

MACULA

Written by

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MACULA

FADE IN

1 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS/TA UNIVERSITY - DAY

In the entrance hall, a stage covered in black cloth is set up. Four men drive a bier bearing a simple wooden coffin onto the stage. They cover the coffin with a black sheet. Two women spread the cloth and smooth out the wrinkles. Two gardeners place flower pots on either side of the bier. The women clean the dry leaves from the flower pots. A man places a portrait photograph with a black ribbon on a stand. The women place bouquets near the coffin.

People arrive and stand in a circle around the coffin. Some are whispering to each other.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

2 INT. KOPPEL'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Doctor JONAH KOPPEL (30, good-looking, sporty, bespectacled) repairs a bicycle chain.

COMPUTER EMAIL NOTIFICATION BUZZ

He rushes to his desk computer, where stock charts are displayed on a large screen. He opens the mail browser.

POV: (EMAIL) FROM CIM TO DR. JONAH KOPPEL - \$5,000 TRANSFER HAS BEEN MADE FOR #7679 SURVEY. SUZANNE LEIDER (CEO)

He finishes his coffee, grabs a small backpack and a cyclist's helmet, and leaves the apartment.

3 INT./EXT. KOPPEL'S BUILDING - MORNING

Koppel picks up a can of cat food from his mailbox labeled 'Koppel', and feeds the street cats. He unlocks his bike and rides to the main street.

4 EXT. MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY - MORNING

Koppel locks his bike at the Ministry of Industry building.

5 INT. MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY/THE LIBRARY - DAY

An elderly bored SMOKING SECRETARY feeds a photocopier with pages containing diagrams, tables, and formulas. She looks to the sides to make sure no one notices her actions.

Koppel browses through articles in a binder. He picks up another binder from a stack. Its cover is embossed with the emblem of the State of Israel, 'MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY - CHIEF SCIENTIST,' and a sticker that reads 'REJECTED PROPOSALS.'

She staples the pages and hands them to Koppel.

SMOKING SECRETARY
(Hebrew, winks)
I never met you.

Koppel looks at the title:

POV: CYRUS - AN INNOVATIVE METHOD FOR FINDING RARE METAL DEPOSITS. PROPOSAL BY NATHANAEL ZANDMAN, PHD. FRS, IAU, NAS, [RED-STAMPED] 'INAPPLICABLE'.

Koppel inserts the pages in his backpack and pulls out a fancy box of chocolates, which he places on the table.

KOPPEL
(winks)
A deal is a deal.

6 INT./EXT. THE OBSERVATORY - EVENING

Prof. NATHANAEL ZANDMAN (55) leaves his room. He opens the circuit breaker relay switches, re-marks the pale labels, and switches them off. He locks the desert observatory and drives off in an old silver Mazda.

7 INT. KOPPEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Koppel arranges internet charts of Bitcoin, the Euro, and the US dollar.

TINDER NEW PROFILE ALERTS

In his cellphone, he swipes left (declines) women's profiles.

He uncorks a Canadian whiskey bottle decorated with ornaments.

EMAIL NOTIFICATION ALERT

POV: (EMAIL) FROM CIM TO DR. JONAH KOPPEL - DEAR DR. KOPPEL, YOU ARE KINDLY INVITED TO ARRIVE AT CIM HEADQUARTERS FOR A MEETING. OUR SECRETARY WILL WAIT FOR YOU AT THE ZOO ENTRANCE TOMORROW AT 12:00. SUZANNE LEIDER (CEO)

8 EXT. A DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

The silver Mazda with its headlights on is the only vehicle on the road.

9 INT./EXT. THE SILVER MAZDA - NIGHT (TRAVELING)

Zandman is driving erratically and keeps wiping his glasses.

POV: THE CENTER OF THE ROAD BLURS.

10 EXT. A DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

The car's headlights light up a camel crossing the road.

11 INT. THE SILVER MAZDA - NIGHT (TRAVELING)

POV: THE ROAD IS BLURRED.

BRAKE SQUEAL AND CRASHING SOUND

POV: THE WINDSHIELD BREAKS, AND A CAMEL'S HEAD WITH BLOODY, TINY GLASS SPLINTERS SHOOTS TOWARD THE STEERING WHEEL. THE IMAGE BECOMES OPAQUE.

12 INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

AMBULANCE SIRENS

PARAMEDICS push a stretcher along a busy corridor.

LOUDSPEAKER

(Hebrew)

Doctor Beylin to the emergency room,
Doctor Beylin to the emergency room.

A NURSE rolls an ELDERLY MAN in a wheelchair, passing by a WOUNDED SOLDIER and a BEDOUIN MOTHER feeding her baby. Two doctors examine a skull X-ray.

A NURSE applies a large adhesive bandage to Zandman's forehead. One eyelid is swollen, and the other eye is hemorrhaged and closed. A POLICE INVESTIGATOR copies Zandman's driver's license details into a tablet.

POLICE INVESTIGATOR

(Hebrew)

In a few days you'll look like new!
Tell me what happened?

ZANDMAN

I don't know. The road was empty!
Suddenly, a camel flew into the
windshield! Boom! Out of nowhere!

POLICE INVESTIGATOR

It was irresponsible of you to drive
here in your condition.

The nurse cleans Zandman's cuts. A FEMALE DOCTOR approaches.

FEMALE DOCTOR

(Hebrew, whispering,)

I can't examine his eyes now. So
swollen. He can't drive, that's for
sure.

POLICE INVESTIGATOR

The doctor will discharge you. She
says that you shouldn't drive today.
You can barely open your eyes.

The investigator hands Zandman his driver's license.

POLICE INVESTIGATOR (cont'd)

I had to suspend it. Sorry.

ZANDMAN

Suspend for how long?

POLICE INVESTIGATOR

Until an ophthalmologist clears you.

The nurse cleans the strands of camel hair stuck to the
bloodstains on Zandman's shirt.

POLICE INVESTIGATOR (cont'd)

There is a tow truck shop not far.
Would you like me to call him? He
might take you home right now.

13 EXT. TOW TRUCK IN THE HIGHWAY - NIGHT (TRAVELING)

Zandman's silver Mazda is being towed.

BROADCASTER (V.O.)

(Hebrew)

Listen to Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata. The first movement, in C minor and alla breve, is composed in modified sonata-allegro form.

14 INT. TOW TRUCK - NIGHT (TRAVELING)

The DRIVER in overalls is smoking.

BROADCASTER (V.O.)

The movement opens with an octave in the left hand and a triplet figure in the right.

Zandman is dozing, his head resting on the driver's shoulder.

BROADCASTER (V.O.) (cont'd)

A melody primarily played by the left hand is performed against an accompanying ostinato triplet rhythm.

MOONLIGHT SONATA PIANO MUSIC

DRIVER

(in Russian)

Ostinato my ass.

The driver puts out the cigarette and switches stations.

LOUD RUSSIAN HIP HOP MUSIC.

Zandman covers his ear and shifts to the other side.

The truck passes under big traffic signs TO TEL-AVIV.

15 EXT. TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY - DAY

MIRA HOFFMANN (28, attractive, wearing a colorful scarf) unzips her backpack at the security checkpoint. The GUARD points to a wicker picnic basket attached to her bicycle. She releases the latch, and he opens the lid. He is startled and quickly closes it.

She locks her bicycle at the Department of Astrophysics building and enters, carrying the wicker basket.

16 INT. PROFESSOR LANZANI'S CLINIC/WAITING ROOM - DAY

STICK KNOCKING.

A visually impaired man taps a rhythm with a white walking stick. A child wearing thick glasses is operating a plastic windmill. A woman wearing oversized dark sunglasses sits in front of Zandman. He adjusts the band-aid on his forehead as a young girl helps an elderly man with a bandaged eye leave the doctor's office. PROFESSOR LANZANI motions for Zandman to come in.

17 EXT. ZOOLOGICAL GARDEN - DAY

Koppel rides his bike to the Zoological Garden. He passes a blue helicopter parked nearby.

A LOUD ELEPHANT TRUMPETING SOUND

Koppel locks his bike near the entrance, next to a van marked "PEST CONTROL SERVICES".

CURLY-HAIRED SECRETARY

Doctor Koppel?

He nods, and she opens the electronic gate using her tag. They ride in a golf cart passing visitors, animal compounds, and cages. They enter an old building.

18 INTR. CIM HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Koppel follows the secretary into a reception lobby. A large CIM logo, along with the slogan 'REVEALING THE UNKNOWN!', is displayed across the wall.

LEIDER (40, dressed in an executive suit) extends her hand to Koppel. He places the helmet under his left arm, and shakes her hand.

LEIDER

Leider. Pleased to meet you.

KOPPEL

My pleasure.

LEIDER
Thanks for coming on such short
notice.

Two men move a large mock-up of a mine facility across the
hall.

LEIDER (cont'd)
Our last project. Tanzania. Nickel.

Leider leads Koppel into her office and offers to sit on a
sofa by an aquarium.

LEIDER (cont'd)
We examined your research
methodology. Your conclusions
validated our analysis and strategy.

KOPPEL
I consider it a compliment.

LEIDER
It definitely is.

KOPPEL
Did you actually spend \$5000 on
something you already knew?

LEIDER
Indeed.

She gets up to feed the fish.

LEIDER (OFF)
We hire top-quality personnel, that
we thoroughly vet. We cannot afford
any wrong decisions. We don't hire
anyone with immoral behavior,
addiction, or financial problems.

KOPPEL
That's clever.

The curly-haired secretary comes in with a coffee pot and
cups.

LEIDER
We can now offer you a generous
contract, which we ask you to
consider.

She hands Koppel the contract, which he scans quickly.

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

Leider partially opens the door and whispers to a MUSTACHED MAN (inaudible).

KOPPEL

What about health insurance? Company options? Annual leave?

Leider makes changes. As Koppel reads, she approaches the door and whispers something to the secretary.

LEIDER

Anything else?

KOPPEL

It is a standard practice to explicitly state my right to receive an additional Finder's Fee when applicable.

LEIDER

What are we talking about?

KOPPEL

15% of the first-year Annual Contract Value for any project I introduce to you.

LEIDER

Well...

She adds the terms, and they sign.

LEIDER (cont'd)

You are definitely a good negotiator.

The secretary enters. She places a praline parcel topped with a box of his personal CIM business cards and hands him an entrance chip tag.

KOPPEL

I have to admit, I didn't see this coming.

