non? Sit down. Talk to me. First lesson is conversation class, yes...come, sit...are you so formal always. Relax!

NIK

OK, you're the boss.

They sit facing the setting sun.

ALEX

My friends say to me 40 Euro an hour for private lessons, yes? It's a good price?

Nik nods.

ALEX

Muy bien. Now we talk.

(BEAT)

So, where you come from, why are you teach in Spain?

NIK

Teaching. Why am I teaching...in Spain.

ALEX

Do you correct everything. Slow conversation!

NIK

It's my job. That's why you pay me.

ALEX

OK. Why are you teaching in Spain?

Nik stretches out his hand to show the sunset.

Alex notices his sketchbook.

ALEX

You are artist too? Let me see.

Nik becomes bashful.

NIK

Not really. I used to be alright,  
but I'm having a dry spell. The  
muse has left me.

She doesn't understand. Nik adopts a more formal voice.

NIK

And what brings Alex Rocca to Spain?

Alex holds the dog-lead around her neck, deep in thought.

ALEX

Rocca-s. I come to Marbella every  
year to make the holiday. I'm  
from Cali.

NIK

You have family here?

ALEX

Me Sobrino. I love to travel but  
my heart is in Colombia always.  
We have many problems, you know?  
It's bad for us.

NIK

Drugs?

ALEX

Si, The Narco-Terrorist.  
Kidnapping all the time. Shooting.  
It is not Colombian problem. It  
is United States, like most of  
world's problems.

NIK

How so?

ALEX

They make the problem. Colombia  
is safe, beautiful. USA make you  
think it is dangerous. Our  
government is, how you say, Corrupt?

NIK

Corrupt.

ALEX

Si, corrupt...but we help the people. It is sad time for Colombia. Not like in the movies. Cabrones!

NIK

In English we say Bastards, Cabrones. But what about the Cartels. They are a problem also, surely?

ALEX

What problem? You know Pablo Escobar? The Medellin Cartel? He give billions of Pesos to Medina town. Built Churches, schools, hospitals. When the Americanos come and take him, the money goes, and so do the Hospitals. The US say, stop Drogas...

NIK

Drugs...

ALEX

...stop the Drugs. Why? I want Schools and Hospitals for my people. You can't take away our way of making money because you don't like it and replace it with nada...

NIK

...nothing...

She smiles straight at him

ALEX

...nothing.

NIK

You should be a politician!

ALEX

Don't make joke. I speak from the heart. You don't see Colombia, it makes me angry.

NIK

If I have offended you, I'm sorry.

ALEX

No te precupe...don't worry.

She kneels to whistle, calling her dog.

Moments later a large white Huskey bounds into view. It aims straight for Nik and begins to hump his leg.

Alex raises her metal lead and coshes the dog in the small of it's back. The dog whimpers.

Nik looks shocked by her cruelty.

ALEX

Look, the sun is finished and I am cold. Let's get a drink.

NIK

OK, but this is free time now. Lesson over, OK?

ALEX

OK. I like you Nik. You are not like Colombian man. You are soft. Soft?

NIK

Yep, pretty much!

ALEX

Do you have pen? I give you my address. Tomorrow's lesson you come to my house, yes? Good...now buy me a drink.

EXT. BACKROAD LEADING UP TO ALEX'S VILLA. DAY.

Nik is walking up a country back road. He swings his battered satchel from side to side.

EXT. ALEX ROCCA'S VILLA

Nik looks up at the impressive white-washed villa.

Nik studies the piece of paper with the address "Las Yucas. Avenida de las Cumbres" He looks up. The Villa has the same name. A big mansion style villa with security gate.

Nik waves into the security camera.

The gate swings open. Nik walks in. Further up the patio the front door opens. Alex stands in shorts and flip-flops.

ALEX

Hola, Nik. Com estas?

NIK

Good. Ready for the lesson?

INT. ALEX ROCCA'S VILLA

Nik enters an expansive marble hallway filled with sculptures and paintings.

His eye is caught by an enormous oil painting of a YIN YANG. He inspects it more closely. There is an Artists explanation in Spanish next to it, beneath that an English translation. He reads it:

WRITING: Balance. The human body is a casing for a maelstrom of energy in careful balance. The capacity in all of us to love, is balanced by an equal opposing force to hate. The irresistible force of Yin, the light soul, balanced against the immovable object of Yang, the dark soul. Without this balance, reality disintegrates. Garcia Hernandez. Bogotá. 1976.

NIK

Phew, deep stuff...who's the Zen Buddhist?

ALEX

It was regalos...I mean present, from my stepfather to the man who owns this villa. It's very expensive. The artist is famous, I think. Hernandez, Colombian. You have heard of him?

NIK

Can't say that I have. It's nice.

He takes out his vitamin tablets and unscrews the lid.

ALEX

Your head hurts?

NIK

No. Supplements. My diet is restricted at the moment...

Alex Leaves through a side door.

NIK (UNDER HIS BREATH)

Restricted to cheap fucking Chorizo sausage and water.

Alex reappears with a glass of water. He takes the tablet.

NIK

So. Where are we going to do this?

ALEX

What?

NIK

Our lesson.

ALEX

By the pool. It's so hot today.

They walk through the hall to a splendid white leather living room with plasma TV, white fur rugs and silk drapes and out onto a poolside patio.

EXT. POOLSIDE PATIO. DAY.

Two sunloungers are positioned under a massive parasol. Rocks and vines guide a waterfall into the swimming pool. At the far side of the area a balcony looks out onto olive groves below. Cicadas rub their legs lazily in the late afternoon sun. Nik and Alex sit on the sunloungers. He opens his satchel, taking out books and paper.

NIK

Incredible place, Alex. You're lucky.

ALEX

Claro. We rent it every year. Friend of family. I come here since ten years.

NIK

For.

ALEX

No, ten.

NIK

Sorry, we say "For"...years. "Since"...date. For 10 years. That would be...er...since 1997. See?

ALEX

Ok.

NIK

Let's begin.

CUT TO

The sun now reflects on a different part of the pool.

ALEX

...there is one person at the door, there are two people at the door...yes?

NIK

That really is excellent, Alex. I think in a couple of months you'll be ready for "First Certificate", if you wanted to, that is.

ALEX

You think? Really? Ah, you are good teacher, Nik. Sympatico.

She gives him a playful kiss that lingers for a second too long. They both feel it. Nik can't hold her gaze and looks at his watch.

Alex leans back on the sunlounger, allowing the straps from her bikini to slide down her shoulder revealing most of her breasts. Nik's eyes are drawn to her cleavage but he tries not to look. Alex relishes his embarrassment.

NIK

Well, we're losing the light. That's it for today. Same time tomorrow?

ALEX

Of course. But I must be in Estepona tomorrow. My cousin Carlos is making business. You meet me there.

NIK

Estepona? I'd like to but I don't have a car, I'm afraid. How about Saturday?

ALEX

No! Tomorrow. Meet me at the Faro. In English I don't know...

NIK

Lighthouse.

ALEX

At seven. I pay for your taxi.

Alex reaches under the sunlounger and produces a small purse. She takes out a roll of 100 Euro notes and peels one off. She rests it on her thigh suggestively.

NIK

It's not about the money.

Alex taps her manicured fingers on the bank note.

NIK

I'm not a big fan of heights. I imagine the top of the lighthouse is glass, yeah?

Alex winks, letting her bikini strap slide down further.

ALEX

At seven.

EXT. ESTEPONA LIGHTHOUSE. EARLY EVENING.

Nik clambers across wet rocks to reach the entrance to the lighthouse. The journey is difficult but not ridiculous.

He slips and hits his knee on a black rock.

Taking off his shoes and socks he reaches the door.

The lintel of the door is splintered like a crowbar has forced it. He looks around to check he is not being watched.

He enters.

INT. ESTEPONA LIGHTHOUSE. EARLY EVENING.

He walks up the spiral staircase, the sound of the sea magnified by the stone walls.

INT. MAIN BULB ROOM. ESTEPONA LIGHTHOUSE.

The bulb room is deserted. He tries to look at the view but his eyes are glued to his feet. The great bulb in the centre is switched off.

He looks at his reflection: Hundreds of splintered repetitions of himself. As he looks he notices one of the reflections is not his own. It is Archie Marino. Nik blinks and looks again.

ALEX

Boo!

He looks into the bulb and sees Alex face refracted. She moves round the bulb and into plain view. She is smartly dressed in a cream trouser suit.

ALEX

I knew you'd come.

(BEAT)

Who can resist this? Look around you...

Nik coughs and looks at the floor. His hand grips the door knob.

NIK

I'd rather not thanks.

Alex moves to the edge of the circular room and leans against the glass. She stretches out her arms to him.

ALEX

Open your eyes, my brave teacher.  
Look at me. You are safe, I promise.

NIK  
 You're embarrassing me, Alex. I  
 can't help it.

ALEX  
 You must see this vista.  
 (BEAT)  
 Chico!

Nik looks into her eyes and slowly lets go his support.  
 He edges towards her. She holds him tightly as they look out.

ALEX  
 It is not so bad, eh?

NIK  
 You make me fearless.

He throws out his arms and shouts to the mountains.

NIK  
 Fearless!  
 (BEAT)  
 Wow, now that's what I call a  
 view! I think I can see  
 Morocco...over there...you see?

ALEX  
 This is the Atlas mountain, you  
 see the snow?

He takes in the spectacular view, without looking  
 immediately down.

NIK  
 So why here?

ALEX  
 I'm watching.

NIK  
 What for?

ALEX (IGNORING HIM)  
 When I was nine, my cousin and  
 me, we break inside to watch.  
 When the night came, the  
 light...whoosh...you can stand  
 in front of the light and your...  
 not reflection, similar. I don't  
 know in English. Like this...

She points to her shadow on the ground.

NIK  
 Shadow. Your Shadow.

ALEX

When the water is flat, your  
shadow reaches to Morocco! Look!

She points to a vessel coming across from Morocco. It is  
a deep-sea yacht. The radar mast can just be made out  
turning lazily.

ALEX

My cousin's boat. You see the  
flag. Here comes Carlos.

NIK

Wow, your cousin is a lucky man.  
It must be worth a million. Have  
you been on it?

ALEX

Sure. It's for his business. I  
wanted to watch it come from here.  
See no problems. No hassle.

NIK

How do you mean?

ALEX

Forget about it, it looks OK. Now  
we make the lesson, yes. Come sit.

CUT TO

The sun's position has moved from their left to their  
right and is about to set completely.

Nik sits against the central glass bulb sketching in his  
book. Alex leans against the window and Nik is drawing her.  
He seems pleased with his efforts.

ALEX

Any minute now. Whoosh! The light  
comes on.

NIK (SKETCHING)

Don't move. I'm nearly done.

ALEX

Let me see.

He twists the book round and holds it up to her.

She nods approvingly.

NIK

I've never shown my drawings to  
anyone before.

ALEX

It is good.

NIK (NODDING)  
I think I've found my muse  
Senorita Rocca!

Nik winks at her.

She sits down next to him and gives him a peck on the cheek. This time he holds her gaze and returns the kiss on the lips.

ALEX (KNOWINGLY)  
Mr Teacher! What you do?

Nik does not reply. Alex kisses him again long and deep. As they stand in front of the bulb, embracing, the automatic light switches on, bathing the entwined figures in a solar light. Their silhouettes are cast like a movie screen onto the calm sea.

Alex breaks the embrace, shielding her eyes. She stands by the window and takes off her shirt. She is bra-less.

ALEX  
And what do you think of this  
view, eh?

NIK  
Magnificent!

They embrace and begin to make love, standing up against the glass window. The light from the bulb sweeps over them every revolution. Darkness then brilliant light.

Nik's face moves from shadow to light and back again.

INT. SANTIAGO'S CAR.

