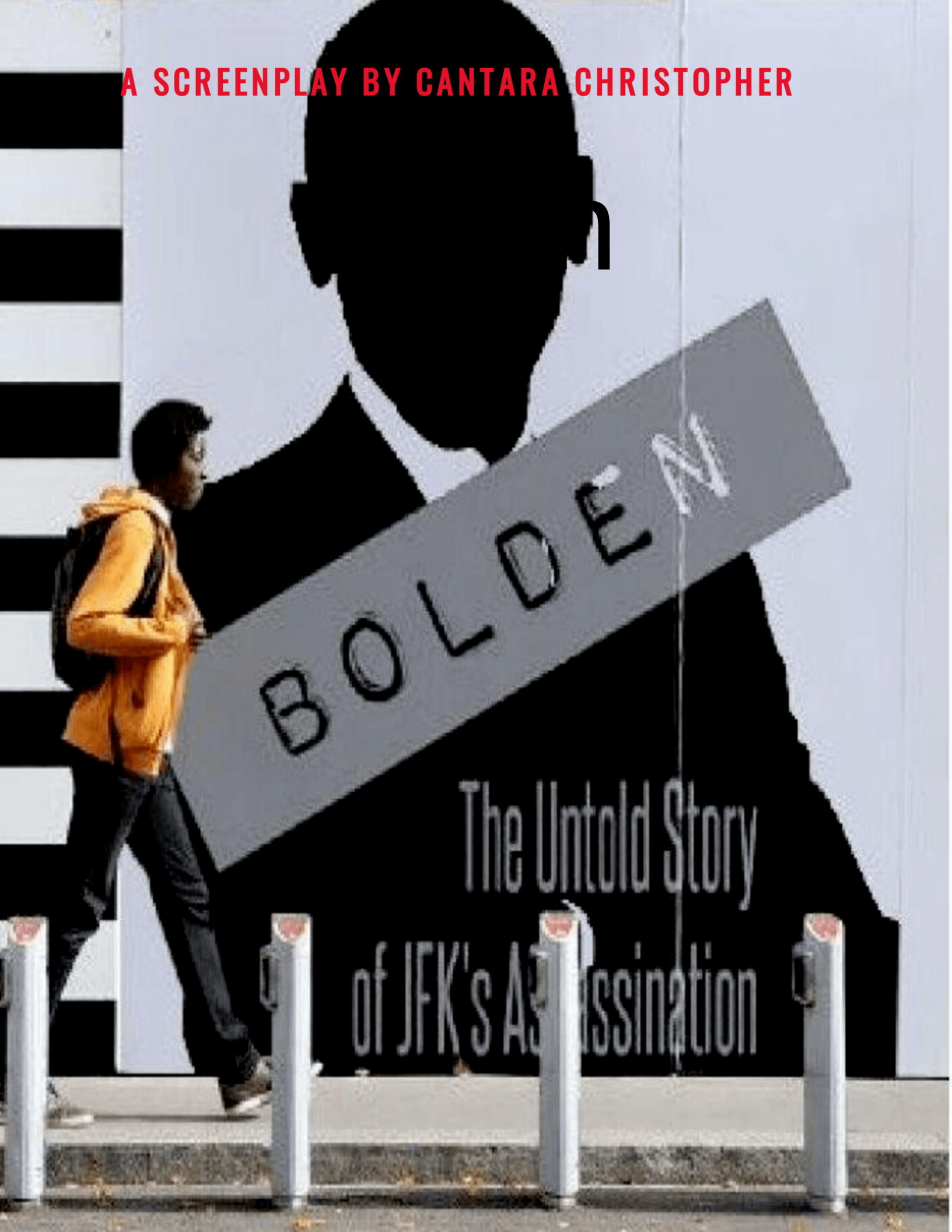


A SCREENPLAY BY CANTARA CHRISTOPHER



EXT. WASHINGTON DC SKYLINE - NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: "JUNE 5, 1961"

EXT. "THE WHITE HOUSE"/GATE - NIGHT

*Beyond the elegant front gate, at the side of the building is a side gate, small and plain. ABRAHAM BOLDEN, a serious, almost humorless black man in his mid-20s, walks up to it. He is neatly dressed in a dark suit and open raincoat. He hands his ID to the GUARD, who scrutinizes it for a long moment and looks at Bolden a couple of times before handing it back to him. Bolden puts it back in his pocket.*

BOLDEN Thank you.

*Bolden purposefully walks down the short path to the small plain entrance of the building and opens the door.*

INT. "THE WHITE HOUSE"/PLAIN NARROW CORRIDOR - NIGHT

*Inside, a friendly 40ish bulldog of a man in a plain dark suit, SECRET SERVICE AGENT STU STOUT, strides up to greet Bolden. He extends his hand to Bolden who shakes it.*

STOUT Are you Bolden?

BOLDEN Yes sir, Abraham Bolden.

STOUT Welcome to the midnight shift. Stu Stout.

BOLDEN Mr. Stout.

STOUT Just Stu. We're all on a first name basis here.

*They walk down the corridor as they talk. Stout's attitude is one of constant alertness.*

STOUT So, you come in from Chicago?

BOLDEN Just got off the plane. Checked into my hotel and came right over.

STOUT Let's take the long way.

INT. "THE WHITE HOUSE"/WIDE ELEGANT HALLWAY - NIGHT

*As Bolden and Stout walk and talk through the hallway they pass by portraits of Washington, Lincoln, and other presidents. Bolden glances around with admiration.*

STOUT So you're a field man, right? You work counterfeiting, that kind of thing?

BOLDEN Mostly.

STOUT You like it?

BOLDEN I prefer working with my mind.

STOUT Brains, not guns, right? Well, here it's all about protecting the President. And the Vice President, and their families... Any way we can. Brains and guns. That's what the Secret Service is all about.

BOLDEN Sir, may I ask you...

STOUT Stu. Go ahead.

BOLDEN You were the agent who saved President Truman from an assassination attempt, right?

STOUT Me among others.

BOLDEN I read about it in the papers when I was in high school. You were the reason I decided to join the Secret Service.

STOUT That's always nice to hear.

BOLDEN You were the one to show me what it takes to be a Secret Service man.

STOUT Yeah, what it takes. (emphatically) Listen. It takes alertness. Preparedness. Quick action. That's what it takes. That's all it takes. Every minute on the job.

BOLDEN I understand.

STOUT Some agents, I won't mention their names, treat the Kennedy detail like some sort of playboy's club, you know what I mean?

BOLDEN I think so.

STOUT You keep your head.

BOLDEN I intend to.

*They stop. Stout points at a stately but simple white door.*

STOUT Know which door that is?

BOLDEN I couldn't say.

STOUT That's the door to President Kennedy's office.

*Bolden stares at it a moment with reverence.*

STOUT (cont'd) Come on, we'll go over to our office and you can meet the other guys and we'll set you up...

*They resume their walk.*

STOUT (cont'd) So, Brains-Not-Guns, what're you doing here?

BOLDEN I got my orders directly from the Boss.

STOUT Oh yeah? How's that?

BOLDEN I was assigned to guard the President a couple of months ago in Chicago... You know, he'd just been elected and he was there to attend a banquet to thank everyone... And I was in the hotel where the banquet was, guarding a men's room they had set aside for him way down in the basement...

STOUT I can see why they assigned you down there.

BOLDEN When he finally did come down because, you know, he had to go, at the men's room door he asked my name and looked me right in the eye and said, "I don't believe there's ever been a Negro agent on the White House detail, Mr. Bolden." And I said, "No, not to my knowledge, Mr. President." And then he smiled and said, "How would you like to be the first?"

STOUT And you said yes.

BOLDEN I said, "Yes *sir*, Mr. President!"

STOUT So, you're here because you're the first Negro.

BOLDEN No, I'm here because I'm good.

STOUT Okay Chicago, you get your chance to prove it.

INT. BOLDEN'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

*An open suitcase is on the bed. Lying on top of his still-folded clothes is a framed photograph of his wife and their three children, two boys 2 and 3 and a girl of 5, which he takes out and puts on the night table.*

*He looks at it for a moment, then picks up the phone and dials the operator.*

BOLDEN (into phone) I want to call Chicago, the number is Calumet 5-6069. Thank you, miss. (beat) Good morning Princess, it's Daddy. You're what? You're eating cereal? That's good honey. Put Mommy on the phone would you? (yawning) Barbara. I just got back from my very first shift at the White House. No, no trouble. They all seem like great guys. No, I haven't met anyone important. You're the only important one, you know that. When I am coming home? Well, we'll see.

INT. "THE WHITE HOUSE"/WIDE ELEGANT HALLWAY - DAY

*Standing quietly alert, Bolden is guarding the entrance to the President's office a couple of feet away from the door. After a moment the door opens and two men come out talking to someone still in the office. They are HUBERT HUMPHREY and BARRY GOLDWATER.*

HUMPHREY I'll make sure the committee has that report on your desk, Mr. President.

GOLDWATER By Friday at the latest.

*JOHN KENNEDY comes out.*

KENNEDY Good. We'll discuss it then.

*He notices Bolden.*

KENNEDY (cont'd) Ah, Mr. Bolden, I see you made it to Washington.

*He gestures for Bolden to approach them, which he does.*

KENNEDY (cont'd) Hubert, Barry, this is Abraham Bolden, the first Negro to be assigned to the White House Secret Service.

*Humphrey takes Bolden's hand and shakes it energetically.*

HUMPHREY Mr. Bolden, an honor to meet you. How long have you been here? Hope the Washington summer won't get you down.

BOLDEN (somewhat overwhelmed) Thank you, Senator Humphrey. Just a couple of weeks, Senator. No, Senator.

KENNEDY (to Humphrey) Friday, then.

GOLDWATER (stiffly, politely) Mr. Bolden.

BOLDEN Senator Goldwater.

*Humphrey and Goldwater go off.*

KENNEDY Come in for a moment, would you?

*Bolden glances back at his post where he was standing, then walks into the office behind Kennedy and shuts the door.*

INT. "THE WHITE HOUSE"/KENNEDY'S OFFICE - DAY

*Afternoon sun streams through the French windows of the Oval Office. Near the large presidential desk ATTORNEY GENERAL ROBERT "BOBBY" KENNEDY and PRESS SECRETARY PIERRE SALINGER are speaking to each other. They both look up when Kennedy and Bolden enter and cross over.*

KENNEDY I want you to meet our own Jackie Robinson of the Secret Service. (to Bolden) Our press secretary, Pierre Salinger. (to Salinger) Pierre, Abraham Bolden.

*Salinger offers his hand to Bolden, who shakes it.*

SALINGER Mr. Bolden. We can always use a good base runner in the White House.

BOLDEN Thank you, Mr. Salinger.

KENNEDY Have you met my brother Bobby?

*Bobby offers his hand to Bolden, who shakes it.*

BOBBY Mr. Bolden.

BOLDEN Mr. Attorney General.

BOBBY (to Kennedy) Glad to see they're finally integrating the Secret Service. It's been long overdue. (to Bolden) Say, have you ever thought about joining the FBI? We already have some fine Negro agents and we can always use some more.

BOLDEN Thank you, Mr. Attorney General. I might be interested.

BOBBY I'll be looking for your application.

KENNEDY Well, we don't want to keep you from your duties, Mr. Bolden.

BOLDEN Of course. Sirs.

*As Bolden turns to leave he has a look of barely-concealed elation. He goes to the door and shuts it behind him.*

BACK TO:

INT. "THE WHITE HOUSE"/WIDE ELEGANT HALLWAY

*Another SECRET SERVICE AGENT is now standing in Bolden's place. Bolden stiffens.*

INT. "THE WHITE HOUSE"/SECRET SERVICE OFFICE - DAY

*One AGENT sits at his desk writing a report, another AGENT talks on the phone. The third is reading a newspaper. This is AGENT HARVEY HENDERSON, a large loudmouthed redneck in his mid-30s with a thick southern accent.*

*Bolden comes in. Henderson barely looks up from his paper.*



HENDERSON You weren't at your post so we sent a relief.

BOLDEN I was still on duty. The President asked me to come into his office.

*Henderson still doesn't look at Bolden.*

HENDERSON Oh yeah?

BOLDEN The President asked me into his office and I talked with him for several minutes. He's the boss, Henderson. Harvey. He gave me a direct order. What should I have done?

HENDERSON Can't imagine what y'all were gabbin' about.

*Bolden doesn't answer.*

HENDERSON (cont'd) Anyway! If I see you desert your post one more time you're gonna be outta here so fast it'll make your head spin. You hear that, boy?

BOLDEN Sure, Harvey. (beat, then more stiffly) Yes. I understand.

HENDERSON Now go finish doing your reports.

*Bolden goes to his desk. On the blotter is a piece of paper. He turns it over.*

INSERT:

*A caricature of a Negro man dressed as a minstrel with exaggerated features, large lips, wild nappy hair, a huge bow tie, big floppy clownlike shoes. The caption says, "Kennedy's Darkie".*

BACK TO SCENE.

*Bolden stares grimly at this drawing as AGENT JIM TURNER, an easygoing man in his mid-20s, enters.*

TURNER Hey, Abe.

BOLDEN Hey Jim, welcome back. Take a look at this, would you?

*Bolden shows him the drawing. Turner shrugs.*

TURNER Hm. My three-year old can do better.

BOLDEN Do you know who did it?

TURNER No, but I can guess.

*They both look at Henderson, who ignores them.*

TURNER Forget it, Abe. You've got to have a thick skin around here.

BOLDEN I'd better be an elephant then.

*Turner sits at his desk and leans back.*

BOLDEN (cont'd) You look like you've had your time in the sun.

TURNER Um-mm! Oh yeah. Just got back from the Palm Springs detail. Swimming pools. Movie stars. I tell you, the President's sure got some famous friends there.

BOLDEN (shortly) Movie stars.

TURNER Movie stars.

*Turner traces the curve of a woman's shape with his hands and whistles.*

TURNER (cont'd) If you're good maybe they'll send you too. It's the only way to go.

*Bolden shrugs.*

INT. BOLDEN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

*Bolden is relaxing on the bed, coat, tie and shoes off.*

BOLDEN (into phone) ...Honestly, Barbara, I don't know if it's working out. Yeah, I'm homesick. Never been away from you and the kids for a whole month. And there's also...never mind. Listen, I'll be out of Washington for a few days. You know I can't tell you where, honey. Jim says it's going to be like a vacation. Just looks like the same job to me. So, what are you doing with the kids for the Fourth of July?

EXT. OTIS AIR FORCE BASE, CAPE COD - DAY

*A screaming crowd of people, all white, displaying signs reading "Welcome Home, Jack" and "Mass. Loves JFK" is held back behind a roped-off area which is guarded by MASSACHUSETTS STATE TROOPERS.*

*Kennedy emerges from Air Force One, immediately walks toward the crowd, and reaches over the rope barricade to shake hands with well-wishers. As the crowd presses forward to touch Kennedy the troopers hold them back.*

*Behind Kennedy are a half-dozen dark-suited, sunglasses-wearing Secret Service men following him closely as he moves along the edge of the crowd shaking hands. One of them is Bolden.*

*A STATE TROOPER grabs Bolden by the arm.*

TROOPER Hey buddy, where do you think you're going?

*Bolden tries to shake him off.*

BOLDEN Let go. I'm Secret Service!