Leider pours Canadian whiskey from an ornamented bottle.

LEIDER

We know our employees' preferences.

She hands him a Jeep key.

LEIDER (cont'd)
 Part of our employment benefits.
 You'll soon receive your next
 assignment. Your office will be ready
 in a few days.

KOPPEL
 How did you find me?

LEIDER
 Professor Maurice Stein from MIT. He
 spoke very highly of you.

KOPPEL
 Oh, he was my PhD advisor. My mentor,
 so to speak.

LEIDER
 He said you're the right man for our
 needs, so here we are.

Leider stands up to end the meeting. They head toward the door.

KOPPEL
 I will update him.

LEIDER
 You can't.
 He just passed away. A car accident.
 In Switzerland.

KOPPEL
 I didn't know. He enjoyed skiing.

LEIDER
 The curve was icy. He crashed into
 the riverbed.

KOPPEL
 Terrible.

At the door, they encounter AVRI, wearing a pilot's jumpsuit.

LEIDER
 Avri. Our helicopter pilot. Doctor
 Koppel.

They shake hands, and Avri gives Koppel his business card.

Koppel copies Avri's details into his cellphone.

LEIDER (OFF)
He can land on the tip of the Empire
State Building.

KOPPEL
I'll keep that in mind.

LEIDER
Please keep us updated on any new
findings you come across.

KOPPEL
Actually, I came across something.

19 EXT. ZOOLOGICAL GARDEN - DAY

A TIGER'S ROAR

Koppel drives the golf cart to the parking lot. He loads his
bicycles and helmet into the yellow Jeep with the CIM logo.

20 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS/MIRA'S ROOM - DAY

Mira adds milk to a saucer near the open wicker basket.

MIRA
Baba! Baba! Come here!

The kitten comes and drinks. Mira types commands and watches
the computer screen displaying Cyrus asteroid's orbit. She
glances at the clock and gets up to check Zandman's room.

POV: ZANDMAN'S ROOM IS EMPTY.

She dials her cellphone.

MIRA (cont'd)
Hi Nathan. Where are you? Give me a
call.

21 INT. DR. LANZANI'S CLINIC/DOCTOR'S ROOM - DAY

Zandman covers his left eye as Lanzani presents him with a
square-shaped grid.

LANZANI
Can you see the black dot in the
center?

ZANDMAN

Yes.

LANZANI

What do you notice around the black dot?

ZANDMAN

Lines are kind of wavy all around.

LANZANI

Now, the other eye. What do you see?

ZANDMAN

Lines are even more wavy.

Lanzani turns on the desk lamp and begins writing.

LANZANI

You were lucky to hit a camel instead of a person. We'll need to examine your retinas.

ZANDMAN

Is there a problem?

LANZANI

The center of your vision, the macula. That's the problem.

ZANDMAN

I don't feel anything.

LANZANI

Your retinas are degenerating. Gradually, it will be difficult for you to read. Recognize faces.

(Pause)

Sometimes vision deteriorates within weeks.

ZANDMAN

No treatment?

LANZANI

There is an experimental treatment, but... Anyway, try to complete important tasks.

ZANDMAN

What do you mean by 'important tasks'?

LANZANI
Finish your articles. Your projects.

ZANDMAN
It sounds just like an obituary.

LANZANI
I tell my patients, 'In a short
while, you'll see the future, but not
the present'.

ZANDMAN
Not funny.

PAUSE

LANZANI
Sell your car.

22 EXT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS - DAY

A taxi pulls up to the Department of Astrophysics building,
and Zandman gets out.

23 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS/ZANDMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Pens and pencils arranged by size sit neatly alongside
rulers, sharpeners, and erasers. Holding a magnifying glass,
Zandman marks a printout with a thin red pen. He reaches the
last page and closes the printout.

POV:

[TITLE PAGE] UNIVERSITY OF TEL-AVIV, DEPARTMENT OF
ASTROPHYSICS

MOON ALBATEGNIUS CRATER ANOMALIES REVISITED

MIRA HOFFMANN

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ZANDMAN (OFF)
Mira!

MIRA (OFF)
Coming. I didn't hear you arrive.
Your students are waiting!

Mira enters.

POV: A LARGE BAND-AID COVERS ZANDMAN'S FOREHEAD.

MIRA
What happened to you?

ZANDMAN
A camel kissed me.

MIRA
So you're dating!

ZANDMAN
It was a blind date. Kind of.

MIRA
Ha ha

He hands her the binder.

ZANDMAN
Start working!

She flips through the pages.

POV: PAGES ARE FILLED WITH RED NOTES.

ZANDMAN (OFF)
A few spelling errors. Conclusions
could be expressed more clearly.
We'll discuss it after my lecture.

Mira's face sinks as she continues flipping through, close to tears.

ZANDMAN
It's a brilliant thesis. I won't let
you spoil it with careless writing.

He walks to the door.

ZANDMAN (cont'd)
You wouldn't allow yourself to miss a
single dot in your program, right? Or
leave an extra blank space in the
code. The program will stop, right?
It's the same here! A PhD thesis
should be flawless.

He leaves and comes back.

ZANDMAN (cont'd)
I don't want your Baba in my room,
OK?!

24 EXT. KOPPEL'S BUILDING - DAY

Koppel parks the yellow Jeep and feeds the cats. He unloads the bicycles and heads to the main road.

25 EXT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS - DAY

Koppel locks his bicycle and enters the building.

26 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS/MIRA'S ROOM - DAY

Mira is examining moon craters on a screen.

CELLPHONE RINGS.

MIRA

Hi Mom... In my office... The same...
Again? I blocked him, so he calls
you... He can't get no for an
answer!... Yes, Mom, it was a great
love, but-... I want to forget this
episode...

DOOR KNOCKS

MIRA (cont'd)

I can't tell him the reason, he will
not understand, but I can tell you-

Mira opens the main door.

KOPPEL

Excuse me.

MIRA

...Listen, Mom, I'll call you
later... Kiss Dad for me.

KOPPEL

I wonder if I could meet Professor
Zandman.

MIRA

Do you have an appointment with him?

KOPPEL

No. It's spontaneous, so to speak.
Koppel. Doctor Jonah Koppel.

MIRA

Mira. He is lecturing right now.

KOPPEL

Well...

MIRA

Would you like to go there?

KOPPEL

Sure!

A kitten comes out of her room and rubs her ankle. Koppel strokes it gently. Mira joins him.

MIRA

Baba - Doctor Koppel. She's adopted.
No manners. Professor Zandman doesn't
like her here. She pees on his desk.

Mira leaves Baba inside her room and takes the lead.
Students are rushing through the corridors.

KOPPEL

It's kind of you to-

MIRA

You can meet him after the lecture.
He enjoys coffee breaks.
Are you an astrophysicist?

KOPPEL

Not really. Are you-

MIRA

I am his PhD student. Research
assistant.

KOPPEL

Asteroids?

MIRA

Moon craters.

KOPPEL

I'm interested in his Cyrus idea.

MIRA

I programmed it.

KOPPEL

Oh.

27 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS/LECTURE HALL - DAY

Mira and Koppel enter the hall.

MIRA
(Whispers)
First-year students. They know
nothing. Bored and lazy.

Zandman, with the bandage on his forehead, holds a remote control. Mira points to two empty seats at the end of the row.

They struggle to pass a student who is busy with his laptop. At each seat, they manage to glimpse at Zandman or the big screen.

ZANDMAN
Asteroids are rocky bodies that orbit
the Sun, just like Earth. See here?
Sun... Earth's orbit... Cyrus's
orbit.

KOPPEL'S POV: ASTEROID BELT

ZANDMAN (OFF)
This is Cyrus, my favorite one.

KOPPEL'S POV: ASTEROID ROCK BODY

They pass two students consulting their Tinder matches.

KOPPEL'S POV: ANIMATION OF AN ASTEROID APPROACHING EARTH.

ZANDMAN (OFF) (cont'd)
Every few years, the two orbits
intersect, and Cyrus gets close to
Earth.

Mira and Koppel pass a student who is solving Sudoku.

ZANDMAN
Earth's gravity is powerful enough to
cause parts of it to break apart.

KOPPEL'S POV: A SMALL LUMP BREAKS OFF FROM THE ASTEROID.

Mira and Koppel pass students tapping on their cellphones.

ZANDMAN (OFF)
When this particle is large enough,
it can penetrate the atmosphere-

Mira and Koppel stop in front of a knitting student.

ZANDMAN (OFF) (cont'd)
...and collide with Earth.

KOPPEL'S POV: A RED DOT FLICKERS OFF THE COAST OF CYPRUS.

Mira and Koppel struggle to pass over the stretched legs of a dozing student and take the adjacent seats. Placing their hands on the armrest of the shared chair, their hands touch and they recoil. Laying their hands again on the armrest, Koppel's palm softly rests on Mira's. His finger feels the gemstone on her ring.

MIRA (OFF)
My grandmother's.

KOPPEL (OFF)
It's pitted. A crack.

MIRA (OFF)
I don't like diamonds. They lack personality.

KOPPEL (OFF)
Turquoise?

MIRA (OFF)
Aha.

KOPPEL (OFF)
I like this texture.

MIRA (OFF)
It's my skin.

KOPPEL (OFF)
I know.

KOPPEL'S POV: BARRINGER CRATER IN ARIZONA

ZANDMAN (OFF)
Barringer Crater. One kilometer in diameter was formed by a tiny asteroid fragment of fifty meters across. Here we find a high concentration of rare metals.

Mira's and Koppel's fingers interlace as they look at each other silently.

KOPPEL'S POV: (CHANGE OF SLIDE) VREDEFORT CRATER IN SOUTH AFRICA.

ZANDMAN

Vredefort Crater. The largest gold and platinum reserves on Earth.

Zandman turns on the lights.

ZANDMAN (cont'd)

Most craters are hidden beneath forests, jungles, desert sands, snow, ice, or oceans. Without these metals, modern industry cannot function.

(pause)

Any questions?

(pause)

See you next week.

Zandman and the students leave the hall. Koppel and Mira remain seated, their hands still touching.

KOPPEL

Good lecture!

MIRA

My thoughts were drifting elsewhere.

KOPPEL

You must be bored too.

MIRA

Not at all. He was talking about bodies that are getting closer.

KOPPEL

Gravity, yes. It's a strange force.

MIRA

He's back in the office.