It is early morning and the highway is empty. Maria is driving. Santiago is in the passenger seat and Nik sits in the back.

MARIA  
You two are acting very  
suspicious. Who goes to  
Algecerias at this time?

SANTIAGO  
You do!

MARIA  
I work there. What business do  
you have?

Nik leans forward.

NIK  
Monkey business!

INT. WAREHOUSE. DAY.

Santiago embraces two men waiting by a Ford transit van.

CARLOS ROCCAS appears out of a side office and throws a set of keys to one of the men.

EXT. WAREHOUSE. DAY.

Nik paces up and down outside the main doors. Waiting.

INT. WAREHOUSE. DAY.

Carlos disappears back into the side office.

INT. SIDE OFFICE. WAREHOUSE. DAY.

Carlos sits down on a yellow packing crate in front of a desk. He nods to a man seated behind the desk. Only the back of the man's head is visible.

The man takes reaches for a handful of pistachio nuts from a bowl on his desk.

CARLOS

That's the driver now, patron.

UNSEEN MAN

He can be trusted.

CARLOS

You trust me don't you?

INT. WAREHOUSE. DAY.

Santiago walks to the entrance to find Nik.

The two men by the van laugh as Nik appears in the doorway.

Santiago opens the van's side door. Nik looks in.

Inside the truck are six wooden-looking chairs, stacked in two piles of three.

One of the men throws the keys to Santiago and the other passes him a map.

NIK

I don't get it.

SANTIAGO

Hot chairs.

(BEAT)

So hot they're smoking.

Nik inspects the chairs. He digs his nail into one of the legs. It leaves a small mark. He smells his finger nail.

NIK  
I don't believe it?

SANTIAGO  
Just don't smoke them before you  
reach Paris.

INT. TRANSIT VAN.

Nik is driving the van with San in the passenger seat.  
They pass a sign for a roadside cafe.

INT. ROADSIDE CAFE. ELVIRIA. DAY.

Nik and Santiago are sitting in the window of the cafe  
eating Churros and drinking Coffee. Outside the window,  
and between them, is the van.

They eat staring at each other, unaware of the figure who  
has walked up to the van and forces the lock with a slim-jim.

Nik takes a large sip of coffee as the van is driven off.  
Out of the corner of his eye he notices the movement.

Too late, he and Santiago bolt from the table.

EXT. ROADSIDE CAFE. DAY.

Nik looks round in a panic. The van is gone.

NIK  
Fuck!

Santiago falls to his knees and shakes his hands at the sky.

NIK  
Shit on a stick! Call the police!

Nik makes to call his mobile phone.

San gets off his knees and knocks the phone out of Nik's  
hand.

SANTIAGO  
Dios Mio, Nik! Use your head.

Nik picks up the phone and wipes the screen.

NIK  
Fuck! What are we going to do.

SANTIAGO  
You mean what are you going to do.

NIK  
We're in this together San.

SANTIAGO

You were giving me a lift back to Marbella only. I have nothing to do with this. You don't know Carlos.

NIK

Oh clusterfuck! Don't do this to me! What am I going to do.

SANTIAGO

I don't know, but you've got three days before you're overdue in Paris.

(BEAT)

Either make some money, find the van, or start running.

Nik is in shock. He stares at Santiago with pleading eyes.

NIK

Why are you being like this. I thought we were friends.

SANTIAGO

Understand me Nik. We are friends. But this has nothing to do with friendship. This is business. I warned you about the Roccas.

(BEAT)

I must look after myself.

NIK

Carlos Roccas. Alex's cousin?

Santiago puts a hand on his shoulder.

SANTIAGO

Be careful. I know you are giving Alex lessons and probably more besides, but don't expect help. She's so twisted, when they bury her they'll have to screw her into the ground.

INT. O MARBELLA NIGHTCLUB. NIGHT.

A hot sweating mass of gyrating designer flesh and neon lights. Nik enters the club and scouts about for Alex.

He finds her in the roped off VIP terrace overlooking a swimming pool. The bouncer won't let him pass. Nik calls over the music and waves to Alex, who motions to the bouncer to let him through. The bouncer ignores her.

She approaches the bouncer with cold eyes. Within Nik's earshot she bawls him out, vitriolic and hateful. Nik is visibly taken aback by the power of her attack.

The bouncer steps aside, scared and embarrassed.

ALEX

Sorry about him, Nik. He must be new.

NIK

It's fine. Look Alex, I need to talk to you.

ALEX

Later. I tell my cousin about you. He want to meet you.

She takes Nik's hand and leads him over to where a group of heavy looking men are sitting.

ALEX

Carlos - this is Nik. My teacher.

Nik freezes.

Carlos looks him up and down.

CARLOS

Ah, yes. The teacher. Now she loves English. I'm thinking to myself, either this man is good teacher or good lover.

Alex laughs.

Nik tries but his face is set in a nervous rictus.

Carlos turns back to his guests.

Alex leads Nik away to the bar.

ALEX

What's the matter with you?

NIK

I need a drink.

ALEX

Or something stronger. Do you want?

She produces small gold cocaine sniffer and offers it to him.

ALEX

Do you?

NIK

I do tonight.

Nik tries to look inconspicuous as he snorts from the gold box.

Alex wipes a white trace from Nik's top lip with her finger.

She takes his hand and they move to the centre of the dance floor where she goes wild. Nik dances like a condemned man.

Alex leaves to speak to Carlos.

Nik nervously watches them talk.

Alex bounces back to him and dangles a set of keys in front of his face. In her other hand is a large folded wrap of cocaine which she places in his shirt pocket.

EXT. O MARBELLA NIGHTCLUB. BEACH EXIT. SEA JETTY. NIGHT.

They exit the club using the beach entrance and walk the short distance to the jetty.

ALEX

We must swim out to the boat,  
it's out there. You see?

She strips to her bikini. Nik takes off his shoes and socks.

They dive off the jetty and swim the short distance to where the boat is moored.

Alex starts the engine, setting the boat to full throttle. It lurches up full power, almost throwing Nik off the back.

ALEX

Yes! This is la vida!

Nik clambers forward to the passenger seat where the salty moonlit spray hits their faces.

Alex rips the boat around the area in front of the club.

NIK

You sure you know what you're doing?

ALEX

Relax Nik, I am taught from the  
best...watch this!

She locks the wheel. The boat rips round causing a massive wake.

NIK

What's that?

Alex looks to where he is pointing. In the ambient light from the Nightclub's strobe-lights, spurts of water can be seen not far from the boat.

ALEX

Porpoise. Hold on...

Nik tries to open his wrap of cocaine but it is impossible. Instead he swallows it, scooping up seawater to wash it down.

ALEX

Here, You drive....Whooooa!

She sets the accelerator to maximum and pretends to fall over the seat. The boat is locked on a collision course with the jetty.

NIK

You're fucking loco...Don't joke...Alex!

ALEX

Oh Nik, I'm sorry. I can't move.  
Ha Ha!

Nik leaps forward and grabs the wheel. He steers away from the jetty. He turns his head to look at Alex, who is on her back laughing.

NIK

Help me, Alex...I'm not kidding...We're going to crash into the harbor wall!

Alex gets between him with her back against the wheel. She uses her buttocks to push the accelerator to the stop position.

The boat stops bouncing off the water and begins to glide.

NIK

I have to talk to you.

She drapes her arms around his shoulders and kisses him. Nick reaches under her Bikini top. In response she pulls the accelerator to full throttle.

Again the boat lurches forward sending Nik over the side.

Alex laughs like a banshee, before helping Nik back into the boat.

He looks wet and vulnerable. Alex takes him in her arms and they make love amongst the life-preservers.

Nik looks into her eyes about to speak.

SANTIAGO (V.O.)

Be careful of that one. She is a Roccas first.

Alex holds Nik's face in her hands

ALEX

Hello? Where are you.

NIK

I'm right here.

EXT. BEACH. NIGHT.

They sit in each other's arms on the sand, bathed in the laser-lights from the club. Alex reaches into the bundle of clothes for the gold box. The music from the club can be heard as a dampened bass line. Around them are other revelers, sharing the early morning magic. The sky is hinting at dawn - a blue tinge dispelling the night and lending a surrealism to everything. She looks in the gold box.

ALEX

Muerte! Finished baby, all gone.  
How about you? No? I go to Carlos  
give him keys, get more.

Alex dresses and picks up her shoes. She disappears into the club, leaving Nik alone with his thoughts.

NIK (TO HIMSELF)

Fuck Fuck Fuck.

CUT TO

Alex returns replenished.

Nik is still mumbling in a cocaine daze.

ALEX

Who you talk to?

NIK

No-one.

ALEX

You talk with yourself. Oh  
brother. You loco. Don't go crazy  
on me. This coca too strong for  
you, I think. You want to dance?

NIK

No, let's just sit for a bit, yeah?

ALEX

What's wrong baby? You look sad.  
I make you sad?

NIK

You're about the only thing  
making me happy right now.

ALEX

Then what?

Nik is silent.

ALEX

If you don't trust me then...

She throws up her hands.

NIK

I'm in trouble Alex. Really big trouble. I owe the wrong people a right load of money.

Alex laughs.

Nik looks hurt.

NIK

It's not funny. Why are you laughing?

ALEX

You surprise me again! You don't seem the type.

NIK

I'm not. I just tried to make a fast buck so that I could stay here in Spain... with you.

Alex kisses his forehead.

ALEX

You get yourself in trouble for me? Then I think I have the answer.

(BEAT)

My father has promised twenty thousand Euro for the man who makes favor for me. I think this will be enough for your trouble?

NIK

What's the favor?

Alex puts two fingers to the side of Nik's head and pulls an imaginary trigger.

NIK

Oh yeah, sure! I'm a regular hitman.

ALEX

I tell you something Nik, maybe only because I'm high, but I trust you.

Her face changes, recalling a painful event.

ALEX

Last summer here in Malaga, I was attacked. Molested by a man who still walks free today.

CUT TO

EXT. A PAVEMENT. DAY.

Alex' face is being pushed down onto the pavement by a hairy, sunburned hand. She has a look of fear.

CUT BACK TO

EXT. BEACH. NIGHT.

Nik takes her hand in his and squeezes it.

NIK

Couldn't the Police help?

ALEX

And you? Why don't you go to Police?

Nik reaches for a handful of sand and throws it into the sea.

ALEX

It is the Colombian way to avenge the one you love, personally.

Nik takes her in his arms and strokes her forehead.

NIK

My poor darling. How dare someone hurt you and make you sad.

(BEAT)

But what you're asking is...

He looks into the dawn then at his watch.

NIK

Fuck. I've got a class in three hours.

Nik stands up and offers her his hand. They walk up the beach, back to the club.

Near the entrance, he turns to her.

NIK

You were joking, right?

Alex slaps him hard in the face.

NIK

Christ I'm sorry. Not about the rape. I meant the...blam, blam.

ALEX

I don't joke about this. You think murder is funny?

NIK

No. I just don't think I can kill a man. I'm an English teacher not a hitman.

ALEX

Not in my defense?

NIK

Not even in self defense.

ALEX

I understand. Then you stay with your problem and my father keeps his twenty thousand euro.

(BEAT)

It would mean a lot to Carlos too. He said he would do it himself if the Guardia weren't watching him.

NIK

Carlos?

She runs ahead the remaining distance to the club.

INT O MARBELLA NIGHTCLUB. NIGHT.

Carlos is dancing. He looks up briefly to see a red-faced, sweaty Nik. Carlos shakes his head and carries on jiving in his air-conditioned life.

INT. NIK'S CLASSROOM. ECOFON LANGUAGE SCHOOL. DAY.

Four hours later. Nik is teaching. He is half way through a lesson. Alex is missing. He glances periodically at the empty seat.

