

THE SERPENT

Episode 8

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SHOOTING SCRIPT

Blue Amendments - 23/10/19
Pink Amendments - 31/10/19
Yellow Amendments - 05/11/19
Green Amendments - 13/11/19
Double Blue Amendments - 04/12/19
Double Pink Amendments - 16/12/19
Double Yellow Amendments - 03/03/20
Double Green Amendments - 06/03/20
Triple Blue Amendments - 03/08/20
Triple Pink Amendments - 25/08/20

1

INT. PRISON CELL. GREECE - FB DAY 8

1

SPLIT-FLAP: **AEgina HIGH SECURITY PRISON, GREECE. 25TH APRIL, 1975.**

A PRISON CELL. Empty. A bed, folded bedclothes. Some BOOKS on a shelf: Kierkegaard; various Nietzsche - **Beyond Good and Evil; Gay Science; Thus Spoke Zarathustra.**

Pictures on the wall: **Ho Chi Min; Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir; Gandhi.**

Alongside: two handwritten QUOTATIONS pinned to the wall --

Coincidence, if traced far enough back, becomes inevitable.

All truth is crooked, time itself is a circle.

Not that such thoughts mean much to this tough PRISON GUARD. Forbidding in the uniform of the GREEK PRISON SERVICE, he is here on shake down.

Opens a book or two, flicks through pages to check for anything hidden. Turns over bed, mattress and pillow. Checks inside a light fitting, then turns his attention here --

A STEEL PAIL on the floor, PLATE on top held down by a BRICK. The Guard kicks it open. Inside: BREAD, PACK OF BUTTER, TIN OF VEGETABLES. Trained well, he examines each item.

And FEELS SOMETHING GIVE within the pack of butter. Pulls back the foil wrapper, and sees the way the slab of butter is entirely untouched... SAVE FOR THE FACT IT HAS BEEN HORIZONTALLY SLICED THROUGH THE MIDDLE.

Guard takes out a pocket-knife, follows the line of the cut, slides the slab apart to reveal a cavity in the centre. SOMETHING HAS BEEN HIDDEN IN HERE, something long and thin.

The Guard - working fast through the other contents. Examines the tin of vegetables, the top of which COMES OFF IN HIS HAND. Nothing inside. So, he smells it and instantly RECOILS.

Then he's throwing the tin aside. And running for an ALARM which he SMASHES and a KLAXON breaks the peace, as we --

CUT TO:

2

OMITTED

2

3 **EXT. ISTANBUL CITYSCAPE - DAY (STOCK FOOTAGE)** 3

The Bosphorus, Hagia Sophia, The Blue Mosque. SPLIT-FLAP
forward: 29TH APRIL, 1975. ISTANBUL, TURKEY.

CUT TO:

4 **INT. THE PUDDING SHOP. ISTANBUL - FB DAY 9** 4

Follow ONE YOUNG DUDE, two CAMERAS swinging from his neck, as
he kicks into this humming CAFE, through crowds of HARDENED
TRAIL-FREAKS and FIRST-DAY OVERLANDERS.

That Young Dude - stopping by a NOTICEBOARD of sorts. Various
POSTCARDS, addressed AIRMAIL ENVELOPES.

And here, under a heading that says: **RIDES**, there are a list
of DESTINATIONS (**Kabul, Kandahar, Delhi, Kathmandu**).

CHARLES (O.S.)

(**French**)

Need a ride? / Tu veux bouger ?

The Young Dude - finding Charles beside him. The same jeans
and t-shirt in which he escaped, but the general air of grime
about him is far from unusual amid the hip squalor --

CHARLES (CONT'D)

*French, right? I'm Charles. / T'es
Français ? Moi c'est Charles.*

THE DUDE

*Hey Charles. I'm Alain. Gautier. /
Salut Charles. Moi c'est Alain.
Gautier.*

CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER: Charles and Alain Gautier drinking glasses of tea, tucked into a corner of the thronging cafe. About them, all eyes are fixed on a TELEVISION sat up on a counter.

On it: a TV NEWSCAST. Images of infamy: THE FALL OF SAIGON.

And such is the distraction, Gautier is now wiser as - from a small wrap of paper - CHARLES POURS A POWDER INTO HIS TEA.

CUT TO:

5

INT. TOILET CUBICLE. AIRPORT. ISTANBUL - FB DAY 10

5

In this clean white cubicle, Charles has Gautier's SHOULDER BAG and his CAMERAS. In his hands: A PRESS IDENTITY CARD.

Agence France Presse: ALAIN GAUTIER. Here's the PASSPORT too.

Charles - from his pockets a few items: stub of a BLACK CANDLE, and a POCKET KNIFE. He sets to work, as, above him, HEAR the BING-BONG of an AIRPORT ANNOUNCEMENT --

TANNOY

*Turkish Airways Flight 031 to New
Delhi will now depart from Gate 6.*

Charles hears that. And smiles.

CUT TO:

6

EXT. KASHMIR - DAY (STOCK FOOTAGE)

6

SPLIT-FLAP **forward:** 5TH MAY, 1975. KASHMIR, INDIA.

A JETLINER smashes across the mountains of Northern India. Hear another ANNOUNCEMENT --

ANNOUNCEMENT (O.S.)

*Your Air India flight from New
Delhi to Srinigar will land in
thirty minutes. Please return to
your seats and fasten your
seatbelt.*

CUT TO:

7

INT. JETLINER - FB DAY 10

7

Charles - his new cameras and his new identity, sharing stories with the HIP COUPLE he's sitting next to on the airplane. They coo in admiration. As --

CHARLES (O.S.)

I was with the US Marines during the shelling of Khé San. I was with the North Vietnamese when they seized Hué. Believe me - all soldiers are the same, whatever the uniform...

But his eyes are here - a YOUNG WOMAN, unbuckling her seat belt to replace some belongings in an overhead locker.

As she stands, however, her LEG SEEMS TO BUCKLE BENEATH HER for a moment.

Charles - out of his seat in a moment. Catches her bag as it falls and --

CHARLES (CONT'D)

May I help you?

She turns. Startled. Sees him: it is MARIE-ANDRÉE LECLERC.

MARIE-ANDRÉE

Thank you. My leg is...

But she doesn't finish because, her voice, **French** --

CHARLES

Quebecois?

MARIE-ANDRÉE

Oui.

CHARLES

*I am Alain. Gautier. Alain Gautier.
/ Je suis Alain. Gautier. Alain
Gautier.*

Marie - her eyes locking on to his for the first time. The plane's engines ROAR.

RUN TITLES

7A

INT. KNIPPENBERG HOME. BANGKOK - DAY 72

7A

SPLIT-FLAP: 28TH JUNE, 1976. BANGKOK, THAILAND.

Stuck to the wall here: a BLOWN-UP COPY of the CHARLES SOBHRAJ ARREST WARRANT.

His long FULL NAME. Beneath the LIST OF ALIASES; the long line of petty and powerful CRIMES.

Also here - a COPY OF A MUCH OLDER WANTED POSTER.

It's in both **GREEK** and **ENGLISH**. It describes the urgent need to locate an **ESCAPED PRISONER**. And it carries the caution:

Do Not Attempt to Approach This Man. He is dangerous.

And beneath it - looking up into Charles' face: HERMAN. And --

REDLAND
I finally get you the FBI, and
still you complain...

GILBERT REDLAND - referring to these two SLENDER, BOOKISH MEN
in IDENTICAL SUITS. They are just two of...

A scrum of DIPLOMATS and JOURNALISTS and anyone else
interested in the DOCUMENTATION that has been METICULOUSLY
ARRANGED on THE GAUTIER TABLE.

On the walls there is that DETAILED TIMELINE pinned up.
Alongside it: long INDEXED LISTS of BELONGINGS. Photographs
and Press Cuttings EVERYWHERE. As --

HERMAN
They're only here for the
Americans, Gilbert. They're
covering their backs. What are they
actually doing to help?

Redland - about to answer. But one of those FBI Men wants a
word. So he breaks off. Listens to the man. Then --

REDLAND
They can't find that man Gore's
documents.

HERMAN
That's because, they're looking in
the wrong section.
(acid)
That's 'Victims'. David Alan Gore
is over there. Under 'Non-Fatal'.
But they ought to stay where they
are and study the materials
relating to the other Americans:
Miss Knowlton. Miss Bronzich too.

Redland - he likes Herman, but this censorious tone of his
gets on his wick --

REDLAND
What is there that says Connie-Jo
Bronzich was one of his? Herman -
neither of us are cops. So we have
to listen to the cops. All you have
is - a book of matches and a
newspaper article...

Herman - studying Redland. But seeing now, across the room, a
shy, suited NEPALESE MAN: SINGH. Herman turns back, and --

HERMAN

Please, Gilbert. Don't you or your
friends be going anywhere.

And he is away. Moving through the crowds towards Singh,
pushing past where --

ANGELA KNIPPENBERG is listening to an ISRAELI DIPLOMAT. He
has handed her a PHOTOGRAPH of a man (ETHAN MEIR) who once
drank beer on a Varanasi Rooftop with Marie-Andrée Leclerc.

Angela - she's weary of much right now, not least all of
these people swarming through her house, but she is doing a
typically robust job of helping them --

ANGELA

Ethan Meir? Yes. I'm certain.

She steers the man toward one of those long lists. Checks it
against the indexing. Moves to where SEVERAL PASSPORTS are
kept together. She finds an ISRAELI one --

ANGELA (CONT'D)

He was the water engineer. Found
poisoned in his hotel suite in
Varanasi?

The Israeli confirms it. Here's that passport. Where Meir's
face should be: Charles Sobhraj stares back.

But Angela's attention is drawn with a certain weary anxiety
over to where Herman is guiding Singh back toward Redland.
Back past Angela, who Herman gives a little look as he
passes: *Watch this....*

HERMAN

Gilbert. May I introduce you to Mr.
Akash Singh, consular attaché at
the Nepalese Embassy. He's been
good enough to bring some records.

Herman hands across a POLICE REPORT and an AUTOPSY REPORT.
Redland, on account of the fact it's written in **Devanagari**,
just looks dumbly at the documents, and --

REDLAND

They may as well be dinner menus.

HERMAN

They are not dinner menus. One is
an autopsy report; the other is a
police report from Kathmandu
police. The autopsy report
describes what was suffered by the
young lady you doubt died at
Charles Sobhraj's hand. American
citizen, Miss Connie-Jo Bronzich.
(beat)

(MORE)

HERMAN (CONT'D)

The police report describes an interview that took place with a foreign couple, matching the description of Sobhraj and Marie-Andrée Leclerc, but who gave the names of Willem Bloem and Helena Dekker.

(louder now)

My. Two. Dutch. Where this all started.

Angela - beside him, gentle hand on his arm --

ANGELA

Herman. Lower your voice.

He - taking his arm back. Glares at her --

HERMAN (CONT'D)

And I raise my voice so that all of our - guests can hear me.

(to Redland)

You are preoccupying yourselves with what has happened, instead of what will happen. Which is certainly that this man - Sobhraj - will keep killing until he is caught.

(beat)

Now: Mr. Singh has been good enough to have both reports translated into English.

Herman - thrusting another set of DOCUMENTS into the FBI men's hands --

HERMAN (CONT'D)

Catch him.

FADE OUT.

7B

INT. HOSTEL RESTAURANT. DELHI - NIGHT 72

7B

A party - there's food, drink, a little dance-floor.