KOPPEL

I'd rather stay here.

MIRA

Just like that?

KOPPEL

Just like that.

28 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS/ZANDMAN'S ROOM - DAY

As Zandman pours coffee, Koppel looks around the room.

POV: A WALL POSTER SHOWING GIORDANO BRUNO'S STATUE IN CAMPO DE' FIORI.

Koppel pulls a book from the shelf and flips through the pages.

POV: GIORDANO BRUNO ON THE STAKE.

Zandman inspects Koppel's business card.

POV: BLURRED CIM LOGO, JONAH KOPPEL, PHD., MBA, CHIEF SCIENTIST, R&D

ZANDMAN
Never heard of CIM.

KOPPEL
We invest in industrial projects.
Worldwide. I am a sniffing dog. I
spot gifted minds. Sort of 'idea
hunter'.

ZANDMAN
Idea hunter?

KOPPEL
Ideas with business potential. Many
inventors fail to realize the
business potential of their ideas.

ZANDMAN
How did an 'idea hunter' discover me?

Koppel hands Zandman his rejected proposal.

KOPPEL (OFF)
I recognize a good idea when I see
one. Their trash can is filled with
treasures. All rejected proposals.

ZANDMAN
These officials are clueless, so they
consult my colleagues, who think I'm
nuts.

Baba enters the room.

ZANDMAN (cont'd)

And you're just as crazy for coming here.

Zandman, disgusted, moves her back to Mira's room. The door doesn't close properly, so the kitten comes back.

KOPPEL

This Cyrus asteroid, how often does it -

ZANDMAN

It completes an orbit every twenty-four years.

KOPPEL

For millions of years.

ZANDMAN

Right. Once we know where the orbits intersected, we can locate the fragments on Earth. Piece of cake.

KOPPEL

So you are a gold miner.

ZANDMAN

A platinum miner. A rhodium miner.

KOPPEL

I talked with your colleagues.

ZANDMAN

The one with the yellow glasses, right?

Zandman gestures dismissal.

KOPPEL

It takes a lot of self-confidence to ignore a colleague.

ZANDMAN

Kaminski has no imagination. No vision.

KOPPEL

People have always detested prophets.

ZANDMAN

I like the way you think. You didn't touch your coffee.

Koppel drinks.

ZANDMAN (cont'd)
I still wonder: Why would anyone with
common sense invest in an impossible
project?

KOPPEL
Because it is impossible! We promote
projects that appear impossible - a
kind of philanthropy for science.

ZANDMAN
This is encouraging!

MAIN DOOR KNOCKS

Zandman opens the main door for two Chinese businessmen.

CHINESE BUSINESSMAN
(Chinese accent)
Professor Zandman! So happy to see
you!

They shake hands warmly, and they give him a colorful
Chinese gift box. He invites them into his room.

ZANDMAN
Please be seated.
(whispers to Koppel)
Come!

He pulls Koppel assertively into Mira's room.

29 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS/MIRA'S ROOM - DAY

Zandman and Koppel burst into the room. Mira, startled,
stops typing on the keyboard. Her screen displays the Moon.

ZANDMAN
Doctor Koppel - Mira Hoffmann, almost
Doctor.

Mira and Koppel shake hands smilingly.

ZANDMAN (cont'd)
Excuse me - I need to attend to these
people.

KOPPEL
Sure.

ZANDMAN

Wait for me. Don't go!

(To Mira)

Doctor Koppel would like to see what we're working on.

(To Koppel)

Anything about the program you should ask her. Without her, my idea is worthless.

Zandman exits.

KOPPEL

Anything wrong?

ZANDMAN

No, no. Some visitors excite him.

KOPPEL

(Points to his forehead)

What happened to him?

MIRA

He hit a camel.

KOPPEL

A camel?

MIRA

On the way from the observatory. It's in the desert.

KOPPEL

Poor camel.

MIRA

I love the desert.

She points to the screen displaying the moon image.

MIRA (cont'd)

That's my favorite crater.

Albategnius. The big one.

(pause)

But you wanted to watch the program!

She taps the keyboard, and the monitor labeled Cyrus fills with tables and numbers.

MIRA (cont'd)

Programming is finished. I'm checking for bugs now.

(MORE)

MIRA (cont'd)

You see, sometimes everything freezes, like now, and the question is whether it's a code problem or maybe the process is so complex that it takes time to complete.

KOPPEL

Have you ever found a hit?

MIRA

Last week we had one. Near Crete.

KOPPEL

Good! Very good!

MIRA

Three kilometers below sea level.

KOPPEL

Bad.

MIRA

We need a land hit.

KOPPEL

That might take time.

MIRA

Time is money!

KOPPEL

What do you mean?

MIRA

We have already used all his grants.

KOPPEL

Used for what?

MIRA

A supercomputer. Same as for the meteorological data processing. We have three days of rental credit left.

(pause)

He deserves the Nobel Prize, but he can't afford the ink for the printer.

KOPPEL

Professor Kaminski says he is a megalomaniac.

MIRA

The lifelong leader of our department! He feels threatened by Zandman.

KOPPEL

Nobody likes competition.

MIRA

Kaminski would burn him on the stake. 'Giordano Zandman' he calls him. Zandman is ostracized!

The computer screen flashes with a disturbing buzz.

MIRA (cont'd)

Here is another one.

POV:

Cyrus - Earth Passing

-40,317

August 20, year:(-)965,600

POSITIVE Encounter

KOPPEL

A real thriller you have here.

MIRA

Attending a firstborn birth.

KOPPEL

Again in the sea?

MIRA

Patience!

POV: THE COMPUTER SCREEN DISPLAYS AN AERIAL VIEW OF AN AGRICULTURAL AREA.

MIRA (cont'd)

Wow! Wow!

Koppel examines the aerial.

KOPPEL

Truly a firstborn birth. And you are the midwife!

She allows him to hug her.

KOPPEL (cont'd)

It looks like Tuscany. Maybe Provence? Let's call him.

MIRA

Hold on!

POV: IN THE CORNER OF THE FARMING AREA, A BUILDING EDGE IS
VISIBLE.

Mira taps a key, and the monitor shows:

EAST 34.58 NORTH 31.49
Latroun (Israel)

KOPPEL

Latroun! Of course! That's the way to
Jerusalem. The Monastery.

MIRA

I've never been there.

KOPPEL

The Trappist monks! The silent ones.

POV: ZOOM IN ON A TRACTOR BETWEEN THE VINE ROWS.

CHAT OF CHINESE BUSINESSMEN LEAVING THEN DOOR CLOSING SOUND

KOPPEL (OFF)

Call him!

MIRA (OFF)

There's something here.

INSERT: ZOOM OUT TO A DARK ARC-SHAPED OUTLINE OF ROCKS
SURROUNDING THE VINEYARD.

MIRA (OFF) (cont'd)

Do you see that? The arc!

KOPPEL (OFF)

I don't see any arc.

(pause)

I see it now.

(pause)

You are magicians!

MIRA (OFF)

That's an impact pattern. We have
these on the moon.

Zandman enters.

ZANDMAN

I really should learn Chinese.

Mira and Koppel exchange glances.

ZANDMAN (cont'd)
Am I missing something?

Mira points at the screen as Zandman moves closer.

ZANDMAN (cont'd)
Nice.

MIRA
Nice?

ZANDMAN
Yes. Anything special here?

MIRA
It's a hit! Nathanael! A hit!

Zandman pulls a magnifying glass out of a leather case and examines the aerial.

MIRA (cont'd)
Latroun.

Zandman looks at Koppel, who nods in confirmation.

ZANDMAN
(To himself)
My Cyrus. My dear Cyrus.

He walks silently back and forth. He stops.

ZANDMAN (cont'd)
I cannot drive there. My license is suspended.
(to Koppel)
You can check it out yourself, if you'd like.

KOPPEL
Absolutely!
(To Mira)
Please print this.
(to Zandman)
I used metal detectors in the army.

ZANDMAN
You looked for mines, right?

Koppel nods.

ZANDMAN (cont'd)
 You'll probably find old ammunition.
 Some nails, horseshoes. Crosses too.

KOPPEL
 So?

ZANDMAN
 For trace amounts, one needs an XRF
 analyzer.

KOPPEL
 Do you have one?

Zandman turns over his pants pockets.

ZANDMAN
 We'll buy one when we are rich. But
 you can send rock samples to a
 laboratory for analysis.

KOPPEL
 I'll do that.

ZANDMAN
 At your expense.

Mira scribbles 'Mira 050-5920507' on the printout and hands
 it to Koppel as he leaves. Baba follows him, and Mira runs
 to the main door after them.

PAUSE

DOOR CLOSING SOUND

She is back.

MIRA
 I'm so excited. Aren't you?

Zandman hands her a plastic folder with Chinese printing.

Mira flips through the pages.

MIRA (cont'd)
 The dollar signs are clear.

Zandman offers her the Chinese treat.

MIRA (cont'd)
 Too sweet for me. Wait for the German
 marzipan. Do you have any
 preferences?

(MORE)

MIRA (cont'd)

(Pause)

For the money, I mean.

ZANDMAN

I'll set a bid. Like an auction.

Baba rubs his trousers.

ZANDMAN (cont'd)

I'd sell her too.

30 INT. ZANDMAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Zandman stands at the window.

POV: (BLURRED) THE SHATTERED WINDSHIELD OF THE SILVER MAZDA

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK: THE CAMEL'S HEAD IS SMASHING INTO THE WINDSHIELD

Zandman opens his eyes.

31 INT. KOPPEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Koppel is lying in bed and makes a call.

KOPPEL

Hi Mira, good evening.

MIRA (OFF)

Good evening.

KOPPEL

Would you like to join me tomorrow?

MIRA

We're in bed. You are on speaker.

KOPPEL

Oops. I understand.

He hangs up.

CELLPHONE RINGS

KOPPEL (cont'd)

I didn't want to disturb. You said-

MIRA

Baba decided to join me.

KOPPEL

I just wanted to thank you for-

MIRA (OFF)

It was a lucky moment with the program. A special day.

KOPPEL

So what about tomorrow?

MIRA

Sounds like a date. Is it?

KOPPEL

Of course it is!

MIRA

It's crazy, isn't it?

(Pause)

I wish you were here. Right now.

PAUSE

KOPPEL

I wish I were your Baba.