NIK

So you see the passive voice is used when you don't know who is doing the action. Look at the example "A man was bitten by a dog"

STUDENT 1

But it says "A man was shot by a gun"

Nik looks at what he has written on the whiteboard. The student is correct.

NIK

Shit on a stick!

Nik hastily cleans the board. He has lost his composure.

NIK

Sorry.

(BEAT)

Excuse me. That's all for today.  
I'll take questions tomorrow.

STUDENT 2

Teacher, we have ten minutes  
remaining.

NIK

Yes, well...I'm not feeling very  
well. Can we finish there? I have  
to go. Sick, stomach.

INT. CORRIDOR. ECOFON LANGUAGE SCHOOL. MARBELLA. DAY.

He quickly exits the room.

Outside in the corridor he catches his breath.

Alex pokes him in the stomach. She wears a camera around  
her neck and holds a brown envelope. She is sucking on an  
ice-pop.

ALEX

Hola, Nik. Sorry I miss your  
lesson. It's all arranged.

Nik pulls her by the arm into an adjacent empty classroom.

INT. CLASSROOM. ECOFON LANGUAGE SCHOOL. DAY.

He shuts the door. Alex is not impressed at this manhandling.

NIK

Are you crazy? Keep your voice down!

ALEX

Hey, what's your problem? Are you  
still high?

NIK

Sorry, sorry. This is private,  
personal. Not here for Christ's  
sake.

She passes him a sealed brown envelope. Nik receives it  
like a poisonous snake.

ALEX

I can't believe you do this for  
me. I think you are someone special.

NIK

Look, Alex. we we're both fucking high last night, weren't we? I can't do this. In the cold light of day...I can't do this.

ALEX

I phone Padron for you. It's arranged. Where's the problem? Who cares about this man? Not even his mother!

NIK

You are asking me to kill a man. In cold blood.

ALEX

I no ask you to do anything. You say you need money bad. I show you how to get money and also avenge me at the same time.

Nik studies the contents of the envelope.

NIK

Who is he?

ALEX

I don't know. A gringo. Who cares?

NIK

I care! It matters to me. I need to know. Does he have a wife, kids who'll cry for their dad? it's important, He's not just a photo.

ALEX

He raped me. Does that tell you enough about his life?

EXT. A MOUNTAIN ROAD BEHIND NICK'S VILLA. SUNSET.

Nik is cycling up a steep incline on a winding, deserted back road. As he climbs higher the view out over the plains to the sea gets more spectacular.

He comes to a dip in the road and free-wheels down.

A wild cat streaks across his path. He tries to swerve but hits the cat. The impact forces him off the bike.

Cursing, he gets up and goes over to the stunned cat. It is injured but not fatally. His first instinct is to kneel down and help it, stroke it. He picks it up and gently puts it in the front basket of the bike.

He cycles the small distance remaining to the viewpoint.

He rests the bike against a tree and sits staring out to the sea.

An expensive white yacht, similar to Carlos's is lazily crossing the horizon.

Nik takes out a pen, piece of charcoal and paper. He begins sketching a hanged man and writes "Am I capable of Murder?"

He looks over at the basket. The cat has popped its head out.

He goes over to the bike and lifts out the cat, resting it on the ground. It's back leg is smashed up as it limps in dazed circles.

He picks up the cat and breaks its neck. The body goes limp. Nik is shaking, not quite believing what he's done. He holds the cat to his face and looks into its dead eyes.

Disgusted with himself he throws the corpse into the scrub and wipes his hands on his trousers.

INT. NIK'S VILLA. LOS ARCOS. MARBELLA. NIGHT.

The villa is small and dirty. Ambient music plays from a small portable stereo.

Nik is sat on his sofa staring at Alex's brown envelope.

He rips open the paper and empties the contents onto the table. A photo and book of matches fall out. He stares at the photo - Archie Marino is getting out of a car. The face is clear. He studies it. Propping the photo against a wine bottle on the table facing him, he looks at the book of matches - "Albert's Bar & Grill. Cabopino Port. Marbella" He opens the flap. In pen is written "Archie Marino. Thursday. From 10pm. Ax"

Nik opens his mobile phone.

NIK

San. It's Nik.

(BEAT)

You don't have to tell me it's twenty-four hours. Look I think I've found a solution.

Nik picks up a sketch pad and begins to doodle. To facilitate this he puts his mobile to hands-free, resting it against the photograph of Archie Marino.

Santiago's half of the conversation can now be heard.

NIK

I need a gun.

SANTIAGO

What the hell for? Are things so bad, now you gonna shoot yourself!

NIK

San, please. You got me into this shit.

SANTIAGO

Jo Bar. It's the only place malo enough that I know of. I smoke a bit of dope Nik. I'm not a fucking gangster.

EXT. CAR PARK. JO BAR. MIJAS COSTA. NIGHT.

Nik steps out of a taxi onto the forecourt of Jo bar, a biker's pub. Rock & Roll from a live band screams out across the bikes in the parking lot.

INT. JO BAR. MIJAS COSTA. NIGHT.

He enters and sits down at a table. When he realizes there is no waiter service, he goes up to the bar and orders a beer.

He scopes the bar. Nothing is obvious, people look ordinary. He contemplates his next move, trying to see if anyone has bulges in their jackets.

Two bikers play pool in the corner. One is recognizable as being with Alex at Vibe Bar.

Nik walks up to the table and puts down a euro coin.

NIK

Winner stays on?

Nik hangs about trying to enjoy the live band.

BIKER (TO NIK)

Hey, you're up...you at the bar...yeah...we're on.

Nik sets up the balls and breaks. The band break into Hendrix's "Hey Joe".

NIK (SINGING)

"...where you going with that gun in your hand..."

BIKER

Good, aren't they. Where you from?

NIK

Originally, London.

BIKER  
Manchester. Don't miss it either.

He viscously pots a ball.

NIK  
Listen, I don't want to sound weird but I came here tonight 'cos I'm looking for something, you get me?

BIKER  
Uh-huh. Aren't we all. Looking for something or trying to lose something. Which are you?

NIK  
Well, it's kinda delicate...I don't want to shout it out. It's a bit irregular, dig?

BIKER  
OK, man. I know what you need. Finish the game and meet me outside, by the bikes.

Nik loses the game as quickly as possible and goes outside.

EXT. CAR PARK. OUTSIDE THE BAR. NIGHT.

The local police have pulled up and are sitting in their squad car. The Biker comes out. He sees the police and ignores them. He points to his bike and Nik follows him over. He opens his glove box.

NIK  
Hold on. Did you check the Guardia Civil, over there?

BIKER  
Fuck'em. Probably here for a drink. They don't care about a bit of blow.

The Biker pulls out a bin liner full of weed. He shoves it under Nik's nose.

BIKER  
Good shit! It's Homegrown. Smell. How much you after?

Before Nik can explain the misunderstanding, a fight breaks out on the steps of the pub.

A stray beer bottle hits the police car bonnet.

The two policeman leap out and rush in the direction of the fight.

A man is about to glass another with a broken bottle.

The Biker puts the bag back in the glove box and locks it.

He rushes to join in the fight.

Nik watches for a minute then walks away.

He passes the empty police car and looks in. There is a gun in its holster in the open glove compartment.

He looks around him - everyone is absorbed in the fight, a policeman has been punched.

Nik reaches in and takes the gun, running off into the darkness.

EXT. MARBELLA BEACH FRONT. DAY.

Nik walks along the esplanade, past a small fun-fair on the beach. It is a scorching hot day yet he wears a jacket covering a bulge.

He looks pale and tired as he enters the fun-fair and walks to a shooting gallery.

Paying the gypsy women for a shot, he feels the weight of the air-pistol in his hand.

The target is a soldier's face and he aims carefully before firing.

The pellet hits, leaving a hole in the paper target, above the soldier's left eye.

Nik walks on, reaching the harbor wall.

He rests from the heat on the stone steps and looks across the road at an Audi TT convertible. A good-looking couple are getting out. The girl is vaguely reminiscent of Alex. The man could be Nik if he had more money for grooming products.

Nik leans back on the harbor steps, opening his jacket and shirt and falls asleep in the hot sun.

CUT TO

Burning sun.

CUT TO

Nik's red face. His eyes are closed and twitching. He is dreaming.

EXT. NIK'S DREAM.

Nik is sitting in the Audi TT with Alex at his side.

The car races down the winding back road where he killed the cat.

Alex reaches across the gear stick and unzips his trousers.

She reaches in, but instead of pulling out his cock; she pulls out the gun.

Nik screeches the car to a halt in a dust-ball at the deserted viewpoint.

Alex sits up on the crossbar of the car.

She takes the gun and puts it up her skirt, as if she is masturbating with the barrel. She groans with pleasure and extracts the gun.

She points it at Nik and pulls the trigger.

EXT. MARBELLA BEACH FRONT. DAY.

Nik opens his sunburned eyes, wincing in pain and instinctively feels for the gun.

INT. NIK'S VILLA. INTERIOR. DAY.

Nik bursts through the door of his villa, putting the chain on behind him.

He presses play on his CD and "BOLERO" (REVEL) plays.

He takes the gun from his jacket pocket and moves to the table to inspect it.

He opens the chamber - a full compliment of six bullets. He studies the gun, flicks the safety catch on, off. Loads and unloads.

He looks in the mirror and points it.

NIK

"You talking to me?... Are you talking to... Are you talking to me?"

He looks embarrassed and stops. He picks up the photo leaning against the wine bottle.

His mobile phone rings. He looks at the ID and it says "Paris".

He throws the phone to the sofa, unanswered, and moves to the sideboard to pour himself a whiskey.

He drains the whiskey and pours again, lighting a cigarette. He inhales and blows the smoke down the gun barrel.

NIK  
 Just one little squeeze of the  
 finger and all my problems go away.

He stares at the photo of Archie Marino and talks to it.

NIK  
 I'm sorry Archie, old boy, but I  
 gotta do it. It's you or me.

Archie Marino stares out from the photo.

EXT. CABOPINO HARBOR NIGHT.

The photograph morphs into real time with the target,  
 Archie Marino, getting out of a car with the aid of a  
 wooden walking cane.

He walks into "Albert's Bar & Grill" restaurant.

"BOLERO" (REVEL) continues to play, now from the  
 restaurants sound-system.

Nik watches him from across the road. He leans on a large  
 ship's anchor wearing a black polo-neck top, black jeans  
 and dark sunglasses. Despite his imagining this is  
 probably what a hitman should look like, he looks  
 decidedly out of place.

He opens the book of matches to check the message.

"Thursday From 10pm. Albert's. Alexxx"

He looks at his watch - 22:20. He takes a vitamin tablet  
 and swigs from the bottle of water at his side.

EXT. ALBERT'S BAR & GRILL. NIGHT.

Archie sits at a table alone, outside on the terrace.

The waiter arrives and he orders a bottle of wine.

EXT. CABOPINO HARBOR. NIGHT.

Nik watches Archie's wine arrive and pats his jacket  
 pocket, feeling for the gun.

He makes two false starts to the restaurant but nerves  
 beat him. It is too public.

From his jacket pocket he pulls out a pink washing up  
 glove and puts it on his shooting hand.

EXT. ALBERT'S BAR & GRILL. NIGHT.

The waiter bumps into Archie's table, sending his bottle  
 of wine splashing onto his trousers.

Archie dabs the stain with a napkin and moves inside with the help of his cane.

Nik crosses the road, both hands in his jacket pocket.

INT. TOILET. ALBERT'S BAR & GRILL.

Nik follows Archie into the toilet. Archie stands at the urinal with his back to the door. His walking cane rests against the sink. A large bird is carved into the wooden handle.

Nik quickly checks the two cubicles, making sure they are empty.

He picks up a hand towel and wraps the gun in it to deaden the noise.

He approaches Archie just as he's about to turn round.

With eyes closed and looking away, Nik points the gun and pulls the trigger. There is a muffled thud.