SPLIT-FLAP: **28TH JUNE 1976, DELHI, INDIA.**

A GANG OF YOUNG WESTERN TRAVELLERS eating and drinking and enjoying one another. Of interest to us --

Two young women: LINNEA and PATTY. Two GUYS as well. One: reedy, young, filthy from sunburn and grime: TOMMY. The other: older, 40s, Belgian: HUYGENS.

But these are GOOD TIMES, enjoyed by all, except this woman, stood at a bar, hid behind dark glasses.

Marie-Andrée - really, she wishes it would all just end. But she watches as Charles makes his way through the gang of youth. Kind words, smiles.

He peels CASH for a MANAGER to bring more booze. Turns his attention to - LINNEA and PATTY. Both known to him already, he takes a moment to POINT OUT TO THEM ANOTHER YOUNG MAN...

His name is LUCIEN SALOMON. He's 28. Not quite so immersed in the good times as the others. He sits apart, with a DISTINCTIVE BACKPACK, eats a plate of curry hungrily.

Looks up shyly now as: Linnea and Patty are stood above him. He smiles. They smile --

LINNEA

My friend bet me I wouldn't ask you
to dance.

Luc - swallowing hard at the naked flirtation. Both women keep smiling for him --

LUC

Okay.
(then, his food)
Can I finish this first?

LINNEA

Why? It's always going to be *hot*,
right?

HUYGENS

Dance with her, man. You don't know
how lucky you are. She never wants
to dance with me!

Luc - defeated by the persuasion. Grins. And stands.

WITH MARIE - considering it all with weary dismay. Scenes she has witnessed before, only in another country with other players.

Watches Luc enjoy the time of his life right now with these two girls. Another night, another victim, as --

CHARLES

*Try to smile, Marie. I hate it here
in India as much as you do, you
know. But if you want us to leave -
and you do want us to leave, don't
you...? If you want us to get out
of here, you need to keep playing
the game. / Essaie de sourire un
peu Marie. Je déteste cet endroit
autant que toi. Mais si tu veux
quitter l'Inde - et t'as vraiment
envie de partir, non...?*

(MORE)

CHARLES (CONT'D)

*Si tu veux qu'on parte faut que tu
continues à jouer le jeu.*

Her face - impossible to disguise that desperate need, but --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

*How many more idiot children do we
need to befriend? / On va devoir en
supporter encore combien de ces
idiots.*

CHARLES

*Two tickets to Brazil, enough to
live well..? We must still make a
few more new friends. We need
passports for cash; cash for gems;
gems for more cash, then... / Deux
allers pour le Brésil, assez pour
bien vivre? Faut qu'on se fasse
encore quelques amis. On a besoin
de passeports pour l'argent,
l'argent pour les pierres et les
pierres pour plus d'argent et
ensuite...*

And he makes a plane motion with his hand.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

(English)

New life.

Marie - accepts this logic with grim obedience as beyond,
Linnea wraps her arms around Luc's neck and brings him even
closer... Go to her for a moment --

LINNEA

*There's something - illuminated
about you, Luc. You know that? Your
aura is very powerful.*

CUT TO:

10

I/E. THE CITROEN/STREETS. DELHI - NIGHT 72

10

Luc - whatever good times he was recently enjoying, they have vanished now. His pupils dilated, he's trying desperately to focus on where he is and what is happening to him...

This is where he is: in the back seat of the Citroen, which is parked up on city wasteland site.

This is what's happening to him: he is watching, powerless, as the people he thought were his new friends stand about watching him --

CHARLES

I will take you both to the police
and tell them how you seduced this
young boy and then drugged him.

Linnea, Patty - confused, frightened looks for each other --

LINNEA

No, but... wait: we didn't...

Her eyes - looking to Marie-Andrée for help. But there's nothing but a listless, seen-it-all misery here. She lights a cigarette, then --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

You did.

PATTY

(Charles)
He *made* us.

CHARLES

How did I make you? I did not force
you to do a single thing.

Linnea, Patty - they've no answer to that. Can only stare as Charles lights a cigarette of his own. Then --

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Now: search his pack.

Patty - frightened looks, back and forth. Turns to Linnea - but she's already obeying. Takes Luc's pack from where it sits beside him.

Luc - fading eyes watching as Linnea produces his passport from his pack. Hands it to Charles. But --

CHARLES (CONT'D)
His traveller's cheques. Where are
his traveller's cheques?

MARIE-ANDRÉE
(the weariness)
Try the lining. Sometimes they sew
their valuables into the fabric.

Linnea - tearing the pack apart. And finds them --

LINNEA
Here, Daniel!

But Charles takes them with no happiness at all, because, a rage growing for the two young women now --

CHARLES
What is this? It's fucking useless.
(he means the passport)
When you picked him up. I told you
to find out where he's been. Are
you idiots? Look! Too many stamps!
It's full!

MARIE-ANDRÉE
You can't travel on it if they have
been too many places. The VISA
pages are full.

Marie-Andrée - watching Charles. Something loose in him. Whereas in the past there was always a nonchalance for adversity, now he's enraged, almost petulant.

LINNEA
He has some cash, Daniel...

CHARLES
How much?

LINNEA
Maybe twenty francs...

CHARLES
Then let us all book ourselves in
to the Sheraton, shall we!?

But stay on Marie-Andrée. Something she's noticed. She moves to where Luc is slumped. She pushes at him. Leans down, her face opposite his mouth, and, quiet --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

He's barely breathing.

Luc - it's true, his breath is increasingly laboured. So, her
panic --

LINNEA

What shall we do?

CHARLES

Didn't I tell you? It's nothing to
do with me.

LINNEA

It's not our fault!

CHARLES

If anyone asks, tell them he's been
smoking heroin.

Marie - her face, the grimness of it all.

CUT TO:

11 **MOVED TO SC 7A**

11

12 **EXT. STREET. DELHI - DAY 73**

12

Where Marie-Andrée, behind sunglasses, emerges from this hotel to be met by the man Huygens. He's been waiting for her evidently. They fall into step down the street.

And there's something on his mind apparently, takes up what's been a ceaseless paranoia --

HUYGENS

He still wasn't breathing. When you took him to his hotel. That's what Linnea said. That he was - dead.

Marie - the ferocious heat. The world cacophonous, splintered by noise and fear. But she stops now. Fixes him. Rifles in this large tote she's carrying for CIGARETTES.

Huygens - eyes drawn to the contents of her bag. Sees inside both - her ROSARY BEADS. And perhaps 15 PASSPORTS.

Marie lights a cigarette, fixes him, pointedly ignores him. And moves off again. So, going after her --

HUYGENS (CONT'D)

There were police at the guy's hotel. That's what they're saying.

Down the street they go. Until they turn in, here --

CUT TO:

13-14 **OMITTED**

13-14

15 **INT. POSTE RESTANTE. DELHI - DAY 73**

15

A PASSPORT - slid across to a TELLER at an EXCHANGE COUNTER. The Passport is SPANISH. But inside - there is MARIE-ANDRÉE'S PHOTOGRAPH on the ID page, as, **English** to the Teller --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

I would like to cash them all please.

Sunglasses off to show herself to the Teller. Sunglasses replaced to hide. And, these: a book of TRAVELLER'S CHEQUES.

She performs the signature required. It's not brilliant; but it's enough to convince The Teller, who counts out cash.

This completed, she organises her bag again. Passports, Traveller's Cheques. MORE cash. Turns back through the usual Poste Restante mêlée. To where Huygens waits for her. And --

HUYGENS

Daniel never said anything about anyone getting killed, Monique!

Enough. She snaps now. Rounds on him --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

No one's killed. No one's dead. Do you think Daniel is an idiot? I have done this with him many, many times. And never has anyone died. Never. He is an expert, you understand. What are you? Some - bum lucky enough to be given a chance by him.

He - entirely chastened. Drops his eyes.

HUYGENS

I'm sorry, Monique.

MARIE-ANDRÉE

I need to make a telephone call.

CUT TO:

A LITTLE LATER: find Huygens - WATCHING Marie-Andrée - through the glass of this Phone Booth, she's talking into a handpiece. And her face... is wet with tears.

Marie-Andrée - sees him seeing her. Turns her back on him.

CUT TO:

16

INT. POSTE RESTANTE. TELEPHONE BOOTH - DAY 73

16

Marie-Andrée - gripping that hand piece tight, as down the line, scratching over continents, but still the bitterness and resentment clear to hear; **French** --

MME. LECLERC (O.S.)

I thought you were in Paris, Marie. Having babies. / Je pensais que t'étais à Paris, Marie. En train de faire ta vie.

MARIE-ANDRÉE

(the SHAME of it all; also **French**)

Mama. Please. / Maman. J'ten prie.

MME. LECLERC

And now you're in Delhi? And you are all over the newspapers. Your face is all over the newspapers.

(MORE)

*
*

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*

MME. LECLERC (CONT'D)

*/ Et j'apprends que t'es a Dheli
maintenant? Il y a ta photo
partout, dans tous les journaux.*

*
*
*

MARIE-ANDRÉE

*I swear it, Mama. It's not true. I
am innocent. It was him. All of it.
Please Mama. I have to come home! /
Je te le jure, maman. C'est pas
vrai. Je suis innocente. C'est lui
qui a tout fait. Tout! S'il te
plaît maman, il faut que je rentre.*

*
*
*
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*
*

MME. LECLERC

*Now she wants to come home. / C'est
maintenant qu'elle veut rentrer.*

*
*

Marie - weeping now, the bleakness of it all --

*

MARIE-ANDRÉE

*I have - no passport; no money...
You have to help me! / J'ai plus de
passeport, plus d'argent. Il faut
que tu m'aides.*

*
*
*
*

MME. LECLERC

*But how? Tell me how, Marie-
Andrée... / Mais comment? Dis-moi
ce que je peux faire, Marie-Andrée?*

*
*
*

Silence. She's not responding. Here's why: she's realised that her bag has gone. The bag that had all those passports and traveller's cheques and money inside it.... It's gone.

MARIE-ANDRÉE

No, no no no...

*

MME. LECLERC

Marie-Andrée...?

*

But she's hung up. She's gone. Out through the Poste Restante and into the blinding light of the day beyond.

CUT TO:

17 **EXT. STREET. DELHI - DAY 73**

17

The man Huygens - running. In his hand: that very same bag.

CUT TO:

18 **EXT. HOSTEL. DELHI - NIGHT 73**

18

The worst of the worst. Last stop before you sleep on the street. And now - it's raining. A MONSOON DOWNPOUR.

Marie-Andrée - soaked to the skin. Staring up at it.

CUT TO:

19

INT. HOSTEL. CORRIDORS/BEDROOM - NIGHT 73

19

Rain hammering above, Marie-Andrée turns into this bedroom.
Finds: the bags and belongings of FIVE DIFFERENT PEOPLE. A
king size mattress and two singles pushed against the
opposite wall. On the mattress --

Linnea, Tommy and Patty. Charles among them. They're all in their underwear. And Charles is using a brass tube to snort speed off a copy of **Paris Match**.

All eyes up for Marie. Aware of the awkwardness, but Charles is beady. Senses something else --

CHARLES
Where is Jean, Monique?
(then)
And where is your bag?

MARIE-ANDRÉE
(quiet; unapologetic)
He took it.

He - off the bed, a step to her --

CHARLES
Where were you when he took it? Did he attack you?