32 INT. ZANDMAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Zandman is preparing Italian-style coffee. He carefully arranges cheese packages and jams on the table. He adjusts the position of the plate and cutlery with precision. He spreads butter and white cheese evenly on a slice of toast. Using a fork, he gently moves olive halves to create a neat row.

POV: THE PICTURE'S CENTER BECOMES BLURRED. THE ROW ARRANGEMENT GETS DISRUPTED

CELLPHONE RING

ZANDMAN

Yes... I'm coming.

33 EXT. ZANDMAN'S BUILDING - MORNING

Zandman exits the building and approaches the tow-truck near his silver Mazda. The Russian driver in overalls inspects the shattered windshield and greets him. He pays Zandman and lifts the Mazda onto his truck.

34 EXT/INT. THE WAY TO LATROUN - DAY (TRAVELING)

KOPPEL

What a beautiful day!

MIRA

Aren't we lucky? So many good surprises. In three days!

KOPPEL

It will stop. Statistically, I mean.

The narrow road curves sharply. Broken warning signs are scattered along the roadside.

SQUEALING BRAKES

Koppel's foot presses the brakes.

MIRA

They will put them back after the next accident.

They park the yellow Jeep at the Trappist Monastery of Latroun.

MIRA'S CELLPHONE RING

MIRA (cont'd)

Yes, Mom...

Koppel steps out of the car and walks toward the winery shop.

MIRA (cont'd)

You can block him too... Yes, Mom, he is intelligent, he is generous... Don't start with that biological clock thing, OK?... Really? Like you and Dad? No hugging, no kissing, no touching?... I don't know, might be some psychological issues.

35 INT. MONASTERY OF THE TRAPPISTS/WINERY SHOP - DAY

Koppel selects four wine bottles and approaches **JEAN-JACQUES**, a monk at the sales counter.

JEAN-JACQUES

(In a French accent)

Please sir. Alors, quarante plus trente plus trente plus cinquante cinq ca fait cent cinquante-cinq. One hundred and fifty-five altogether. That's our best! Le Mondial des Vins Blancs! Silver medal! Oh! There is also a rosary. From olive tree. And crosses. Presents from the Holy Land.

Koppel pays, and Jean-Jacques places a small cross gift in the shopping bag.

KOPPEL

May I visit your vineyard?

JEAN-JACQUES

Malheureusement, ce n'est pas possible. This is private property.

KOPPEL

Of course.

JEAN-JACQUES

It needs permission from our Dom.

(Pause)

He will not be available until after the prayer.

KOPPEL

Merci!

36 INT./EXT. LATROUN VINEYARD/THE JEEP - DAY

Mira watches a young good-looking monk who cleans the leaves by the car.

MIRA

...I don't want to live in a monastery. I need loving physical contact.

POV OF MIRA: KOPPEL EXITS THE SHOP AND APPROACHES THE JEEP

MIRA (OFF)

Yes, he's good looking... Three days... And one night... Too early to tell... I'll call you later, bye!

She hangs up, and Koppel enters the jeep.

KOPPEL
 (Mimics French accent)
 Malheureusement, ce n'est pas
 possible. This is a private property.

MIRA
 God bless the monks.

THE MONASTERY BELL RINGS.

KOPPEL
 Prayer time.

They glance at each other. Koppel picks up the aerial print and activates his cellphone magnifier app.

POV: ZOOM IN ALONG THE DARK ARCHED LINE. IT ENDS AT THE DISTANT EDGE OF THE VINEYARD.

Koppel drives around the vineyard and parks far from the monastery.

MIRA
 We are trespassing, you know.

KOPPEL
 It's Emmaus here. We are following
 Jesus.

They cross a collapsed stone wall and follow the dark, arched line on the aerial print, walking through vines, rocks, and thorns. Occasionally, they dig up some stones and place them in a backpack. Their silent interaction shifts between childish play and cheerful lovers' courtship.

They drive to the main road and stop at a bus stop. Two monks are leaving the bus. Mira runs and boards it.

37 INT. THE GEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE - DAY

Koppel walks into the building and heads toward a door.

POV: DR. ARIE PICARD - MINERALOGICAL LABORATORY - DIRECTOR

The laboratory is filled with computers, an electron microscope, centrifuges, labeled plastic boxes, and chemical bottles. Koppel approaches PICARD (35, with a wild beard) from behind. Picard examines 'sausages' of soil and rock. He glances at a small mirror in front of him.

POV: KOPPEL STANDS BEHIND HIM.

PICARD (O.S.)
I know only one person who uses this
stinky aftershave.

KOPPEL
Hi Picard.

PICARD
Long time no see.

They share a quick hug.

PICARD (cont'd)
What brings you here?

Koppel pours the stones from his backpack onto the table.

PICARD (cont'd)
I was expecting some whiskey. Some
chocolate.

KOPPEL
How is your leg?

Picard reveals his prosthetic leg.

PICARD
A new one! State of the art!

KOPPEL
How is Sarah?

PICARD
We have a baby.

KOPPEL
Mazl Tov!

PICARD
It was two weeks ago.

KOPPEL
Well done, Picard! Who is the father?
(Points to the stones)
I need an analysis.

PICARD
No problem.

KOPPEL
Tonight!

PICARD
Can't you see all this? You've always
been incorrigible.

KOPPEL
A night shift never killed anyone.

38 INT. MIRA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Mira is browsing the CIM website on her laptop.

INSERT: TEMPORARILY INACCESSIBLE. WE ARE CURRENTLY
EXPERIENCING A MALFUNCTION. OUR TECHNICAL TEAM IS ACTIVELY
INVESTIGATING THE ISSUE AND WORKING TO RESOLVE IT. WE
APOLOGIZE FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE THIS MAY CAUSE AND
APPRECIATE YOUR PATIENCE.

A CELLPHONE RING.

POV: [A CALL FROM] JONAH KOPPEL.

MIRA
Good evening!

KOPPEL (OFF)
Oh, sorry, I thought I was calling
Zandman. My mistake!

MIRA
Would you like to leave him a
message?

KOPPEL (OFF)
Yes. I would like to set up a meeting
with his assistant.

MIRA
May I ask, what is the subject?

KOPPEL (OFF)
It's about a date.

MIRA
I don't believe he's interested in
dating you. He's straight.

KOPPEL (OFF)
Sorry to bother you. Have a good
night-

MIRA

But we can discuss it further
sometime. Maybe a bicycle date?

39 INT. THE MINERALOGICAL LABORATORY - SUNRISE

Picard stretches and rubs his eyes. He empties an ashtray
into a dirty disposable coffee cup.

PRINTER HUMMING

He pulls a page from the printer and reads it.

The sun rises.

40 INT. THE GEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE/CORRIDOR - SUNRISE

Koppel is asleep on a bench, resting his head on his
backpack.

LOUD NOISE OF A VACUUM CLEANER

A woman vacuuming the hallway approaches Koppel. He covers
his head and turns to the other side. She pulls the bench to
the middle of the corridor and continues cleaning around
him. Picard exits the laboratory.

PICARD

Get up!

Picard kicks the bench. Koppel turns away. Picard splashes
him with water.

41 INT. MINERALOGICAL LABORATORY - DAY

Koppel washes his face in the sink.

PICARD

What's the story?

KOPPEL

I missed you. That's all.

PICARD

Haha.

Picard throws the stones into the trash can.

PICARD (cont'd)
 Nothing much to see here. Typical
 Judea Hills stuff. Sorry.

KOPPEL
 Such is life. Sorry for the bother.

PICARD
 Except for this.

He hands Koppel a tiny, clear specimen box.

POV: THE BOX LABELED 29A HOLDS A SMALL STONE

He turns on a high-tech electron microscope.

PICARD (OFF)
 How was the safari?

KOPPEL
 What safari?

PICARD
 In South Africa.

KOPPEL
 What are you talking about?!

PICARD
 Cut the bullshit, Koppel, will you?

KOPPEL
YOU cut the bullshit! I've never been
 on a safari. Never been to South
 Africa.

PICARD
 They mine platinum there. See?

POV: ELECTRON MICROSCOPE SCREEN VIEW OF CRYSTALS.

PICARD (cont'd)
 (imitating)
 'Never been in South Africa'

Picard flips through a thick book.

PICARD (cont'd)
 My Bible. German.
 (MORE)

PICARD (cont'd)
 (Having trouble
 pronouncing
 correctly)
 Ein untrügliches Zeichen für die
 Echtheit der Eisenmeteoriten-

KOPPEL
 Speak English, Picard

PICARD
 An infallible sign of the
 authenticity of iron meteorites.

KOPPEL
 Plain English, bitte.

PICARD
 Hear this: ...Das Vorhandensein
 sogenannter Widmanstätten Figuren und
 von Neumann Linien.

KOPPEL
 Stop Widmanstätten with me, will you?

Picard marks some lines on the printout and hands it to
 Koppel. Koppel reads it quickly.

PICARD
 So, how was South Africa?

KOPPEL
 Forget it, OK?

PICARD
 Why forget?

KOPPEL
 I never met you! Understand?

PICARD
 Platinum in Israel... It's crazy!

Koppel finger-zips his lips and pulls out a wine bottle from
 his backpack.

KOPPEL
 For the new baby!

42 INT. PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY BUILDING/ZANDMAN'S ROOM - DAY

Sandman stands by the bookshelf, examines the order of the books, then places the book on Giordano Bruno in the appropriate place.

Mira (with the colorful scarf) enters.

MIRA

Do you want me to do it?

ZANDMAN

I'm not disabled! It's... It's just my vision.

He approaches the window.

MIRA

Shouldn't you see an ophthalmologist?

ZANDMAN

I did.

POV: THE TREES.

MIRA (OFF)

Did he find anything?

ZANDMAN (OFF)

My retinas are bad.

POV: THE TREE IN THE CENTER IS BLURRED.

MIRA (OFF)

What do you mean by 'bad'?

ZANDMAN (OFF)

Very bad. It's called Macular degeneration.

POV: BY SHIFTING THE VIEWING ANGLE, THE BLURRY SPOT COVERS DIFFERENT OBJECTS.

MIRA (OFF)

So, it's NOT because of the accident.

ZANDMAN

(Turns)

It's the CAUSE of the accident.

MIRA

So you've known this for days, and you tell me nothing?

(MORE)

MIRA (cont'd)

(pause)

You said we're friends, remember?

ZANDMAN

Of course I remember.

MIRA

Close friends, you said.