*The Trooper pulls Bolden toward him.*

TROOPER Not so fast. You better come with me.

*Turner rushes over to them.*

TURNER Let him go! He's one of us!

*Turner takes Bolden by the other arm.*

TURNER (cont'd) Come on, Abe.

*The Trooper immediately releases Bolden's arm. Turner pulls him to one side.*

BOLDEN Where's Lancer?

TURNER He made it to the chopper.

*The sound of a HELICOPTER taking off is heard. They both look up.*

EXT. SKY - DAY

*HELICOPTER is flying away.*

BACK TO SCENE.

*A STATION WAGON pulls up a few feet from where Turner and Bolden are standing. They run over to it and get in.*

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

*Inside are two other AGENTS, SPENCE and ETHAN, both in their mid-20s, and Henderson, who is driving.*

BOLDEN Spence. Ethan.

HENDERSON Okay, you in?

*The car door slams as it is shut. Henderson gives a loud rebel yell and steps on the gas.*

HENDERSON (cont'd) Yee-haa! Hyannis Port, here we come!

EXT. STATION WAGON - DAY (TRAVELING)

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY (TRAVELING)

*Turner is in front with Henderson. Bolden is in the back between SPENCE and ETHAN, who are both slightly drunk.*

*SPENCE pulls out of his breast pocket a miniature liquor bottle and offers it to ETHAN who takes it, cracks it open and begins to gulp it down. Then SPENCE reaches in his pocket for another bottle and offers one to Bolden.*

BOLDEN Thanks. I'll pass.

SPENCE You're sure? We already got a head start on you.

*Spence starts to drink it himself.*

HENDERSON Yeah, what is it with y'all anyway? All that free booze on the plane and whudduya end up drinkin'? 7-Up!

BOLDEN I thought we were on duty.

ETHAN Killjoy.

BOLDEN Oh, maybe I'll have a beer when we settle in at our quarters.

HENDERSON Suit yourself. We'll drop you off and do a liquor run.

SPENCE Get some steaks! We're barbecuing tonight.

ETHAN Yeah, broads and barbecue.

SPENCE Barbecue first, broads later.

ETHAN Yeah, get your priorities straight!

TURNER Boys. You're going to corrupt this young man.

ETHAN Nah, he's safe with us.

INT. SECRET SERVICE COTTAGE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

*Downstairs is the sound of a raucous PARTY, including the shrieks and laughter of women.*

*Bolden, in T-shirt, is on a twin bed reading a news magazine as Turner enters.*

BOLDEN Quite a shindig going on downstairs.

TURNER Yeah, are we keeping you up?

Turner flops down on his twin bed and starts to undress.

BOLDEN No, just been catching up on my reading. What time is it?

TURNER After two.

BOLDEN You know, we're due at the compound at eight.

TURNER We'll be fine.

BOLDEN Who's on duty with the Kennedys right now?

TURNER Oh... Clint, Paul, Bill—Bill Greer, Stu...

BOLDEN Stu Stout?

TURNER Yeah, Stu.

BOLDEN Great. That makes me feel better, knowing the President's in good hands.

*Bolden puts his magazine on the night table and slides under the blanket.*

BOLDEN (cont'd) Kill the light when you're ready, would you?

EXT. BACK OF THE KENNEDY HOUSE/BEACH - DAY

*A large "Cape Cod" type house with a spacious back yard sloping down to a sandy beach. In the yard, Kennedy children of varying ages are playing hide-and-peek, tag, ball, etc.*

*AGENT CLINT HILL, mid-20s, is sitting on a simple folding chair at the foot of the yard where the beach starts when Bolden comes up to relieve him.*

BOLDEN Hey, Clint. Pretty quiet today.

HILL Like always.

*As Hill rises to give Bolden his seat JACQUELINE KENNEDY, in a short terry robe, comes down the path from the house, carrying a rolled-up blanket.*

JACQUELINE Mr. Hill. Mr. Bolden.

BOLDEN (shyly) Mrs. Kennedy.

*Hill approaches her.*

HILL (eagerly; it's obvious he has a crush on her) Mrs. Kennedy. Here, let me.

JACQUELINE That would be very kind.

*Jacqueline hands him the blanket. Hill walks down a few yards to the edge of the water, unrolls and spreads it out on the sand with great decorum. As he does a child's ball rolls down from the yard to where Bolden is standing. Bolden picks up the ball.*

*At the top of the yard is a little girl of 3 1/2, CAROLINE.*

*Jacqueline turns to Bolden, holding out her hands.*

JACQUELINE May I?

*Bolden gives the ball to Jacqueline inadvertently touching her hands.*

*Hill notices this, his face wrinkling with disapproval for a moment, then walks up the beach toward Bolden.*

JACQUELINE (cont'd; calling to Caroline) Here you go, darling!

*She throws the ball back to Caroline, who catches it and runs off. Bolden, watching, smiles broadly.*

JACQUELINE (cont'd) Mr. Bolden, could you do me a great favor?

BOLDEN Of course, Mrs. Kennedy.

JACQUELINE My husband will be coming down from the house in a little while. When you see him, will you tell him I went for a swim?

BOLDEN Of course, ma'am.

JACQUELINE Thank you.

*While the two men look on, Jacqueline goes to the blanket, removes her slippers and her terry robe and, looking gorgeous in a form-fitting maillot bathing suit, walks into the water. Without another word Hill glares at Bolden with a look of pure disgust and stalks off.*

EXT. BACK OF THE KENNEDY HOUSE/YARD - DAY (LATER, SUNDOWN)

*It's quiet; the children have left the yard. Henderson is making his inspection of the grounds, his last for the day.*



*Gradually the barely audible sound of men's VOICES catches his attention.*

EXT. BACK OF THE KENNEDY HOUSE/BEACH - DAY - P.O.V. HENDERSON

*Bolden and a casually-dressed Kennedy, sitting side by side on folding chairs, in quiet conversation.*

BACK TO SCENE.

HENDERSON (muttering) Look at that sonofabitch.

INT. SECRET SERVICE COTTAGE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

*Spence, Ethan, and Turner are standing near the liquor cabinet sipping their drinks. Henderson, already drunk, is on the couch leaning back, a half-empty quart bottle of bourbon and his empty glass on the coffee table.*

ETHAN That was a hell of a blonde you were with last night.

SPENCE Yeah. She wanted me to go home with her but I had to go on duty.

TURNER And if your wife ever found out she'd kill you.

SPENCE No problem. She's back in Silver Spring.

*Bolden enters.*

BOLDEN Gentlemen.

TURNER Hey Abe, we're all just shooting the breeze.

SPENCE How about a drink?

BOLDEN Actually, is there any fruit juice?

TURNER In the fridge. Take off your jacket, come join us. Bet it's been quite a day for you.

*Bolden heads for the kitchen but is stopped by a remark by Henderson.*

HENDERSON Yeah, just ask Kennedy.

BOLDEN What did you say?

HENDERSON I'll bet the guys want to know about your little confab with the Boss.

*Bolden looks at the others, who shrug and shake their heads. He goes over and stands in front of Henderson.*

BOLDEN What little confab?

HENDERSON Ya know, the one where you're suckin' up to Kennedy. Next thing ya know you'll be suckin' him off in the Oval Office.

ETHAN Christ, Harvey.

*Bolden looks directly at Henderson. Henderson avoids his gaze, staring at his empty glass.*

BOLDEN I think that was a little uncalled for, don't you?

HENDERSON Uppity nigger like you. Bet you didn't even graduate high school.

BOLDEN I graduated college with a baccalaureate, third in my class.

HENDERSON Must have been one of them nigger schools.

BOLDEN And where did you go to college, Harvey?

HENDERSON I didn't need no fancy school to get where I am.

BOLDEN After graduation, I went straight into law enforcement with the Illinois State Police.

*Henderson leans forward and pours himself a drink.*

HENDERSON (snorts a laugh) Huh! (menacingly) So tell me, ya ever draw your gun on a white man?

BOLDEN When it was necessary.

HENDERSON Shee-it!

*Henderson gulps down his drink and stands up.*

HENDERSON (cont'd) Now you listen to me, boy. I'm gonna tell you somethin' for your own good. You're nothin' but a nigger. You were born a nigger and you're gonna die a nigger. And if you think anyone here'll ever lift a finger to save your sorry black ass you got another think coming. So why don't ya go back to niggertown where ya belong?

*Henderson unsteadily drops back down on the couch.*

BOLDEN (beat, then evenly) I love you too, Harvey. (to the others) If you'll excuse me.

*Bolden goes back out the front door. There is an uncomfortable moment of silence.*

TURNER Hey, I think I'll go out for a smoke.

EXT. SECRET SERVICE COTTAGE/THE PORCH - NIGHT

*Bolden is standing on the porch, looking off in the distance. Turner comes out and stands next to him. He takes a pack out of his pocket and offers it to Bolden. Bolden waves it away; Turner takes out a cigarette, lights it, and smokes.*

BOLDEN How do you put up with him? I mean, how do you put up with a guy like Harvey Henderson?

TURNER He's got seniority.

BOLDEN You know, I was this close to punching his lights out.

TURNER I've got to hand it to you, you've got great self-control.

BOLDEN Oh, he wanted me to. He would've kicked my ass out of here with a smile and a song.

TURNER Abe, you've got to think of this as just a job. That's all. Or it'll drive you crazy.

BOLDEN The job is fine. It's drunken morons like him, you know?

TURNER Listen, they're dozens of agents like him all over the Service. You just have to learn to ignore them.

BOLDEN I don't know if I can. And that's what worries me. It's not the insults, I can put up with that. But now these thoughts are going through my head. What if I find myself in a dangerous situation? Could I trust the agent next to me? What if I can't?

TURNER You have to learn to watch out for yourself, wherever you are.

*Bolden shakes his head.*

BOLDEN You know, I'm thinking I might be better off back in Chicago. There may be a few bigoted assholes there, but at least they're sober. At least I can trust them to cover my back.

*Suddenly there's a loud BANG in the distance. Bolden's hand goes to his shoulder holster.*

BOLDEN What was that?

TURNER Relax. It's just the fireworks. Hey, happy Fourth of July.

*They both look up at the sky.*

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

*FIREWORKS, loud and dazzling.*

EXT. CHICAGO SKYLINE - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "CHICAGO - NOVEMBER 1, 1963"

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM - DAY

*A large modern office. STRONG, NOONAN, and JORDAN, agents in their early 30s, are at their desks busily on the phone or dictating reports.*

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MARTINEAU'S OFFICE - DAY

*SPECIAL AGENT-IN-CHARGE MAURICE MARTINEAU, a brusque man in his mid 40s, sits at his desk while meeting with four other AGENTS.*

*Sitting on one side are STOCKS and MOTTO, also Agents in their early 30s; on the other side is Bolden, now in his late 20s, and DANNY PIKE, an earnest young black man in his early 20s who obviously admires Bolden and tries to emulate him.*

*Martineau looks at some reports on his desk.*

MARTINEAU So, Bolden. Looks like Spagnoli's up to his old tricks again.

BOLDEN Yes, sir. Looks like our friend has started up another counterfeiting ring.

*Martineau holds up one of the reports.*

MARTINEAU But this is all you've got on him?

BOLDEN So far. I've got a meeting this afternoon with my informant.

MARTINEAU Refresh me.

BOLDEN That old man we arrested last year, Frank Jones—

*The phone on the desk rings, interrupting him. Martineau picks it up.*

MARTINEAU (into phone) Martineau! Yes... Yes... I'm sorry, but that's impossible. No. No. All our agents are tied up at the moment. No, no, I just can't spare the manpower. I don't care what the Bureau wants. This is not a job for the Secret Service.

*Martineau hangs up and looks at the agents.*

MARTINEAU (cont'd) Gentlemen. It looks like the Federal Bureau of Investigation needs us to pull their nuts out of the fire. Again.

*Stocks and Motto laugh but Bolden remains expressionless. Danny takes note of his lack of reaction and doesn't laugh either.*

MARTINEAU (cont'd) It seems that the Bureau just got a call from some landlady who runs some kind of boarding house. She's renting a room to a couple of Hispanic types, Mexican or Cuban or whatever. Claims something strange is going on. Says that two guys, white guys, have been visiting them on a regular basis. And this morning when she went in to clean she saw two rifles on the bed just lying there, both of them with some kind of hunting scopes.

STOCKS Huh!

MOTTO You don't think with Kennedy coming and everything this might be something serious?

BOLDEN (to Martineau) I think you ought to contact Rowley in Washington.

MARTINEAU Now hold on. In the first place, this is not even our jurisdiction. Did you hear about even one threat on the President's life? Because I sure didn't. As far as we know, this is just about the discovery of firearms that might or might not be illegal. My guess is that they're above board. This is a waste of time.

BOLDEN But it's on the weekend President Kennedy is due to visit.

MARTINEAU He's only going to be here for the game at Soldier Field. (short laugh) The only killing'll be Army trouncing Navy by at least two touchdowns. You can bet your bottom dollar on that.

MOTTO Hey, my money's on Army.

BOLDEN He's going to be riding in an open car. There's a motorcade planned. For God's sake, the route was published in the newspaper.

MARTINEAU All right, all right! I'll call the chief. But I'm telling you, Rowley's going to say the same thing—forget it, this is the FBI's problem.

*He shuffles some papers, then looks up.*

MARTINEAU (cont'd) Well. That's it for now.

*The 4 Agents get up. Stocks exits and Motto is about to.*

MARTINEAU (cont'd) Motto.

MOTTO Mr. Martineau?

MARTINEAU You know you're behind with several of your cases.

MOTTO Only a few weeks. I can handle it.

MARTINEAU I'll get someone to give you a hand.

BOLDEN Mr. Martineau, except for this Spagnoli case my inbox is pretty much empty—

MARTINEAU (irritably interrupts) Oh for chrissakes Bolden, give someone else a shot, would you? (to Motto) I'll see what I can do.

*Motto then Bolden and Danny exit.*

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM - DAY

*Bolden and Danny are walking to their adjoining desks.*

DANNY Mr. Martineau didn't seem to think much of your offer, Abe.

BOLDEN I was given citations three years in a row for excellence and efficiency at my job. And he just hates that.

*Martineau opens the door of his office and calls out.*

MARTINEAU Stocks! Motto! Get in here!

*Stocks and Motto hurry in, closing the door behind them. After a moment they both come out, again closing Martineau's door, and pass by Bolden's desk.*

BOLDEN What happened?

MOTTO He called Rowley. Rowley told him to look into this boarding house thing, pronto.

BOLDEN That's good news.



MOTTO He told us to just go over there to do a quick recon, that's all. Just to see if there's anything to this landlady's story. It's, uh, on the north side, otherwise...

BOLDEN No, I understand. He wants a couple of agents who'll be as inconspicuous as possible.

STOCKS Yeah, I mean, they're all Polacks over there.

MOTTO A couple of Hispanics should stick out like a sore thumb.

DANNY I can't believe anyone would want to kill the President.

MOTTO Son, you've got a lot to learn.

EXT. CHICAGO SOUTH SIDE BAR - DAY

*A rundown establishment located in the mainly Negro section of the city.*

INT. CHICAGO SOUTH SIDE BAR - DAY

*A few customers, black, old and shabbily dressed in winter wear, sit at the bar where a black bartender serves them. In the dim interior Bolden and Danny sit in a booth sitting opposite FRANK JONES, small, black, late 50s. A bottle of beer is in front of each of them. Jones takes nervous swigs from his, Danny sips, while Bolden doesn't touch his.*

*Danny is making notes on a small pad, which Bolden then looks over.*

JONES Well, that's it.