MARIE-ANDRÉE
No! I was - distracted.

CHARLES
Distracted? What were you doing?

MARIE-ANDRÉE
It's not my fault you recruit drug addicts and thieves.

The other three - insulted intrigue for this. But --

CHARLES
Your ring, Monique.

His hand held out for the ring on her finger. *That* ring. That storied ring. And so, her derision --

MARIE-ANDRÉE
Who will you give it to now?

CHARLES
A pawnbroker. We all need money now, don't we?

Marie - a mirthless laugh; utter derision. Hands it over --

MARIE-ANDRÉE
Money for drugs? Take it.
(for the others)
It is probably made from tin and glass.

Sudden surge of rage at that. He takes her by the hair, and
YANKS HER TOWARD HIM --

CHARLES

It is not! It is a sapphire set in
diamonds on a platinum ring.

(shows her to the others)

All the times I could have cut her
loose. Each one - I thought: no.
She might still be of some use to
me. And here we are now. Where you
have FUCKED IT ALL. But I don't
know why I'm surprised. She's my
worst mistake, Marie. Some hopeless
little Quebecois with a limp who I
made beautiful for a while.

(Back to her)

But you're not beautiful - you're a
cripple. A nothing.

Marie-Andrée - in truth it's always how she's felt about
herself, so to own that feeling now is no great dismay. So,
for the awestruck others as much as for Charles --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

It's true. I am those things. But
at least I know what I am.

(beat)

(MORE)

MARIE-ANDRÉE (CONT'D)

But you, Charles? The... master-criminal, the international gem dealer... He talks and talks about - freedom... how his life is some - victory over the world. It's a joke! Look at us all! Five of us, sharing one room or sleeping in a fucking car!

Charles - cold, brutal eyes fixed on her, but --

CHARLES

You three: get out.

The three kids - throwing clothes on, heading for the door, but Marie hasn't finished --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

Everything about him is a lie. Everything except this: he is a mother's boy whose mother despises him. A boy who was never wanted anywhere or by anyone except pathetic fools like me.

The door slamming behind them. Charles reaches out, Takes her by the throat. Pins her against the wall. So **French** now --

MARIE-ANDRÉE (CONT'D)

You think you can hurt me? I don't care, I don't care. There was a time I longed to have your child inside me. But I think now - if I gave birth to a child of yours, I would smash its brains out in front of you. / Tu peux plus me faire de mal. Je m'en fous maintenant. Je m'en fous. J'ai eu tellement envie d'avoir d'un enfant avec toi. Mais tu sais, si il naissait là, maintenant, je lui écraserait le crâne juste devant toi.

Enough. His fist clenches to smash her face. But he thinks better of injuring her there. And so PUNCHES HER in the stomach. The breath gone from her, she sinks.

MARIE-ANDRÉE (CONT'D)

You never hit me before. Not once. / C'est la première fois que tu me frappes. La première fois.

CHARLES

No. / Ouais.

So he does it again.

CUT TO:

20 OMITTED 20

21 INT. HOSTEL. DELHI - NIGHT 73 (CONTINUOUS) 21

Linnea, Tommy and Patty - sat on a tatty sofa, watching the rain pour down outside - as the sound of those muffled punches and groans seep through the thin walls.

FADE OUT.

22-23 OMITTED 22-23

23A INT. FOOD MARKET. BANGKOK - DAY 74 23A

SPLIT-FLAP nudges one day forward: 30TH JUNE, 1976. BANGKOK.

Various STREET-FOOD STALLS set up in this vast HANGAR. At one table, alone: Sompol and Herman.

Herman - in front of him, a copy of that Sobhraj ARREST WARRANT. Something he's picking away at here --

HERMAN

You are a Thai. You live and work
in your own country, Colonel.

SOMPOL

I trained with Scotland Yard in
London for three months.

HERMAN

And then you came home. You brought
your skills and diligence back to
serve the country that raised you.

SOMPOL

As you do, Mr. Knippenberg.

Herman - a smile, a roll of his shoulders. Knows there's some echo reverberating somewhere here --

HERMAN

Well, I serve my country. But I do
it - abroad. If I do well in my
career, I doubt I'll spend very
much time in The Netherlands at
all.

A beat. They consider this difference between them. Then --

HERMAN (CONT'D)

(the warrant)

This man. He is something else
altogether.

SOMPOL

He is a criminal.

HERMAN

But look - where is his home?

(beat)

I don't say this to try to - excuse him in any way. But - every country he ever lived in, one way or another, they told him he was no longer welcome. And now - France. Where he was educated, married. His home. Where he hoped to return and live. And we chase him out again.

SOMPOL

You didn't do that, Mr. Knippenberg. It is international law enforcement that is chasing him.

HERMAN

No, of course. All I mean to say is - it frightens me. I think about the crimes he committed when he was free to roam. And how much worse they might be now, when the world is closing in on him.

Sompol - the kindness in him, and the respect, but --

SOMPOL

Mr. Knippenberg I have nothing but respect for your commitment to this case. But this criminal is no longer your responsibility.

Herman - sharp eyes for that. Doesn't feel that way at all.
And Sompol - careful. Knows he's in treacherous waters here --

SOMPOL (CONT'D)

In fact - my superior officer General Chaikamdee asks that you now hand over all of your records to us.

There it is. Sompol meets Herman's astonished gaze. And Herman - those loose threads in him fraying again --

HERMAN
(quiet; hard)
They are my records. *My* files. They
aren't yours!

Sompol - eyes down, hates the confrontation of it --

SOMPOL
If you do not agree, he will make
the request to your Ambassador.

HERMAN
Van Dongen? That would be the last
straw. He would send me home.

SOMPOL
And what help can you be to us in
Holland?

Herman - almost blank --

HERMAN
Have your men come to my home at
7am tomorrow morning. They'll be
boxed and ready for you.

CUT TO:

24 OMITTED 24

25 I/E. KNIPPENBERG HOME - DAY 74 25

Nadine - her outraged features --

NADINE
But why!?

Siemons - rising from an easy chair, drink in hand --

SIEMONS
So they can make a bonfire of it.

And here's Herman - only recently home. His briefcase at his feet, alongside a bundle of FLATTENED ARCHIVE BOXES.

HERMAN
You're not helping.

SIEMONS
Would you like me to also make eggs
for your friend Sompol when he
comes to collect it all in the
morning?

HERMAN
No. I'd like you to also be my
friend. And lend a hand.

Then he moves through to the GAUTIER TABLE, the room full of documentation and imagery. Sets about opening out one of those archive boxes.

Then he begins placing the documents inside. Until it's full.
Everyone else watching him. Until --

REMY
What's going on?

Remy - in an apron, emerging from the kitchen. Behind him - all sorts going on. Kannika helping. Dinner being prepared.

Herman - a look to Angela. Needs her to understand --

HERMAN
I can't just hand it all over.

Angela - a sadness here. But she understands --

ANGELA
Alright, Herman.

So she goes to him. Starts to fill a box herself. As --

REMY
It's our last night. I'm cooking.

NADINE
(to Siemons)
What are they doing?

SIEMONS
(understanding)
It's embassy protocol.

And he gets about it too.

ANGELA
You have a report. You make a copy.

HERMAN
We should be able to get it all in
both cars.

REMY
Fine way to say goodbye.

CUT TO:

26 **OMITTED** 26

27 **INT. KNIPPENBERG HOME. BANGKOK - DAY 74** 27

Where KANIKA, the maid, considers what was the Gautier Table, but is now entirely naked. Not a trace of the case that was built there.

CUT TO:

28 **EXT. COPY SHOP. BANGKOK - EVENING 74** 28

Angela's Mazda, Siemons' car - parked up outside. Through the glass, see them: Herman, Angela, Remy, Nadine, Siemons. They each have a box except Herman who carries two.

And Angela is explaining something to a perplexed ASSISTANT.

A LITTLE LATER: through the windows, SEE THEM AT WORK. Those XEROX MACHINES FLASHING. Slowly making their way through the mass of documentation.

ANGLE ON: that SOBHRAJ WARRANT. **CHARLES' FACE FLASHING THROUGH THE MACHINE.**

FADE OUT.

29 **INT. POLICE STATION. DELHI - DAY 75** 29

The daily scrum of life in this central Delhi Police Station. Various notices on the wall. But here is an engraving --

A POLICE OFFICER IS A CITIZEN IN UNIFORM; AND EVERY CITIZEN IS A POLICE OFFICER WITHOUT A UNIFORM.

Push on through. To another notice, pinned above A CLUTTERED DESK. It's that same **SOBHRAJ WARRANT**. Next to it, however --

ANOTHER ARREST WARRANT. This one OLD AND MILDEWED, however, but occupying a place of some privilege.

NEW DELHI CRIME BRANCH is its heading. Beneath, bolder, larger: **WANTED**. And beneath that - **a MUCH YOUNGER CHARLES**. And his name, followed by a date, **30th October 1971**. Then --

The Above Named Person is wanted by the New Delhi Police in connection with charges of KIDNAP and ROBBERY.

Through this, a senior POLICEMAN paces to his desk. His name is DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT NARANDA NATH TULI (late 50s). We've met the man before. He once held a gun to Charles' head.

A little older. But still elegant, he has a piece of paper in his hand. A TELEPHONE NUMBER on it. Dials.

CUT TO:

30

I/E. TRAVELER CAFE. GOA - DAY 75 (MOMENTS LATER)

30

Where the RAIN THUNDERS DOWN on a monsoon ocean, this rickety cafe doing a serviceable trade for the damp TRAIL FREAKS sat sipping lassies, playing chess and smoking hash.

A phone rings here too. Answered by an INDIAN BARMAN. Who listens. Then, calling out --

BARMAN

Mr. John! Telephone!

This nervous, hidden man - rising up from a hammock: HUYGENS.

BACK TO:

31

INT. POLICE STATION. DELHI - DAY 75 (CONTINUOUS)

31

Tuli - through the interference, speaks *English* now --

TULI

May I take your name, sir.

Silence down the line, the sound of the sea, breathing --

HUYGENS

You may not.

TULI

But you wish to report a crime.
Druggings, robbings?

(silence; so)

Sir. Why ask to be telephoned if
you have nothing to say?

BACK TO:

32 **I/E. TRAVELER CAFE. GOA - DAY 75 (CONTINUOUS)** 32

Huygens - looking about him, the horror of it all, but,
careful he isn't overheard --

HUYGENS
A man died.

CUT TO:

33 **INT. POLICE STATION. DELHI - DAY 75** 33

Inspector Tuli - eyes up in thanks for a UNIFORM. Who is
depositing a LARGE FILE on his desk. Tuli goes to work.

Pages of incomprehensible CRIME REPORTS; AUTOPSY REPORTS.
PHOTOGRAPHS of DEAD BODIES. Until he stops on one in
particular. On a mortuary slab: THE FACE OF LUCIEN SALOMON.

CUT TO:

34 **OMITTED** 34

35 **EXT. CAFE. GAVASKAR HOTEL. DELHI - DAY 75 (MOMENTS LATER)** 35

Charles - pushing out into the haywire Delhi streets. Stops
at the sight of --

A TOUR BUS pulling up outside this decent tourist hotel: THE
GAVASKAR. There are a number of GERMAN FLAGS strung up in the
windows and a banner: **KASSEL TECHNISCHE HOCHSCHULE.**

Charles - moving into position. Watching as the bus disgorges
perhaps 30 GERMAN STUDENTS. With them - an older couple, a
man and a woman, who appear to be in charge of the group.