ZANDMAN

I thought, perhaps-

MIRA

It was quite clear what you meant.

ZANDMAN

I thought perhaps you feel lonely,
so-

MIRA

Nathanael! You could be my father!

ZANDMAN

I apologized, didn't I? Forget it.

MIRA

What does 'friendship' mean to you if
you keep this macula thing a secret?

ZANDMAN

What do you want?

MIRA

I'm your student. We also work
together, right? I am your
programmer - your only programmer. We
are a team. We share some
responsibility, don't we? If you stop
functioning, I'm in trouble. If I am
sick or dead, you're lost! No one
else really cares about you. Face it!

ZANDMAN

Do me a favor, please.

MIRA

You are being inconsiderate.

ZANDMAN

Inconsiderate?

MIRA

Selfish.

ZANDMAN

I'm going to go blind! It's incurable! Yes, I'm selfish! It's time for me to be selfish.

She gets closer to him.

MIRA

There must be some treatment.

ZANDMAN

Just leave me alone.

MIRA

I feel like I'm being blamed for something.

ZANDMAN

Everything will be fine. Soon you'll earn your PhD. Your entire life lies ahead. Enjoy it! Go to the movies, marry a nice guy, watch the sunset, and look at the stars.

MIRA

Beethoven was deaf and nonetheless persisted-

ZANDMAN

Are you attempting to console me?

MIRA

Just think about it-

ZANDMAN

There are no blind painters. No mute singers. No amputated violinists. Fact! Everything else is just empty talk. Paka-paka.

As he hides his eyes, she gently kisses his forehead.

ZANDMAN (cont'd)

Leave. Please leave.

43 INT. KOPPEL'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

A computer screen shows a platinum stock market chart.

Koppel swipes left women's Tinder profiles.

COMPUTER DING-DONG SOUND.

POV: AN EMAIL NOTIFICATION COVERS THE STOCK CHART.

He types.

POV: FROM: THE NATIONAL GEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE - MINERALOGICAL
LABORATORY

As he reads, a satisfied smile gradually appears. He prints
the report and folds the page into an envelope.

He grabs his bicycle helmet and leaves.

44 EXT. BANK OF THE YARKON RIVER - SUNSET

Koppel and Mira sit on a bench by the riverbank. Their bikes
lean against a nearby tree.

MIRA

You keep me curious. Are you enjoying
teasing me?

KOPPEL

It's a tricky way to stretch out our
date.

MIRA

Will it take all night?

KOPPEL

I hope so.

Koppel hands her the plastic specimen box 29A.

MIRA

Is it-?

Koppel nods. He then hands her the folded geological report.
Her quick read ends with her hugging Koppel tightly.

They walk with their bicycles.

KOPPEL

I wonder why he didn't tell me
anything about it.

MIRA

He told me only today. His retinas
are damaged. Macular degeneration.

KOPPEL

My father had it. Bad news.

MIRA

That's why he had that accident.

KOPPEL

Bad news for us too.

They approach a building's entrance.

MIRA

That's where Baba lives.

KOPPEL

Give her my regards.

MIRA

You'll have to do it personally. You know ladies. They expect direct personal attitude.

45 INT. MIRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mira exits the kitchen carrying a bottle of sparkling wine and two glasses.

MIRA

Did you give him the analysis?

KOPPEL

Not yet.

MIRA

He was crying this morning. He mourns his eyesight.

KOPPEL

It will cheer him up.

MIRA

I'm no longer certain about this project.

KOPPEL

He needs some help. That's for sure.

MIRA

He will never admit he needs any help. He'll soon deny the situation. Then he'll fight the doctors.

(MORE)

MIRA (cont'd)
 We know the process. Psychology 101.
 Frustration, then depression.

KOPPEL
 Is he religious?

MIRA
 A devout atheist.

KOPPEL
 Any friends?

MIRA
 Not that I know of.

KOPPEL
 You should take care of him. If he
 collapses, you'll need a new advisor.

MIRA
 If he collapses, you'd better forget
 your... Whatever you're up to.

She pours the wine into the glasses.

MIRA
 Cheers!

Baba the kitten climbs onto her lap.

KOPPEL
 I envy her.

Mira pulls him towards her, and they embrace passionately.

46 INT. ZANDMAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Zandman lies in bed, staring at a hanging mobile of the
 solar system.

POV: THE SLOWLY MOVING PLANETS

DISSOLVE TO:

HALLUCINATION: THE CHILD'S SPINNING WINDMILL AT LANZANI'S
 CLINIC. THE MAN WITH THE WHITE WALKING STICK IS ZANDMAN
 HIMSELF.

DISSOLVE TO:

47 INT. MIRA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Mira and Koppel are finishing breakfast.

KOPPEL
So from now on, you'll do the
maintenance?

MIRA
Aha.

KOPPEL
It's a long drive.

MIRA
Four hours.

KOPPEL
The department should rent a car for
you. Now is the time to ask for a
raise.

MIRA
You are a shrewd negotiator. A good
lover. Any hidden flaws?

KOPPEL
I'm running late!

They kiss.

KOPPEL (cont'd)
This time we'll go in my jeep.

He rushes out of the apartment.

48 EXT./INT. CIM HEADQUARTERS - DAY

A LOUD ELEPHANT TRUMPET

At the parking lot entrance, Koppel stops the yellow Jeep
and lets the 'PEST CONTROL SERVICES' van exit.

The red-bearded driver thanks him waiving.

Koppel drives the golf cart.

CHIMPANZEE'S PANT-HOOT

Koppel enters CIM headquarters.

CURLY-HAIRED SECRETARY
Good morning Dr. Koppel.

KOPPEL
Morning.

CURLY-HAIRED SECRETARY
(intercoms)
Doctor Koppel is here.

Leider exits her office, and they shake hands. She then leads him to an automatic secured door. He touches the sensor with his new security tag, and the door opens.

LEIDER
That's our secure section.

They walk along walls adorned with framed photos. Koppel examines a photo.

POV: U.S. ADMIRAL COMMANDER JEFFREY STARLING +USA FLAG (IN HANDWRITING:) DEDICATED WITH DEEP GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION TO THE CIM TEAM FOR YOUR EFFICIENT COOPERATION.

He slowly walks past photos of executives and high-ranking military officers attached to the flags of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan.

They arrive at the door of DR. JONAH KOPPEL - CHIEF SCIENTIST. A welcome flower is attached. Koppel touches the sensor with his badge, and they enter.

The room is spacious and well equipped. A large window overlooking the flamingo pond.

LEIDER (cont'd)
To feed the flamingos, you need to go outside. These windows are sealed. The cafeteria is always open. And free. We want you to feel at home. That's your computer code. WiFi is not allowed. All communication happens through our network.

KOPPEL
Working hours?

LEIDER
We are here 24/7.

KOPPEL
An unusual company.

LEIDER

You probably noticed the special nature of our organization. That's the term we use here.

KOPPEL

It's different from what I expected.

LEIDER

I have good coffee in my office.

49 INT. CIM HEADQUARTERS/LEIDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Leider is preparing coffee.

LEIDER (OFF)

CIM is a shared headquarters for the CIA and Mossad. Many people here hold double nationality - American and Israeli. Just like you.

KOPPEL

You really know everything.

LEIDER

Almost everything. We are basically an intelligence alliance.

KOPPEL

So am I a spy now?

LEIDER

Sort of.

KOPPEL

I really don't like it!

LEIDER

Trust me, you will.

Koppel places his security badge in front of Leider.

KOPPEL

I won't kill anyone for you.

LEIDER

No need to kill anybody.

KOPPEL

What about these Generals and Admirals on the walls?

LEIDER

Don't be fooled by decorations. Our job is to collect business secrets.

KOPPEL

What for?

LEIDER

For gaining a strategic advantage. Exactly what you've already done in your survey. Perhaps unknowingly. A supply interruption of some rare metals poses a severe problem. For 16 Western industries.

KOPPEL

So what am I supposed to do with this?

LEIDER

CIM seeks to secure this supply. No need to hurt anyone. There are no guns in this building.

She pushes the security badge back to Koppel.

LEIDER (cont'd)

Think about your finder's fee.

He takes the badge.

She hands him a binder labeled Dr. Jonah Koppel.

LEIDER (cont'd)

Now that you know our true nature, it is required that you re-sign your contract.

Koppel signs.

LEIDER (OFF)

Here... and here... It goes without saying that we require secrecy, loyalty, and total commitment to finish any assignment. And here, the last one... Any questions?

KOPPEL

It's too early for me to ask anything.

LEIDER

I'll introduce you to the board of directors. It's our weekly meeting. Everything is in English. They are all interesting people - top experts in their field. Mingling is important.

She walks with Koppel to the door, and as he leaves, he comes across Avri.

AVRI

(in Hebrew)

Hi doctor. How are you today?

KOPPEL

Hungry!

AVRI

You can join me. If you want something special.

KOPPEL

Of course!

AVRI

My treat. Twenty minutes and we're there.

KOPPEL

OK

50 INT. DRUZE RESTAURANT - DAY

Koppel and Avri finish their falafel. Near the shaded dining area, CIM's blue helicopter is parked.

51 INT./EXT. CIM'S BLUE HELICOPTER - DAY (TRAVELING)

The helicopter flies over the sea. Koppel's face shows discomfort.

AVRI

(in Hebrew)

If you feel sick, just take off your earphones and put your head into your backpack.

KOPPEL

OK

AVRI
What a waste of a good falafel.

KOPPEL
What should you do if the motor malfunctions?

AVRI
You mean, right now?

KOPPEL
Yes. I can't swim.

AVRI
(In English)
In the unlikely event of an engine failure, as flight attendants say, I need more time to reach the beach.
(Hebrew)
Especially since you don't swim, and we don't have life vests here. The lighter we are, the slower our descent rate, so I'll drop any extra load.

Koppel turns his head, but the back seat is empty.

CONTROL (OFF)
Bravo-Juliet-Yankee from control, descend to two thousand.

AVRI
Control from Bravo-Juliet-Yankee descend to two thousand.

52 INT./EXT. DESERT ROAD JUNCTION - SUNSET (TRAVELING)

The yellow jeep nears a remote desert intersection on the way to the observatory.

KOPPEL (OFF)
We should go there. The best falafel I've ever had. What an adventure...

KITTEN MEOW

Mira turns to the back seat and opens the wicker picnic basket for Baba.