MUSIC STOPS ABRUPTLY.

Nik looks round. Archie has been shot in the back of the head. His forehead and frontal lobes are splattered against the blue tiles, It is a real and brutal sight.

Nik whimpers, wide-eyed with fear. He drops the gun and rushes from the toilet.

EXT. ALBERT'S BAR & GRILL. NIGHT.

Nik puts his hands in his pockets, lowers his head and walks as calmly as possible through the restaurant. No-one seems to notice him. The music is loud, mutter of dinner conversation strong. The distance between toilet and diners is enough to have masked the gun shot.

EXT. CABOPINO HARBOR. NIGHT.

Nik walks into the street.

A safe distance from the restaurant he drops the glove into the yellow trashcan and breaks into a run.

EXT. CABOPINO BEACH. NIGHT.

Nik is at a beach payphone. Car headlights swoop past him as he fumbles for some change and looks at his reflection in the glass of the phone booth. There are tiny bits of brain and blood on his shirt and neck. He wipes his face. His gun hand has powder burns on it. He reaches for Alex's number and dials. He is manic with adrenaline and fear.

A police car and Ambulance scream past him.

He turns his face away from the road.

NIK  
 Alex...? Oh, habla usted Ingles?  
 Shit! Alex, Alex Roccas, por  
 favor...No comprende.

He slams down the phone and runs off onto the darkened beach.

INT. NIK'S VILLA. LOS ARCOS. MARBELLA. NIGHT.

Nik is in the shower cleaning the blood and brains off him.

INT. LIVING ROOM.

He towels himself dry and takes out the book of matches from his jacket on the sofa.

He strikes a match, picks up the photo of the dead man, sets fire to it, drops it in the bin and throws the book of matches in after it.

He picks up his phone and dials.

NIK  
 Alex? Oh thank God! Where you  
 been? I've done it.

He sets the phone to hands-free speaker and continues drying himself.

ALEX  
 You done what?

NIK  
 You know what. Don't make me say  
 it. This is a mobile, it's not  
 secure.

ALEX  
 Don't joke Nik.

NIK  
 Do you think I'd fucking joke  
 about that!

ALEX  
 You really did it?

NIK  
 Damn right I fucking done it.  
 (BEAT)  
 I need to see you. I don't know  
 how to feel.

ALEX  
 You fucking crazy man. Loco.  
 Don't call again. You don't call  
 here again...

Nik sits down on the floor and holds his hand to his mouth.  
 He gags and then is sick all over the carpet.

INT. ECOFON LANGUAGE SCHOOL. MORNING.

Nik enters the school. He looks a total mess. Frazzled,  
 wired, tired.

INT. CORRIDOR. ECOFON LANGUAGE SCHOOL. MARBELLA. DAY.

Nik peers through the door to his classroom. No Alex.

INT. STAFF ROOM ECOFON LANGUAGE SCHOOL. MARBELLA. DAY

Santiago is at the photocopier. He seems surprised to see  
 Nik.

NIK (DISTANTLY)  
 Where's Alex?

SANTIAGO  
 What?

NIK (EMOTIONLESS)  
 Where's Alex Roccas?

SANTIAGO  
 I dunno...probably waiting  
 upstairs for the lesson...que  
 passa, Nik?

NIK  
 Where are the student contact  
 details?

SANTIAGO  
 She's no upstairs?

NIK (EMOTIONLESS)  
 No. Where are the contact details?

SANTIAGO  
 Not until you tell me what's  
 happened. You freaking me, Nicky.

Nik snaps and grabs Santiago by the his shirt. He throws  
 him against the photocopier.

NIK  
 Where the fucking contact details!

SANTIAGO (FRIGHTENED)  
 In the fucking Rolodex!

Santiago's shouting snaps Nik into focus.

Nik moves to the side desk and flicks through the Rolodex. He is babbling.

NIK

Something's happened...it's terrible... misunderstanding...I HAVE to speak to Alex. Don't ask me, San, please don't ask me. Have to speak to Alex, must speak to Alex. Shit, shit...there!

He pulls out a card with an address and two numbers. He picks up the phone and dials the new number.

NIK

Alex? No...Alex, por favor...  
(HE SLAMS DOWN THE PHONE)  
...I don't fucking understand...  
(TO SANTIAGO)  
...You call...please I can't translate...for fuck sake,

Santiago takes the phone and dials.

SANTIAGO

Alex?

He puts down the phone and turns to Nik.

SANTIAGO

She left for the airport. She's going home.  
(BEAT)  
What's happened? Is it Carlos?

NIK

Oh sweet Jesus what have I done? This is not fucking happening. Oh, San, tell me this isn't happening.

SANTIAGO

Nik...por favor!

NIK

What time the flight?

SANTIAGO

I don't know. Soon, I guess.

Nik goes to leave. Santiago grabs his arm.

SANTIAGO

Did you do something for her you shouldn't?

Nik is stopped in his tracks.

NIK  
What do you mean?

Santiago points at a picture on the staff room wall.

Nik looks at it. It is a class photo with Santiago as teacher. Alex hangs off his shoulders. She is kissing him on the cheek.

Nik can't believe it.

SANTIAGO  
Two months we dated. Nearly the  
whole of last summer.  
(BEAT)  
Then we split. And do you know why?

Nik leans against the wall.

SANTIAGO  
She asked me to, how do you say,  
get rid of, a man who molested her.

Nik slides down the wall until he is crouching.

SANTIAGO  
I'd never heard anything so  
stupid in all my life. So do you  
know what I did? I went to see  
this man, to talk with him. Do  
you know who he actually was?

NIK  
What have I done?

SANTIAGO  
It was her shrink. Her psychiatrist.

Nik's mouth falls open.

SANTIAGO  
I tried to warn you about her.

Nik starts to run out of the staffroom.

SANTIAGO (CALLING AFTER HIM)  
I hope you haven't done anything  
stupid.  
(TO HIMSELF)  
God have mercy on you. The  
Guardia certainly won't.

EXT. ECOFON LANGUAGE SCHOOL. MARBELLA. DAY

Nik leans against the wall and vomits again.

Passers-by look on in horror and hurry away.

A police car drives past slowly and look at him. His paranoia is tangible.

As soon as the police car is out of view he hurries down the street, trying to hail a taxi.

EXT. ALEX ROCCAS' VILLA. DAY.

Nik jumps out of a taxi and races to the gates of Alex's villa just in time to see her getting in to the back of a big white Mercedes.

He jumps the gate and catches the closing car door.

NIK

Alex!

Inside the car, Alex motions to the driver to drive.

The car begins to move. Nik holds on to the open door and runs with it to the gate, where it has to stop while the gate opens.

NIK

Alex, please! I don't understand.  
Help me!

The gate is open. In a last desperate attempt he stands in front of the car, hands on bonnet.

Alex motions again for the driver to stop. She winds down her window.

ALEX

What do you want from me, Nik? I told you...this is a joke?

Nik's eyes tell her it is no joke.

NIK

Get out of the car, I can't talk to you like this.

ALEX

What is your major malfunction, eh?...I was joking...It was a JOKE!

NIK

What? Joke what? Joke how?

ALEX (TO DRIVER)

I don't have time for this. My flight is leaving. Drive!

Nik grabs her arm through the open window.

NIK

No! You're not going anywhere,  
you wait just a fucking minute.

ALEX

Take your hand off me! You scare me!

The driver has now got out of the car and is approaching  
Nik. Alex motions for him to wait.

NIK

Do I? How do you think I feel?  
How do you think it felt  
executing this man? His fucking  
brains exploding on my shirt!  
When I called you, remember? I  
was picking bits of jawbone and  
matted blood out of my hair, my  
face, my...my fucking God...this  
is a joke?...you tell me this is  
a joke?

ALEX

But where you get gun? How could  
someone like you ever get gun?

NIK

Someone like me what?

ALEX

You were a nice guy, that's why  
I liked you. You not like other  
people in my life. I play game.  
This is all. Make you feel  
dangerous and sexy.

NIK

Sexy?

(BEAT)

Let me make it real simple for  
you, Alex. Last night I murdered  
a man for you. He might have a  
wife and kids, wondering where  
he is. Where's daddy?

(BEAT)

Daddy is lying in a shitter in  
Cabopino with his cock in his  
hand and what's left of his brain  
in the fucking urinal. And you  
tell me I did this for a cunt  
joke?

ALEX

What do you want from me, Nik?

NIK

I want to know who he was.

ALEX

Archie Marino.

NIK

I fucking know that, Alex. Who WAS he?

ALEX (QUIETLY)

He was my doctor.

NIK

You fucking bitch!

ALEX

You need help, Nik. I'm sorry, I'm so sorry.

ALEX

You're sorry? Where's my fucking money? You owe me that at least...give me my fucking money!

The driver grabs Nik and throws him to the ground.

Nik tries to get up, but the driver kicks him in the face.

As the car pulls off, Alex's door remains open. She looks at Nik lying in the driveway.

Nik wipes his chin and gets to his feet as the car speeds away. He stumbles out of the wrought-iron gates.

INT. BEDROOM. NIK'S VILLA. LOS ARCOS. MARBELLA. DAY.

Nik pulls down a large hold-all from the wardrobe and throws in random handfuls of clothes.

He goes to a drawer and takes out a passport.

INT. MALAGA AIRPORT. DEPARTURES. DAY.

Nik enters the departure area, wearing thick sunglasses to hide his darting eyes. His small hold-all is over his shoulder.

He studies the flight information board.

The flight to Bogotá has closed.

He strides across the marble expanse of the departure hall.

CUT TO

Archie Marino's head explodes against the blue tiles.

CUT BACK TO

Nik walks towards a check-in desk.

The monitor above the desk reads "LONDON".

He throws down his bag.

EXT. A LONDON UNDERGROUND TRAIN PULLS INTO EARLS COURT STATION.

TITLE: ONE MONTH LATER.

INT. A LONDON UNDERGROUND TRAIN. DAY

Nik sits on the end seat, facing the door. He has grown a small goatee beard and has lost weight. His suntan has faded.

He is drawing, in his sketchpad, the passengers facing him.

Directly in front of him are two old men. Both in remarkably good shape for their advanced years. They wear identically cut suits and hats, but one's is a black color, the other white. They could be twins. They watch Nik sketch, benignly.

Nik becomes aware of them staring.

WHITE SUITED MAN

May we see?

NIK

Excuse me?

BLACK SUITED MAN

May we see...

WHITE SUITED MAN

...your drawing?

They finish each other's sentences without missing a beat. Nik leans across and hands them the sketchbook. They nod approval simultaneously.

WHITE SUITED MAN

Really very good...

BLACK SUITED MAN

Are you...

WHITE SUITED MAN

...an Artist?

Nik takes back the sketchbook bashfully.

NIK

I wish. It's only a hobby, kills the time, doesn't it.

BLACK SUITED MAN

Just so.

The train has come to a stop in the tunnel.

NIK  
Don't take this the wrong way,  
but you both look very...

BLACK SUITED MAN  
Strange?

WHITE SUITED MAN  
He thinks we look very...

BLACK SUITED MAN  
...strange!

NIK  
I was going to say striking.  
(BEAT)  
Are you twins? Like good cop, bad  
cop...you know, the suits!

BLACK SUITED MAN  
We're not related...

WHITE SUITED MAN  
...by blood. But you could say  
we are soul mates. He's like my  
shadow. We share...

BLACK SUITED MAN  
...a Balance.

Nik smiles knowingly and resumes sketching.

The two old men look at each other and laugh.

WHITE SUITED MAN  
Not like you are thinking...

BLACK SUITED MAN  
...We are not, homosexuals.

NIK  
It's none of my business. I  
didn't say you were.  
(BEAT)  
So what if you are?

BLACK SUITED MAN  
Have you never felt it yourself..?