CUT TO:

36 **INT. GAVASKAR HOTEL. BAR. DELHI - DAY 75** 36

That COUPLE - KARL and ERICA - stood at the bar here, three
or four of the STUDENTS too. All of them listening and
laughing as Charles holds court.

Charles - watching as A COUPLE OF STUDENTS return, approach
Karl, and DEPOSIT THEIR PASSPORTS with him.

Those passports transferred into a TOTE BAG that Karl keeps close at all times. But Charles manages a glimpse into the interior...

ALL THE GROUP'S PASSPORTS AND TRAVELLER'S CHEQUES INSIDE.

LATER: WATCH - as Charles, such sleek skill, palms a bump of white powder into Erica's glass of whisky.

CUT TO:

36A

INT. HOSTEL. BEDROOM. DELHI - NIGHT 75

36A

Marie-Andrée - desultory attempt to wash some clothes in this filthy basin. Hangs up one of Charles' once beautiful shirts to dry in the dank heat.

Turns to where Charles concentrates on the task in hand. Another set of POWDERS. A couple of GLASS FLASKS with incomprehensible Indian Script on them.

These powders he is mixing and decanting into any number of PLASTIC PILL CAPSULES. The Poisoner At Work. Turning back to address Tommy, Linnea and Patty as he works --

CHARLES

It is - perfection. And, you know: already the first has - with a little help - fallen sick. I don't know how many of them there are but it is more than fifty... And all of their valuables, their passports, their money... all of it - in one bag in the care of only one person. It is as if the world decided. Reached out to me and said - they are yours. Take them.

Patty, Linnea - startled, but they grin with enthusiasm --

LINNEA

Fifty - in one swoop... That's - far out, right, Monique?

Marie-Andrée - the bruises on her arms, looks at Charles --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

It is madness. A grandiose delusion.

(the drugs)

You saw what happened with the French boy.

CHARLES

Ignore her. She is a washer-woman.

(his smile, arms open)

(MORE)

CHARLES (CONT'D)
If I say it will succeed, it will
succeed.

FADE OUT.

37 **OMITTED** 37

38 **I/E. KNIPPENBERG HOME. BANGKOK - MORNING 76** 38

Sompol and his INTERPOL MEN - climbing from their cars.
Moving to where - Kannika stands next to SIX ARCHIVE BOXES --

SOMPOL
(*Thai*)
Mr. Knippenberg?

KANNIKA
(*likewise; the boxes*)
*He's not here, sir. But he left
these for you. With his respects.*

Sompol - acknowledging this. Flicks a signal to his men. As they begin to load the boxes into their cars, Kannika retreats into the house. Climbs stairs.

Moves into the shade of the upstairs terrace. From where she can see through to **HERMAN'S STUDY**. Where, sat quietly in the corner are SIX MORE ARCHIVE BOXES. Herman's copies.

CUT TO:

38A **EXT. KANIT HOUSE - DAY 76** 38A

In the parking bay - Angela's VW and a TAXI. There's lots of LUGGAGE in the back of the taxi.

CUT TO:

38B **INT. KANIT HOUSE - NADINE AND REMY'S APARTMENT - DAY 76** 38B

Empty, clean, nothing remains of their home. Here's Remy - handing the keys to a THAI REALTOR.

But he stops for a moment or two. Seen something. Moves out to the balcony. Beneath, he can see Nadine and Herman and Angela down by the swimming pool. But --

Across the way, on the balcony to 504 - two small THAI CHILDREN are leaning out and looking at the place. After a moment or two, their PARENTS appear.

CUT TO:

38C

EXT. KANIT HOUSE. SWIMMING POOL - DAY 76

38C

Nadine - roaming, remembering, turns to where Herman and Angela stand considering the weird peace of the place, and --

NADINE
And when they catch him, Herman.
Please make me the first person you
telephone.

Herman - a smile. He will. Then --

HERMAN
Nadine - I thought... well, call it
a leaving present...

From his briefcase, he offers Nadine a thick buff envelope.
She takes it. Knows what it is already, but she opens it. A
series of PHOTOCOPIED PAGES.

NADINE
(oddly charmed)
It's your report, Herman.

Angela - first she's heard of it. Can't quite believe it --

ANGELA
Herman: really?

HERMAN
(a little defensive)
I thought - it might be useful. In
France.

Nadine - going to him, enormous affection here. Embraces him
tightly, and --

NADINE
I don't ever want to think what my
life would have been like if I had
never met you.

REMY (O.S.)
Hey. Dutchman. Hands off.

Remy - moving through, with a smile and --

REMY (CONT'D)
Have you seen..?

And he points up to where the Thai Father, up on the balcony -
looks down, his infant daughter in his arms, to where the
Thai Mother and their son now appear down the stairs.

REDLAND
New tenants.

The Mother, her son - polite bows and smiles. Then they move
to the SPIRIT HOUSE. And make an offering.

Remy and Nadine - arms about each other. Herman and Angela - a defined space between them.

REMY

Ça ira. On continue.

Herman - a look to Angela for help with that. She, quiet --

ANGELA

Life goes on.

CUT TO:

38D

I/E. KNIPPENBERG HOME. BALCONY - DAY 76 (LATER)

38D

And here is that life, going on... Herman and Angela, two large tumblers of booze, sitting up here, looking out over their gardens as the day comes to an end...

Silence. And not the easy kind. Angela breaks it --

ANGELA

They ought to be taking off about now.

HERMAN

It will be strange not having them in the house.

(his joke)

As if our children had left home.

A beat. She smiles for that. Although doesn't find it particularly funny. So --

ANGELA

Shall we try driving to the coast this weekend? Get out of the city. It might be good for us...

HERMAN

Yes. I can't - leave Bangkok at the moment. I might - be needed.

ANGELA

(can't resist)

Who by?

HERMAN

Anyone, Angela. I need to be here.

ANGELA

Didn't Colonel Sompol say it was no longer your responsibility?

Herman - little shrug for that, so --

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Well then - we can go to the beach can't we?

HERMAN

Why would you say that?

ANGELA

I only meant - you're [allowed]...

HERMAN

(OVER her)

Allowed to what? Drink cocktails by the beach while Sobhraj is still out there?

ANGELA

And what if he's never caught? What then? Will we never go anywhere nice ever again?

HERMAN

(quiet at that thought)

He'll be caught.

The gardens, the light falling, the birds calling --

HERMAN (CONT'D)

Besides - isn't it nice here?

ANGELA

That depends on the company.

HERMAN

There's no need to be unpleasant.

ANGELA

I'm sorry, but it's too much. To believe that - Herman Knippenberg must maintain a constant vigilance or this man will forever be free? I think it's vain of you.

And silence. No way of unsaying those words. Herman looks at her. Resentment here; but fear too - that she might be right. He finishes the rest of his drink in a hurry --

HERMAN

I'd like another, I think. You?

Angela - a little shake of the head. She doesn't. Looks up as he stands to move away from her, and --

ANGELA

I thought I might go to visit my
parents.

HERMAN

In Germany?

ANGELA

(gentle; sad)

That's where they live, Herman.

(beat)

It's been such a long time. And as
you say - you're very busy.

Herman - the barb here, but the sadness beneath it. But he has no energy to fight her, so --

HERMAN

Alright.

FADE OUT.

38E **EXT. ROADS. INDIA - DAY 76**

38E

SPLIT-FLAP rolling **forward**: 4TH JULY, 1976. AGRA, INDIA.

And there's that BANNER again: **KASSEL TECHNISCHE HOCHSCHULE**.
Their TOUR BUS smashing through the Indian landscape.

CUT TO:

38F **INT. TOUR BUS. INDIA - DAY 76**

38F

Charles - in his element. This busload of students - flushed with excitement, gazing up at him as, standing, swaying with the motion of the bus, he talks with tour-leader Karl --

CHARLES

Really? She is no better? But it's
the Taj Mahal. It's a tragedy for
her.

KARL

She is very sick.

Karl, the others - their concern. So, LOUD for all --

CHARLES

Well, I needn't tell you, it's the
most common complaint for all those
visiting India. It can ruin what
ought to be magical.

KARL

What do you do. To protect
yourself?

Charles - his modest shrug --

CHARLES

Peel your fruit; avoid ice. And meat. Eat nothing that is not given to you hot and straight from the fire.

(a beat)

But I also take an anti-bacterial drug that was recommended to me by a biochemist in Teheran.

Look at them, the students, all so eager to know.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I might find you some. If you'd like?

CUT TO:

39-40 **OMITTED**

39-40

41 **I/E. TRAVELER CAFÉ. GOA - DAY 76**

41

SPLIT-FLAP. Same day: **4TH JULY, 1976. ANJUNA BEACH, GOA.**

Monsoon. The rain thunders down on to street shacks and SODDEN TRAIL FREAKS. Through this - panama, Hawaiian shirt, small clutch bag, not staying long - Tuli.

Ducking into that same café, where, sitting alone, Huygens recognises him immediately.

CUT TO:

TULI

I am not here in an official capacity as such.

He smiles at the rain cannoning down outside.

TULI (CONT'D)

I took two days holiday. I have never been to Goa before.

Huygens could care less. But this takes his attention: Tuli pushes across that OLD ARREST WARRANT --

TULI (CONT'D)

Please be careful with it. It's quite old.

Huygens - reading. Seeing that picture of Charles.

HUGYENS

Yes. That's Daniel.

TULI

For three days, he kept an American flamenco dancer tied up in the Ashoka hotel for three days while he drilled through the floor to rob the jewelry shop below.

(beat)

After he was apprehended and imprisoned, he faked appendicitis, had the organ removed and, while recovering in hospital... he vanished.

Huygens - processing this. Long beat. Then --

HUYGENS

I tell you what you want to know, you'd - look after me? Get me home? I haven't been home in so long.

Tuli - not making any promises, but --

TULI

You have met the woman with whom he now travels?

HUYGENS

Monique?

TULI

She is a French-Canadian correct?

HUYGENS

How do you know this?

Tuli - from his bag, he produces that NEW ARREST WARRANT --

TULI

Because they are hunted by people other than the New Delhi Crime Branch, and in places other than India.

FADE OUT.

41B **INT. KNIPPENBERG HOME. BEDROOM - DAY 77**

41B

SPLIT-FLAP **forward: 5TH JULY 1976, BANGKOK, THAILAND.**

Herman - home from work. Considers --

The flawless marital bed. In the bathroom - only one toothbrush in a mug. One face flannel by the bath. In the wardrobe, half of Angela's dresses have gone. On her denuded dressing table, there's a note for him.

Please look after yourself, Herman. Herman - the note folded immaculately and placed inside a bedside drawer. He leaves the room.

CUT TO:

41C **INT. KNIPPENBERG HOME. OFFICE - DAY 77**

41C

Herman - those SIX ARCHIVE BOXES tucked into a corner. He considers them for a moment. But then he reaches for the telephone. Dials. And --

HERMAN

Yes. It's Herman.

(beat)

No. Nothing. It's only - I don't really feel like being at home.

CUT TO:

41D **OMITTED**

41D

41E **INT. GO-GO BAR - NIGHT 77**

41E

Herman - curious, faintly nervous as to what might be waiting for him in here. Eyes adjust. Pick out the ranks of THAI WOMEN waiting to greet him.

Stops for a moment. Until --

LAVER (O.S.)