53 INT. DESERT ROAD JUNCTION - SUNSET (TRAVELING)

KOPPEL

I've never been to an observatory.
Only seen them in science fiction
movies.

MIRA

A meteor shower began yesterday.
The Perseides.

KOPPEL

Perseides. Never heard of them.

She holds up a bag of popcorn and feeds Koppel.

MIRA

Thousands of people are arriving
here. They say it's the meteors they
come to watch, but they really rush
to cuddle in their sleeping bags.

She hands Koppel a bottle of water.

MIRA (OFF)

In about an hour, you will hear moans
and groans echoing across the valley.
Only a few are actually waiting for a
falling star to make a wish.

KOPPEL

Do you have any wishes?

MIRA

I don't want you to get distracted.

KOPPEL

Is your English Australian, or what?

MIRA

You have a good ear.

KOPPEL

You say 'cah' for a car. It's neither
British nor American.

MIRA

It's South African. My parents moved
here when I was little.

KOPPEL

CIM questions whether other companies
are already aware of your project.

MIRA
You should ask Zandman about that.

KOPPEL
The Chinese people met him. I saw them.

MIRA
Yes.

KOPPEL
Any others?

MIRA
Give me a break, will you?

KOPPEL
We are taking a huge risk with this investment, so transparency is expected.

MIRA
He's my boss. Don't make me lie to you, okay? Just ask him.

They approach a remote desert intersection.

DUSTY ROAD SIGN: HEDGEHOG MOUNTAIN - STELLAR OBSERVATORY

MIRA (cont'd)
He enjoys tormenting me with this thesis.

KOPPEL
Why do you say this?

MIRA
He knows I'm waiting for his approval, but he just doesn't care. Every day, he suggests new corrections.

KOPPEL
He's going to be blind. That can shake anyone!

MIRA
He's a self-centered person.

KOPPEL
Be patient with him. He's a good man.

MIRA

How good? I'm his only friend, and he
doesn't tell me anything for days!
It's insulting. It hurts.

54 EXT. THE ROAD TO THE OBSERVATORY - SUNSET (TRAVELING)

The yellow jeep ascends the narrow road to the observatory.

55 EXT. THE OBSERVATORY - EVENING

DOGS BARKING.

The yellow jeep arrives at the observatory.

56 INT. THE OBSERVATORY - EVENING

Mira grabs Baba and enters the building with Koppel. She
switches on the circuit breakers.

57 INT. THE OBSERVATORY/TELESCOPE HALL - NIGHT

Mira turns on the lights, revealing numerous computers and
devices, some covered with cloth or nylon.

KOPPEL

WOW!

A huge telescope stands on an elevated platform.

58 INT. THE OBSERVATORY/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Koppel finishes drinking a big cup of tea.

Koppel finishes correcting Mira's dissertation following
Zandman's red notes.

KOPPEL

Done!

(pause)

Under 'Acknowledgments', you may add
'And thanks to Dr. J. Koppel for his
dedication and encouragement'.

She places a thermos and two cups on a small tray.

MIRA

To the meteors!

59 EXT. THE OBSERVATORY/VERANDA - NIGHT

Mira covers the external lights with red plastic sheets. She joins Koppel, and they stand together, sipping their coffee as they gaze out at the dark landscape.

KOPPEL
No Perseides tonight.

MIRA
They'll come!

LOUD CALLS OF HYENAS.

KOPPEL
There's one!

MIRA
And there!

Their bodies brush against each other.

KOPPEL
I love Perseides!

MIRA
We have a mattress inside. We'll open the canopy and see what happens.
(Pause)
There's complete privacy there.

60 INT. THE OBSERVATORY/TELESCOPE HALL - NIGHT

Koppel lies down on the mattress facing up. Mira switches on the motor of the telescope's canopy.

MOTOR HUMMING

Mira lies beside Koppel.

MIRA (OFF)
No clouds tonight`. We'll see the moon soon.
Would you like to visit my crater?

KOPPEL
You naughty girl.

61 INT. ZANDMAN'S APARTMENT/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Zandman is eating his supper.

CELLPHONE VOICE ALERT: CANOPY OPEN, CANOPY OPEN...

Zandman grabs his cellphone.

POV: (RED SECURITY ALERT) 'CANOPY OPEN'.

Zandman taps.

POV: SECURITY CAMERA OF TELESCOPE HALL

Zandman taps.

THE CAMERA PANS AND ZOOMS IN ON THE COUPLE MAKING LOVE ON THE MATTRESS.

Zandman switches off the cellphone and leaves the apartment.

62 INT. A BAR - NIGHT

A MELANCHOLIC TUNE.

Zandman sits at the bar, drinking a beer.

POV: COUPLES DRINKING. A MAN OF FIFTY FLIRTS WITH A VERY YOUNG WOMAN.

On the small stage, a pianist, a saxophonist, and a drummer are playing. The pianist wears dark sunglasses. A singer joins the trio, humming a wordless melody. She leaves the stage and moves between the tables.

POV: THE SINGER APPROACHES ZANDMAN. AS THE BLURRY SPOT APPEARS.

She stops at Zandman and leans very close to him, humming seductively in his ear.

DISSOLVE TO:

HALLUCINATION: MIRA'S COLORFUL SCARF COVERS THE SINGER'S NECK.

63 EXT. THE OBSERVATORY - FIRST LIGHT

BIRD CHIRPS.

The dome canopy starts closing.

64 INT./EXT. A TAXI IN TEL-AVIV CITY - DAY (TRAVELING)

LOUD ORIENTAL MUSIC

Zandman sits in a taxi's back seat, holding an attaché case. Muslim rosary hangs from the driver's mirror. The driver hums along to the music and taps his fingers on the steering wheel.

POV: URBAN LANDSCAPE OF TEL AVIV.

The taxi stops at the German embassy. The driver lowers the radio volume.

DRIVER
(Hebrew)
German embassy, right?

He gives Zandman the meter printed receipt. Zandman pays and gets out with his attaché case.

65 INT. TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY/CAFETERIA - DAY

PROFESSOR KAMINSKI (65, wearing yellow glasses) is having coffee. He spots Zandman holding a tray, searching for a free table, and signals to him to join him.

KAMINSKI
(Russian accent)
Who hurted you?

ZANDMAN
Hurt, not hurted. Speak Hebrew.

KAMINSKI
I need to practice my English. You correct my English, I correct your Russian, OK?

ZANDMAN
OK

Zandman moves cutlery to Kaminski.

KAMINSKI
Spaciba. What's this?

ZANDMAN
A camel. Near the observatory.
Smashed my windshield.

KAMINSKI

I saw a camel in the zoo. In Kiev.

(Pause)

Was your Mira student hurted?

ZANDMAN

No. She's busy with her thesis.

KAMINSKI

She's getting more old here.

ZANDMAN

Older.

Zandman meticulously arranges the cookie saucer, coffee cup, and cutlery.

KAMINSKI

You are too... what's the word... too **pedantic** with her.

ZANDMAN (OFF)

Pedantic? It's a dissertation!

KAMINSKI

She will claim that you delay her PhD because you want to... You know what I mean.

ZANDMAN

Nonsense!

KAMINSKI

Some womans do this. There will be a disciplinary committee.

(pause)

My advice - approve her PhD and let her go.

ZANDMAN

She is my programmer! I can't let her go!

KAMINSKI

OK, OK, it's your business. By the way, Goddard from MIT asked me about you-

ZANDMAN

I actually sent him a paper.

KAMINSKI

He said that Jules Verne wrote something similar. He is right! He said that they don't publish science fiction! Ha Ha. A good fellow this Goddard.

ZANDMAN

He should attend my seminar. You should come too! It's an academic debate.

KAMINSKI

I don't want to embarrass you. Embarrass. It is the word, right? Your simulations are fireworks. Games.

ZANDMAN

E pur si muove.

KAMINSKI

There was a guy last week. Doctor Koppel or something. He asked me about you. About your model.

ZANDMAN

Did you explain it to him?

KAMINSKI

I don't understand it myself. Nobody does.

ZANDMAN

Bright people in Stockholm do already.

Kaminski shows Zandman a photo on his cellphone.

KAMINSKI

The security department gave me this.

Zandman examines it with the magnifying glass.

POV: IN THE OBSERVATORY VERANDA, ZANDMAN IS HUGGING MIRA, TOUCHING HER BREAST.

KAMINSKI (OFF)

You better cancel your candidacy. You involved with a female student is not good for you-

ZANDMAN
Did she complain?

KAMINSKI
It does not matter.

ZANDMAN
This never happened!

KAMINSKI
You argue with a photo? You tell the
Dean your story. Finish your coffee
and come to my office.

ZANDMAN
No! You come to **my** office!. Right
now!

KAMINSKI
OK, OK, don't be so excited.

66 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS/ZANDMAN'S ROOM - DAY

Kaminski sits facing the large TV screen, holding a print of the photo. Zandman flips through video clips from the security cameras.

ZANDMAN
What date was this?

KAMINSKI
August thirteen.

ZANDMAN
My birthday.

POV (A VIDEO CLIP): IN THE OBSERVATORY'S VERANDA, MIRA
APPROACHES ZANDMAN FROM BEHIND, HOLDING A SMALL BOUQUET.

MIRA
(in video, Singing)
Happy birthday to you, happy birthday
to you... Close your eyes! A little
surprise for you!

ZANDMAN
(in video)
Where?

MIRA
(in video)
Right behind you.

(in video:) Zandman reaches both hands back and grasps Mira's breasts.

ZANDMAN
(in video)
Sorry.

MIRA
(in video)
It's OK.

(in video:) Mira lowers the bouquet in front of him, and he takes it.

Kaminski watches Zandman operating the computer's video. Zandman rolls back to match the printed photo, and stops the video.

KAMINSKI'S POV: THE VIDEO FRAME IS THE SAME AS THE PRINTED PHOTO.

Kaminsky tears up the print and throws the pieces in the trash.

KAMINSKI
Forget it.

67 INT. CIM HEADQUARTERS/KOPPEL'S ROOM - DAY

Koppel unwraps a new box of a handheld XRF analyzer.

PRINTER BUZZ

Koppel pulls a page from the printer and reads it.

POV: OFFICIAL CHEMICAL ANALYSIS #789. SPECIMEN 29A

He marks several lines of the analysis report.

KNOCKS ON THE DOOR

KOPPEL (OFF)
Yes, please, enter.

The curly-haired secretary pops in.