WHITE SUITED MAN  
...In the quiet moments? The pull  
of your soul's other half?

BLACK SUITED MAN  
Calling out...

WHITE SUITED MAN  
...Desiring unity.

BLACK SUITED MAN  
Don't you know it takes...

WHITE SUITED MAN  
...two halves...

BLACK SUITED MAN  
...to make...

WHITE SUITED MAN  
...a whole?

Nik is starting to get a bit twitchy. He doesn't want to have the conversation.

NIK  
Nope.

BLACK SUITED MAN  
You will. We all do...

WHITE SUITED MAN  
...eventually...

BLACK SUITED MAN  
...If we take the time...

WHITE SUITED MAN  
...to listen. It took me years  
to find my other half. Show me  
your hand, I'll explain...

NIK  
No you're alright. Thanks anyway.

BLACK SUITED MAN  
The trains not going anywhere.  
Let him look. Kills the time,  
doesn't it?

Nik moves across to sit in the free seat next to them.

He offers his right hand to White-suited man who begins to study the palm.

WHITE SUITED MAN  
Yes, you see that line on the  
Mons. You have a light half soul  
my artistic friend.

He touches the white fabric of his suit and turns Nik's palm over. Traces of the powder burn are visible on his knuckles. The man's face becomes very grave.

Black-suited man leans sideways to join in. He also begins to shake his head.

BLACK SUITED MAN  
We can't understand it.

WHITE SUITED MAN  
Not at all.

NIK  
What? What's wrong?

WHITE SUITED MAN  
I'm looking to see where you can find the person who has the dark half of your soul...

He points at the black suit fabric.

BLACK SUITED MAN  
Well, I've never seen that before...

WHITE SUITED MAN  
...nor I...according to your palm, he or she is...but...by your own doing...

BLACK SUITED MAN  
...that's not possible.

White-suited man drops Nik's hand and begins muttering in the other's ear.

The Train pulls into Shoreditch station.

Nik exits the train, glancing sideways at the two men before stepping off.

They eyeball him nervously. The only word audible from White's lips.

WHITE SUITED MAN (WHISPERED)  
...I'm telling you, he's a murderer...

EXT. HOXTON SQUARE GARDENS. SHOREDITCH.

Nik is sitting in Hoxton square. It is filled with young, trendy people enjoying the sunshine. He sits with five of his friends ROB, PHIL, TOBY, GLENN, CLARE, having a make-shift picnic.

A cork is pulled from a champagne bottle. It sounds like a gun-shot.

Nik jumps visibly.

ROB  
 Jesus, Nik. You been smoking the  
 rocks again?

NIK  
 Not since Spain, you know...

PHIL  
 Yeah, what's up with that? I  
 thought you were having a blast?  
 Why come back to this old shit-pit?

Nik takes a swig of the champagne that's being passed  
 round. He seems on the verge of crying.

ROB  
 Hey, Space Cowboy?

NIK  
 Just give me a minute, yeah? I'm OK.

Rob shakes his head and turns to Glenn. Nik begins  
 automatically ripping up clumps of grass. He looks around  
 him.

A familiar looking man dressed in black moves in the  
 shadows of the trees at the edge of the square, behind the  
 colorful and bright crowd.

Toby is addressing the group.

TOBY  
 Gross. It was this Schizo guy,  
 right. It was in all the papers.  
 He forget to take his anti-  
 psychotics , and before you can  
 say George Bush, Boom, he's  
 shooting up his family. Blam.

The crowd of people in the square are all overly happy  
 with seemingly not a care in the world.

The dark shadow of the man continues to move unnoticed  
 against the trees.

Phil takes two small sticks and binds them together with  
 a piece of twine, making a cross.

He places it on the patch were Nik has ripped up the grass.

TOBY (MIMICKING A GUNSHOT)  
 Blam!

Nik sees the mini-grave. He jumps up and kicks it over,  
 continuing to kick long after the sticks have gone.

The group laugh nervously at him, unsure of his motivation.

PHIL

Nik, are you OK? Nik!

Phil gets up and puts his arm round Nik.

PHIL

You better tell us what happened in Spain, man. This ain't like you at all.

NIK

It's like I said, I ran out of money and had to leave. No big deal. Leave it hey Phil?

ROB

Yeah, but your mum called mine and said you left in kind of a hurry. She was moaning that she had to square it with your Spanish landlady.

NIK

Your mum should mind her own business.

ROB

She can't she's a private eye...

PHIL

Private dick!

NIK

Makes sense. she looks like Magnum!

ROB

Ha! Well, fuck it. I'm just glad your back, Crosby.

Nik forces a wan smile.

NIK

I gotta scoot. I'm teaching over at St.Patrick's now. Next time I'll dish the dirt better. It's just all a bit too raw right now.

Nik exits the square.

EXT. A NEWS STAND. HOXTON SQUARE. DAY

Nik buys a Spanish Newspaper. He lights a cigarette and stands, scouring the Newspaper for any incriminating news.

He throws the paper in the bin.

INT. LONDON UNDERGROUND TRAIN. EVENING.

Nik is once more on the train, this time the journey home at the end of the working day. He is doodling again, sketching the passengers facing him.

He has a coughing fit and reaches into his pocket pulling out a handkerchief and his vitamin tablets, with it is a folded piece of paper.

It is on headed note-paper from St Patrick's college. He opens it and reads.

"Yevenia's Birthday drinks. From 6pm - Hermitage Restaurant. Near St. Paul's."

He pulls a pained expression.

INT. "HERMITAGE" A RUSSIAN RESTAURANT NEAR ST.PAUL'S CATHEDRAL. LONDON. EVENING.

It has been raining outside and Nik shakes his coat as he enters.

He sneezes and coughs his way through the diners to a table at the back where eight people, male and female, all in their early twenties are seated.

NIK

Happy Birthday Yevenia! I've brought the bad weather with me as a present.

YEVENIA

Thank you, Teacher. I get you vodka, it will make you forget the weather and the cold. Sit down!

Nik sits and removes his coat, exchanging pleasantries with the people round the table.

NIK

Well, I teach four of you, but the rest...Yevenia, introduce me!

Yevenia is busy trying to attract the waitress's attention. She momentarily gives up.

YEVENIA

Da. This is Ji, this is Irma, Irma not Imma, da, this is Glenda and...Ozan.

They wave excitedly as if a register is being called.

Their waitress EVA (28) comes over carrying a tray of vodka. She is Russian and good looking, small and dark haired. A dead ringer for Alex Roccas.

EVA

Vodka...

(BEAT)

I'm sorry, I hear, you all go to language school?

Nods of agreement.

EVA

Me also! Which one you go?

YEVENIA

St Patrick's College.

EVA

Ah! Mine is not so good I think. Very expensive. You like yours?

NIK

I should hope so, I'm her Teacher!

Eva gives an impish smile to Nik.

EVA

English Teacher? Maybe you help me. Do you give private lessons?

Nik stares into the candle as if remembering something.

Everybody resumes their separate conversations, leaving Nik and Eva to theirs.

NIK

Yeah, why not? Talk to me some more, so I can gauge your level.

EVA

My name is Eva, I work here evenings, about six months. I... I feel stupid, I don't know what else to say!

NIK

Sounds to me like you have very good English, Upper Intermediate, Advanced, I guess?

EVA

You are correct! I do my Cambridge First Certificate in three weeks. I need extra lessons - to help me write and practice my speech, but my school...private lessons are so expensive...

NIK

Well I tell you what...look...you  
got a pen?

She gives him her waitress pen and pad. He writes down his  
name and number.

NIK

There. That's my name...sorry,  
I'm Nik, pleased to meet  
you...and here's my number. Give  
me a call!

EVA

Da, I'll do that. Thank you, Nik.  
You want another wodka?

Nik winks.

EVA (WHISPERED)

I give you the good stuff, not  
this peasant piss, pravda!

She goes to the bar. Yevenia watches Nik ogle her and digs  
him in the ribs.

YEVENIA

So, you want Russian girlfriend?

EXT. ST. PAUL'S TRAIN STATION. NIGHT.

HIGH & LOW (NEIL HALSTEAD) PLAYS.

Nik waits for the last train. He is trying to stifle tears.  
The platform is open-air, dark and deserted. He opens his  
sketchbook and writes.

NIK (V.O.)

Second time today I've been in a  
crowd and yet utterly alone. I  
feel so isolated. No-one knows  
what I been through.

A fluttering of wings disrupts his writing. A large bird -  
almost too large to be natural for London has landed on  
the rails in front of him. It is winged and distressed.  
Nik looks closer. The bird's left eye is bloody and  
exploded like it has been shot.

The train light appears down the track. The light flashes  
round like a lighthouse beacon coming closer.

Nik jumps onto the tracks, avoiding the third rail and  
scoops up the bird. It flaps and is still.

He climbs back onto the platform, well in advance of the  
train.

Nik looks at the large bird. It appears dead.

Nik's face is momentarily illuminated by the arriving train.

He waits for people to leave the platform then walks to the far end where he finds some shrubbery and earth.

With his bare hands he moves aside broken bottles and used condoms to dig a hole in the earth. With religious gravity like a penance, he buries the bird and places two sticks in the shape of a cross.

Down the tracks a rumbling sound and incredible rush of wind hits him. Then silence.

EXT. A BIRDCAGE. EARLS COURT RECREATION PARK. DAY.

It is raining lightly. Nik stands by the large Victorian aviary. He is watching a hawk rip the flesh from a dead mouse.

A hand taps him on the shoulder and he spins round to see Eva. She is holding an umbrella, her coat done-up against the drizzle.

EVA

Hello Nik. I didn't mean to frighten you.

NIK

Eva! Sorry. I'm a bit jumpy at the moment.

(BEAT)

This weather is terrible, isn't it?

Eva raises her umbrella to check the sky. In profile she looks strikingly similar to Alex Roccas.

EVA

Russian sky. I am used to this.

NIK

Well, you said on the phone you wanted an outdoor conversation class. That's the risk you take.

(BEAT)

Shall we..?

They begin to walk, huddled under Eva's umbrella.

NIK

So whereabouts in Russia are you from.

EVA

St. Petersburg. Have you been?

NIK

No I...

Nik is staring intently into Eva's eyes.

She becomes uncomfortable.

EVA

Nik? What's wrong?

NIK

You remind me of someone.

(BEAT)

Alex? Is that you?

Eva looks around and realizes they are alone in the park. She laughs nervously.

Nik reaches to touch her face.

NIK

Alex. How could you!

He retracts his hand and makes as if to slap her.

Eva drops the umbrella and runs away from him.

Nik is left alone in the park. The upturned umbrella around his feet.

INT. NIK'S BEDSIT. EARLS COURT. MORNING.

Nik is asleep, fully clothed on the sofa of his rundown bedsit. His sketches and doodles are strewn over the coffee table, next to a chess board. On the floor at his feet are weeks of Spanish local newspapers.

A gunshot is heard and he sits bolt-upright.

He collects up the doodles and puts them inside his sketch book.

He opens the book and looks at his work. Various images he has drawn - Yin Yang symbol, Lighthouse, Archie Marino's face reflected in the toilet mirror. People on Underground train every morning/afternoon. He stops at a big pencil sketch of Alex's face and sips his coffee, before realizing it is stone cold.

NIK

You fucking bitch!

He spits the cold coffee onto the sketch of Alex's face causing the charcoal to smudge and distort her features.

He rushes to the communal toilet to be sick.

INT. COMMUNAL TOILET. NIK'S BEDSIT.

Nik grips the toilet bowl, gripping the stained sides. He lets go long and hard. After the first involuntary vomit, he sticks his fingers down his throat.

NIK

Gonna puke you out of me! Gonna  
shit you out of me! Piss you out  
of me!

He vomits again like an exorcism.