Ker-nippenberg!

LAVER, the Australian - appeared from somewhere. An arm about his shoulder. Guides him away from the women, so --

LAVER (CONT'D)

All in good time, son.

(then)

We're over here.

Over there: Where Paul Siemons waits. Stands to welcome him --

SIEMONS

Cloggy!

CUT TO:

LATER: Herman, Siemons, Laver - sat together. Assortment of bottles, glasses and girls about them, as --

SIEMONS (CONT'D)

Show him...

Herman - a smile. Reaches into his pocket. Produces that slender pistol. Shows it to Laver. Who grins for Siemons --

LAVER

Told him he'd be buying a Cobra
sooner or later.

HERMAN

I almost shot my wife with it.

LAVER

Mate. Fucking hell. We've all been
there.

And away he goes, into the crowd of welcoming women. Leaves --

SIEMONS

You know, Herman. Men like you
ought not to associate with men
like him.

HERMAN

Or men like you for that matter.

SIEMONS

True.

(beat)

You're meant to think we're -
crass.

HERMAN

Which I do.

SIEMONS

We're meant to think you're -
effete.

HERMAN

Which you also do.

SIEMONS

Yes.

(beat)

And yet... And yet... if one of us
said 'you ought to be more like me,
you'd be happier'... only one of us
would be right... Me. I would be
right.

HERMAN

You're drunk.

SIEMONS

You're drunk.

(beat)

(MORE)

SIEMONS (CONT'D)

But I am right.

(another)

You would be happier. If you
thought less. If you thought less,
you would be happier.

HERMAN

Like you? Happy Paul.

SIEMONS

It's not your job, Herman - to
penetrate the inner workings of
men. To think, if you just put your
head far enough up your own
arsehole that you might arrive
at...

(he doesn't know at what)

He's a cheap little conman. A
thoughtless street thug. He's not
worth a single grey hair on your
head.

HERMAN

Sobhraj.

SIEMONS

Yes Sobhraj. Fuck him. FUCK HIM.

(beat)

You're beautiful. Your wife is
beautiful. You ought to be fucking
in mountain pastures and raising
little Cloggies... not sitting in a
place like this wondering if she's
coming back or not...

HERMAN

She's coming back. She went to see
her mother. She's coming back.

But here's Laver - two more girls with him --

LAVAR

And even if she isn't... this is
Bangkok, Ker-nippenberg. It's all
gravy, my friend.

Siemons - his wistful musings ruined --

SIEMONS

Oh for godsake, Laver. Fuck off.

CUT TO:

LATER STILL: Here they all are. Herman, Siemons, Laver, their
girls - bugging out on a dancefloor. Hot, sweaty.

And Herman - breaking off. Needs a glass of water. And to sit
down. And to gather himself.

Finds a seat. Looks up to see one of those girls stood over
him. She cocks her head. Offers her hand.

FADE OUT.

41F **EXT. GAVASKAR HOTEL. DELHI - NIGHT 77**

41F

SPLIT FLAP. **Same night: 5TH JULY, 1976. DELHI, INDIA.**

Where the Citroen CX pulls into the forecourt. Charles gets
out holding a BLACK DOCTOR'S BAG.

CUT TO:

41G **INT. GAVASKAR HOTEL. BAR AREA. DELHI - NIGHT 77**

41G

Where Charles now sits with Erica, still grey and unwell, and
Karl (and his TOTE BAG of PASSPORTS and TRAVELERS CHEQUES).
Surrounding them, many of those STUDENTS.

On the table, that black bag is open. And various **BAGS OF
PILL CAPSULES** are on the table, as --

CHARLES

... the sooner the better. For me,
the first day I'm in India, I take
one before dinner and two
afterwards, before bedtime.
Thereafter - one each morning.

Various looks of relief at this. Erica takes a pill. Karl
does likewise. So do three or four of the students, and --

KARL

Will you stay for dinner?

And Charles smiles. Of course he will. And so Karl and
Francoise take those bags of pills and begin to distribute
them among their students. Everyone takes one.

CUT TO:

41GA

I/E. HOSTEL/BALCONY. DELHI - NIGHT 77

41GA

Marie-Andrée - infinite weariness, walking like the dead
through the semi-populated interior of the hostel. Moving out
on to the balcony to smoke a cigarette and drink a beer.

Takes in the night. And the sequence of POLICE SQUAD CARS
quietly prowling on to the street beneath her.

For an abstracted moment she considers them, and who they
might be here for. And then she understands the inevitability
of it: They're here for her.

From the first patrol car, she watches as DS Tuli climbs out.
And from the other door: Huygens.

Huygens - who sees her. And points her out to Tuli. Still she
doesn't move. Not even now, as --

Tuli flicks a signal and his MEN POUR INTO THE BUILDING.

CUT TO:

41H

INT. HOSTEL. DELHI - NIGHT 77 (CONTINUOUS)

41H

Marie-Andrée - unhurried, turning back in from the balcony.
Watching as --

Linnea, Patty and Tommy explode from the bedroom and try to
RUN. Nowhere for them to go, however. Tuli's men tackle them
to the floor.

LINNEA

You're a fucking pig traitor, Jean.
An evil, bald bastard.

But Huygens isn't paying her any attention. Only looks to where Marie-Andrée steps slowly down the stairs towards him and Tuli. Cocks her head at him. And smiles gently.

Tuli - removing his hat. Bows in a gentlemanly fashion and --

TULI

Miss Leclerc. My name is Tuli. If
Mr. Sobhraj is not here. Please -
will you tell me where I can find
him?

She - turning to him. Eyes him. Then --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

Yes. Alright.

CUT TO:

42-52 **OMITTED**

42-52

53 **INT. GAVASKAR HOTEL. BAR AREA. DELHI - NIGHT 77**

53

Charles - moving to the bar. Surveying his prey, eyes seeking out Karl and Erica and that TOTE BAG OF RICHES. Turns to order a whisky. Refuses the ice. Takes a drink.

As a TERRIBLE SHRIEK SPLITS THE ROOM. It's Erica. And something awful is happening to her. She clutches at herself.

Karl - all the students, it's as if they're frozen. Staring at the woman, inside of whom, something awful is happening.

She SCREAMS again. And then collapses to the floor where now, she begins to CONVULSE.

KARL

Daniel! Help us!

Charles - frozen by it for a moment. Across the room, there's another shout. A BOY VOMITS. So does another GIRL.

He can't believe what he's seeing. But he finds action. Goes to Erica, who, for now has stopped convulsing. Stares up at him for some kind of intervention.

CHARLES

Was she - taking anything else? Any other medication? Quinine perhaps? For malaria?

Karl has no idea. But Charles' eyes remain fixed on his prize: In Karl's hands - that TOTE BAG OF PASSPORTS AND TRAVELERS CHEQUES.

But then: MORE SCREAMS. More convulsions. Two more YOUNG WOMEN go down. Another VOMITS. Watch panic ripple out into everyone in the room.

Suddenly it's like a Hieronymous Bosch landscape in here. SCREAMS, HYSTERIA, CONVULSIONS, VOMIT...

The Indian staff beginning to panic now as EVERYWHERE THERE IS TORMENT AND SICKNESS.

Charles - remaining with the ailing Erica. Folding his jacket as a headrest for her.

But here - two other students. Two YOUNG WOMEN. For whatever reason, the drugs haven't worked on them and together they have come to some conclusions. They advance on Charles --

STUDENT

What have you given us? You've made us all sick! Why!?

Karl - he's heard this. Turns back toward where Charles is refusing to panic, watches that TOTE BAG come back to him --

CHARLES

My friends. Please. I understand your fears but... why? And if I had meant this to happen to you... why would I still be here? Wouldn't I try to escape?

Karl - the dreadful responsibility of it all. Looks to Charles. Can he be trusted? So --

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Please Karl. By all means call the police. But please - have the hotel call an ambulance first.

Karl - entirely bewildered. Nods at that. Places that TOTE BAG down beside Francoise. And moves across the floor to a BEWILDERED HOTEL MANAGER.

Charles - watching them both talk. Watching Karl point back towards him. Watches the Manager squint in suspicion. Pick up a TELEPHONE.

But here - only a step from where he crouches - the prize: that TOTE BAG. And his path to the exit is clear.

So he moves to stand, but - perhaps she senses something - beneath him, Erica REACHES UP and grabs for his arm. Stops him. Charles - his eyes for her. The contempt --

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Take your hands off me you bitch.

And he's up. Taking that Tote. His progress toward the exit serene and unimpeded. The light beckoning from beyond. Freedom. Only it's silhouetted now. By other men.

Policemen in uniform. At their head --

TULI

That man. Stop him.

Charles - immediately seized. He and Tuli - face to face --

TULI (CONT'D)

Don't you remember me?

And he steps to him. RIPS THE SHIRT FREE FROM THE WAISTBAND
OF CHARLES JEANS TO EXPOSE: **THAT APPENDIX SCAR.**

TULI (CONT'D)
Mr. Sobhraj.

CUT TO:

53A **INT. KNIPPENBERG HOME - MORNING 78**

53A

Kannika - not sure what to do about this, but - beneath her,
shoes off but otherwise fully-dressed - Herman is PASSED OUT
ON THE COUCH.

In her hands - the TELEPHONE. So she reaches down and touches
Herman's shoulder. Herman who JOLTS AWAKE.

HERMAN
Kannika!

Kannika - her startled face. She passes the phone to him. He
looks at the phone like it comes from outer space. But --

HERMAN (CONT'D)
Hello...?
(then)
No, Colonel. You're not disturbing
me. Please go on.

And watch his face - alert and awake in an instant. The deep
excitement of it --

HERMAN (CONT'D)
What!?

CUT TO:

53C

**INT. DUTCH EMBASSY. VAN DONGEN'S OFFICE/MEETING ROOM -
BANGKOK - DAY 78**

53C

Lawana here, various files and paperwork in her arms. Other Assistants preparing for a big meeting. But here: Van Dongen - at his desk, trying to complete a CROSSWORD, as --

HERMAN

Over fifty German engineering students. All at once. The man must have lost his mind, you feel.

Van Dongen - a simmering fury and resentment. Pointedly not listening, pointedly goes on with his crossword.

HERMAN (CONT'D)

Colonel Sompol - of Interpol - assures me the Thais are doing everything they can to secure the extradition.

Van Dongen - worrying at a particular clue. Finds the answer. And COMPLETES THE PUZZLE. At which he stands. Looks to an Assistant, and --

VAN DONGEN

Are we ready?

Assistant confirms it. And so Van Dongen stands. Puts his jacket on. Heads for the main meeting room.

Herman and Lawana - falling in just behind --

HERMAN

Ambassador?

Van Dongen stops. Considers him. Raises an eyebrow. *What?* So Herman - reaching for his diplomatic skills --

HERMAN (CONT'D)

All this business... I know that it has been - very trying for you. But I hope that, at last, you will be able to tell the families of the murdered Dutch that justice has been served...

Van Dongen - knows what trick Herman is playing on him. Isn't interested in falling for it. So doesn't respond. Gives him only the most opaque of looks. And turns to the room --

VAN DONGEN

Gentlemen: good morning.

And here they are - that same Intergovernmental Narcotics Liaison gathering. Siemons is here; Redland too. And the Canadian Bastien. Herman greets them all with a nod and a smile.