BOLDEN This is good, Frank. This is very good.

JONES Thanks.

BOLDEN And these are the names of all of Spagnoli's confederates.

JONES Yeah, them's the cats.

BOLDEN You know, there are very few people in the world who can do what you do.

JONES (grinning) Thanks.

BOLDEN It's a real talent to keep your cool, not get caught.

JONES Maybe I should join the Secret Service.

BOLDEN Well, let's see about keeping you out of jail first.

JONES Yeah man, I can't go back to jail again. I cannot. I'll die in there. I'm already fifty-eight.

BOLDEN You won't die in jail.

JONES Who says?

*Bolden points upward.*

BOLDEN A little angel tells me. Look, I know you beat the rap last year on a technicality—

JONES What's that word?

DANNY Technicality.

BOLDEN But you can't expect that to save your ass next time. Now you keep helping us just like you've been doing and we'll stand behind you. You keep your nose clean, no jail.

JONES Well, that's what I done. I helped you.

BOLDEN You did great, Frank. But there's still more you can do.

JONES Yeah, what's that?

BOLDEN Well, in order to get a conviction, we've got to know where his plates are. We have to connect Spagnoli to the plates. That's where you come in.

JONES Oh man! You know, all I do for them cats is spread the bills around, that's it. I don't even know where Spagnoli lives.

BOLDEN I'm sure it wouldn't be hard for you to find out. You know how to use your head.

*A beat as Jones thinks.*

JONES ..Yeah, I guess I could. Yeah. Yeah. Okay.

BOLDEN That's fine.

JONES So we done here?

BOLDEN Till you get me that information.

*Jones gets up.*

JONES Hey, lemme get out of here first, okay?

BOLDEN We'll wait a minute, then we'll leave.

JONES Only November and this town's an iceberg. Man, I oughta be in Florida.

*Jones puts up the collar on his coat and leaves the bar. Bolden turns to Danny.*

BOLDEN So you see, Danny, that's how you conduct an interview.

DANNY I understand.

BOLDEN You don't throw your weight around, you treat people with respect. That's how you get information.

DANNY Yes, I get it.

*Danny glances at watch.*

BOLDEN It's nearly four. We should be checking in at the office.

*They both get up.*

DANNY You didn't drink your beer.

*Bolden smiles wryly.*

BOLDEN You're kidding, right?

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/COAT ROOM - DAY

*As Danny and Bolden enter the coat room and hang up their coats Strong comes up to them.*

STRONG Did you hear what happened?

BOLDEN We just walked in.

STRONG (laughing) Those goddamn morons.

BOLDEN Who?

STRONG Stocks and Motto! They blew the surveillance!

DANNY What surveillance?

STRONG The boarding house, the Hispanics.

BOLDEN You'd better give it to us from the top.

STRONG Okay. So Stocks and Motto drive over to the boarding house, right? They just go and park across the street.

BOLDEN Okay.

STRONG They sit there for about fifteen minutes trying to decide whether or not they should go in and talk to the landlady, when the guys they're looking for come driving up and park their car right in front of the house.

BOLDEN The Hispanics and the white guys?

STRONG Just the Hispanics.

BOLDEN Go on.

STRONG They're only in the house for a few minutes when they come back out and get into their car again. Then they start to drive away, only they're going back the way they came so they make a U-turn.

BOLDEN And why is this funny?

STRONG Because the moment they make a U-turn they pass right by Stocks and Motto while they're on the radio, right? And out of the radio comes Martineau's big fat voice so loud the Hispanics can hear it.

*Bolden shakes his head.*

BOLDEN Maurice Martineau. A man you can't ignore.

STRONG So the Hispanics hear the two-way radio, they take one look at Stocks and Motto, figure out they're being watched, and vamoose outta there.

BOLDEN While Martineau was still on the radio.

STRONG Oh yeah, so he asks Stocks what's going on, Stocks whines to him about how their cover's just been blown, the Hispanics are getting away, and Martineau's on the radio screaming at them to go after the guys!

BOLDEN Did they get them?

STRONG Oh yeah, they caught up with them about a mile away. They're in interrogation now. Stocks has got one, Motto's got the other.

*Bolden, Danny, and Strong head toward the door to the Main Room.*

BOLDEN How long have they been at it?

STRONG Couple of hours now. Oh! If you see Stocks, don't give him a hard time.

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM - DAY

*As Bolden and Danny walk over to their desks, Stocks comes out of the Interrogation Room and stretches.*

BOLDEN (sincerely) Stocks. Good work.

STOCKS Shut up.

BOLDEN What do you think? Think you can get any information from your guy about those other two men?

STOCKS Oh, he'll crack. If it takes all night.

*Stocks goes back into the Interrogation Room. Martineau comes out of his office.*

MARTINEAU Bolden!

BOLDEN Yes, Mr. Martineau.

MARTINEAU Stay by your phone tonight. And be here tomorrow morning no matter what.

BOLDEN I'll be here.

MARTINEAU When these guys give up the names of their partners I'm going to need every field agent to help locate them. (to Danny) You too... (blanks)

DANNY Pike. Daniel Pike.

MARTINEAU Pike.

*He goes back to his office and shuts the door. Bolden turns to Danny.*

BOLDEN Well, at least he got your name right.

INT. BOLDEN HOME/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

*Bolden, his wife BARBARA, an attractive black woman in her late 20s, and their Kids, the boys 4 and 5 and the girl now 7, have just finished dinner.*

BARBARA (to Kids) All right, you're excused. Now you can go eat your Halloween candy.

*The kids yell "Yay!" and hurry out of the dining room.*

*Barbara gets up and starts to clear away the dishes. Bolden gets up and helps her.*

BOLDEN Here, let me take that.

BARBARA Sounds like you had a long day.

BOLDEN But a good day.

BARBARA I'm glad. I know you're not allowed to talk about work.

BOLDEN No, it's okay. One of my cases is going well. (beat) Listen, I may have to go in tonight. I definitely have to go in tomorrow.

BARBARA Oh, Abe. You were going to watch the football game on TV.

BOLDEN I don't mind. But weren't you going to take the kids out tomorrow anyway?

*Barbara nods.*

BARBARA Um-hm! With Ahvia's class. We're all going downtown to watch the motorcade. They're so darling, they spent all week making a big banner: "We love you, Mr. Kennedy".

BOLDEN It sounds great.

BARBARA I'll let the kids tell you all about it when we get back. They're so excited about seeing the President.

*Bolden smiles at her, then glances uncertainly at the telephone.*

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM - DAY

*As Bolden walks in he is startled to see Stocks come out of the Interrogation Room, yawning and stretching.*

BOLDEN Stocks?

STOCKS Yeah.

BOLDEN You look like a wreck. (beat) You haven't been here all night, have you?

STOCKS (sarcastically) Hah!



BOLDEN How did it go with your suspects?

STOCKS He's being an asshole. Motto says his guy's not talking either.

BOLDEN What, you mean they're still here?

STOCKS Why do you think I'm still here?

BOLDEN Have you slept at all? Have you eaten? Have they eaten?

STOCKS (shrugs) Coffee.

BOLDEN That's all?

STOCKS What do you think this is, a health spa? Look, if you see Martineau, keep him off my back. Don't let him into interrogation again till I give the word.

BOLDEN I'll do what I can.

*As Stocks goes back into the Interrogation Room. Bolden goes to his desk and notices Danny sitting at his.*

BOLDEN Danny. Where is everybody?

DANNY Mr. Martineau sent Strong early this morning to check the boarding house. He just called in to say he didn't find any weapons of any sort, no rifles with hunting scopes, nothing. So Martineau sent Agent Jordan over to Soldier Field to check the President's section for anything suspicious.

BOLDEN What, like a bomb?

DANNY Something, I don't know.

BOLDEN Well, we've got to be thorough.

*Bolden looks over to Martineau's closed door.*

BOLDEN (cont'd) What's Martineau doing now?

DANNY Probably on the phone. Rowley's been calling him every fifteen minutes.

*Martineau comes out of his office. As Bolden and Danny watch, he walks straight over to the Interrogation Room and goes in. Then he comes out and walks over to the other interrogation room.*

*After a moment HISPANIC MAN #1, mid 20s, looking disheveled and exhausted, emerges, with Stocks behind him. As he slowly puts on his coat he looks uncertainly at Stocks.*

STOCKS Yeah, yeah, you're free to go. Get out of here. Oh, yeah. Thanks for your time.

*HISPANIC MAN #2, also mid 20s, emerges from the other room followed by Motto and Martineau. The Hispanic joins his compatriot.*

HISPANIC MAN #1 Estás bien?

HISPANIC MAN #2 Si si, estoy bien.

*Together they exit. Martineau goes back into his office and slams his door.*

BOLDEN (to Stocks) What happened?

*Stocks and Motto go over to Bolden's desk.*

MOTTO Martineau got word from Rowley to let the suspects go. Hey, we've got nothing on them.

STOCKS Goddamn it. We could've cracked them. We could have.

DANNY But the President's coming in two hours.

BOLDEN And we still don't know what's going on.

*COLLEEN, A SECRETARY, mid 40s, enters. She wears a small crucifix around her neck.*

COLLEEN Abe, Danny, everyone, good morning.

*They all greet her good morning.*

BOLDEN So Colleen, they got you working today too.

COLLEEN Mr. Martineau wanted all hands on deck for this one.

BOLDEN What have you got there?

COLLEEN I just got this off the teletype. It's from the White House. I'm taking it to his office.

BOLDEN May I read it?

*Colleen hands the cable to him. Bolden reads it to himself and smiles.*

BOLDEN Well, that's a relief. (to Colleen) Excuse me, I've got to call my wife.

*Bolden holds out the cable to Colleen.*

MOTTO Lemme see that.

*He snatches it from Bolden and reads it out loud while Bolden dials a number.*

MOTTO (cont'd) "November second. The White House has announced that due to a lingering cold, the President has canceled plans to attend the Army-Navy football game at Soldier Field in Chicago. Signed, Pierre Salinger, Press Secretary."

DANNY Abe, is anything wrong?

*Bolden is still on the phone waiting.*

BOLDEN No. There are going to be some disappointed kids, but no. Everything's fine.

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MARTINEAU'S OFFICE - DAY

*The CALENDAR on Martineau's desk reads "Friday, November 22". Martineau glances at several reports on his desk. Around him are Bolden, Danny, Stocks, Strong, Motto, Noonan, Jordan, and MIKE WEINSTEIN, an agent in his mid 30s. Half of the Agents are sitting, the rest are standing.*

MARTINEAU All right, who let the loonies out of the loony bin?

*No one answers. He finally looks up at them.*

MARTINEAU Look at this. The FBI. The Chicago police. For three weeks now. Haven't we got enough to do without doing their work for them? They're dumping every nutcase in town in our laps. I mean, look at this. Here's one from the police. Some guy named Val-ay or Val-ee or whatever, works in a warehouse, overheard making threats on the President's life. Here's another one. Hm. Another Hispanic. (tries to pronounce name) Es-kay...Es-chay...

BOLDEN Eschevarria.

MARTINEAU Yeah. He was overheard saying he was going to "take care of Kennedy". There's a million of these people out there.

BOLDEN Mr. Martineau, with due respect, it is our job to follow up on all these leads.

MARTINEAU We're already overworked as it is with our counterfeiting cases. Rowley's got a hell of a nerve sending us reinforcements from Minneapolis—no offense intended, Weinstein—

WEINSTEIN None taken.

MARTINEAU —for the sole purpose of helping us catch a bunch of would-be assassins who are probably harmless cranks. I mean, it isn't as if Kennedy's right here in our bailiwick. I'm going to send all these reports to Washington and let them deal with it.

WEINSTEIN Actually, Kennedy's been on the road for nearly a week. Don't you think it would be a better idea to forward these reports to the protection detail that's traveling with him?

MARTINEAU Where are they now?

WEINSTEIN ...They were in Tampa a few days ago... Then New Orleans... They should be in Dallas around noon.

MARTINEAU Great. Forward this information to the Kennedy detail in Dallas. It's their problem. Then we can get back to the job of arresting some genuine criminals. (to everyone) Now get this straight. Any calls any of you get about threats to the president, run them past me before you go off on some wild goose chase. That's all.

*They all get up and leave except for Bolden, who is the last to reach the door.*

MARTINEAU (cont'd) Bolden.

BOLDEN Yes?

MARTINEAU You're the one who took that call from the FBI about Echevarria, right?

BOLDEN And I'm dictating that report right now.

MARTINEAU Right. Finish it up as soon as you can and get back to the Spagnoli case.

BOLDEN Yes, sir.

*Bolden exits.*

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM - DAY

*Weinstein is outside Martineau's door to walk with Bolden back to his desk. Danny is already sitting at his desk.*

WEINSTEIN Tell me, you were with Kennedy's detail, weren't you?

BOLDEN About three years ago. You were too, weren't you?

WEINSTEIN This past summer. Hey. I have to ask you something.

BOLDEN Go ahead.

WEINSTEIN Weren't you the guy who complained to Rowley about all the whoring and drinking at Hyannis Port?

BOLDEN Not exactly. I didn't complain to Rowley because I knew Rowley wouldn't listen. I went over his head. But it didn't do any good anyway.

WEINSTEIN Nope. They're still whoring and drinking.

BOLDEN I'm sorry to hear that. Look, I'm no prude, but—

WEINSTEIN Yeah, I know. I tried to tell them myself there's no excuse for that sort of behavior. Not when you're about to go on duty. You never know what's going to happen.

BOLDEN Like Stu Stout told me, alertness. Preparedness. Quick action.

WEINSTEIN I know Stu. Good guy.

BOLDEN Yeah.

WEINSTEIN It's like I tried to tell them, how can you expect to protect the President of the United States if you're drunk on your ass and you've gotta pull your pants up?

*Danny has been staring at them both, a little starry-eyed.*

DANNY Wow. Both of you were actually with the President. Did you get to talk to him?

*Bolden nods.*

BOLDEN We spoke a little.

WEINSTEIN Very intelligent man. (to Bolden) So Abe, tell me. What do you think of all this?

BOLDEN I don't know what to think. All I know is, it's out of our hands.

CLOSE UP ON:

*the CLOCK on the wall at "9:40".*

CROSS FADE TO:

*the CLOCK at "12:40".*

INT. DELI NEAR CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE - DAY

*It's fairly busy. On a high shelf behind the ordering counter is a B&W portable TV which is showing a REAL T.V. SOAP OPERA FROM THIS DATE on a low volume. Bolden is ordering a sandwich.*

BOLDEN Roast beef on rye, mustard, no pickle.

*Bolden is casually glancing at the TV. Suddenly the screen goes black and the CBS eye logo appears with the words "CBS NEWS BULLETIN" written across it.*

BOLDEN Hey, turn that up, will you?

*The COUNTER MAN does.*

*As the logo continues to be displayed, we hear an ANNOUNCER on the TV.*

ANNOUNCER (V.O.) "We interrupt 'As the World Turns' to bring you a special news bulletin. From New York, Walter Cronkite."