He reaches up for his toothbrush and cleans his teeth, looking at his reflection in the rusted mirror. His face is half lit. Half in shadow, half in light.

INT. LOUNGE. NIK'S BEDSIT.

He returns to the living room and screws up the sketch of Alex.

He throws it in the bin, misses and knocks over his vitamin tablets.

He picks up the container, then throws it across the room into the bin as well.

CUT TO

Through the window, the sun sets in the west and immediately comes back up in the East.

(FROM THIS POINT EVERYTHING IS SATURATED WITH A BRIGHT, UNNATURAL LIGHT UNTIL THE FINAL SCENE)

CUT BACK TO

Nik sits on the sofa staring with glazed eyes out of the window. He snaps out of it and takes a sip of Coffee, pulling a face - it is still freezing cold. He looks at his watch. 09:50. He is shivering, sick with cold. He picks up his phone.

NIK

Sharon, it's Nik...Look I feel  
like shit today...I'm really  
sorry. Lesson plans are in my  
pigeon hole.

He throws open the curtain. Bright sunlight hits him, showing his body in outline, arms holding the curtain, outstretched, like a bird.

NIK

Oh Crap! I'm dying!

Turning round, he accidentally kicks the table. The sketch book falls to the floor, splaying its contents like a fan.

Nik bends down to collect them.

The sketches up close are of passengers on the trains over a period of weeks. The fan effect leaves the final passenger on the end seat visible in four different sketches - It is Archie Marino in each one.

Nik recoils in fear then dares himself to look again.

He opens out the fan of sketches to see more drawings, 5, 6, 7 different sketches of passengers on the train on different days, all with the same man in the same position.

Nik freaks out and runs out of the bedsit.

EXT. EARLS COURT TUBE STATION PLATFORM. DAY.

Nik paces the platform, arms folded, preoccupied.

The train pulls in with a crackle of blue electricity.

He gets on a carriage. Just before the doors close he jumps off and on to the next carriage. Doors shut. Train moves out.

INT. UNDERGROUND TRAIN.

The train goes into a tunnel, lights dim.

When the lights come up, Nik looks to the end of the carriage. There, on the furthest seat, as in his sketches, sits Archie Marino, wearing a black suit and staring directly ahead

The train enters another tunnel and the lights go out.

NIK

Sweet Christ.

The lights come back up. He looks again.

Archie Marino has turned his head and is staring straight at him.

Nik is paralyzed with fear, Marino continues to stare impassively.

EXT. KENSINGTON HIGH STREET STATION.

The train doors slide open, Nik exits in a panic.

Just as the doors are about to close, Marino follows.

CUT TO

Nik takes the escalator steps two at a time.

At the top he waits by the ticket barrier wide-eyed with fear.

The escalator reveals Marino's head followed by body, moving towards him.

A crowd of tourists cut sideways across, obscuring Nik's view. When they pass, Marino has vanished.

Nik waits watching the escalator. The sound of a busker playing "BOLERO"(REVEL) on the violin, badly, is heard.

Nik walks away from the escalator and through the winding tunnel to the station exit. The sound of the busker gets louder.

Nik pensively turns the corner, bringing the busker into view. It is Archie Marino playing the violin in his black suit, face bloodied from the gunshot wound.

Nik has no choice but to run past him screaming.

EXT. KENSINGTON HIGH STREET. DAY.

Nik bolts from the station exit and continues running down the street.

INT. FITZROVIA TAVERN. DAY.

He enters the bar, coughing and sneezing and in an obvious state of distress.

He sits at a barstool. The Barkeep puts down his Spanish newspaper and comes over.

BARMAN

What can I get you, sir?

NIK

Double Jamesons. No ice.

Nik takes the drink and drains it. He looks in the mirror behind the bar. In the reflection, Archie Marino is over his shoulder, standing stock still, staring directly at him.

Nik turns slowly and deliberately.

There is no-one there.

BARMAN

That's three pounds? Another?

Nik turns back round and fishes for some change. He extracts a crumpled ten pound note and hands it to the Barman, nodding.

The barman refills his glass.

The entrance door bangs open and a man enters.

Nik is wound so tight he drops his glass and spins round to face the door.

It is a man carrying a delivery of drinks. The Barman acknowledges him and goes over to help.

Nik stands up and brushes the whiskey stain from his trousers.

Behind the bar, a bottle of Russian vodka catches his eye. He looks at his watch, remembering something.

He gets up to leave and looks through the bar to the Saloon bar.

Sitting in a snug is Archie Marino once more staring at him.

The Barman, carrying a crate of drinks crosses his view, when he moves, Marino is gone.

EXT. NIK'S BEDSIT. EARLS COURT.

Nik approaches his flat. Eva waits on his doorstep wearing a cream trouser suit, identical to the one Alex wore at Estepona lighthouse. Nik is in an advanced state of paranoia and doesn't notice her at first.

EVA

Second chance? Are you feeling OK now?

NIK

Eva. Come in. I'm having a very strange day. Sorry I'm late.

EVA

It's OK, relax. My day bad too.

NIK

Not like this, I guarantee you!

INT. NIK'S BEDSIT. EARLS COURT.

Nik is drawing the curtains, turning on the lights, moving maniacally.

Eva watches him from the doorway.

NIK

I think I'm being followed...not sure...someone else must know...testing me...you know...no, you don't know...

EVA  
Teacher?

NIK (COUGHING)  
It's not possible.

EVA  
You sound ill...are you ill? You have the cold?

NIK (MANIC)  
Yeah, got a stinking cold. Came on this morning, or was it last night, don't know? Sorry, come in. Sit down, sit down.

(BEAT)  
I'll do my best Eva, but we may have to cancel the lesson, I don't feel right. Not focused, no use to you like this.

EVA  
But Nik, my Cambridge exam is in three weeks! I must practice my speaking.

NIK  
Things are happening to me, Eva...things I can't explain.

EVA  
Who follows you?

NIK  
Forget it. I got a fever making me crazy.

(BEAT)  
Your speech. Have you finished it?

Eva opens her fake Channel bag and pulls out a plastic folder.

Nik takes it from her and scans the pages.

NIK  
Looks good. Read it to me, while I make us a coffee. You have milk, one sugar, correct?

EVA  
No sugar.

She begins reading self-consciously.

EVA  
"For the people of Estonia 1996 was the most important year in our recent history..."

Nik makes the coffee. He bangs and clatters pots too noisily to be really listening.

EVA  
 "...since the storming of the  
 Winter Palace in St Petersburg  
 in 1917, the..."

He hands her a mug of coffee although he could not have boiled the water in such a short time.

NIK  
 Watch out, it's hot.

She pauses to take a sip of coffee.

EVA  
 It is cold.

Nik drains his coffee in one gulp. The coffee spills down his chin.

NIK  
 Oh that's good. More!  
 (BEAT)  
 Carry on reading.

He returns to the kitchen area and bangs around some more.

EVA  
 OK...."since the storming of the  
 Winter Palace in 1917, the fate  
 of Estonians have been relatively  
 overlooked. We provided much of  
 Mother Russia's resources. Our  
 forests..."

Nik has made another coffee and drains it in the same way, spilling it down his white shirt.

Eva stares at him as if he has gone mad.

Nik is deeply embarrassed.

NIK  
 Sorry. I suppose that is a bit  
 weird. Like I said, Eva, I'm  
 having a strange day. I'm losing  
 my balance.

While Eva continues her speech, Nik opens the curtains and looks out the window. He is in no way listening to her.

Out of the window, against the lamp post between two parked cars stands Archie Marino. Still. Watching. Looking up at him.

EVA (READING)

Not since the storming of the Winter Palace in 1917 have people felt strongly enough to rise up against the status quo. President...

NIK

Fuck!

EVA

President Yeltzin...what?

NIK

Carry on...

EVA

"...President Yeltzin granted independence after the end of the cold war, but for...

NIK

Fuck!

EVA

But for... You don't listen to what I read...what you look in the window?

Nik leaps towards the door.

NIK

That's it...fuck this...!

CUT TO

He bolts down the stairs and into the street.

CUT TO

Marino is nowhere to be seen. He searches maniacally.

Finding nothing, Nik reluctantly returns to the house.

INT. STAIRWELL. NIK'S BEDSIT.

He meets Eva coming down the stairs. She pushes him away.

EVA

You acting crazy, like KGB coming for you!

NIK

It feels like it...I can't explain.

He coughs and sneezes violently in her face.

NIK

Jesus, I'm sorry. Look come round same time tomorrow, OK? I promise I'll have this sorted out.

EVA

You need sleep. No more coffee for you. Valium perhaps.

Eva leaves, shutting the front door.

INT. NIK'S BEDSIT.

He looks out the window and watches Eva leave. She walks past Marino who is back, watching.

Nik tries to open the window but it has been nailed shut. Instead he draws the curtains and sits against the opposite wall clutching his knees to his chest.

The sound of "BOLERO" (REVEL) is heard from the next flat. Nik looks at the wall where the sound is coming from, wide-eyed with fear.

With eyes open, through lack of sleep, he begins to dream and hallucinate.

INT. NIK'S DREAM.

Nik is on a beach at sunset. Behind him is Estepona lighthouse.

The lighthouse beacon comes on.

He looks up and sees the silhouette of a woman in the tower.

The sun moves at triple speed across the sky. Everything is triple speed except for him. As the sun sets to the right of the lighthouse, it immediately rises to the left.

NIK

I've lost night.

He walks to the water's edge.

He looks at his reflection in the still water. Archie Marino stares back, from a night sky, stars and moon behind him.

Nik looks up from the water, to see it is bright day.

He looks again in the water. The moon sets and rises immediately, left to right, behind Marino's face.

ARCHIE MARINO

I've lost day.

Nik steps back from the water and everything slows down.

The sun sets slowly out to sea. A long shadow is cast over everything.

At Nik's feet he casts no shadow, where his shadow should be, a transparent white outline marks his body's parameters in the sand.

Nik follows this outline upwards to see a table with two chairs and a chess board on the shoreline.

He sits down on the side of the white pieces.

Archie Marino sits by the black chess pieces. He is dressed in black with his brains blown out, but eyes focused sharply on Nik.

Nik stares back, now wearing a white suit, covered in flecks of blood. With his left hand he tries to move a white chess piece. His arm casts no shadow over the table.

NIK

No shadow.

A gun shot sounds. MUSIC STOPS. Nik is brought back to his room.

INT. NIK'S BEDSIT.

Nik is still lying against the wall. The television is on, the volume barely audible.

The phone rings then clicks to answer machine.

ANSWER MACHINE (V.O.)

"Nik...it's Sharon, where the hell are you? You had better be dying, you've left us right in the shit, mate.

Nik remains impassive.

NIK (TO HIMSELF)

No night. No shadow. I've lost my balance.

He reaches up to open the curtains.

Sunlight blinds him.

He averts his gaze to see his chess board. All the black pieces are missing.

He searches on his hands and knees for the missing pieces, moving past the television.

## TELEVISION PRESENTER

Like the Yin Yang, people's souls are essentially light or dark. Not to be confused with good or bad, this is about Balance. For every action there must be a reaction, every cause an affect, for every dark soul a comparable light soul. Together they create a balance. They are interdependent. There cannot be light without dark or dark without light. Always the balance. No positive without a negative. There is a balance to night and day. A man needs sleep. How long could a man last in unending day? Day as bright and inescapable as a lighthouse beacon?

The intercom buzzer sounds. Nik breaks off his search opens the door.

INT. STAIRWELL. NIK'S BEDSIT.

Eva smiles back at him.

He looks at his watch, confused.

Nik looks over Eva's shoulder. Marino is back across the street, behind a parked car.

Nik pushes Eva out the way.

EXT. STREET. NIK'S BEDSIT. DAY.

Nik crosses the road and runs towards Marino.