Then moves to sit at his usual seat, where --

VAN DONGEN (CONT'D)
No, Mr. Knippenberg. I'd like Mr.
De Jongh to make the briefing notes
from now on. Mr. De Jongh...?

De Jongh - he's been briefed. Herman finds him stood at his shoulder. Waiting. Herman - eyes to Redland, to Siemons.

Siemons knows exactly what's happening here. It's what he warned both Herman and Angela about and his eyes to Herman are sympathetic but unyielding: *this is the price*.

So Herman has to stand and leave the table. Retire instead to where Lawana and the other assistants are seated.

And every step, Van Dongen watches him. Until he sits. And --

VAN DONGEN (CONT'D)
Now: shall we begin.

FADE OUT.

54-61 **OMITTED**

54-61

62 **EXT. TIHAR JAIL. DELHI - DAY 79**

62

SPLIT-FLAP **forward**: 26TH JULY, 1977. TIHAR JAIL; DELHI. ONE YEAR LATER.

Scenes of MAYHEM out here. TV NEWS VANS, REPORTERS, PHOTOGRAPHERS, RUBBERNECKING CIVILIANS held back by PRISON GUARDS. Into which, a taxi arrives and emits --

Sompol. Surveys the madness. Makes for a gate where two Uniformed Guards suddenly push him back. Here's why --

The Crowds are suddenly thrusting forward. Screams go up. Because from one of those PRISON BUILDINGS, various men are now appearing. More guards, suited LAWYERS. And --

Charles. In the middle of it all. His wrists bound by chains. From the crowds, shouts of his name go up. Not of dismay, however. OF CELEBRATION.

TV CREWS rush forward. He plays to them. Shows them his chains, and --

CHARLES
I expect to be free very soon now!!

The Serpent - Ep 8 - RW - SHOOTING SCRIPT - 15.10.10
Double Blue Amendments (04/12/19)

38AA.

Laughter, more cheers. The world glories in him.

CUT TO:

63 **INT. TIHAR JAIL. DELHI - DAY 79**

63

Tuli, and a PRISON GUARD - leading Sompol down this long corridor. Brings him to a cell door.

Sompol offers his thanks to Tuli. The two men shake hands. The Guard opens the cell door.

CUT TO:

64 **INT. CELL. TIHAR JAIL. DELHI - DAY 79**

64

Sompol - all calm dispassion. He is still. Only listens --

CHARLES

All that the Indians want me for. I
did all of it. I have confessed.

(MORE)

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I robbed the Ashoka hotel of a million rupees in rare gems. And then, yes - I drugged my prison guards and I escaped, while all India celebrated the act.

(another)

I am quite different here to the man who lived in Thailand.

SOMPOL

In Thailand you are wanted for murder.

CHARLES

In Thailand you have the death penalty.

Sompol - he's not denying that fact --

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Have you persuaded the Indian authorities that I ought to be extradited to Bangkok?

Silence. Sompol doesn't move. Then, his huge regret --

SOMPOL

I have not.

CHARLES

You see - in India, I am loved.

SOMPOL

But you murdered in India. A Frenchman in June.

CHARLES

I am charged with that crime, but I deny it.

SOMPOL

You murdered in January also.

CHARLES

There is no evidence of that. Who did I murder?

Sompol - reaches for his attache case. Opens it. And produces this: a photocopy of the ID PAGE OF A PASSPORT.

SOMPOL

Mr. Meir, an Israeli citizen.

Sompol hands the page to Charles. Who inspects it. Sees the name and face of **ETHAN MEIR**. Charles - a crack in his self-assurance --

CHARLES

How did you get this?

(Sompol doesn't say, so)

It's the little Dutchman, isn't it?
Knippenberg. Tell him from me I'd
like to meet him one day.

SOMPOL

Perhaps you will. When your
sentence here in India is complete.
And I am waiting to take you home
with me.

CHARLES

Weren't you listening, Colonel? I'm
never going to Thailand again.

FADE OUT.

65 **OMITTED**

65

66 **I/E. FOOD MARKET. BANGKOK - DAY 80**

66

SPLIT-FLAP: 1ST AUGUST, 1976. BANGKOK, THAILAND.

HERMAN

We both know this man, Colonel.
Whatever he can do to not be
brought back here, he will do it.

SOMPOL

And we will be watching. As soon as
his sentence is served in India, he
will face charges here in Thailand.

Herman - his face. Does he believe him? He's not sure. But --

SOMPOL (CONT'D)
I brought you a present back from
India.

HERMAN
Instead of a prisoner?

SOMPOL
Yes: Instead of a prisoner.

Sompol - from his attaché case, a document. Close typed.

That document: officially stamped. Herman reads the title: IT
IS THE DELHI POLICE DEPOSITION OF MARIE-ANDRE LECLERC.

SOMPOL (CONT'D)
It took Miss Leclerc two days, but
she assured Inspector Tuli she
didn't miss a thing.

HERMAN
(his excitement)
Shall I read it now - while you
wait? It's rather long.

SOMPOL
No need. I made you a copy.
(a long beat)
To go with all the others...

HERMAN
(busted)
Others?

SOMPOL
The copies you made of your
records. Before you gave them to
us.

HERMAN
How did you know?

Sompol - the ghost of a smile --

SOMPOL
It's my job, Mr. Knippenberg.

CUT TO:

66A

EXT. FOOD MARKET / EMBASSY CAR. BANGKOK - DAY 80

66A

Herman - the copy of that deposition in his hands, he reads
as he walks. Entirely immersed. So **HEAR HER** --

MARIE-ANDRÉE (O.S.)
I was born in St. Charles, Quebec,
Canada on 26th July 1945.
(MORE)

Pink Amendments (31/10/19)

MARIE-ANDRÉE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I have three sisters and two
brothers. My parents are both
Canadian...

Yotin - stood by the car. Sees Herman coming. So he opens the
back door. Herman doesn't even acknowledge this. Entirely on
autopilot, still reading, he climbs in.

Yotin climbs in the driver's seat. Pulls away, as --

MARIE-ANDRÉE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

When I was six, I started my
education at the Convent St.
Charles...

CUT TO:

66B

INT. TIHAR JAIL. MARIE-ANDRÉE'S CELL. DELHI - DAY 78

66B

Tuli - aware of the deep significance of everything he is being told, he listens with great and focussed empathy, as --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

He told me that he was friends with
a Thai Girl who owned a jewelry
store and that she would help him
make contacts in the gemstone
business.

Marie-Andrée - a prison gown on. Hair tied back tight. Her face pale and bare of cosmetics. Around her wrist, her ROSARY BEADS. And beside her, in a chair --

An INDIAN NUN. From time to time, Marie turns to her for support and the nun only nods for her to continue.

MARIE-ANDRÉE (CONT'D)

He introduced me to everyone else
as his wife but he asked me to say
to her that I was his secretary,
and I agreed to that...

Her face - the interview passing. Tuli writes. The Nun is only unreadable sorrow...

MARIE-ANDRÉE (CONT'D)

In Bangkok, anyone suffering from
dysentery goes to the store and
buys Kaopectate. Alain, or Charles,
used to mix the sedative Mogadon in
water and combine it with
Kaopectate to give to the people
who stayed with us...

And Tuli - checking the time. A gentle smile, and --

TULI

Thank you Miss Leclerc. I think we
ought to resume in the morning.

(the Nun)

Goodnight Sister.

(Marie)

Are you comfortable. May I have
anything brought to you.

Marie-Andrée - it's not that she doesn't mean it, she does, very much. But as with so much in her life, she is so uncertain of herself that this must be performed for Tuli --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

I have God, Inspector Tuli. Which
is all I need.

And so he departs. Leaves the women there. Marie - doesn't even move. Her eyes dead, the beads roll around that rosary.

CUT TO:

66C **EXT. TIHAR JAIL. DELHI - DAY 81**

66C

Establish the prison as a SPLIT-FLAP flicks **forward**:

29TH JUNE, 1983. NEW DELHI, INDIA. 7 YEARS LATER.

Somewhere, OVER - the shrill sound of distress.

CUT TO:

66D **INT. TIHAR JAIL. MARIE-ANDRÉE'S CELL. DELHI - DAY 81**

66D

Marie-Andrée - as though there is a beast in her she is trying to exhume, she is WRETCHING in the corner of her cell. She clutches at her abdomen and now SCREAMS FOR HELP.

CUT TO:

66E **INT. TIHAR JAIL. CORRIDOR. DELHI - DAY 81**

66E

Still SCREAMING - Marie is transported on a gurney down this long corridor. Her face - the AGONIES there.

CUT TO:

66F **INT. TIHAR JAIL. CORRIDOR/CHARLES'S CELL. DELHI - DAY 82**

66F

SPLIT-FLAP **forward**: **25TH JULY, 1983. NEW DELHI, INDIA.**

Two PRISON GUARDS stood outside this particular cell door.

CUT TO:

66G **INT. TIHAR JAIL. CHARLES'S CELL. DELHI - DAY 82**

66G

Marie-Andrée - sat in a WHEELCHAIR, attached to some kind of drip. Her hair scraped back, she is grey with near death. Beside her, quiet, that Nun is a permanent companion --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

A compassionate release.

Opposite her, sat on his bed: Charles. His cell is - as you might expect - faintly luxurious. He has as many books as he needs, a TV set. He considers her. The nun. Keeps silent.

MARIE-ANDRÉE (CONT'D)

Well? Will you say something?

Charles - eyes to the Nun. Her great age. Eyes vast behind those pebble-thick lenses. Entirely opaque, perhaps her blankness reflects his own. So, at length, chooses **French** --

CHARLES

What ought I to say? You betrayed me. / Qu'est-ce que tu voudrais que je te dise? Tu m'a trahie.

Marie - the childishness of it suddenly enraging. **French** --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

I, betrayed you...!? / *Je t'ai trahi?*

CHARLES

You sat with that Indian policeman and told him everything. / Tu t'es assise avec ce Policier indien, et tu lui as tout raconté.

MARIE-ANDRÉE

You promised me love. But brought me only despair. / Tu m'avais promis l'amour, mais tu ne m'as apporté que du désespoir.

The Nun - smallest of gestures. A hand on Marie's arm. And so, just as quickly, Marie calms. Reverts to **English** --

MARIE-ANDRÉE (CONT'D)

I have come to you to say goodbye, Charles. We are never going to see each other again. They have agreed to send me home. To die. I am going home to die.

His face - it's a fact. But not much more than that. So --

MARIE-ANDRÉE (CONT'D)

Look: Even now, you are pitiless. Something I always knew, but persuaded myself to the contrary. Or that your cruelty was only meant for others.

(then)

It's in my womb, the cancer.

(MORE)

MARIE-ANDRÉE (CONT'D)

Where I once thought there would be
a child.

Charles - he says this to the Nun --

CHARLES

She told me she would beat out that
child's brains.

The Nun - entirely unresponsive. But Marie is not shamed.

MARIE-ANDRÉE

The Sisters tell me I must forgive
everything. You. Me.

CHARLES

And so - do you?

MARIE-ANDRÉE

Not yet. I am trying.

And silence. On it goes. None of them move. Until --

MARIE-ANDRÉE (CONT'D)

And you, Charles? I do not imagine
there is remorse. But I would like
to know if you even - *question* what
you did.

(beat; the Nun)

What we did.

(then)

Or do you still sit here believing
yourself to have somehow triumphed?

CHARLES

(presently)

The convictions against me - the
killings - they are to be
overturned.