*There is a brief pause. Then the REAL T.V. NEWS BULLETIN OF WALTER CRONKITE appears.*

CRONKITE (ON T.V.) "In Dallas, Texas, three shots were fired at President Kennedy's motorcade downtown. The first reports say that President Kennedy has been seriously wounded by this shooting."

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.) Oh God!

*Cronkite continues on the T.V.*

COUNTER MAN (turning back to Bolden) You said roast beef?

BOLDEN (distracted) No, I've—I've got to get back to the office.

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM - DAY

*Bolden, still in his overcoat, rushes in. Only Noonan and Weinstein are there. Noonan is at his desk. Weinstein is pacing, obviously upset. Colleen, distraught, comes up to Bolden.*

COLLEEN Oh Abe, did you hear the news?

BOLDEN Yeah. Does anyone know exactly what happened?

WEINSTEIN Just that Kennedy was shot in Dallas a few minutes ago.



NOONAN Goddamned rednecks.

BOLDEN How about Martineau, does he know?

COLLEEN (stonily) Oh, he knows. When I heard the news over the office radio I went right in to tell him the President was shot, and you know what that man said? "Big deal. One goes out, another one comes in." How could he be so cold?

BOLDEN It might not be as bad as it sounds.

COLLEEN I'm praying for him to recover.

*Noonan shakes his head.*

NOONAN No. I've got an awful feeling about this.

WEINSTEIN I told those guys. I told them. But they wouldn't listen.

*Martineau's door opens and he comes out. Calmly he addresses all of them.*

MARTINEAU I just got off the phone with Rowley in Washington. This is not for general release so don't go blabbing to your families yet. The President died a few minutes ago.

*Colleen begins to sob and crosses herself.*

COLLEEN Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners.

MARTINEAU Yeah? You want to pray for something, pray for our jobs. The shit hasn't even hit the fan yet.

*Martineau goes back into his office and shuts the door. As Colleen continues to sob, Bolden puts an arm around her.*

INT. BOLDEN HOME/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

*The Kids are in bed. Barbara and Bolden are sitting close to each other on the sofa, watching the REAL T.V. LIVE COVERAGE OF KENNEDY'S BODY BEING RETURNED TO WASHINGTON on low volume. He has his arm around her.*

BOLDEN I didn't want the kids to see this. But they know. They were so quiet at dinner.

BARBARA Ahvia knows. The teachers told the children and sent them all home after lunch. The boys, well, we'll talk to them later.

BOLDEN Should I go up and talk to them?

BARBARA I think they're asleep, but you might try.

INT. BOLDEN HOME/BOYS' BEDROOM

*Bolden opens the door quietly, sees both of them sleeping soundly, and closes the door.*

INT. BOLDEN HOME/AHVIA'S BEDROOM

*Bolden opens the door and is surprised to see AHVIA sitting up in bed.*

AHVIA Hi, Daddy.

*Bolden goes over and sits beside her.*

BOLDEN Hey, Princess. You shouldn't be up.

AHVIA Daddy, can I ask you something?

BOLDEN May I ask you something.

AHVIA May I ask you something? Is he the bad man?

BOLDEN Who?

AHVIA That man they say killed the President. Is he the one?

BOLDEN We think so.

AHVIA Are you going to punish him?

BOLDEN If he's the one responsible, we'll punish him.

AHVIA Promise?

BOLDEN Promise.

AHVIA Okay.

*Ahvia slips into bed. Bolden tucks her in and kisses her forehead.*

BOLDEN Now don't you worry about a thing. We always catch the bad man. Always.

*He goes to the door.*

AHVIA 'Night, Dad.

BOLDEN 'Night, Ahvia.

*He closes it.*

EXT. BOLDEN'S PARENTS' HOME/FRONT - DAY

*A small house in a small town just outside of Chicago. Bolden, Barbara, their Kids, Bolden's mom OPHELIA and his dad GABRIEL come up the walk on their way home from church.*

BARBARA It's so peaceful here outside the city.

GABRIEL Yes, it's hard to believe on a day like this there's evil in the world.

INT. BOLDEN'S PARENTS' HOME/LIVING ROOM - DAY

*They all enter the house and hang up their coats, Barbara and Ophelia helping the Kids.*

BARBARA That was a nice sermon the Reverend gave about President Kennedy.

OPHELIA Have they made you work harder these past few days, Abe?

BOLDEN No harder than usual. Really, there's not much we can do up here in Chicago to assist in the case. Just maintain our vigilance.

GABRIEL Besides, Ophelia, they caught the man.

OPHELIA The Reverend said we oughtn't to seek vengeance, only justice.

BARBARA Justice. That's right.

OPHELIA I'll go start dinner.

BARBARA Let me help.

EXT. BOLDEN'S PARENTS' HOME/YARD - DAY

*Bolden and the kids, all in their sweaters, are playing catch when Gabriel opens the door and calls out.*

GABRIEL Abe, you'd better come in here.

BOLDEN Why, Dad, what's up?

*Bolden follows him in while the Kids follow Bolden.*

INT. BOLDEN'S PARENTS' HOME/LIVING ROOM - DAY

*Bolden sees Gabriel sitting on the couch with Ophelia and Barbara standing behind him. All are transfixed by the REAL T.V. LIVE COVERAGE OF OSWALD'S ASSASSINATION which is on low volume. Bolden joins them.*

BOLDEN What's going on?

GABRIEL Shhh!

BARBARA Someone shot him.

BOLDEN Who?

BARBARA Oswald. That assassin.

BOLDEN What!?

*Bolden is now also transfixed by the scene on TV. Barbara notices the Kids enter the living room and herds them out.*

BARBARA Come on everyone, you can help me baste the chicken.

*She and the Kids go off.*

BOLDEN I can't believe this is happening.

OPHELIA Lord have mercy on us.

*Gabriel turns to Bolden.*

GABRIEL So what happens now, son? What's the government going to do?

BOLDEN (slowly) I have no idea. I wish I did.

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM - DAY

*Several Agents are at their desks. Bolden at his desk is speaking into a dictaphone when Weinstein comes up to him.*

BOLDEN ...And on Thursday, November twenty-first, I spoke over the phone to a man named Thomas Mosley— that's M-O-S-L-E-Y—who told me that a man named Homer Echevarria— that's E-C-H-E-V— (to Weinstein) Hey, Mike.

WEINSTEIN Got a second?

BOLDEN Sure.

*Bolden turns off machine.*

WEINSTEIN One of the secretaries brought in a portable TV. You want to go into the typing pool and watch the funeral?

BOLDEN I think I'll pass. I've got to finish this report and have it typed up on Martineau's desk this afternoon. (beat) No, that's not it. To tell you the truth, watching the funeral would just get me wound up all over again.

WEINSTEIN Sounds like you're still wound up.

*Bolden leans toward Weinstein.*

BOLDEN You know, I still keep running it through my mind. What the hell was going on in Dallas? How the hell could our guys screw this up?

WEINSTEIN Good question.

*Weinstein nonchalantly looks around to see if anyone is paying attention to them, no one is.*

WEINSTEIN (cont'd) Listen Abe, it's nearly lunchtime. Why don't we grab a sandwich?

BOLDEN Are you buying?

WEINSTEIN I'm buying.

INT. DELI NEAR CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE - DAY

*The B&W TV is showing REAL T.V. LIVE COVERAGE OF KENNEDY'S FUNERAL on low volume. Bolden and Weinstein are sitting at a small table opposite one another, finished lunches in front of them.*

WEINSTEIN First I've got to tell you. Today's my last day.

BOLDEN You're going back to Minneapolis.

WEINSTEIN Just got the call last night. Seems they need me more than you do.

BOLDEN Well, I'm glad we had the opportunity to work together.

WEINSTEIN Likewise.

BOLDEN But that's not why you bought me a sandwich.

WEINSTEIN I wanted you give you some parting advice.

BOLDEN Like in "Hamlet". Polonius.

WEINSTEIN Mine's better.

*Weinstein leans forward.*

WEINSTEIN (cont'd) Listen, Abe. You want make the Secret Service your career, you've got to let up some.

BOLDEN Let up on what? What are you talking about?

WEINSTEIN All this complaining about the drinking and womanizing on the Kennedy detail, for one thing. You never stop talking about it.

BOLDEN But you saw all of that too.

WEINSTEIN Yeah, but I only groused to the guys themselves. I didn't go complaining to Chief Rowley or Chief Baughmann or Inspector Kelly, for chrissakes. Not like you. Everybody in the Service has you down for a snitch, and it's not winning you any friends.

BOLDEN Well, maybe you if had complained to the top Kennedy would still be alive.

WEINSTEIN Listen. It's bad enough they had to listen to a Jew criticize them. But to take it from, well, you...

BOLDEN A black man. I see.

*Bolden starts to get up.*

BOLDEN (cont'd) Anyway, thanks for lunch.

WEINSTEIN Wait a minute, sit down.

BOLDEN Did Martineau tell you to try to shut me up?

WEINSTEIN No! Absolutely not. Sit down.

*Bolden sits.*

WEINSTEIN (confidentially) Okay. Listen. You didn't hear this from me.

BOLDEN Okay. I didn't hear it from you.

WEINSTEIN I have a friend who was on the detail in Dallas. Never mind who. He tells me the guys were drinking. Big time.

BOLDEN (ruefully) Of course.



WEINSTEIN No, you've got to hear the whole story. Seems that they were at the Fort Worth Press Club. So far so good. Can't do much damage at the Press Club. But then a few of them got the itch and went bar-hopping. So they picked up some girls and finally ended up with their dates over at an after-hours club where they didn't leave until five in the morning, stone drunk on their asses.

BOLDEN (shocked) Five—! When did they have to be with Kennedy?

WEINSTEIN Seven a.m.

BOLDEN But—that's only two hours!

WEINSTEIN That's not all.

BOLDEN There's more?

WEINSTEIN It seems— Well, you know, I said they had girls with them.

BOLDEN What do you mean, hookers?

WEINSTEIN Well, whoever they were, the guys probably didn't get any sleep.

BOLDEN That's not good.

WEINSTEIN Not only that. One of the guys, I don't know who so don't even ask, swears his pocket was picked.

BOLDEN So, one of the girls took his wallet.

WEINSTEIN Worse. His Secret Service ID.

*Bolden sits back, taking this in.*

BOLDEN Oh no. This is bad.

WEINSTEIN If it turns out someone unauthorized was running around using it last Friday, well, you can see why the Service doesn't want it to come out. And if you keep complaining about their drinking and womanizing, that's only going to bring some unwanted attention.

BOLDEN To the problem.

WEINSTEIN To you!

BOLDEN (slowly and deliberately) Mike, this is my work. I'm the eyes and ears of the Federal government. You can't tell me that I'm going to get in trouble just doing my job. I think I've got a little more faith in the Service than you do.

*Weinstein gets up, grabs his trash.*

WEINSTEIN Okay Abe, have it your way. But don't say I didn't warn you.

*Bolden gets up, grabs his trash.*

BOLDEN Thanks for your concern, Mike. But I've got to do what I think is right. And that's all there is to it.

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM - DAY

*Stocks, Motto, Danny, and Bolden are crowded around Noonan's desk in the middle of a bull session.*

*The CLOCK at 3:15.*

*The CALENDAR on Noonan's desk reads "Tuesday, November 26".*

DANNY So who was there?

NOONAN As far as I know, Kellerman was on the motorcade detail...Lawson... that new kid Youngblood...Paul Landis...

MOTTO Yeah, I know Landis.

NOONAN Bill Greer...

STOCKS That stupid mick.

NOONAN He was driving Kennedy.

STOCKS It figures. That's about all he's good for.

NOONAN Clint was there. Clint Hill.

BOLDEN He's a good man.

NOONAN I heard it through the grapevine he leaped on top of the car to save Mrs. Kennedy.

*Danny nods knowingly.*

DANNY Yeah, that sounds like Clint.

*Bolden looks at Danny askance.*

*Suddenly 2 FBI AGENTS in dark suits and hats enter, slamming the door behind them. The Secret Service Agents follow them with their eyes. Without a word the FBI Agents go directly to Martineau's office and one of them knocks loudly on the door. The Secret Service Agents glare at them.*

STOCKS Well, well, well, what have we got here?

MOTTO Looks like J. Edgar's boys.

*Martineau's door opens. The FBI Agents go inside, shutting the door firmly behind them.*

*There is a pause, then Noonan turns back to the others.*

NOONAN You know, I also heard that later on at the hospital some FBI asshole barged in trying to make, quote, official inquiries, unquote, about the shooting, and Hill decked him.

BOLDEN What, Clint Hill slugged an FBI agent?

MOTTO Good for him.

*Noonan points with his thumb towards the closed door.*

NOONAN I wonder what the hell that's all about.

MOTTO Something tells me it's not about a fist fight at Parkland Hospital.

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM - DAY (LATER)

*The CLOCK at "3:30".*

*The Secret Service Agents are back at their desks, working. Bolden is looking through his notes when Martineau opens the door to his office, looks out, and calls to him.*

MARTINEAU Bolden, get in here.

BOLDEN Right away.

*He gets up and goes over.*

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MARTINEAU'S OFFICE

*The 2 FBI Agents are still there, standing behind Martineau at his desk.*

MARTINEAU (to Bolden) Close the door, have a seat.

*Bolden does. Martineau looks up from a report in an open folder on his desk.*

MARTINEAU (cont'd; to the FBI Agents) Gentlemen, would you excuse us a minute.

*The 2 FBI Agents leave, closing the door behind them.*

BOLDEN What's this about?

MARTINEAU Abe, I just want you to know off the bat that I think you're doing a real slam-bang job.

BOLDEN (uncertainly) Thank you.

MARTINEAU In fact you're the best field agent this office has ever had. I was just looking at this report, for example. Yes...a thorough investigation. No one could have done it better.

BOLDEN If you mean the Echevarria report, that's just a preliminary. I intend to follow up—

*Martineau holds up his hand.*

MARTINEAU No need. You've done fine. We, um, we're going to be handing this off to the Bureau.

BOLDEN I don't understand.

MARTINEAU Well...after all, we've done our part, haven't we? Now it's time for the FBI to do their jobs and continue their investigation. I mean, begin their investigation.

BOLDEN I have to say that's a disappointment. I was about to follow up some very promising leads...

MARTINEAU Well, it's in your outbox now.

*He picks up the report and slides it and a pen over to Bolden.*

MARTINEAU (cont'd) Just a couple of things. There were some typos so I had the girl retype your report. But basically, no changes. So if you could just sign it again, we'll give it to the Bureau right now and get it off our desks, okay?

BOLDEN (beat) Okay.

*He glances at the report without picking it up.*

BOLDEN (cont'd) Hey, wait a minute.

MARTINEAU (nonchalantly) Like I said, no changes.

BOLDEN But that's the wrong date. I started the investigation last Friday, not yesterday.

MARTINEAU No...I seem to recall it was yesterday the twenty-fifth.

BOLDEN But that wouldn't make any sense. The man who called me distinctly said that he heard Eschevarria state he intended to kill President Kennedy.

MARTINEAU Didn't he state, just the President?

BOLDEN No, he said Kennedy. You repeated it yourself.

MARTINEAU I don't remember doing anything of the sort.

BOLDEN (hesitantly) Mr. Martineau, what is this about?

*Martineau gets up, walks around his desk over to Bolden, and puts a hand on his shoulder.*

MARTINEAU Abe, let me be frank with you.