A school bus intercepts him and catches him on the side of the head with its wing mirror.

He winces in agony as the blood pours from his temple.

Marino has vanished.

Eva comes rushing from the doorway.

She grabs the disorientated Nik and leads him back inside.

INT. NIK'S BEDSIT. DAY.

EVA

Still crazy. You trying to get yourself killed? Why you run like rabid bear?

Eva lays him on the sofa. There is a gash on the side of his head, which is lightly oozing blood.

She goes to the kitchen area and soaks a tea towel in cold water, returning to dab away the blood.

Nik looks up at her and in his concussed state sees Alex Roccas face for a brief instant.

NIK  
Bitch. Where did you go? Where  
did he go?

EVA  
Who?

NIK  
Marino. He's dead. Dead!

EVA  
I'm calling Ambulance. I think  
you, how you say, have a convulsion.

NIK  
No police, no Ambulance, please,  
Eva.

EVA  
Then you must tell me what's  
going on. Look at you. You're not  
well, Nik.

Nik straightens himself on the sofa, feeling his head.

Eva sneezes.

EVA  
You give me your cold. You make  
me ill as well. Hope I don't go  
crazy like you.

NIK  
I doubt it, unless you've shot  
someone too? This is guilt flu.

(IN THE FOLLOWING DIALOGUE "T" REPRESENTS TELEPATHICALLY  
SPOKEN WITHOUT LIP MOVEMENT. IN V.O.)

EVA (T)  
Guilt flu?

Nik tries to stand up, but falls back down under the strain.

EVA  
No, don't try to stand up. Rest.  
We can make lesson another time.  
I make you some sweet tea. Good  
for the shock.

NIK  
 No it's OK. I don't want to  
 involve you in all this. It's not  
 your problem.

(T)  
 You're very kind.

EVA (T)  
 I know!

She sits next to him on the sofa. They face each other.

EVA (T)  
 Now tell me about this man. Who  
 follows you. What is...What is it?

Nik becomes aware that Eva's lips aren't moving.

NIK (T)  
 I think I hit my head worse than  
 I thought. I hear you but your  
 lips aren't...

EVA(T)  
 ...moving. What's happening?

Eva springs off the sofa in disbelief.

EVA  
 Say something.

NIK  
 Like what?

EVA  
 No. Without moving your lips,  
 like before...

NIK (T)  
 I can't. I don't know how I did  
 it. Do you?

EVA  
 There! There!  
 (T)  
 You did it again!

NIK (T)  
 So did you!

EVA  
 Ha! This is incredible!

NIK  
How are we doing it?

(T)  
Have you done this before? Have  
you ever had anything like this  
before?

EVA (T)  
No, of course not.

NIK  
I wonder...

Nik gets up slowly, moves to the curtain and looks out.

Marino stares up from his lamp post.

Eva sneezes.

Nik sneezes harder.

NIK (T)  
Perhaps this fever.

Nik and Eva speak telepathically at the same time, over  
each other.

NIK & EVA (T & IN UNISON)  
It must be connected, how can he  
be alive, I killed him, I shot  
him dead I saw the... ..What  
must be connected? You don't make  
any sense...you killed  
him?..killed who...Stop!

They both put their hands to their heads.

NIK  
It's too much. I can hear your  
thoughts as well as my own. Stop  
thinking. It's too much. Too much.

EVA  
For me too! Talk with your mouth  
only...

(T)  
Try.

NIK (UNSURE)  
OK?

EVA  
OK.

NIK  
Come here. Look at this. Tell me  
what you can see...

Nik beckons her to the window. He holds the curtain for her.

EVA  
You decide to give me English  
lesson, now?

NIK  
No, I need you to tell me what  
you see. Down there.

EVA  
I don't know...cars parked. Woman  
with shopping bag...Man in suit  
staring at flat. Cat on wall...

NIK  
...That man. You can see him?

EVA  
Da. He's looking right at me!

NIK  
Yes! Sweet Jesus, yes! I'm not  
mad. I'm not losing my fucking  
mind. Alright!

Nik punches the air, then holds his head at the pain.

NIK (ENERGIZED)  
Do something for me, Eva. Go  
downstairs and say hello to him.  
Just hello. Can you do that for me?

EVA  
Sure. But why?

NIK  
It's connected to this, I just  
know it.  
(BEAT)  
If I'm right, then he'll  
disappear before you can talk to  
him. But this time I'll be  
watching. He can't hide from both  
of us.

Eva taps his forehead and crosses her eyes before leaving.

Nik watches from the window as she appears in the  
downstairs door.

Nik can see a bus approaching from the right. Eva  
hesitates and waits for it to pass.

NIK (TO HIMSELF)  
Don't wait. Go now.

The sun comes out from behind a cloud.

Nik's eyes are drawn to his hand resting on the window frame. It is casting no shadow.

When he looks back up, Marino is gone.

NIK  
Shit on a stick.

He looks across the street and sees Eva standing where Marino was. She shrugs her shoulders up at him.

Eva re-enters the room. Nik is still by the window.

EVA (T)  
I don't understand it. One minute  
he is there, next minute, Borsch!

NIK  
With the mouth, Eva.  
(T)  
Please.

EVA  
So who is he?

NIK  
If I tell you, you have to  
promise me you'll stay until I've  
explained everything.

Eva nods, collecting all her papers together.

NIK  
I haven't told anyone this before.  
but if I don't I'll go crazy in  
the coconut.

EVA  
I'm listening.

NIK  
I was in Spain, teaching. I met  
this girl. Alex. Beautiful girl...

EVA  
Yes, and...

NIK  
Please Eva, this isn't easy for  
me. I'm trying to find the right  
way to explain how it really was,  
not just how it sounds.

EVA (T)  
Just tell it as it was.

NIK

I hate London. Look around. This is what I get. But in Spain it was different. But I ran out of money and got in trouble with the wrong sort of people. Alex said she could help me. Her dad... it sounds crazy now, but I need you to believe me, Eva.

EVA (T)

I believe you, Nik. Go on.

NIK

Her dad was a gangster or something. She said he'd give me enough money to stay and pay off the bad guys if I shot this guy who'd attacked her. A tit for tat thing.

EVA (NERVOUSLY)

Tit for tat?

Nik points two fingers at Eva and pulls the imaginary trigger.

NIK

Rat-a-tat-tat. So I shot him in the back of the head.

(BEAT)

Only he was her psychiatrist, there'd never been any attacker.

Eva holds her hands to her mouth.

EVA (T)

I must leave.

NIK (T)

Don't go, you promised. I'm not dangerous, Eva. I'm begging you. Don't leave me!

EVA

And the man downstairs, how is he involved?

NIK

That's him! That's the man I shot!

EVA (CONFUSED)

Her Psychiatrist?

(BEAT)

So you didn't shoot him after all?

NIK  
I shot him alright. You don't forget a thing like that. His dying face is burnt onto my fucking eyeballs.

EVA  
Maybe you missed. Maybe you only hurt him.

(REALIZATION)  
Maybe the bullets were blanks!

NIK  
No he was dead. If you'd seen the mess, what I had to clean off my shirt. No he was dead.

EVA  
Before today, I would say you are crazy.

(T)  
But with this. Anything is possible.

Nik looks out of the window.

Marino stares straight up at the bedsit.

EVA  
Is he there?

Nik nods without looking at her.

EVA  
Whoever he is. He wants something. You must talk to him.

NIK  
I've tried. You've tried! Every time I get close he disappears.

EVA  
I must go. Really. I need air.

Nik's eyes plead with her.

NIK  
I understand. If I'd been you I'd probably have run a mile by now  
(MEEKLY)  
At least you're practicing your English.

She holds out her hand to him.

EVA  
The fresh air will do us both well. Try to talk to him.

EXT. NIK'S BEDSIT.

Marino is nowhere to be seen.

EXT. STARBUCKS COFFEE SHOP. EARLS COURT. DAY.

Nik and Eva sit at a table on the street. Both are sneezing and coughing. Nik is worse, shivering, pale, bruised. They sip their tall white coffees.

EVA

Better?

Nik exhales and watches the cars drive past.

EVA

When was the last time you slept?  
You look so tired.

NIK

I can't remember ever sleeping!  
Feel like I'm caught in limbo,  
between sleep and awake. Like a  
bad dream state. Never fully  
asleep. Never fully awake.

EVA

Like Tennyson...

Nik shoots her a strange look.

EVA

I study it, in Russia. "Never to  
sleep again." Rhyme of the  
Ancient Mariner. Sailor shoots  
Albatross and is cursed. All his  
crew die and he drifts in his  
ship never able to sleep. He...

NIK (SNAPPING)

I know it!...and it's Coleridge,  
not Tennyson. Samuel Taylor  
Coleridge.

EVA

I am sorry. I try to make light,  
it's not the time...

NIK

The Albatross. My dream! I  
remember now. I'm on a beach,  
where the sun never sets. There's  
no night, never any dark. I look  
up and see a bird, a great bird  
like an Albatross. I have no  
shadow, in my dream, it's like a  
white emptiness, it's...

Nik stops and looks on the pavement behind him. There is the shadow of the chair, but not him.

NIK

Oh my god. I'm scared Eva, what's happening to me?

Nik points at the shadow of the chair, then looks at his hand.

NIK

Look, on the table. Make a hand puppet, make a rabbit, you know, two fingers for ears, like this...

He demonstrates with his hands. Eva practices over the table. She has it.

NIK

Good. Now, I'm the big bird, the fucking Albatross sweeping down to eat your Rabbit.

Nik's hand casts no shadow on the table.

NIK

Nothing!

EVA

This is not possible!

NIK

Believe it. I've got no fucking shadow. Now tell me I'm crazy!

EVA

We must tell someone about this. Go to Doctor, Scientist. This is not possible.

NIK

And our telepathy thing is?

(BEAT)

Thank Christ your here, Eva. You seeing it too means it must be real, doesn't it?

EVA

I guess. It makes me think of the old Russian fairy tale my grandmother told me about the Baba Yaga...

NIK

The old Russian witch?

Eva raises her eyebrow.

NIK

Not your Grandmother, the Baba Yaga.

EVA (NODDING)

She tries to sweep shadows away with broom and kept the moon in a bag.

NIK

What's the connection?

EVA

First, you say you don't sleep. The sun never sets - like someone has stolen the moon, put the night in a bag. You have no shadow...

NIK

I appreciate what your trying to do Eva, but this is real life, not a fairy story.

On the table, Eva's tall white coffee mug has changed to black. Nik's remains white. Neither person notices.

EVA

Cinderella? In original story the glass slipper was hot iron shoe that the ugly sisters feet were trapped in.

NIK

I don't see where you're heading with this

EVA

And another example. Dracula. The Dracul family existed, they were Anemic. They needed to drink fresh blood to get Iron. They were rich, so they use peasants to stay alive. This is where myth of Nosferatu come from.

Nik holds his hands up in frustration.

EVA

Fairy tales have their beginning in real events. So this Baba Yaga story must have a little truth in it somewhere...maybe you are not the first this has happened to.

(BEAT)

Investigate.

NIK

How?

EVA

You have libraries and Internet,  
don't you. Or is it only in  
Mother Russia we read books!

Nik kicks back his chair.

NIK

Let's go.

Eva stays seated.

EVA

I must work soon.

NIK

For fuck sake, Eva. Not now! Work  
can wait!

EVA

Friday is our busiest day. It's  
different for you, you're English.  
My papers are not as correct as  
yours.

(BEAT)

I have the early evening shift,  
I'll be finished by ten.

NIK

Come round after work?

EVA (USING ALEX'S CATCHPHRASE)

Of course!

EXT. A NEWS STAND. EARLS COURT.

Nik runs past the news stand. His eyes are caught by a  
Spanish newspaper.

One of the cover photos shows Santiago flanked by two  
policeman. He is in handcuffs standing next to the Hash  
Chairs and stolen van.