CURLY-HAIRED SECRETARY
The board is waiting for you.

KOPPEL
Thank you.

Koppel turns off his cellphone. He takes the analysis report and the 29A specimen, and leaves the room.

68 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS/MIRA'S ROOM - DAY

Mira taps her keyboard.

POV: CIM WEBSITE LOGO. CIM - REVEALING THE UNKNOWN! >
'ABOUT' PAGE

She taps again.

POV: 'CONTACT'. ADDRESS IS BLANK. PHONE NUMBER 03-9876966

She makes a phone call.

MIRA

Good day. I want to make an
appointment... Yes... Doctor Jonah
Koppel... Chief scientist...

Baba jumps onto her lap. She is petting the kitten.

MIRA (OFF)

I don't know his extension, so I
can't leave him a message... It's
personal... His email address is
invalid...

She's back at her computer.

MIRA (OFF) (cont'd)

Can you tell me his cellphone
number?... His secretary, perhaps?...
All the staff is at a convention...
In Fiji... Thank you for the
information... Have a nice day too.

POV: [CHATGPT > CIM] CIM IS AN INTELLIGENCE ALLIANCE
COMPRISING ISRAEL'S MOSSAD AND THE UNITED STATES' CIA.

Baba runs toward Zandman's room. She taps the keyboard.

POV: [CHATGPT > CIM > AUDIO READING]

She runs after Baba into Zandman's room. Zandman is not
there.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

CIM remains a key element in the intelligence and security landscape of each member country, providing a strategic advantage in understanding and responding to global events.

She grabs Baba from Zandman's desk and returns to her room.

She taps the keyboard and watches the screen.

INSERT: ZANDMAN'S ANIMATED PRESENTATION ENDS WITH THE ASTEROID DISINTEGRATING AND HITS EARTH.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (cont'd)

Pax Silica - The "Silicon Peace" Initiative is a circle of nations that secures the global supply chain of critical minerals, energy, and chips required for AI, effectively freezing rivals out of the next era of technology.

FADE TO BLACK

69 INT. CIM HEADQUARTERS/CONFERENCE HALL - DAY

FADE IN

The window curtains are drawn aside and the hall is gradually illuminated.

LEIDER

Thank you, Dr. Koppel.

In the corner, flags of Israel and the USA stand next to Mossad and CIA emblems. In between is a big CIM emblem with the slogan: REVEALING THE UNKNOWN! The white screen slowly rises. Shelves lined with military trophies line one wall. Models and Photos of airplanes, missiles, submarines, and drones are exhibited throughout the room.

LEIDER (OFF)

We are intensively collaborating in military technology, counter-terrorism, signals intelligence, and cyber intelligence, but rarely attend to significant discoveries. No doubt, this program highlights an important strategic issue relevant to all members here.

Koppel is standing facing the board members sitting around an oval table. Some are civilians, some are high-ranking Israeli and US officers.

LEIDER

Please continue.

KOPPEL

A few days ago, I was lucky to witness the first field results of this model. Zandman's program located the first asteroid impact site. It is near Jerusalem. I collected this stone there.

He presents the 29A specimen in the transparent plastic box.

KOPPEL (cont'd)

I brought this stone to the Mineralogical Laboratory for analysis, and now you can inspect it yourselves.

Koppel hands it to an ECONOMIST, a middle-aged man in civilian clothes who sits beside him, the Economy Today quarterly is in front of him. The economist inspects the plastic box.

ECONOMIST

May I open it?

KOPPEL

Sure!

Koppel shows the board the printed report.

KOPPEL

This is the analysis report. The elements found in this stone.

He displays it magnified on another large screen.

KOPPEL (OFF)

Rare metals are marked in red.

The economist hands the stone to a high-ranking US NAVY OFFICER.

KOPPEL (OFF) (cont'd)

You can see here the relative concentrations compared to other rocks in the Judean hills. These rare metals are critical minerals.

NAVY OFFICER

May I touch it?

KOPPEL

Of course.

The NAVY OFFICER passes the stone to an man in a leather jacket, who immediately passes it to a PSYCHOLOGIST, a woman in a business suit. She tries to match the stone to her gem necklace. Her wristwatch lies on a book titled "Advances in Cognitive Warfare"

KOPPEL (OFF)

The analysis proves Zandman's model viability. Zandman is a genius.

LEIDER

Did you talk with his colleagues?

KOPPEL

They think it's a fantasy.

LEIDER

So what on earth-

KOPPEL

They are wrong. And jealous.

LEIDER

You are the expert.

KOPPEL

Anyway, his project now seems attainable, and we should take this opportunity and control it before others do.

ECONOMIST

What do you mean by 'others do'?

KOPPEL

The Chinese.

LEIDER

The Chinese are everywhere.

KOPPEL

They met him when I was in his office. He's desperate to sell it. His grants have ended.

The psychologist passes the stone to an WILD-HAIRED OLD MAN. He palm-weighs the stone and passes it to a THICK-GLASSES MAN who has just read Annals of Improbable Research.

THICK-GLASSES MAN
Sounds like he belongs to this-

PSYCHOLOGIST
Stop it! Will you?

THICK-GLASSES MAN
Just kidding. Is he stable? Is he a healthy person? I mean, insurance-wise. What happens if we buy his program and he's dead?

KOPPEL
He seems to be healthy, except for having AMD. You may ask Professor Lanzani about it.

THICK-GLASSES MAN
What's AMD?

PSYCHOLOGIST
He's going to be blind.

THICK-GLASSES MAN
Told you. A blind astronomer.

ECONOMIST
What does he need?

KOPPEL
\$600M for a supercomputer. The rest is peanuts.

The stone is passed to a high-ranking Israeli INTELLIGENCE OFFICER, who holds a Hebrew-language newspaper in front of him. He passes the stone to the last person sitting next to Leider.

LEIDER
Thank you, Dr. Koppel.

KOPPEL
Excuse me for being sentimental. It's like discovering a vast oil deposit that will never run dry.

LEIDER

It gives me comfort to know that we are not only dealing with weapons and espionage but also with pure, benevolent science.

ECONOMIST

I'm going to pour cold water on your enthusiasm. Whether we buy it, or somebody else does, the Chinese or the Russians, it doesn't matter. The market will be flooded with platinum. This will lead to an immediate crash in platinum prices. South Africa will go bankrupt. But it won't just affect platinum; everything will be affected. Gold will also lose its value. All reserves could suddenly become worthless. Can you imagine a total collapse of stock exchanges, banks, and investment companies? The outcome will be widespread panic. Governments will collapse, and we risk irreversible destabilization of nations. Anarchy will certainly follow. Sorry!

Koppel's face exhibits his disappointment. Leider signals to the man beside her to speak.

MOSSAD AGENT

As a Mossad agent, I can tell you how easy it is to lure an egocentric academic who desperately needs money. He will sell his program to any mobster or oligarch willing to pay. The Chinese have already engaged with him, and who knows if they are the only ones. Zandman is a real problem. He is toxic.

KOPPEL

What do you mean by 'toxic'?

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

When you have a toxic substance in your fridge, you take it out. You eliminate it, right? You don't let your children have it. In fact, anyone with access to this program should be considered toxic. Everyone!

Leider signals to the psychologist.

PSYCHOLOGIST

You showed us a photo of Zandman's bookshelf. Galileo Galilei, Giordano Bruno, Einstein. These are his role models. He believes that he deserves the Nobel Prize. Now we are told that he's getting blind!

KOPPEL

He is not blind yet. It's a process.

PSYCHOLOGIST

It's doomsday for him. It's terrible! He must be emotionally unstable. Unpredictable. His decisions are not necessarily logical at the moment.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

I'm worried that Zandman may leak his program. Even accidentally.

MOSSAD AGENT

It doesn't matter who buys it.

LEIDER

(to Koppel)

You are our advisor. What say you?

KOPPEL

I'm a scientist. Your decision here has nothing to do with science.

LEIDER

You brought us this.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Stop torturing him. He's new here.

KOPPEL

It's OK.

LEIDER

You know the full picture. Better than any of us. Why not share your conclusions?

KOPPEL

I gave you the facts. I have no knowledge of medicine, psychology, economics, or politics.

LEIDER

Does Zandman know who you are? Does he know who we are?

KOPPEL

No. Not yet.

LEIDER

We need to ensure he works exclusively with us.

KOPPEL

He has a PhD student, Mira, who has been working with him for years now. She wrote the program, so she knows everything about it.

(pause)

She might suspect that I am hiding something.

(pause)

I am committed to secrecy, but I am a bad liar. I will not be able to lie to her. We will need to disclose our identity, or she will stop cooperating.

LEIDER

You'll find the best way to address this issue.

KOPPEL

We are good friends. Very good. But I can't vouch for her credibility.

LEIDER

What do you mean?

KOPPEL

Whether she has interests beyond her doctorate.

LEIDER

That's very honest of you to say. Anyway, we'll check both of them. Is Zandman married?

KOPPEL

Nope.

LEIDER

Gay?

KOPPEL

He is a widower.

LEIDER

Check it out. And also look into gambling, cards, drugs. Maybe he has a shrink, a rabbi, a guru. I want him X-rayed! And her too.

(Pause)

Your head is on the line here.

Leider looks at her wristwatch. She whispers to the colleagues on either side and rises.

LEIDER (cont'd)

Time for lunch!

All participants leave the hall, except Leider, the intelligence officer, and the Mossad agent, who are chatting in a far corner. Leider signals the MUSTACHED MAN to approach. She whispers to him, and he nods.

Koppel collects his printed pages and the plastic stone box and exits the hall. Leider signals him to join her.

70 INT. CIM CAFETERIA - DAY

Leider and Koppel sit on a sofa in a far corner.

LEIDER

I understand your frustration.

KOPPEL

Do you?

LEIDER

Our job here is to consider the pros and cons, and act - if necessary.

KOPPEL

It never occurred to me that innocent people are considered 'toxic'.

LEIDER

It's a figure of speech.

KOPPEL

I find myself a member of a firing squad.

LEIDER

As I said, that's our job here.

KOPPEL
It's your job, perhaps, not mine.

SOUND OF THE HELICOPTER BLADES SPINNING.

LEIDER
I'm worried about this Mira. She tried to gather information about you. Did it occur to you that she is using you?

KOPPEL
I would notice if she were using me. We have become friends. That's all.

LEIDER
Friends? You are dating! We know everything. You are transparent.