BOLDEN (guardedly) All right.

MARTINEAU You know what the situation is as well as I do. The Service is in trouble. We are under intense scrutiny these days. Now, our men down in Dallas did exactly what was expected of them. But none of that seems to matter to the politicians in Washington or to the press.

BOLDEN I am aware of all of that, Mr. Martineau, but how will post-dating my report help?

MARTINEAU Oh, it will help immensely, son. You do see it, don't you? We have to look as if we've done our jobs.

BOLDEN But we have.

MARTINEAU Of course we have. But given the current climate, it wouldn't look good if people thought we had information about a threat to Kennedy and didn't follow up. So we're making it a threat to President Johnson and letting the damn FBI follow up on it.

BOLDEN I—I don't know if I can do what you ask.

MARTINEAU Bolden. I know how much you love the Secret Service. You intend to make it your career, don't you?

BOLDEN Yes, I do.

MARTINEAU And you accept the fact that the Secret Service is the only organization in America dedicated and qualified to guarding the leaders of our nation.

*Bolden doesn't answer.*

MARTINEAU (cont'd) Bolden?

BOLDEN (quietly) Yes.

MARTINEAU We owe it to the American people to do our utmost to maintain our strength. Without us, our leaders will have no means of protection. And without our leaders—well, we don't want to imagine what might happen to America. The Secret Service, your brothers in arms, are counting on you. You're not going to let them down, are you?

*Bolden takes a long moment to consider.*

BOLDEN No, I suppose not.

*He pulls the paper toward him, picks up the pen, and signs it, with Martineau looking over his shoulder.*

MARTINEAU Good man. I knew you'd do the right thing. You remember the motto of the Secret Service, don't you, Abe?

BOLDEN "We serve in silence."

MARTINEAU Right. I think you're going to turn out to be a first-class agent in all respects.

*He pats him on the shoulder and returns to his desk.*

MARTINEAU (cont'd) Now, get back to work and we won't talk of this again, right?

BOLDEN Right.

*Bolden gets up and goes to the door, but before leaving looks back at Martineau, who is now ignoring him, intently checking the report.*

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM

*The 2 FBI Agents are right outside Martineau's door. Bolden shoots a quick look at them and returns to his desk. At the same time Martineau opens the door to his office and addresses FBI Agent #1, holding out the report.*



MARTINEAU Here you go. Say hi to your boss from me.

*Agent #1 takes the report.*

FBI AGENT #1 Thank you.

FBI AGENT #2 Thanks for your cooperation.

*The 2 FBI Agents leave and Martineau closes his door. Stocks, Motto, and Noonan come over to Bolden's desk.*

DANNY What was that all about, Abe?

BOLDEN (without emotion) Nothing special. Martineau caught some mistakes in my report.

STOCKS That's it?

BOLDEN Yeah. I guess I'm not as thorough an investigator as I should be.

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM - DAY

*Stocks, Motto, Jordan, Strong, Noonan, Bolden and Danny are just settling down at their desks. Bolden's desk CALENDAR reads "Monday, December 2".*

DANNY So Abe, how was your Thanksgiving?

BOLDEN Oh, the kids always love going to see their grandparents. How about you?

DANNY Turkey and all the trimmings at my mom's house. It was pretty relaxed.

BOLDEN Yeah, we can all use that.

*He looks through his phone messages. Danny points to one of them.*

DANNY I took that one for you a few minutes ago.

BOLDEN This one from Frank Jones.

DANNY Yeah. He says he doesn't have any information on Spagnoli yet but he's working on it. I think he just wants some reassurance.

BOLDEN Reassurance about what?

DANNY He sounds like he's really afraid he's going to end up in jail again.

BOLDEN That is one nervous old man. (short laugh) I hope you're not having as much trouble with your guys.

DANNY My guys? Nah. By the way...I'm meeting a new informant this afternoon and I could really use your help.

BOLDEN What did you have in mind?

DANNY Well, he wants to meet in Belden Park and I'd appreciate a little backup.

BOLDEN Sure.

*Danny takes a folded newspaper from his desk and offers it to Bolden.*

DANNY Oh yeah, I almost forgot. I read this on the bus.

BOLDEN What is it?

*He takes the newspaper.*

DANNY I thought you might be interested. It just happened over the weekend.

BOLDEN What am I looking at?

DANNY They're starting a group to investigate Kennedy's assassination.

BOLDEN (chuckling) I thought that was the FBI's job.

DANNY No, this is something different. The paper says they want testimonies from as many people as they can to help them determine what actually went on in Dallas.

BOLDEN Testimonies? Well, if isn't the Bureau, who is it?

*Danny points to the news item.*

DANNY It says the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is heading it. I'll bet we get some answers now.

*Bolden hands Danny back the paper without reading it.*

BOLDEN Sounds interesting. I'll take a look at it later.

*Martineau's door opens and he emerges. All the men look up from their desks.*

MARTINEAU Gentlemen, good morning. As you all probably know, it is the Agency's ongoing policy to upgrade our ID books periodically. This is one of those times. So I'm going to need each and every one of your ID books before the end of the day. You can drop them off by my desk on your way out.

NOONAN Mr. Martineau, I've been here eight years and I've never heard of ID books needing to be updated.

MARTINEAU Well, you obviously haven't been here as long as I have. The Service does this at regular intervals for security purposes.

STRONG How long before we get our new books?

MARTINEAU You should get them by the first of the year.

*Stocks and Motto groan.*

MARTINEAU Hey, relax. You're not going to need them over the Christmas season. Well, that's it. Remember, end of the day.

*Martineau goes back into his office and shuts the door.*

NOONAN (to no one in particular) Well, that's interesting.

MOTTO The first time I've ever heard of it happening.

BOLDEN (loudly to everyone) Wonder what Rowley's trying to cover up this time.

STRONG (laughs) Good one, Abe.

*Bolden leans over to Danny.*

BOLDEN Danny. May I see your paper again?

DANNY Sure.

*Danny hands the newspaper over to Bolden, who starts to read the news item.*

BOLDEN "The Warren Commission." Hm.

EXT. BELDEN PARK, CHICAGO SOUTH SIDE - DAY

*As they enter the park, Danny leads Bolden to a bench.*

DANNY This is where we arranged to meet. He ought to be here any moment.

*They sit. After a moment, they are approached by TOM VINCENT, white, early 20s, casually almost shabbily dressed in jeans and a cheap winter jacket.*

DANNY There he is. Hey, Tom.

TOM Hey, Danny. Long time no see.

DANNY Abe, this is Tom Vincent. He was my roommate in college.

BOLDEN Roommate.

DANNY Yeah, I went to Northwestern.

TOM (to Bolden) Northwestern's pretty integrated.

DANNY Tom, this is Abraham Bolden.

*Tom extends his hand, Bolden shakes it.*

TOM A real pleasure to meet you, Mr. Bolden.

BOLDEN Mr. Vincent.

DANNY So...what are you doing here?

TOM Danny, cut the crap. You know why I'm here.

DANNY All right. I guess the jig is up.

BOLDEN What's this all about?

TOM Can I sit?

BOLDEN Be my guest.

*Tom sits next to Bolden.*

TOM First of all, Abe—can I call you Abe?

BOLDEN You just did.

TOM I'm sorry for the secrecy of our meeting. I have to do this sometimes in my line of work.

BOLDEN And what is your line of work?

TOM I'm an investigative reporter for "The Chicago Eye".

BOLDEN Never heard of it.

TOM It's new. It's a newspaper my friends and I started to sort of be like "The Village Voice" in New York.

BOLDEN I see.

TOM Our aim is to tell it like it is. To root out the corruption in our government and let the people know what's really going on.

BOLDEN And what do you want from me?

DANNY Abe, this is your chance to tell your story. You know, about all the drinking and running around you saw with the Kennedy detail.

BOLDEN Danny, that's an internal matter and you know it.

TOM Not when it has to do with the assassination of the President of the United States.

DANNY You complained to the higher-ups time and time again, Abe. You told me so yourself. They're not going to do a thing. Nothing in the Secret Service is going to change.

BOLDEN (agitated) That's because they all want everybody to think they're a loyal band of brothers dedicated to doing their jobs. My God, if you only knew

—

TOM What, there's more?

*Bolden calms down and gets up.*

BOLDEN No.

TOM Abe, if there's more, the American people have a right to know—

BOLDEN (interrupting him) Forget it. Tom, it was nice to meet you.

*He gets up and starts to walk away. Tom gets up.*

TOM (calling out) We'd give you complete anonymity...

*Danny gets up, gives Tom a look of resignation and shrugs his shoulders, then starts to run after Bolden.*

DANNY (calling out) Hey, wait for me.

*He catches up to Bolden who is striding down the path out of the park.*

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MARTINEAU'S OFFICE - DAY

*Martineau sits at his desk conferring with Agent Jordan who is standing beside him. Martineau's CALENDAR reads "Monday, February 17".*

MARTINEAU So Jordan, what's your opinion?

JORDAN You want the truth? I don't like him. He won't stop complaining about guys who just want to live it up a little.

MARTINEAU Not to mention he's been trying to put the Service in a bad light for years.

JORDAN A guy like him ought to show more gratitude for chrissakes.

*Martineau gets up.*

MARTINEAU Well, you want to get this thing over with? The quicker he's out of here the better.

*He goes to the door.*

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM - DAY

*Bolden and Danny are at their desks. A construction paper valentine with the words "I Love Daddy" lies on top of Bolden's desk calendar.*

*Martineau appears at his office door.*

MARTINEAU Abe, would you come in here a minute?

*Both Bolden and Danny look up at Martineau and as Bolden gets up they exchange glances of dismay.*

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MARTINEAU'S OFFICE - DAY

*Bolden comes in.*

BOLDEN Sir.

MARTINEAU Sit down. I think you'll want to hear this.

*Bolden sits.*

MARTINEAU Jordan here was formerly an agent for the Internal Revenue Service.

BOLDEN (uncertainly) I didn't know that.

MARTINEAU Tell me, what do you know about the IRS?



BOLDEN (lightly) Enough to file my taxes on time every year.

JORDAN Did you know that the IRS has an Intelligence Division?

BOLDEN No.

JORDAN Well, let me be brief. The Intelligence Division of the Internal Revenue Service is in the process of putting together a major undercover operation targeting some highly-placed people in the government. The IRS asked us to lend them one of our agents, and—

MARTINEAU (interrupting) I told them you were my top man.

JORDAN It would be a year-long assignment and it would take you out of Chicago. Your salary, however, would reflect your increased responsibilities, almost double what you're making now.

MARTINEAU (encouragingly) Double, Abe.

JORDAN This is a golden opportunity to really serve your country.

BOLDEN I believe I'm doing that now.

JORDAN The IRS needs someone with your brains and unique skills, Bolden.

MARTINEAU If I were a young man like you I'd jump at the chance.

BOLDEN (to Jordan) And how do you fit in?

JORDAN Well, you're going to need a lot of preparation before you can infiltrate the group we've targeted. I'll be the one to help you prepare. But we'll work together on this.

BOLDEN I don't understand.

*Martineau suddenly gets up from his desk and heads for the door.*

MARTINEAU I'll just give you a moment to work out the details.

*Bolden watches warily as Martineau EXITS. Jordan walks around from behind the desk, takes the empty chair beside Bolden, and positions it so that he can look straight at him. Then he sits.*

JORDAN (brusquely) Bolden. Pay attention.

BOLDEN Yes.

JORDAN This is what's going to happen.

INT. BOLDEN HOME/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

*After dinner. Dishes are still on the table. Bolden is sitting at the table apparently lost in thought, and Barbara is sitting next to him watching him patiently. Finally she speaks.*

BARBARA Abe, honey.

BOLDEN Hm?

BARBARA Bad day at work?

BOLDEN Oh, no, no.

BARBARA I know I'm not supposed to ask.

BOLDEN No, that's fine. Actually, it turned out to be... (searching for words)  
Actually I'm not sure. This morning I was offered a special assignment.

BARBARA Can you tell me about it?

BOLDEN I can tell you this much. It involved undercover work and I'd have to be away from home for about a year.

BARBARA (sighing) A year.

BOLDEN But they told me I'd be making double my current salary.

BARBARA Sounds wonderful. But you're already bringing home a good paycheck. No, we're fine.

BOLDEN And the fact is, I don't think I could bear being away from you and the kids for that long.

BARBARA So you said no.

BOLDEN I said no.

BARBARA I'm glad.

BOLDEN You're sure?

BARBARA Yes, I'm sure. Having you away from home isn't worth any amount of money.

BOLDEN Thanks, honey.

*They kiss. Then Barbara starts to clear away the dishes.*

BARBARA So, did they really want you to go undercover?

BOLDEN That was the plan.

BARBARA Well, it wouldn't have worked out anyway. You're the most honest man in the world. You'd never be able to fool anyone.

BOLDEN (lightly) Oh, you don't think so?

BARBARA Of course. In fact, I can't understand why they asked you to do something like that in the first place.

*Barbara goes into the kitchen with the dishes and Bolden silently sits at the dinner table, lost in thought. After a beat he calls out and gets up from the dining table.*

BOLDEN Barbara, I'm going out for a walk. I'll be back in an hour or two.

INT. CHICAGO COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

*A typical coffee shop with a pay phone on the wall, long counter, etc. There are only a few customers, black and white, in winter outerwear. Bolden is sitting at the counter nursing a cup of coffee when Danny comes in and sits next to him.*

DANNY It's pretty late, Abe.

BOLDEN Yeah, I'm sorry. But I had to talk to you, and it had to be out of the office.

*The WAITRESS comes up, turns over the coffee cup on the saucer in front of Danny, and pours out some coffee.*

DANNY (to Waitress) Thanks. (to Bolden) So what did you call me about?

BOLDEN First do me a favor. Take out your ID book.

DANNY My Secret Service ID?

BOLDEN Yeah, go on.

DANNY Okay.

*He takes the ID out of his coat pocket and shows it to Bolden.*

BOLDEN Take a look at it. A good look. That's the new one.

*Danny does.*

BOLDEN Notice anything peculiar?

DANNY No. As a matter of fact, it looks almost exactly like the old one. (he points to book) Except for the word—

BOLDEN (interrupting) Except for the word "The" on the front. "The United States Secret Service" instead of just "United States Secret Service".

DANNY Yeah.

BOLDEN Don't you think it's a little strange that the Agency went to all that trouble, all that expense, just to add the word "the" to the front of three hundred ID books?

DANNY Martineau said it was for security purposes.

BOLDEN Don't you wonder exactly what kind of security he was talking about?

*Danny shrugs while repocketing his ID.*

BOLDEN (cont'd) Or maybe, just maybe, it was a way for the Agency to cover up a situation.

DANNY What situation?

BOLDEN Well, what if, and I'm just saying what if, an agent lost his ID or, worse, had it stolen?

DANNY Well, that guy would be in one big heap of trouble.

BOLDEN But what if that agent got drunk and lost his ID in Dallas the day Kennedy was killed?

DANNY (stunned) Oh.

*He shakes his head.*

DANNY (cont'd) You know, I heard a rumor that somebody in Dallas was pretending to be a Secret Service agent, flashing around some real-looking credentials. But it sounded so crazy I didn't take it seriously.