Nik snatches the paper and feverishly reads the story.

CUT TO

EXT. ROADSIDE CAFE. ELVIRIA. DAY.

Nik and Santiago are sitting in the cafe as seen through  
the window.

Alex watches them eating their churros, before pulling out  
her "slim-jim" and opening the van door.

CUT TO

INT. SANTIAGO'S KITCHEN. DAY.

The Christ shape on the back wall behind the cooker. A female hand presses against it.

Alex is fucking Santiago against the cooker. Her cream trouser suit is on the floor. Santiago pushes so violently into her that the cooker is slamming on the floor.

ALEX (PANTING)

So you help me?

SANTIAGO

Anything you want. Just don't stop.

Alex kisses him.

ALEX

Show me the money.

INT. SIDE OFFICE. WAREHOUSE. DAY.

Carlos twirls a set of van keys around his hand. He sits on a yellow crate facing an unseen man behind a desk.

UNSEEN MAN

The driver can be trusted?

CARLOS

You trust me don't you?

The unseen man lifts up his walking cane. A large bird is sculpted into the wooden handle. He uses the cane to pry through the closed blinds of the office window.

Nik is visible through the blinds, looking into the back of the van with Santiago.

The man puts down the cane and turns to Carlos. His face now visible. It is Archie Marino.

ARCHIE MARINO

This is your last chance Roccas.

Marino grips the bird carving on his cane.

CUT BACK TO

EXT. A NEWS STAND. EARLS COURT.

A pigeon pecks at a piece of chewing gum next to Nik's foot. The pigeon casts a shadow. Nik does not.

He finishes reading and drops the newspaper. The pigeon flies away.

INT. EARLS COURT PUBLIC LIBRARY. EVENING.

Nik is looking on the microfiche computer for relevant books making notes on a piece of paper.

CUT TO

He stands in the aisle facing the shelves and flicks through a few books.

Through a gap in the books he sees Archie Marino.

For the first time, Nik's eyes register something other than fear. He makes a sudden dash along the bookshelf keeping Marino in his sights above the tops of the books.

He turns the corner of the aisle ready to confront him, but Marino is gone.

Nik has found himself in the Biography section. A large letter "C" on the aisle.

NIK (TO HIMSELF)  
Crowley? The Beast himself?

He trips his fingers along the shelf, through the "C"s.

NIK (TO HIMSELF)  
C, C, C, Caulfield, Cranford,  
Cromwell, Cros...oh my GOD!...it  
can't be!

He drops the books he's holding and reaches for this new book.

He looks at the cover. The title reads:

"NIK CROSBY. A BIOGRAPHY."

He turns the book in his hand. The rest of the sleeve is blank. No author. No publisher.

NIK  
What the fuck is this?

He opens the book and flicks through to the photos. Pictures of him as a baby, schoolboy. Pictures of Santiago and Alex. The charcoal drawing of Alex's face.

He turns to the fly leaf. The date is 2007. No lending ticket.

Nik takes the chair at the end of the aisle and begins to read.

He becomes so involved, he forgets where he is and lights a cigarette.

NIK (TO HIMSELF)  
It's all here...all true.

He turns to the final photo. It is a picture of Nik talking to Alex Roccas against a London skyline. The caption beneath it reads:

"NIK HEARS THE TRUTH FROM ALEX ON TOP OF ST PAULS CATHEDRAL. AUGUST 24 2007"

Nik looks at the clock on the wall. The date reads August 24.

A Librarian appears, incredulous that someone is smoking in the Library.

LIBRARIAN  
Sir, you can't smoke in here.  
This is a Library!

NIK  
Get lost.

LIBRARIAN  
Right that's it. I'm calling the  
Police. I'm warning you...

Nik focuses at the mention of the law.

NIK  
Police! No, sorry. I'll go. Look,  
I'm going, see?

Nik walks to the exit, still carrying the book.

LIBRARIAN  
Sir, the book, you haven't  
borrowed it, leave the book...Sir,  
you must leave the book!

Nik makes a run for it. The Alarm goes off.

EXT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL. LONDON. APPROACHING DUSK.

Nik races up the wide steps of St. Paul's Cathedral and into the main body of the church.

INT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

Nik enters the side door that leads to the whispering gallery.

INT. STAIRCASE. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

The spiral staircase is wide and made of stone, similar to Estepona lighthouse. At each turn dim orange lights show the way. He still casts no shadow against the stone wall.

He hears a familiar giggle and looks up just in time to see the shadow of a woman disappearing round the corner.

He quickens his step, trying to hold the shadow in his view. The shape of the body and sculpt of the hair is reminiscent of Alex, or possibly Eva.

INT. THE WHISPERING GALLERY. FIRST FLOOR.

He comes to the first exit and must walk round the gallery to access the second flight of stairs to the roof.

He is alone in the whispering gallery. The giggling is heard again.

He presses his ear against the stone wall and listens. Many whispering voices talk over each other. One stands out. A low, rasping voice.

RASPING VOICE

A vision. The pains of sleep. As  
 who pursued with yell and blow,  
 still treads the shadow of his  
 foe. The sun now rose upon the  
 night, out of the sea came he,  
 And I had done a hellish thing,  
 for all averred I had killed the  
 bird that made the breeze to  
 blow...still treads the shadow  
 of his foe...

Nik in a cold sweat tears his head away from the wall.

INT. SPIRAL STAIRCASE.

As he walks up the spiral staircase he hears footsteps behind him.

"BOLERO" (REVEL) begins to play as if from a small portable stereo. The music gets louder with the approaching footsteps.

Nik looks at the twisting stone stairs behind him to see the black shadow of Archie Marino on the smooth wall.

Archie Marino himself comes into view.

Nik leaps up the remaining steps three at a time.

EXT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL. ROOFTOP.

Nik opens the final door onto the roof of St Paul's. The area is circular.

He is greeted by a spectacular panoramic view of London at dusk. The sky is finally getting dark.

He walks over to the balcony and recoils at the height to the ground. He scans the viewing area.

On the other side of the circle is a woman wearing a cream business suit with her back to him.

Nik approaches slowly.

NIK

Alex?

The woman turns round as he approaches.

NIK

Eva?

Just as her face is coming into focus the steel entrance door bangs behind him.

Nik pivots round in time to see Archie Marino step out of the door.

In a panic Nik runs to the furthest point away from both of them.

He crashes into a massive spotlight against the far wall, causing its trajectory to change from nearly vertical to horizontal.

Marino continues his approach.

Nik is struggling but his jacket has got caught in the metal mesh of the spotlight.

The spotlight comes on, bathing Nik in white light. He looks like a crucified bird.

CUT TO

Aerial view of the viewing area. Due to the adjusted angle of Nik's spotlight the viewing circle has been neatly divided into half dark, half light - it looks like a Yin Yang - with Nik in the white half and Marino in the black half. Marino continues to approach.

CUT BACK TO

Marino all dressed in black approaches, the side of his face bloody from the gunshot.

Nik breaks free of the wire mesh, ripping his arm in the process.

Nik rushes towards the open door. He sees the woman in the cream suit - only now it is not in shadow and can be seen for what it is - white pigeon shit dripped down the gray wall in the shape of a human.

He reaches the door and tries to open it. It has jammed.  
He hits it with his biography.

Nik backs up against the balcony edge and looks over at  
the street below.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW OF STREET BELOW.

All the people on the street are dressed in black and  
white, like chess pieces. They move with a balletic  
symmetry. Black follows white, white follows black. Never  
touching.

EXT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL. ROOFTOP.

Nik looks down at himself. He is now wearing a white suit.

Marino begins to walk towards him.

Nik opens the biography in a panic. The pages are black  
and white empty sheets.

They fly out the book on a sudden breeze around his head.

Marino becomes obscured by the flapping pages.

Nik leans back over the balcony and loses his footing.

In a swirl of black and white he falls off the ledge  
towards the street below.

CUT TO

Interspersed with his fall are short still images of:

The bright lighthouse light at Estepona.

His and Alex' shadow cast over the sea in the lighthouse.

The picture of the Yin Yang in Alex' Villa.

The Aerial Yin Yang of St. Paul's viewing circle.

The winged bird flapping on the rail tracks as the  
electric blue flash of the train approaches.

The stone Albatross above the entrance to the Spanish  
language school

The carved bird on Archie Marino's walking cane.

Archie Marino (Ancient Mariner) slumped in the toilet at  
"Albert's."

Nik throwing the vitamin tablets into the bin at his bed sit.

Nik hits the unforgiving pavement with a decisive thud.  
MUSIC STOPS ABRUPTLY.

His body lies twisted. A small crowd of people are gathering, dressed in normal clothes.

The moon can just be seen in the sky.

EXT. HERMITAGE RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

Eva is putting on her coat in the doorway of the restaurant. YURI, the fat owner stands behind her, helping her with the heavy door.

YURI

See you tomorrow, Eva.

Eva has no trace of a cold and seems in high spirits.

EVA

Good night, Yuri.

She gives a little wave and walks off into the gathering night. It begins to rain softly.

EXT. LONDON STREET. IN VIEW OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL. NIGHT.

Eva pulls up the collar of her coat as an Ambulance screams past her.

Turning the corner she sees the Ambulance stop in front of a crowd of people.

Getting closer she peers through the crowd, making out a twisted body on the floor. She tries to see the face of the dead man by pushing through the crowd.

She recognizes Nik and kneels beside him, noticing a book in his outstretched hand. She picks it up.

It has an Albatross on the front cover, flying over a boat. The title reads "The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner"

She puts the book by his side, knocking his jacket pocket. A small bottle of pills falls out - Nik's Vitamin tablets.

She studies the label, which reads: "Rhoeyhdrimide. Anti-psychotic. 3 to be taken with water after food. Mr N Crosby."

The Ambulance crew arrive at her side. The Ambulance worker puts a hand on her shoulder.

PARAMEDIC

Excuse me, Miss. I need to see him. Mind out the way. Stand back, please.

EVA

Is he..?

Eva stands up.

The Paramedic feels for a pulse, shakes her head and motions to the other crew members to join her.

They barge through with a red blanket and stretcher.

With the blanket she covers Nik's face and body.

PARAMEDIC

OK People. Everybody move back,  
please, we need to clear a  
space...Did anyone see what  
happened?

No-one speaks up. There is a general shaking of heads. The Ambulance worker looks at Eva.

PARAMEDIC

How about you, Miss?

EVA

No.

PARAMEDIC

Did you know him?

EVA (NODDING)

I meet him in the park once for  
English lesson and he tried to  
attack me.

(LOOKING AT BODY)

I think he was disturbed.

The Paramedic puts a hand on her shoulder.

PARAMEDIC

Do you know his surname, Miss?

Eva shakes her head and looks down at the body.

EVA

He never told me.

The three Ambulance crew stretch Nik towards the Ambulance.

Eva looks at the bottle of pills she is still holding. She catches up with the Ambulance worker.

EVA

Here, you better have these...  
they fell out of his pocket.

The Paramedic studies the label and kisses her teeth.

As they put Nik into the Ambulance she shows the tablets to her co-worker.

PARAMEDIC

Anti-psychotics. He must of been  
delusional - another Nut-job!  
Probably forgot to take 'em.

PARAMEDIC 2

Probably thought he could fly!  
Fucking jumpers! Never think of  
the mess they're gonna leave for  
someone else to clear up. Selfish  
bastards..!

The rest of their conversation is lost as they shut the  
back of the Ambulance doors.

"SAND" (LEE HAZELWOOD) FADES IN.

The Ambulance drives off into the rainy London night.

EXT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL. ROOFTOP.

On the ledge from where Nik fell, bathed in Moonlight, a  
large bird pecks at a sheet of black & white paper caught  
in the balcony railings.

FADE OUT.