MARIE-ANDRÉE

But the police in Thailand,
Charles? The death penalty.

CHARLES

You're not to worry about the
Thais. I have plans for them.

She - a despairing little shake of her head. So, ***French*** --

CHARLES (CONT'D)

*Trust me, Marie. The Indians will
release me and I will be free. /
Fais moi confiance Marie. Les
Indiens vont me relâcher et je
serai libre.*

She - an awful little smile. Shakes her head. ***English*** --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

Your vanity is powerful enough to
defeat anything.

Silence. Her face. Then --

MARIE-ANDRÉE (CONT'D)

You will be free. And I will be
back in Canada. Under the earth. A
stupid little dead Quebécoise.

And there it is - the truth of the matter for her. The Nun
places her hand over Marie's once more.

FADE OUT.

66H **EXT. ATHENS, GREECE - DAY (STOCK FOOTAGE)**

66H

The Greek capital. And a SPLIT-FLAP **forward:**

1ST AUGUST, 1997. ATHENS, GREECE. TWENTY YEARS LATER...

CUT TO:

66I **INT. DIPLOMATIC RESIDENCE. ATHENS - EVENING 84**

66I

Herman - spry in his fifties now. His briefcase, and a PADDED
BROWN ENVELOPE in hand, he enters this empty apartment.

Hard to say whether he lives here alone or not, but there is
no one else home right now. No matter. He moves to a fridge.
Cracks a beer. Sits at a table. Opens that padded envelope.

Inside - A VHS VIDEO TAPE. And a handwritten note, clear to
READ: ***One for the collection. Hope you're well. Angela.***
Herman - eyebrow of curiosity, takes the tape to a VCR.

CUT TO:

66J **INT. DIPLOMATIC RESIDENCE. ATHENS - EVENING 84 (LATER)**

66J

Herman - sank in an armchair, entirely transfixed, the light
from the TV screen playing over him as --

CUT TO:

67-68 **OMITTED**

67-68

69 **INT. HOTEL SUITE. PARIS, FRANCE - DAY 83**

69

SPLIT-FLAP, **backward:** 21ST JULY, 1997. PARIS, FRANCE.

TWO CHAIRS face each other in the middle of a room. A room that has been turned into an improvised TELEVISION STUDIO.

About - various TECHNICIANS prepare for an Interview. CAMERAS. LIGHTS. MICROPHONES.

And here - at a table, alongside her INTERVIEW NOTES, a pot of coffee and a TELEPHONE - crime reporter, MOIRA CALLAGHAN, is watching a TV MONITOR.

On that **MONITOR**: COMPILED NEWS FOOTAGE.

Charles is seen: chained by police, transported from prison vans into vast security facilities. There are MAPS OF THE HIPPIE TRAIL.

Images of his VICTIMS. More CHARLES. ACCOMPLICES - the faces of **Suda Romyen, Ajay Chowdury, Marie-Andrée Leclerc**. More **VICTIMS**.

Over all this: a NARRATION RUNS --

MALE NARRATION (O.S.)
... many were young backpackers, travelling across Asia on the so-called 'Hippie Trail'. They were found drowned, poisoned, stabbed, strangled, shot. And sometimes burned alive. All of them, police say, taken in by a mesmerising conman. A man who - amid the political turmoil of 1970s Asia - was to elude the police forces of an entire continent. His name was Charles Sobhraj and, by 1976, he had become the most wanted man in the world.

Here is a FLOOR RUNNER - delivering coffees and such to CAMERAMEN AND SOUND TECHNICIANS.

And to Callaghan. Callaghan who now conducts a PHONE CALL --

CALLAGHAN
... I agree, Malcolm. It's stronger that way. The shots of him arriving at the jail. The adulation...
(then)
Uhuh. That's right. We'll have the tapes on tonight's flight and you can air tomorrow evening...
(and, a laugh)
What's he like? I barely met him. I don't know. He's old, Malcolm.

And with that the Floor Runner moves on. Through to A BEDROOM, made over now for a DRESSING ROOM, where the first thing she sees is this --

A THICK BLACK WIG perched on a HEADPOST. She puts the coffee down beside it, and --

RUNNER

Ten minutes. / Dix minutes.

A MAKE-UP ARTIST acknowledges this. Lifts up that WIG and steps across to place it on THE BALD HEAD OF CHARLES SOBHRAJ. Twenty years older, he smiles for the Runner; **French** too --

CHARLES

I'll be ready. / Ça va, je serai prêt.

And then he gestures to where ANOTHER TV MONITOR has been set up for his benefit and on which EXERTS of that narrated footage continue. And, to the Runner, of that footage --

CHARLES (CONT'D)

It's good, no?

Runner - crept out, finds some kind of smile as he turns back to the monitor, watches --

Charles, himself, grinning from prison cells, chained by police.

MALE VOICEOVER (O.S.)

... As Sobhraj served his jail time in India, so authorities began assembling their case to extradite him to Thailand as soon as his sentence was served. There he would face the death penalty.

Shots of LONG EMPTY PRISON CORRIDORS; AN EMPTY CELL.

**Shots of NEWSPAPERS in which CHARLES IS SEEN WALKING AMONG
EXCITED INDIAN CROWDS. SITTING ON A BEACH HOLDING A NEWSPAPER
WHICH CARRIES THE STORY OF HIS ESCAPE.**

MALE VOICEOVER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

However, only one month before his
release, Sobhraj escaped captivity
once more. He experienced 22 days
of freedom before he was
recaptured. And just as he had
calculated, he was then sentenced
by the Indian courts to 10
additional years.

Charles - very happy about all this. ready now. A sip of
coffee, stands. Slips on his jacket but then --

MALE VOICEOVER (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

The extension to his sentence meant
he avoided extradition to Thailand.
That's because the statute of
limitations for murder expired
before he was released. As a result
he never faced trial in Thailand.

Charles - he offers a shrug, a smile of triumph for the
appalled Runner. Then --

CHARLES

After you, Miss...

The Runner - frightened little smile. But she leads him out of the bedroom and into the main room.

Where a SOUND TEAM begins to mic him up. And --

CALLAGHAN

Mr. Sobhraj.

Charles shaking hands with his INTERVIEWER --

CALLAGHAN (CONT'D)

Shall we?

CHARLES

Of course.

Cameramen take up positions, Charles takes his seat opposite Callaghan. Ambient light goes down, and the SPOTS COME UP on Callaghan and Charles.

BACK TO:

69A **INT. DIPLOMATIC RESIDENCE. ATHENS - EVENING 84**

69A

Herman - transfixed, as that NARRATION CONTINUES --

MALE VOICEOVER (CONT'D)

And eleven years later, on February
17th 1997, as a result of a
prisoner exchange with the Indian
government, Charles Sobhraj, Asia's
most notorious serial killer, was
granted a new French passport, and
returned there - a free man.

**SEE: Charles outside Tihar Jail again. Showing his chained
wrists to the onrushing TV CREWS --**

CHARLES

(in the filmed footage)

I expect to be free very soon now.

MALE VOICEOVER (CONT'D)

Tonight, Moira Callaghan tracks him
to Paris, for the first TV
interview with the man known as:
The Serpent.

Herman - almost in awe at it all --

HERMAN

You son of a bitch.

CUT TO:

70-73 **OMITTED**

70-73

74 **INT. TELEVISION STUDIO. PARIS, FRANCE - DAY 83**

74

That interview concluded now. Moira Callaghan - her chilled features shaking hands with Charles, who steps off the stage, down to where a woman waits for him.

She's twenty years older too. It is beyond astonishing, but it is her. It is **JULIETTE VOCLAIN. French --**

JULIETTE
Congratulations, my love. It was perfect. / Bravo mon amour. C'était parfait.

So they embrace, passionately. Until Juliette turns to find the various faces of the TV CREW WATCHING HER.

Callaghan, the Floor Runner - a disbelief in their faces. And it's directed at Juliette now. But entirely haughty, **French --**

JULIETTE (CONT'D)
Judge me if you wish. Love is love.

Which Charles likes. And so they kiss again. A show for the world. Turn for where a rank of FOUR OR FIVE PHOTOGRAPHERS GATHER. Flashbulbs pop.

BACK TO:

74A **INT. DIPLOMATIC RESIDENCE - ATHENS, GREECE - NIGHT 84**

74A

Herman - makes his way through the empty residence to a SPARE BEDROOM. In he goes. Turns the light on. There's no bed in here. ONLY: 6 ARCHIVE BOXES.

The various TRANSPORTATION STICKERS - **New York, Jakarta, Vienna, Luxembourg** - of the places they have been shipped to and from over the years. He considers them for a moment.

Until there is the sound beyond of the front door opening and closing and now there is a WOMAN in the door to the room --

VANESSA KNIPPENBERG (O.S.)
Herman? What are you doing in here?

He turns. Sees her. She is 50s too. Home from an evening out. He goes to her. Takes her hand. Kisses her --

HERMAN
Oh: nothing much.

FADE OUT.

75-79 **OMITTED**

75-79

79A **EXT. MOUNTAINS/VARIOUS. NEPAL - DAY**

79A

See the MOUNTAINS. The astonishing, timeless majesty. The permanence of them.

MUSIC OVER: in **TIME-LAPSE** (N.B. Obviously, only if we can find Stock Footage that gives us this effect) watch as the snows thaw and recede and reveal pasture land.

Watch as the ice returns. Watch as mountain flowers grow
beside the roads on which Charles once drove a young couple
to their murder.

CUT TO:

80 **EXT. KATHMANDU AIRPORT. NEPAL - DAY (STOCK FOOTAGE)** 80

The Nepalese Capital. Those white Himalayas beyond, as an
AIRPLANE cruises out of crystal skies and lands on tarmac.

CUT TO:

80A **INT. KATHMANDU AIRPORT. IMMIGRATION - DAY 85** 80A

TIGHT ON: a FRENCH PASSPORT. Charles'. It is STAMPED.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER
Welcome to Nepal, Mr. Sobhraj.

CUT TO:

81 **EXT. KATHMANDU AIRPORT - DAY 85** 81

SPLIT-FLAP **forward:** 10TH SEPTEMBER, 2003. KATHMANDU, NEPAL.

Signs of MODERNITY. Cell phones, trolley luggage, TV Screens.
But still - ALL THOSE YOUNG WESTERN TRAVELERS, amongst whom
Charles now emerges.

On the lookout for something, so it seems. So he stops. Waits
beside a mural advertising the Kingdom of Nepal. The vast
mountainscape behind him. Until --

Here's a PHOTOGRAPHER. Exactly who Charles was waiting for,
apparently. He nods a greeting. A permission too.

So the PHOTOGRAPHER lifts a smart DIGITAL CAMERA. And takes a
PHOTOGRAPH of him there, in front of those mountains.

CUT TO:

82 **OMITTED** 82

83 **OMITTED** 83

84 **INT. POLICE STATION. THAPA'S OFFICE. KATHMANDU - DAY 87** 84

A UNIFORM - pacing hard through this police station. Knocks
on the door to the office of the CHIEF INSPECTOR.

His name is THAPA. He was the investigating officer on a
double murder here back at Christmas 1975. He's 50s now.

Immediately sees the urgency on the young officer's face, as
he hands across a NEWSPAPER, folded to display a PHOTOGRAPH
and STORY: **Charles photographed in front of that Himalayan
mural at Kathmandu Airport.**

Thapa snaps to his feet immediately.