BOLDEN But what if it's true? What if an agent did get drunk and lose his ID book in Dallas and someone else used it? And what if the Secret Service wanted to cover up that fact? Don't you think their best course of action would be to issue us all new ID books to hide the fact that someone had lost his?

DANNY You've got to tell Tom about this.

BOLDEN I'm not going to be the one who allows the Secret Service's image to be tarnished by cheap muckraking. And, I could be reading this all wrong. Or—

DANNY Or?

BOLDEN Or I could be reading it right. Look, here's the real reason I called you tonight. I have to tell someone about this. You know when Martineau called me into his office today?

DANNY Yeah.

BOLDEN He offered me an assignment to work undercover. There was only one catch to it.

DANNY What?

BOLDEN To go undercover, I'd have to undergo a complete change of identity. I'd be given another name, and all official references to Abraham Bolden would be erased or destroyed. My birth certificate, my marriage certificate, my employment records, everything. There would be no more record of an Abraham Bolden that could be traceable to me, or to anyone associated with me. That's how they put it.

DANNY Abe, I haven't been in the Service very long, but I've never heard of anything like that. It doesn't sound right to me. Even if you were going undercover, why would they need to destroy official records proving your identity?

BOLDEN Unless they wanted to throw me down a deep dark hole and keep me there.

DANNY So what are you going to do?

BOLDEN Do? Well, nothing. I already refused the assignment. The way Martineau looked at me, I'm telling you, if looks could kill, I'd be one dead man. I'm just going to go on doing my job.

DANNY But—

BOLDEN (interrupting) Danny, I've got no proof. And I still could be completely wrong. Either the Secret Service is being paranoid, or I am. Meanwhile, I've got bills to pay and criminals to catch.

*Bolden gets up and puts a dollar on the counter.*

BOLDEN (cont'd) Come on, I'll walk you home. Thanks for coming out.

*Danny gets up.*

DANNY Anytime, Abe.

EXT. BOLDEN HOME/PORCH - DAY

*Easter Sunday. Church BELLS are heard in the distance. The family, in their best church clothes, are walking up their front walk. The Kids are carrying Easter baskets filled with colorful eggs.*

*Barbara cries out in surprise when she notices Frank Jones, who has been sitting on a chair on the porch. He stands up.*

FRANK Hey man, relax.

BOLDEN It's okay, Barbara, it's just someone from work. (to Frank) Frank, what are you doing here?

FRANK I came like you wanted me to.

BOLDEN What do you mean, like I wanted you to?

BARBARA I'll just take the kids in.

*She ushers the Kids up the porch stairs.*

FRANK Ma'am.

*Ignoring Frank she walks right past him and unlocks the door.*

BARBARA (to the Kids) Let's go in now and we'll count all your Easter eggs.

*The Kids go in. Barbara turns to Bolden and knits her brows with apprehension.*

BOLDEN I won't be long.

BARBARA Try not to be.

*She goes in and closes the door. Bolden goes over and sits on the porch steps, gesturing for Frank to do the same. Frank sits down a little too close to him.*

BOLDEN Hey, hey, back off a little, would you?

FRANK Oh, uh, sure.

*Frank moves away only a few inches.*



BOLDEN So what's this about? Why did you show up on my doorstep? How do you even know where I live?

FRANK You told me.

BOLDEN I told you? No, I don't think so.

FRANK Yeah you did. You said come round when I was ready to help you.

BOLDEN So, what are you telling me? You found out where Spagnoli lives?

FRANK Yeah I found out. And I'm ready to do what you want. I can do it, man.

BOLDEN And what's that? (beat) Frank?

*Frank stands and opens his jacket, revealing a gun in his waistband. Bolden stares at the gun, then his eyes dart to the front door and back to Frank.*

BOLDEN (cont'd) What is that for?

FRANK It's for Spagnoli, just like you want.

*Bolden rises.*

BOLDEN (slowly) What is it exactly do you think I want?

FRANK Hey man, don't worry, it's a good piece. Clean. No one'll be able to trace it.

*He takes the gun out of his waistband and offers it to Bolden.*

FRANK Go on, check it out.

BOLDEN (sharply) Put that away and close your jacket. I've got kids in there.

*Frank does.*

BOLDEN Now what is this all about? What is it you think I want? (beat) Wait — you think I want you to kill Spagnoli?

FRANK Yeah, yeah, I'll kill Spagnoli for you. Just like you said.

*Something O.S. is gradually getting Bolden's attention.*

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE BOLDEN HOME - P.O.V. BOLDEN

*A CAR with an indistinguishable white male driver is parked across the street.*

BACK TO SCENE.

BOLDEN You know I never told you to—

*He looks Frank up and down.*

BOLDEN (suddenly) Frank, are you wearing a wire?

FRANK (groaning) Oh, man.

*Frank backs away from Bolden.*

FRANK (cont'd) I gotta go. Oh man, I gotta go.

*He hurries down the walk as Bolden goes after him a few steps.*

BOLDEN Frank, wait!

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE BOLDEN HOME - P.O.V. BOLDEN

*Frank gets into the CAR and it speeds away.*

BACK TO SCENE.

*Bolden turns back to the house, goes up the steps, and opens the door.*

INT. BOLDEN HOME/LIVING ROOM

*Bolden enters and deliberately double-locks the front door.*

BARBARA So, you're all finished with your friend?

BOLDEN I don't know, Barbara. I actually don't know.

*He puts his arm around her waist and walks with her to the coffee table, where the Kids are sitting on the floor, their eggs all spread out.*

BOLDEN So, how many Easter eggs did you get?

INT. CHICAGO COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

*Bolden and Danny are sitting at the counter, coffee cups in front of them.*

BOLDEN So that's everything. The Echevarria file, the ID books, that strange assignment with the IRS, Frank Jones at my door. Since then there's been nothing. I don't know whether to keep being suspicious or to let my guard down.

DANNY From what you've told me, no one should never let his guard down.

BOLDEN (with forced lightness) I hope I'm not making you paranoid too.

DANNY Not paranoid. No, not paranoid. Because I believe you. Abe, you've given me a lot to think about these past few months.

BOLDEN (thoughtfully) You know, I was one of the first Negroes hired by the Secret Service. I was the first Negro ever assigned to the White House detail. President Kennedy himself personally selected me. (he shakes his head) I think sometimes I should've toughed it out. Like he called me, Jackie Robinson. I should have tried to find a way to put up with all those bigots and bullies. Maybe I was too proud. You know, I can live with rules. I've followed the rules all my life and I've tried to enforce them. What I can't live with are the unwritten rules.

DANNY The rules of bullies.

BOLDEN But there is one thing I can do. I can do my job as an agent of the United States government. I can add what little I know to the assassination inquiry. I owe that much to President Kennedy.

DANNY Oh, that reminds me. I got that information for you.

*Danny takes piece of paper from pocket.*

DANNY (cont'd) The phone number of the Chief Counsel of the Warren Commission. J. Lee Rankin.

*Bolden reads paper then pockets it.*

BOLDEN Thanks.

DANNY So when are you going to Washington?

BOLDEN Next week. I'm joining Stocks and Motto, we're going to a special training session at the Secret Service facility there. I figure I can slip away at some point, make an appointment, go give my testimony, and no one will be the wiser.

DANNY Well, that's a tall order. I mean, it is the Secret Service.

BOLDEN Yeah it'll be tough. But I think I can do it.

EXT. WASHINGTON DC SKYLINE - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "MAY 17, 1964"

INT. BOLDEN-STOCKS-MOTTO'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

*Stocks and Motto, their suit jackets off, are watching REAL T.V. FROM DAYTIME CIRCA THIS DATE. Bolden, his jacket also off, restlessly paces about and distractedly looks out of the window a couple of times.*

BOLDEN I, um, I think I'll go for a walk.

*Stocks doesn't look at him.*

STOCKS Sure. Be back in an hour then we'll all go grab some dinner.

BOLDEN Sounds good.

*Bolden grabs his jacket which is draped over a nearby chair and exits. As soon as he does, Stocks and Motto look at each other, then Motto gets up and switches off the TV.*

EXT. A) SIDEWALK OUTSIDE THE HOTEL - DAY

*Bolden, walking away from the hotel, looks at a telephone booth on the corner, then looks behind him. He passes this telephone booth and walks in the other direction and turns a corner.*

EXT. B) SIDEWALK A LITTLE FURTHER AWAY

*As he briskly walks down this street he looks behind him a couple of times, then turns another corner.*

EXT. C) SIDEWALK EVEN FURTHER AWAY

*There are two telephone booths at the corner, which Bolden hurries to.*

INT. TELEPHONE BOOTHS

*He enters one of the telephone booths, closes the door, takes from his pocket the piece of paper Danny gave him, reads it, puts it back in his pocket, picks up the receiver, then takes out a dime, drops it in, and dials.*

*As the number rings Motto suddenly appears in the other booth. As their eyes make contact Bolden's face registers surprise which he quickly conceals.*

SECRETARY (V.O.) (over phone, filtered) This is the office of J. Lee Rankin. How may I help you?

*Still lost in surprise, Bolden doesn't respond.*

SECRETARY (V.O.) (cont'd; over phone, filtered) Hello? How may I help you?

BOLDEN (into phone; lightly) Hey, Barbara honey, just calling to say hi.

SECRETARY (V.O.) (over phone, filtered) This is the office of J. Lee Rankin.

BOLDEN (into phone) Yeah, we got in a little late. We start our training tomorrow, so I thought I'd call you now before things get a little hectic.

SECRETARY (V.O.) (over phone, filtered) Excuse me? What number are you calling?

BOLDEN (into phone) Yeah, the guys are great. We're going to dinner now.

*The DIAL TONE is heard as the Secretary hangs up. Bolden continues to speak into the receiver.*

BOLDEN (cont'd; into phone) Love you too. Say hi to the kids for me.

*Bolden hangs up and exits.*

EXT. SIDEWALK OUTSIDE TELEPHONE BOOTHS - DAY

*Stocks is standing there.*

BOLDEN (nonchalantly) I didn't want to bother you guys. Just thought I'd call my wife.

*Motto exits the other telephone booth.*

MOTTO It wouldn't have bothered us.

BOLDEN So, where should we go for dinner?

STOCKS Afraid there's been a change of plan. We just got a call from the office.

BOLDEN Oh?

STOCKS Seems like there's been a break in that Spagnoli case. Martineau wants you back a.s.a.p.

BOLDEN Oh. Well, I guess I should be leaving you—

MOTTO (interrupting) Our orders are to bring you back to Chicago.

STOCKS Accompany you. That's the word he used. Accompany you back.

BOLDEN But your training session.

STOCKS That's nothing. This is going to be the Chicago office's biggest case in years.

MOTTO Shall we go?

BOLDEN I've got to get my bag.

*They all start to walk away from the booth with Bolden flanked by Stocks and Motto.*

MOTTO Don't worry, I already packed it and sent it ahead.

STOCKS We're going straight to the airport.

*He sees a taxi on the street and hails it.*

STOCKS Hey, taxi!

INT. AIRPLANE CABIN - DAY

*The sound of a FLIGHT. Bolden, wary, is seated between Stocks and Motto.*

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

*Bolden, with Stocks and Motto still at his side, enters. Stocks steers them toward the Interrogation Room.*

STOCKS This way.

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

*A bare room with a long table and two chairs. Motto opens the door and they all enter.*

MOTTO Go on, Abe, make yourself comfortable.

*Bolden pulls out a chair from the table and sits.*

BOLDEN You said this was about Spagnoli.

STOCKS Martineau will fill you in.

BOLDEN Martineau's here?

STOCKS He'll be here in a moment. He'll explain everything.



BOLDEN But—

*Stocks and Motto exit.*

*The CLOCK at "8:30".*

CROSS FADE TO:

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT  
(LATER)

*The CLOCK at "9:30".*

*Bolden has taken his jacket off and is sitting, sweating and looking somewhat disheveled. He gets up and tries to open the window but it's jammed. Then he tries to open the door and finds it locked. With a sigh he sits down again.*

*Finally Martineau enters carrying a file with one hand and with the other holding the door open for Jordan, who is wheeling in a lie detector machine atop a rolling table.*

*Martineau closes the door and Jordan positions the rolling table alongside the long table.*

*Bolden stands up.*

BOLDEN Mr. Martineau.

MARTINEAU (brusquely) Bolden. Sit down, sit down.

*Bolden sits. Martineau pulls out the other chair from the table and sits down across from him.*

BOLDEN I've been waiting here over an hour. Listen, could we open a window? It's really warm in here.

MARTINEAU This won't take much longer.

BOLDEN Okay. It's just that I've had a long day, I'm tired, I'd like to eat, I'd like to call my wife. She has no idea I'm back.

JORDAN (to Martineau) The outlet?

*Martineau points.*

MARTINEAU Over there.

BOLDEN Look, it's really stuffy in here. I can hardly breathe.

*Martineau ignores him and studies his file. Jordan plugs in the cord and busies himself adjusting the lie detector. Then he stands a few feet away from Martineau, arms folded. After a moment, Martineau looks up from his file.*

MARTINEAU (to Bolden) All right. Well, I'm sure you understand why you're here.

BOLDEN Actually, I don't.

MARTINEAU This has to do with your involvement with Frank Jones and Joseph Spagnoli.

BOLDEN Involvement? What do you mean? I was investigating Spagnoli, and Frank Jones was my informant, but you know about that.

MARTINEAU We're talking about your criminal involvement with Jones and Spagnoli.

BOLDEN My—criminal—involvement.

*Martineau stands up and leans toward Bolden.*

MARTINEAU I'd better tell you—we picked up Spagnoli this afternoon.

BOLDEN That's good news.

MARTINEAU Jones too. The two of them have a very interesting story.

BOLDEN About their counterfeiting operation.

MARTINEAU No, about you. (slowly, deliberately) Did you or did you not attempt to sell Joseph Spagnoli the file on his investigation by the Secret Service for the sum of fifty thousand dollars?

BOLDEN (aghast) What? No!

MARTINEAU And when he told you that he was unable to pay you that sum of money, did you or did you not ask Frank Jones to kill him?

BOLDEN (realization dawning; firmly) No. Absolutely not.

MARTINEAU These are the accusations being made against you by these two men.

BOLDEN Two convicted criminals, the subject of my investigation. You can't tell me you're going to take their word over mine?

MARTINEAU The Secret Service takes seriously any allegations of misconduct by its agents. We're following up.

BOLDEN So am I free to go now?

MARTINEAU Not just yet. I wonder if you would agree to take a lie detector test? Just to clear things up?

BOLDEN What if I said no?

MARTINEAU I'm sure you don't want to make our job any harder.

BOLDEN (slowly) If I do agree to a lie detector test, I would only do it on condition that an experienced person administer it.

MARTINEAU Jordan here will administer it.

BOLDEN Jordan's not experienced in using a lie detector machine. I suggest that you get someone from the firm we usually use. They're only a few blocks away and I believe they're still open.

MARTINEAU I'm afraid it would take too much time to send for them. You say you want to get out of here as soon as possible?

BOLDEN (beat) Yes.

MARTINEAU Well, then.

BOLDEN (beat; then grimly) All right. Just so I can get out of here. Let's do it.

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

*Dark, empty, quiet.*

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT  
(LATER)

*The CLOCK at "10:00".*

*Only Jordan and Bolden are in the room. Bolden is wearing a blood pressure cuff, a heart monitor, and a respiratory monitor, all of which are attached to the machine. The machine is on and the needles quickly move across the readout paper. In an even voice Jordan questions Bolden, who answers in an equally even voice.*

JORDAN Is your name Abraham Bolden?