CUT TO:

85 **INT. ROYAL ANNAPURNA GRAND HOTEL. KATHMANDU - DAY 87** 85

Remember this hotel? Less glamorous than it was all those years ago. Charles drinks tea with his back to the wall. Keeps half an eye on the door.

With good reason it seems, because - the SUDDEN DISTURBANCE of it - there are POLICE pouring into the place. Charles is calm. Waits until here is Thapa stood above him.

CUT TO:

86 **EXT. ROYAL ANNAPURNA GRAND HOTEL. KATHMANDU - DAY 87** 86

A great many more PRESS and MEDIA here now. Camera's flash, video is filmed, as Inspector Thapa and three uniforms lead Charles Sobhraj out into the daylight in chains.

He smiles for the camera, and --

CHARLES

It is a misunderstanding. All a terrible misunderstanding. But you see - I go quietly.

SPLIT-FLAP rocks **forward**: 13TH SEPTEMBER, 2003.

CUT TO:

THAPA (O.S.)

They are old. But my memory of the sight of them - it's as though it happened this morning.

87 **INT. POLICE STATION. THAPA'S OFFICE. KATHMANDU - DAY 87** 87

AUTOPSY PHOTOGRAPHS - the remains of CONNIE-JO BRONZICH and LAURENT CARRIÈRE. And here, seated, his wrists in irons --

CHARLES

It is a terrible thing. But I assure you, Inspector. On the life of my mother - I was not here in 1975. I have never been to your country in my life.

THAPA

But I remember talking to you, sir. You and your companion.

CHARLES

Time plays tricks on every man's
mind.

THAPA

Not on mine.

CHARLES

What were the names of the couple
you interviewed, Inspector.

Thapa - sensing the trick, but he finds the records --

THAPA

Bloem and Dekker.

And here, in front of Thapa, Charles' FRENCH PASSPORT --

CHARLES

But see - my name is Sobhraj.

Charles - all beneficent grace --

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Inspector, I appreciate your
compassion and diligence. But I do
not think you can hold me here for
long. Not without evidence.

FADE OUT.

88

EXT. COASTAL TERRACE. NEW ZEALAND - DAY 88

88

SPLIT-FLAP: 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2003. WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND.

Clear skies, open vistas, light on the ocean. And here - a
COUPLE IN THEIR FIFTIES - eating breakfast. Herman's
silhouette unmistakable. Vanessa beside him.

But somewhere, however, a telephone is ringing.

CUT TO:

89

INT. KNIPPENBERG HOME. WELLINGTON, NZ - DAY 88

89

Herman - stepping in from the terrace. Answers the call --

HERMAN

Herman Knippenberg

ANGELA (O.S.)

Herman. It's Angela.

And hold. Her voice. The surprise of it. Until, looking up for where Vanessa stands in the doorway, he shrugs, mystified, for her, then into the phone --

HERMAN
Hello Angela.

CUT TO:

90

INT. OFFICE. NEW YORK CITY - DAY 88

90

SPLIT-FLAP. Same day: 13TH SEPTEMBER, 2003. UNITED NATIONS BUILDING, NEW YORK CITY.

Where Angela, also 50s, is sat at a big desk in this impressive office --

ANGELA
How is Vanessa?

AND INTERCUT AS NECESSARY:

HERMAN
Very well, thank you. We were just
toasting my retirement.

Angela - a boom of laughter down the phone --

HERMAN (CONT'D)
Why is that funny?

ANGELA
You're going to need to send
Vanessa my apologies. Open your
email, Herman.

Herman - reaching for a laptop computer. Opens it. His email pings. Angela's email address reads **Angela KANE**. He clicks on an attachment.

HERMAN
My god. What's that from?

ANGELA
The Post.

HERMAN
What. The Washington Post?

ANGELA
No, Herman. The Bangkok Post.

It's a NEWSPAPER CUTTING. **SERPENT ARRESTED IN KATHMANDU**. A picture of Charles. The story goes on: **SOBHRAJ DENIES KILLING COUPLE IN 1975. Says This Is His First Visit to Nepal.**

HERMAN

What the hell is he doing?

Angela - at her desk. For a moment a wave of deep regret --

ANGELA

I thought - if anyone would know,
you would.

HERMAN

Well: there are two things he
enjoys. Notoriety. And he's had
none of that in recent years...

ANGELA

(after a moment)

You want me to ask you what the
other is, don't you? What is it?

HERMAN

(his smile; he *does*)

He likes to escape.

(then)

Thank you, Angela.

Silence. All their history

ANGELA

You're welcome, Herman.

Herman - as soon as he's hung up, he's dialing again.

HERMAN

(the PHONE)

Yes. International Operator? I need
the telephone number for Kathmandu
Police.

AND INTERCUT AS NECESSARY

90A

INT. POLICE STATION. THAPA'S OFFICE - KATHMANDU - DAY 88

90A

The telephone on Thapa's desk - blasting into life.

THAPA

Thapa.

Beyond - in the police station, he can see where a SCRUM OF
PHOTOGRAPHERS AND JOURNALISTS are being held back.

THAPA (CONT'D)

Yes, Mr. Knippenberg... I
understand you...

But he doesn't get that out, because, hard, OVER --

HERMAN

How long can you hold him?

THAPA

(his unhappiness, but)

Sir, I cannot hold him at all.

HERMAN

Inspector. Do whatever you can -
but please: HOLD him.

BACK TO:

91 **INT. KNIPPENBERG HOME. STORE ROOM. WELLINGTON, NZ - DAY 88** 91

A light flickering on. Reveals once more those SIX ARCHIVE BOXES. Even more decayed now.

Herman - urgently moves them about. Looking for one box in particular. Hurls others aside. Finds it. Rips back the tape that seals it. Rifles around. Finds one particular FILE.

It reads: **LECLERC, MARIE-ANDREE**. Herman opens it. Removes one particular sheaf of paper. And BLOWS THE DUST OFF IT.

CUT TO:

92 **OMITTED** 92

93 **INT. TIHAR JAIL. MARIE-ANDRÉE'S CELL. DELHI - DAY 78 (FB)** 93

Where Tuli, that Nun and Marie-Andrée are found once more --

MARIE-ANDRÉE

We arrived in Kathmandu at about 3
in the afternoon and stayed in the
Royal Annapurna Grand Hotel. He
wrote his name as Bloem, the Dutch
boy. And made me write mine as the
girl, Dekker.

Marie-Andrée - blank, dispassionate, on she goes --

MARIE-ANDRÉE (CONT'D)

We met a couple traveling together.
A Canadian Boy, an American girl. I
do not remember their names. But on
the 22nd December, Alain and Ajay
went with them to drive into the
mountains...

TULI

Did the young man and lady return?

MARIE-ANDRÉE

No.

Tuli - stopping, eyeing her, then --

TULI

You understand, Miss Leclerc, that
all of this might at some time be
used against him.

MARIE-ANDRÉE

I understand.

CUT TO:

93A

INT. KNIPPENBERG HOME - WELLINGTON, NZ - DAY 88

93A

With Herman - once more working the telephones --

HERMAN

Yes. Ker-nippenberg... I was until
recently a foreign service
operative myself. Twenty-nine and a
half years service with the Dutch
Foreign Ministry. So I know how it
works. Even at the American Embassy
in Wellington. You will have two or
three men or women pretending to be
cultural attachés who are in fact
with the C.I.A.

(protest on the line, but)

Yes, young man, I can tell you to
what it pertains: the murders of an
American Citizen and her boyfriend
in Nepal at Christmas, 1975.

(a beat)

Yes. I can hold.

CUT TO:

93B

INT. POLICE STATION. THAPA'S OFFICE. KATHMANDU - DAY 88

93B

Charles - sat opposite Thapa. He is almost beatific, as --

CHARLES

I can see: they still distress you -
the events you suspect me of.

THAPA

We had never seen anything like it.
I still haven't.

CHARLES

Haven't men slaughtered each other
before in this country?

THAPA

These people were our guests. We
honour our guests.

CHARLES

I am your guest.

THAPA

You are my prisoner.

CHARLES

Only in the event that you charge
me.

And he stands. Looks down on Thapa --

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Am I to be physically restrained?
Or may I leave?

CUT TO:

93C

INT. KNIPPENBERG HOME - WELLINGTON, NZ - DAY 88

93C

Herman - frantically feeding pages into a FAX MACHINE. Still
speaks on the telephone --

HERMAN

That is right. I need to transmit
crucial information to you.
Information which must then be
urgently communicated to the
Kathmandu Police.

CUT TO:

93D

INT. POLICE STATION. KATHMANDU - DAY 88

93D

Thapa - deeply unhappy about it. Watching as Charles is
handed back his personal items. Watch, wallet, hotel key. And
a RETURN AIRLINE TICKET FOR AIR FRANCE.

Which Charles shows to Thapa. And smiles. But here: across
the room, a FAX MACHINE begins to chatter into life. Beside --

POLICE CONSTABLE

Inspector Thapa!

Charles - turning for the door. Walking slowly.

Thapa - marching across to the Fax Machine. Accepts the pages
from him. Sees the faded COPY of an old LETTERHEAD: **NEW DELHI
CRIME BRANCH**. It is Marie-Andrée's DEPOSITION.

THAPA

Constable. Stop that man.

Charles - hitting the door. But must stop. Uniformed police
all about him now. Thapa - stepping to him. Slaps the
document into his chest --

THAPA (CONT'D)
Recorded witness statement from
your accomplice, Miss Leclerc. She
was here. With you. See?

Charles - knows this has changed the game entirely --

CHARLES
Where did you get this? It's almost
thirty years old...

THAPA
I am not the only one who doesn't
forget you, it seems.

CHARLES
Knippenberg.

CUT TO:

93E **INT. KNIPPENBERG HOME. WELLINGTON, NZ - DAY 88**

93E

HERMAN
What did he say? When you asked
him?

THAPA (O.S.)
I don't understand what he said.

CUT TO:

94-97 **OMITTED**

94-97

98 **INT. CELL. POLICE STATION. KATHMANDU - DAY 88**

98

Charles - one side of the bars. Thapa - the other --

THAPA
You were, I understand, a free man.
Why come here? Why take the risk,
Mr. Sobhraj?

Charles - something distant in him --

CHARLES
I don't know. I wanted to.
(then)
All truth is crooked, time itself
is a circle.

CUT TO:

99 **OMITTED**

99

100

EXT. COASTAL TERRACE. NEW ZEALAND - DAY 88

100

Herman - stepping out. Alone. He fills his glass. Sits.

Herman - those words echoing in his head. Stares out on the sea. And there is the sun and the sea and the world BLEACHING OUT until, A CARD APPEARS:

THE REASONS BEHIND CHARLES SOBHRAJ'S DECISION TO RETURN TO NEPAL IN 2003 ARE STILL A MATTER OF CONJECTURE, AND KNOWN ONLY TO HIMSELF.

BUT IN NOVEMBER 2004 HE WAS SENTENCED BY A NEPALESE COURT TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT FOR THE MURDER OF CONNIE-JO BRONZICH.

A FURTHER 20 YEARS WAS ADDED TO THAT TARIF IN 2014 FOR THE MURDER OF LAURENT CARRIERE.

SOBHRAJ REMAINS IN KATHMANDU CENTRAL PRISON TO THIS DAY.

HE HAS NEVER FACED TRIAL FOR THE MURDER OF FIVE YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN IN THAILAND,

-- ends --