BOLDEN Yes.

JORDAN Do you live in Chicago, Illinois?

BOLDEN Yes.

JORDAN Are you an agent of the United States Secret Service?

BOLDEN Yes.

JORDAN On March 29th of this year, did you contact one Frank Jones...

*Jordan's VOICE fades out.*

CROSS FADE:

INT. CHICAGO SECRET SERVICE OFFICE/INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT  
(LATER)

*The CLOCK at "11:15".*

*Bolden is still seated, still connected to the machine while Jordan turns it off and pulls out the readout, all the time not looking at Bolden.*

BOLDEN Is that it?

JORDAN Not quite yet.

BOLDEN Is Martineau gone?

JORDAN Mr. Martineau stepped out, but he should be back any minute now.

BOLDEN Where is he?

JORDAN

He's gone to Judge Campbell's office.

BOLDEN Isn't it a little late at night for the judge to be in his office?

JORDAN He came back at Mr. Martineau's request.

*Jordan briefly glances at the readout then shakes his head with a laugh.*

JORDAN (cont'd) You really can't keep anything straight, can you, Bolden?

BOLDEN What are you talking about?

JORDAN The readout says you're obviously lying.

BOLDEN Is that what the readout says? How about getting a real professional to administer the test?

*Jordan looks straight at him.*

JORDAN Are you questioning my ability?

*Bolden angrily tears off all the monitors on his body.*

BOLDEN Listen. A professional is impartial. A professional doesn't rig the results of a lie detector test by keeping the subject hungry and tired in an overheated room. You think I don't know what you're up to?

*He tosses the monitors on the table and stands up.*

BOLDEN (cont'd) Well, I've had enough of this. I'm getting out of here.

JORDAN Sit down. You're not going anywhere.

BOLDEN You got what you wanted. False accusations from convicted criminals. A lie detector test that "proves" I'm a liar. Don't make me laugh. I'm getting a lawyer. And I'm going to make sure everyone knows you're trying to railroad me and why.

*Bolden gets up and starts to walk around the table. Before he can get more than a few steps Jordan shoves him back in his chair.*

JORDAN (shouting) Sit down and shut up!

BOLDEN Look, I know what this is about.

JORDAN You know, right? You know? This is about you being a pain in the ass. This is about you trying to destroy the Secret Service. A stupid nigger like you. Who the hell do you think you are?

BOLDEN I know I'm not the one who let Kennedy get murdered.

*Jordan pulls back a fist.*

JORDAN Listen boy, you say that one more time—

*Jordan is interrupted by Martineau's entrance. He is followed by two sheriff's officers.*

MARTINEAU (in official tone) Abraham Bolden, I have here a warrant for your arrest.

*The officers approach Bolden, put his hands behind his back, and handcuff him. Bolden, dumbfounded, doesn't resist.*

*Jordan shakes his head and smirks.*

JORDAN You stupid son of a bitch. You thought you could get away with it.

INT. CHICAGO COURTROOM - DAY

Martineau is in the witness stand being sworn in by a COURT OFFICER.

COURT OFFICER Raise your right hand and place the other one on the Bible.

*Martineau does.*

COURT OFFICER (cont'd) Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MARTINEAU I do.

*Martineau sits. A US ATTORNEY approaches Martineau and begins to question him. INAUDIBLE.*

BOLDEN (V.O.) It was a nightmare. It all happened so fast. Martineau already had the warrant for my arrest even before I took that insane lie detector test.

CUT TO:

*Frank Jones on the stand giving testimony. INAUDIBLE.*

BOLDEN (V.O.) (cont'd) At the trial he testified that I tried to sell information belonging to the Secret Service. When they got Frank Jones on the stand he said the same thing.

CUT TO:

*JOSEPH SPAGNOLI, a tough-looking middle-aged man giving testimony. INAUDIBLE.*

BOLDEN (V.O.) (cont'd) Then they got Joseph Spagnoli himself, the counterfeiter I was trying to arrest, to say the same thing.

CUT TO:

*Jordan on the stand giving testimony. INAUDIBLE.*

BOLDEN (V.O.) (cont'd) Then they got Agent Jordan to say I had a grudge against the Secret Service, which is why I tried to sell the information. In the end, the government prosecutors got what they wanted—my conviction.

CUT TO:

*JUDGE SAM PERRY on the bench.*

PERRY Prisoner will rise.



*Bolden slowly stands up.*

PERRY Abraham Bolden, you have been found guilty of one count of fraud. Do you have anything to say on your behalf?

BOLDEN (voice breaking) I—I just tried to do the right thing, Your Honor.

PERRY (snorting derisively) You are hereby sentenced to the Springfield Correctional Facility for a period of no less than four years and no more than six.

*He raps his gavel.*

CUT TO:

INT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/SOLITARY CELL - DAY

*Bolden is sitting on his cot in a windowless cell. He has been talking to himself.*

BOLDEN (dully) After the trial, they dumped me in Springfield. Then after that, Terre Haute. Now here. I've been dumped in so many holes I'm losing track.

*Bolden shakes head in wonderment.*

BOLDEN (cont'd) Now they've got me in solitary. They say I jumped a guy. It wasn't like that at all. He came after me.

EXT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/YARD - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "UNITED STATES PENITENTIARY, LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS – AUGUST 30, 1965"

*Prisoners in uniforms, a variety of races and ages, are gathered in groups talking, smoking, or sitting on benches. CALVIN, an affable black man in his 40s, is alone, leaning against the wall, when Bolden, slightly disheveled and looking a little disoriented comes up to him and taps him on the back.*

CALVIN Abe! When'd you get out of solitary?

BOLDEN Gimme a cigarette.

CALVIN Sure. Sure.

*He takes a pack out of his pocket and hands it to Bolden, who takes it, shakes out a cigarette, hands the pack back to Calvin, and puts the cigarette in his mouth.*

CALVIN Oh yeah. Yeah.

*Calvin, after a little fumbling, finds a matchbook in his pocket and proceeds to strike a match and light Bolden's cigarette. Bolden takes a deep drag.*

CALVIN (cont'd) So they let you out this morning?

BOLDEN Yeah. So what did Buford get?

CALVIN Oh him? They just took away his visitors privileges for a month.

BOLDEN Figures. So I guess he's back in the kitchen.

CALVIN Yeah. Looks like.

BOLDEN Guess they couldn't wait to put us back together. See who ends up killing who.

CALVIN Buford ain't too bright. Not like you.

BOLDEN If I was bright I wouldn't be here.

CALVIN You'll learn, boy, you'll learn. You just do your time. You ain't gonna wind up dead.

BOLDEN We'll see.

INT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/KITCHEN – DAY

*Bolden is washing out a large pot, every so often glancing apprehensively at BUFORD, a big blond dumb-looking redneck in his early 20s, who is across the room peeling potatoes, while the fat pig of a COOK watches them both.*

COOK Hey, cheer up, Bolden! The guards are givin' ten to one odds that Buford here's gonna kick your nigger ass by Sunday. Ain't that right, Buford?

*Buford looks up, grins, and cheerily waves the knife he's peeling with.*

BOLDEN (muttering) Goddamn honky assholes.

COOK (loudly) You say somethin', boy?

BOLDEN (evenly) No, sir.

COOK When Buford comes for ya, you won't have nothin' more to say.

EXT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/YARD – DAY

*Bolden and Buford are in the middle of a FIGHT, encircled by a crowd of excited inmates who are whooping and shouting. A prison guard stands nearby not interfering, obviously enjoying the spectacle.*

*Buford is attempting to grab Bolden, while Bolden ducks and tries to move out of the way, in the process giving Buford a few ineffective punches to the chest.*

*Finally Buford gets a hand on Bolden's shoulder and spins him around, then grabs him by the chest, leaving Bolden's arms free, and lifts him into the air while trying to squeeze the life out of him.*

*Bolden frantically makes kicking motions with his legs as if trying to regain his footing. Just as it seems that Buford has triumphed and is about to throw Bolden to the ground, Bolden makes one last effort, giving the other man a sharp blow in the groin with his elbows.*

*Buford, surprised and howling with pain, lets go of Bolden, who immediately turns around and begins to pummel the other man with a series of quick blows to the face and stomach.*

*Within seconds Buford, his face now bloody, sinks to the ground, throwing his arms up helplessly as if trying to ward off Bolden's blows. But Bolden leaps onto Buford, planting his knees on the man's chest as he grabs Buford's throat and tries to strangle him.*

*Seeing this, the prison guard, with a look of surprise on his face, finally comes over and, pushing his way through the crowd of spectators, roughly pulls Bolden off the other man.*

GUARD All right, all right. You've had your fun. I can't let you kill him, now.

*Exhausted, Bolden slowly gets up, then Buford.*

GUARD (cont'd) You two, go stand there against the wall while I decide what to do with you.

INT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE – DAY

*Bolden is sitting across the desk from DR. KINSEL, a black man in his early 30s, who addresses him formally and without emotion.*

*KINSEL I've been asked to talk to you about the incident the other day. We think that you have a feeling of being persecuted. Do you feel, Abe, that someone is out to get you, or that you're being watched?*

BOLDEN Of course I feel like I'm being watched. I'm in a penitentiary! But the "incident" yesterday has nothing to do with persecution. Buford didn't persecute me. Persecution is an act of authority. And you and I know the government's history for persecuting black men.

KINSEL (chuckling) Well, you certainly haven't lost your rhetoric. You know, I've read the court transcripts of your trial. And the newspaper articles about you. And I've read the letters you've written to your wife.

BOLDEN My private letters. Of course you have.

KINSEL It's clear that you had a feeling of persecution even before your trial.

KINSEL (cont'd) Abe, we're trying to help you. You know you're not going to get any real help from anybody on the outside. Let's be honest. (he leans back) So let's discuss what you need. I can tell that this experience with Buford has made you overly emotional. Perhaps the best course of action would be to send you to a place where you they can give you drugs to help you control your emotions. I could arrange to have you sent to a medical facility in Atlanta. You realize, of course, that any hospitalization would not count as time served on your sentence, and that it would be up to the doctors how long you would be hospitalized. Which could be...indefinitely.

*Beat as Bolden takes this in.*

BOLDEN (cautiously) What do you suggest?

KINSEL Well, I suggest, that if you don't want to be hospitalized, that you try to control your emotions on your own. Let's give it some time. Then we'll see.

BOLDEN May I go now?

KINSEL Of course.

*Bolden gets up and walks to the door.*

KINSEL Just one more thing, off the record.

*Bolden turns.*

KINSEL (cont'd; less formal tone) Listen, Abe, you had a good thing going. Good job. Respect. You should have left it at that. All these other things, what business was it of yours? My advice to you, if you want to get along in the future, is you learn to mind your own business and keep your mouth shut. Just keep it shut.

BOLDEN Thanks, Polonius.

INT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/KITCHEN - DAY

*Bolden is washing pots and Buford is peeling potatoes. Buford, in a subdued mood, does not look up at Bolden, as he washes the pots with deliberate noisiness.*

EXT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/YARD - DAY

*Most of the inmates are wearing jackets or sweaters over their uniforms and are standing around in groups, talking.*

*Bolden is sitting on a bench alone, smoking. Behind him Calvin is leaning against the wall. They don't acknowledge each other.*

*A very YOUNG INMATE, white, jacketless, approaches Bolden, looking just as dishevelled and disoriented as Bolden did when he came out of solitary.*

YOUNG INMATE Hey man, gotta cigarette?

*Bolden turns away, ignoring him, but Calvin, on hearing the young inmate's request, goes up to him. Bolden turns around again and watches them.*

CALVIN Hey, here you go.

*He gives the young inmate a cigarette out of his pack and lights it when the man puts it in his mouth.*

CALVIN (cont'd) You just come outta solitary?

*The Young Inmate smokes and shakes his head.*

YOUNG INMATE Jesus. Jesus. Yeah. (indicates cigarette) Hey, thanks man.

CALVIN Guess you're new here. Well, you'll learn the ropes. Who not to piss off, not to shoot your mouth off.

YOUNG INMATE Yeah, guess I better. (groaning) Don't wanna end up in that hole again.

*Calvin puts an arm around the young inmate's shoulder and leads him away.*

CALVIN C'mon, let's stretch your legs a little.

*As he walks away with the inmate he looks back at Bolden with a frown. Bolden returns his look impassively.*

INT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/BOLDEN'S CELL – NIGHT

*Bolden, in his underwear, is lying on his cot reading a news magazine dated "August, 1967" and smiling.*

*Suddenly the lights go out.*

*Bolden puts the magazine down on his stomach, folds his hands behind his head, and sighs.*

INT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/TV ROOM – DAY

*Calvin and another inmate, MACKAY, are sitting at a nearby table playing draw poker.*

*Bolden is sitting by himself at a nearby table reading a magazine.*

*2 inmates, LEVON and ZEKE, are sitting watching REAL T.V. NEWS COVERAGE OF THE 1968 BATTLE OF HUE.*

REPORTER (V.O.) "...with casualties reaching the hundreds, this has been the worst day of fighting since the Viet Cong attack at the end of January, now nearly two months ago. This is Penn Scott, CBS News, Hue, South Vietnam."

*The TV SOUND continues at a low volume, over REAL shots of American and Vietnamese casualties.*

*LEVON points to the screen.*

LEVON Willya look at those fuckin' gooks.

ZEKE Dumb assholes.

LEVON Hey, shut up! My brother's over there.

ZEKE He's a dumb asshole.

LEVON He's a Marine.

ZEKE He's a dumber asshole.

*LEVON stands up and shakes a fist at him.*

LEVON (loudly) You take that back, motherfucker!

*MACKEY looks up from his cards in bored disgust.*

MACKEY Siddown, Levon.

ZEKE Yeah, siddown, asshole.

*Levon sits down, folding his arms.*



LEVON (muttering) Motherfucker.

*Calvin looks over at Bolden. Bolden continues reading, not looking up.*

CALVIN Hey, Abe.

BOLDEN Hey.

CALVIN We got a wild game goin' here. How 'bout joinin' us?

BOLDEN Oh, I don't know...

CALVIN Hey, c'mon. No one's gonna toss you in the hole for playin' poker.

*Bolden looks up with a brief smile.*

BOLDEN I'm reading, Calvin. But thanks anyway.

CALVIN Suit yourself.

*Calvin turns back to his game but then suddenly looks up past Mackey and sees ELIJAH, a large black man of sixty, entering the room. He is grizzled but bears himself with dignity and an out-of-place serenity.*

CALVIN Well, I'll be damned.

MACKEY What's up?

CALVIN I see Elijah.

MACKEY Who?

*Calvin points.*

CALVIN Elijah! He's famous, man. I heard they was transferrin' him to our cell block.

*Mackey turns around to look at Elijah, then turns back to Calvin.*

MACKEY He looks like he should be in a rest home.

CALVIN Nah, he's been here thirty, forty years.

*Calvin puts down his cards and stands up.*

CALVIN (cont'd) I'll be right back. Don't you peek now.

*Calvin walks over to the man and addresses him.*

CALVIN You Elijah?

ELIJAH That is my name.

CALVIN I'm Calvin. Come over here and meet the fellas.

*As they walk over to the tables, passing the TV area, Calvin points to the two TV-watching inmates.*

CALVIN (cont'd) That's Levon over there, and there's Zeke. (lowered voice)  
Best not to mess with them right now.

*As they reach the tables Calvin points to Mackey.*

CALVIN (cont'd) This here's Mackey.

*Mackey, still holding his cards, nods. Calvin points to Bolden.*

CALVIN (cont'd) And that there's Abe Bolden. He usedta be a cop or somethin'.

*Bolden, not looking up from his magazine, sighs at this introduction. Elijah goes over to him and, with great solemnity, extends his hand.*

ELIJAH Mr. Bolden.

*Bolden looks up at him. Hesitating at first, he shakes Elijah's hand. Elijah continues to hold his hand while looking straight into Bolden's eyes.*

ELIJAH (cont'd) I heard that you're a man of integrity, sir.

BOLDEN (uncertainly) Uh, yeah.

*Elijah lets go of his hand.*

CALVIN (to Elijah) We're playin' draw poker. Can I deal you in?

ELIJAH I think I would prefer to watch some TV.

CALVIN Suit yourself.

*Elijah heads over to where Levon and Zeke are sitting, takes a seat between them and proceeds to become engrossed with the TV news along with them.*

*Bolden stares at Elijah.*

BOLDEN I've never heard anyone here talk like that. He is funny in the head?

CALVIN Nah. He's righteous.

BOLDEN So what did he do? To get in here, I mean?

CALVIN I heard he killed two guards in a bank robbery.

BOLDEN (snorting) Hah!

CALVIN (sharply) Hey. You thinkin' you better than he is? You fulla shit, man. We all the same here.

*Calvin glares at Bolden steadily. After a moment, Bolden clears his throat in embarrassment and resumes his reading.*

INT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/TV ROOM – NIGHT

*JACKSON, a mild-mannered black trustee in his early 40s, is alone in the TV room mopping the floor, listening to the radio.*

NEWSMAN (V.O.) (on radio, filtered) "Kansas City news time is 2:30 a.m. In Los Angeles, two shots were fired at Democratic presidential candidate Robert Kennedy in the kitchen of the Ambassador Hotel. Kennedy had just concluded a victory speech following his win in the California primary. He was rushed to Good Samaritan Hospital, where his condition is reported as extremely critical."

*Jackson looks up from his mopping, listening to this news, and shakes his head in dismay.*

INT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/JACKSON'S CELL – NIGHT

*In his cell, Jackson raps on his wall closest to the bars and makes noises to get the attention of GEORGE, the white inmate in the next cell.*

JACKSON Psst! Psst!

*No answer. He does it again. After a moment, George sits up.*

GEORGE Who's that? That you, Jackson?

JACKSON I got news from the radio. Bobby Kennedy, he's been shot. He ain't gonna make it.

GEORGE (sleepily) Whaddaya talkin' about?

JACKSON (louder) Bobby Kennedy's been shot!

GEORGE (sighing) Christ.

*George gets up, goes to his corner where the wall and bars meet, and makes noises at the inmate in the next cell.*

GEORGE (cont'd; loudly whispering) O'Brien! Psst! O'Brien!

INT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/BOLDEN'S CELL - NIGHT

*There is a relay of loud WHISPERING that awakens Bolden. He stirs, rubs his eyes, but continues lying on his cot with his eyes open when he hears DELBERT, the black inmate in the cell across from him.*

DELBERT (loudly whispering) Hey, psst! Bolden! Bolden! Get your ass up!

BOLDEN (groggily) Huh?

DELBERT Got news. It's big.

*Bolden slowly rises and goes over to his cell door.*

DELBERT (loudly whispering) Bolden! Can you hear me?

BOLDEN (sleepily) Yeah, Delbert, I can hear you. What's up?

DELBERT Jackson heard it on the radio. Bobby Kennedy's been shot.

BOLDEN (suddenly alert) Is he dead?

DELBERT Nah. But's it's bad. Sounds like he ain't gonna make it.

*Bolden grips the bars of his cell, saying nothing.*

DELBERT Bolden! You there?

BOLDEN (dully) Yeah, I'm here.

DELBERT Pass it on.

*But Bolden shuffles back to his cot, drops down on it and groans into his pillow. Then he turns over and stares up at the ceiling of his prison cell.*

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. BACK OF KENNEDY HOUSE/YARD - DAY (SUNDOWN)

*From the top of the yard Secret Service Agent Harvey Henderson is looking down at John Kennedy and Bolden sitting side by side on folding chairs at the edge of the yard near the beach.*

EXT. BACK OF KENNEDY HOUSE/BEACH

*Kennedy is casually dressed, relaxed. Bolden, still on duty, remains alert, although he clearly is thoroughly enjoying this informal talk with the President.*

KENNEDY I see it this way, Mr. Bolden.

BOLDEN Yes, sir?

KENNEDY I've got three and a half years more in office. Then, well, Bobby thinks I'm being arrogant, but I have every expectation of winning the '64 election.

BOLDEN I expect that too, sir.

KENNEDY So that brings us to 1968. Can you imagine what the world will be like seven years from now, Mr. Bolden?

BOLDEN No, sir, I can't. I can only imagine things will get better.

KENNEDY But that's it, you know. Imagination. Optimism. It's everywhere these days. This is our chance to build what I like to call the New Frontier.

BOLDEN (thoughtfully, reverently) The New Frontier.

KENNEDY All I can do as president is use the tools I have to the best of my ability. But when I'm no longer in office, imagination and optimism will still be around. That's when it'll be time for young people like you to take up the slack.

BOLDEN (moved) I see. I understand. Thank you, Mr. President.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/BOLDEN'S CELL – DAY

Bolden is on his cot sleeping when the lights suddenly come on and he wakes.

EXT. "LEAVENWORTH PRISON"/YARD - DAY

*The men are milling about or gathered in groups.*

*Bolden is alone, leaning against the wall smoking when Elijah comes up to him.*

ELIJAH I am sorry.

BOLDEN Excuse me?

ELIJAH I am sorry. You lost a friend last night.

BOLDEN What are you talking about?

ELIJAH Robert Kennedy.

BOLDEN You're crazy. Get away from me.

*He starts to walk away.*

BOLDEN He wasn't my friend.

*Elijah follows him.*

ELIJAH But you are grieving for him.

BOLDEN That's more than I can say for anybody else here.

ELIJAH So you knew him, and you grieve.

*Bolden turns to him.*

BOLDEN Yes, I knew him. I shook his hand once. (thoughtfully) When I worked for his brother.

ELIJAH President Kennedy.

BOLDEN (slowly) Yes. Both of them were fine men. They didn't deserve to die like that.

ELIJAH I believe it is how they lived that truly matters.

BOLDEN (passionately) You know, there's so much they could have accomplished. So much! (he waves his hand) Now look at everything that's

happened. The war. Dr. King. It's all gone to shit.

ELIJAH I believe when it is God's will that we suffer a loss so great, He also expects the rest of us to take up the slack.

BOLDEN (attentively) What was that you said, slack?

ELIJAH No matter what happens to us, we still have a duty to our brothers and sisters.



BOLDEN (angrily) Who are you to say what is God's will? Was it God's will that I try to do my job and get punished for speaking out? Didn't that judge, Judge Perry, have a duty to set aside his naked prejudice against black men and try my case fairly? And not listen to the perjured testimony of criminals I was trying to bring to justice? (more calmly) But you probably have no idea what I'm talking about.

ELIJAH I do. I know your story.

BOLDEN You do?

ELIJAH I watch the news. I pay attention. I know your story. Would you like to know mine?

BOLDEN No. (beat) I'm sorry. Sure. You killed two men in a robbery.

*Elijah shakes his head.*

BOLDEN No?

*Elijah shakes his head again.*

ELIJAH No. I was nowhere near Midland City Bank that day. But you know, back then, one colored man was the same as another.

BOLDEN How long did they give you?

ELIJAH I'm here for life, son. With no hope for parole.

BOLDEN Aren't you angry? Aren't you bitter?

ELIJAH Oh, I was. I was at first. I shut myself off and concentrated on my own pain. Then after a while I started to wake up and look around me.

BOLDEN So you've been here all these years.

ELIJAH I've been here since before you were born, son. And these men, these men here are God's children. Like all of us. I am here for a reason. I may not know what it is, but it is God's will and I abide by it. As for you—

BOLDEN What about me?

ELIJAH When is your release?

BOLDEN Eighteen months, three days.

ELIJAH You have a wife, children?

BOLDEN Yeah.

ELIJAH They are in good health?

BOLDEN Yeah.

ELIJAH And they write to you?

BOLDEN All the time.

*Elijah nods his head.*

ELIJAH I had a wife and children but I lost them. When I was sent to prison they moved away. I never heard from them again. When you get out of here, son, you will have a home to go to, a life. Go back to your life, go and do your duty.

*Bolden and Elijah look at each other for a long moment.*

BOLDEN I'll try. I will try.

EXT. INTERSTATE BUS - NIGHT (TRAVELING)

INT. INTERSTATE BUS - NIGHT (TRAVELING)

*Few passengers, all asleep except Bolden. Bolden, sitting in the middle of the bus, dressed in winter civilian clothes, a club bag on the seat next to him, stares out the window at the lights of the city the bus is approaching.*

EXT. BUS STATION UNLOADING AREA, CHICAGO - NIGHT

*Bolden, carrying his club bag, steps down from the bus after all the other passengers, who go off. He looks around uncertainly. After a moment he sees Barbara come up to him, looking lovely as ever. He rushes to her outstretched arms.*

BOLDEN (softly) Hey, honey.

*They embrace tightly for a long moment.*

BARBARA It's been forever.

BOLDEN It was just a little while.

*She loosens herself from the embrace, takes his arm, and they start to walk away from the unloading area.*

BARBARA Come on. The car's over there.

EXT. BOLDEN HOME/PORCH - NIGHT

*Bolden and Barbara are at the door. Barbara takes out her keys and unlocks it.*

BOLDEN (softly) We'd better be quiet. The kids. I'll let them know in the morning that I'm back.

BARBARA Oh no you won't.

INT. BOLDEN HOME/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

*Barbara opens the door wide and the living room lights come on. There's a huge homemade banner hanging on the wall: "Welcome Home, Daddy!"*

*Under it are the two boys, now 10 and 11, and Ahvia, now 13, all in pajamas.*

*As Barbara and Bolden enter, the boys run up to Bolden and hug him, calling out "Daddy!" Ahvia comes up to him*

AHVIA (serious tone) Welcome home, Dad.

*Bolden holds out his arm to her and she goes to join the boys hugging him. Barbara puts her arms around Bolden's neck and they all stand there in a tight group, holding each other.*

INT. BANQUET HALL, CHICAGO - NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: "CHICAGO BUSINESS ASSOCIATION'S TRUTH AND JUSTICE AWARD CEREMONY – MAY 30, 2009"

*Every table at the banquet is filled with guests in formal attire. The guests are equally black and white, with a few Latino and Asian guests scattered about.*

BOLDEN'S TABLE

*At the front table is Barbara, now in her mid 70s, still attractive, and their two sons and daughter Ahvia, now in their early to mid 50s.*

DIAS

*Bolden, now a distinguished man in his mid 70s, is sitting on the platform behind the dais. At the dais a middle-aged, professional-looking white woman, GAYLE FONSECA, is speaking to the crowd. On top of the dais is an impressive award statue.*

GAYLE I cannot imagine a world without Abe Bolden. Father, husband, mainstay of our business community for nearly forty years, model citizen. Against overwhelming odds, he did his duty and tried to find out the truth about the greatest crime in our nation's history. His enemies might have thought they beat him, but here he is, still with us, still fighting the good fight. Ladies and gentlemen, the Chicago Business Association presents its 28th annual Truth and Justice Award to Abraham Bolden.

*There is warm applause as Bolden rises from his seat and goes to Gayle, who picks up the award, ceremoniously presents it to him, and shakes his hand.*

GAYLE Would you like to say a few words, Abe?

BOLDEN Thank you, Gayle.

*Gayle sits down in the seat Bolden just vacated while Bolden regards his audience.*

BOLDEN This is a great honor. A great honor indeed. My family there—

BOLDEN'S TABLE

*They look up at him, beaming.*

DIAS

BOLDEN (cont'd) Hello, Barbara. I don't know how I could have gone through what I did without you.

*Bolden looks at another table and nods.*

BOLDEN (cont'd) Danny. And Tom, Tom Vincent, who's sitting over there, for his articles about me through the years—

DANNY AND TOM'S TABLE

*Danny and Tom, now in their late 60s, nod back.*

BOLDEN (cont'd) Tom, you deserved that Pulitzer. (more formal) "Model citizen." "Doing one's duty." These are boring phrases. I know they make me sound like an old coot. But the world was built by boring old coots like me. And when our time comes to pass the torch to the next generation, we'd like to know that our work hasn't been in vain. So we try to pass on as well what we've learned about the way of the world—sort of a user's manual, you might say. And this is what we old coots have learned: Of all the tools you need to build a new world, a better world free from fear and injustice—a New Frontier, you might call it—the greatest tool is integrity. Integrity in your work, in your life, it's the same thing. If you have a job, whatever it is, be proud of it. Don't take advantage of the perks or power that job may offer you, but don't whine either, just do that job and do it well and take pride in it. Because the future depends on it. Sometimes it means just running the trains on time. Sometimes it means educating a child who has no other way to raise himself from poverty. Sometimes it means saving the President of the United States. It's integrity, my friends. Integrity is the enemy of corruption, and corruption is what's been choking the life out of our country for as long as I can remember. But it doesn't have to be that way. We can fix this. Because we're Americans, and I still believe in America. Well, that's all I want to leave you with. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for this award.

*There is even warmer applause while Bolden, holding the award, steps down from the dias and returns to his table.*

#### BOLDEN'S TABLE

*Bolden's family immediately gets up and takes turns hugging him.*

*Then guests from the other tables start coming up to shake his hand, pat him on the back, hug him, surround him.*

*The camera pulls away, taking in the entire scene.*

#### CARDS:

A) "IN 1978, ABRAHAM BOLDEN TESTIFIED TO THE UNITED STATES HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS."

B) "IN 1979, IN ITS OFFICIAL REPORT, THE COMMITTEE STATED, 'THE SECRET SERVICE POSSESSED INFORMATION THAT WAS NOT PROPERLY ANALYZED, INVESTIGATED OR USED BY THE SECRET SERVICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE PRESIDENT'S TRIP TO DALLAS.'"

C) "'IN ADDITION, SECRET SERVICE AGENTS IN THE MOTORCADE WERE INADEQUATELY PREPARED TO PROTECT THE PRESIDENT FROM A SNIPER.'"

D) "IN 1995, THE SECRET SERVICE DESTROYED PRESIDENTIAL PROTECTION SURVY REPORTS FOR THE FALL OF 1963, INCLUDING THE REPORT COVERING KENNEDY'S PLANNED TRIP TO CHICAGO THE BEGINNING OF THAT NOVEMBER."

E) "ABRAHAM BOLDEN HAS NEVER CEASED HIS QUEST FOR EXONERATION."

THE END.

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BOLDEN:  
The Untold Story  
of JFK's Assassination

*Cantara Christopher is a retired actress and Hollywood intimate who has appeared in porn movies under her screen name Simona Wing. She is now a screenwriter and novelist.*