KOPPEL
I thought my private life was supposed to be just that - private.

She stands up.

LEIDER
You don't have a private life. Nobody here has a private life.

He rises.

LEIDER (cont'd)
Don't forget who you are working for.

71 EXT./INT. MIRA'S BUILDING - DAY

The mustached man sits in a car parked facing the building.

POV: THE RED-BEARDED DRIVER STEPS OUT OF THE 'PEST CONTROL SERVICES' VAN. HIS COLLEAGUE, SPORTING A VIBRANT RED FORELOCK, FOLLOWS HIM WITH A PESTICIDE SPRAYER. BOTH WEAR HATS AND MASKS.

He watches them enter Mira's building.

72 INT. MIRA'S APARTMENT - DAY

The Redheads quietly break into Mira's apartment. They put on gloves and open drawers and cupboards. They use pens to move items. They take photos of their findings.

INSERT: A PHOTO OF ZANDMAN AND MIRA WITH THE CHINESE BUSINESSMEN AT THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA.

INSERT: A PHOTO WITH EXECUTIVES AT THE BRANDENBURG GATE.

INSERT: MIRA'S SOUTH AFRICAN PASSPORT.

They take a look under the bed.

INSERT: A TORN CONDOM PACKET.

They attach a tracking chip to one of her shoes and set up a LED bulb spy camera in the vintage lamp near the aquarium.

73 INT. ICM HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Leider feeds the aquarium fish.

CELLPHONE RING.

LEIDER

...Good afternoon. Thank you for calling back... Yes... I'm afraid it is quite urgent... Professor Zandman recommended you...

She looks at her wristwatch.

LEIDER (cont'd)

OK, I'll be there. Thank you!

74 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS/ZANDMAN'S ROOM - DAY

Mira washes cups and cutlery at the kitchen sink.

MIRA (OFF)

This CIM is a mystery to me.

ZANDMAN

Why 'mystery'?

MIRA (OFF)

Their website is a joke. It provides no information. No address, no nothing. I couldn't reach them by phone either. It stinks!

ZANDMAN

What do you suggest?

MIRA
Not to sign anything.

ZANDMAN
And then what?

MIRA
I don't know.

ZANDMAN
I don't know either. I like this
Koppel, but perhaps I'm naive.

MIRA
Are you going to sign it?

ZANDMAN
Money! That's what matters! Koppel
doesn't flatter me with Chinese
sweets. The Germans didn't offer
anything yet. And Koppel is here, not
in Peking. I trust him. Do you have
any issues with him?

MIRA
Quite the contrary! I like him!

ZANDMAN
I hear Cupid's steps since you met.

MIRA
Is it difficult for you?

ZANDMAN
Not really. My crush was childish.
Naive. And it is history.

MIRA
Are you sure?

ZANDMAN
My love for you is a kind of fatherly
care.

MIRA
You are gracious.

ZANDMAN
OK now! Let's change the subject.
What could go wrong with this CIM?

MIRA

What I know is that when a commercial entity funds a researcher, he loses control. Whether it's CIM, the Chinese, the Germans. They are all the same.

(pause)

Remember Maiman?

ZANDMAN

Vaguely. Laser something?

MIRA

Hughes Aircraft. They made millions with his invention. Registered the patent and left him with nothing.

ZANDMAN

I didn't know that.

MIRA

Not to mention the Nobel Prize that went to others.

ZANDMAN

That's unfair. Tragic.

MIRA

CIM will file for a patent on our program and say farewell to Professor Zandman.

ZANDMAN

He's a decent guy, Koppel. You know him better, don't you?

75 EXT. ZANDMAN'S BUILDING - EVENING

Zandman gets out of a taxi and approaches the building's entrance. The red-bearded man with an attaché case politely opens the main door for him enters the Mustached Man's car.

76 INT./EXT. MIRA'S BUILDING PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The Mustached Man holds binoculars.

POV [THROUGH BINOCULARS]: KOPPEL LEAVES THE YELLOW JEEP AND ENTERS THE BUILDING. A LIGHT TURNED ON IN A WINDOW, AND KOPPEL HUGS MIRA INSIDE.

77 INT. MIRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mira and Koppel are hugging shortly.

MIRA
Tea, right?

KOPPEL
Yes, please.

She goes to the kitchen.

MIRA (OFF)
How was your day?

KOPPEL
Frustrating.

MIRA (OFF)
Frustrating?

KOPPEL
Long story.

MIRA (OFF)
I'm curious.

KOPPEL
Would you like to eat out tonight?

She brings a tray with cups.

MIRA
I don't feel like going out.

KOPPEL
Are you OK?
(Pause)
Did something happen?

MIRA
I tried to find you on CIM's website.
(pause)
You're not listed there.

KOPPEL
I'll tell the administrator.

MIRA
Try calling them. Go ahead. Try it!

She goes to the kitchen.

MIRA (OFF)
Don't bother.

KOPPEL
What's the problem?
Mira?

She is back with a teapot.

MIRA
The problem is that they don't exist.
All I get are vague answers. Evasive.
As if this CIM is a secret
organization.

KOPPEL
It is, actually.

MIRA
Pax Silica, right? AI told me that.

KOPPEL
I had to keep it from you.

MIRA
Secrets and Lies, ha?

KOPPEL
CIM stands for CIA and Mossad.

MIRA
Oh! That's the thing! You claimed you
are the Chief scientist. It's right
on your business card.

KOPPEL
I **am** a scientist.

MIRA
You're a fraud. An imposter.

Koppel puts on his jacket and approaches the door, but she
blocks his way.

KOPPEL
You don't want an imposter here. Let
me.

She doesn't move.

KOPPEL (cont'd)

Please?

She unzips his jacket and leads him back to the chair. She fills the two tea cups. She sits.

MIRA

It will be cold.

He sits down.

MIRA (cont'd)

I feel that I'm being used.

KOPPEL

Used by whom? For what?

MIRA

By you. By your CIM. I don't know what for. To get close to Zandman? To the software? Am I a tool for you to get richer? I really don't know!

He stops drinking, collects his jacket, and rises.

KOPPEL

Perhaps we should better separate business from pleasure.

She grabs him to sit and doesn't leave his hand.

MIRA

I am confused.

KOPPEL

I started this job a week ago. They recruited me for scientific research, not for your project. I had no idea about their true nature.

MIRA

CIA and Mossad are not welfare organizations. You are either naive or brainwashed.

KOPPEL

Perhaps.

MIRA

You are both.

KOPPEL

Anyway, this project must remain a secret.

MIRA

Go on. I listen.

KOPPEL

Someone is watching us.

MIRA

Watching us? Why watching us?

KOPPEL

24/7. It's for your protection.

MIRA

Protect me from what?

KOPPEL

The Chinese who visited you... They are not Mother Theresa. The people you met in Berlin build submarines, did you know that?

MIRA

I should have told you that. I'm sorry.

KOPPEL

They are greedy and cruel. They may kill to obtain your program. CIM will not allow this to happen.

Koppel approaches the window and cautiously moves the curtain aside.

He signals her to get closer.

KOPPEL

See the white van?

MIRA'S POV: THE 'PEST CONTROL SERVICES' VAN.

MIRA (OFF)

Are you comfortable being followed?

KOPPEL (OFF)

That's the price I pay. It reassures them of my loyalty. I've become a red flag because they know we are friends.

She gets closer to him. He embraces her to his body.

MIRA
It's too much for me.

KOPPEL
I'm sorry I dragged you into this
non-scientific environment.

MIRA
I like your environment. You know
that.

KOPPEL
I know.

MIRA
You are irresistible.

KOPPEL
I am.

MIRA
I'm going to take a shower.

78 INT. ZANDMAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Zandman prepares for sleeping. He arranges the shoes, sandals, slippers, and sneakers in a straight line. He positions the pillows meticulously, covers himself with a blanket, and closes his eyes.

BAR MELANCHOLIC TUNE

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK/HALLUCINATION: THE BAR SINGER IS VERY CLOSE TO HIM. MIRA'S COLORFUL SCARF IS ON THE SINGER'S NECK.

He opens his eyes.

79 INT. CIM HEADQUARTERS/WIRETAPPING ROOM - NIGHT

Two technicians wearing headphones connect and tune electronic equipment. They adjust the pictures on several TV monitors in front of them.

POV: MIRA'S ROOM. KOPPEL APPROACHES THE BOOKSHELF.

TECHNICIAN A

(Hebrew)

He's a book maniac. She's naked in the shower, and he's searching for books.

TECHNICIAN B

Hamburger?

TECHNICIAN A

Good idea!

They get up and leave.

80 INT. MIRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Koppel scans the bookshelf.

POV: NEAR ARCHERY AND CYCLING TROPHIES, TANTRA EROTIC FIGURES SUPPORT A MIXTURE OF ART ALBUMS, CAT DISEASES MANUALS, AND CLASSICS BOOKS.

Mira is combing her hair.

Koppel moves to the other wall.

POV: COMPUTER SCIENCE AND PROGRAMMING UNIVERSITY DIPLOMAS

MIRA (OFF)

You can feed the fish.

Koppel goes to the aquarium. He opens the fish food box and smells it with disgust. He turns on the vintage lamp.

POV: CLEAR FINGER TRACKS ALONG THE DUSTY CERAMIC BASE.

He takes a closer look at the bulb.

POV: THE LED BULB HAS A BUILT-IN SPY CAMERA.

MIRA (OFF) (cont'd)

In five minutes!

Koppel brings the spy camera very close to the aquarium.

81 INT. CIM HEADQUARTERS/WIRETAPPING ROOM - NIGHT

The technicians enter the room with drinks and hamburgers.

LOUD AIR BUBBLES

The technicians' faces express dismay. They drop down the hamburgers.

TECHNICIAN A

(Hebrew)

What the fuck!

82 INT. MIRA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mira and Koppel are making love.

83 INT. MIRA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Mira brushes her teeth. Koppel enters the bathroom. He signals 'be quiet' and drags her to the aquarium. He shows her the spy camera. They leave the apartment.

KOPPEL

My apartment is bugged too. Zandman's too. We are being followed now. You go to your office and I'll call you later.

84 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS / ZANDMAN'S ROOM - DAY

Zandman tries different magnifier lenses.

Mira enters, holding a few pages.

CELLPHONE RING.

ZANDMAN

Zandman... Hello Professor Lanzani!
How are you?... Not easy... I'm still
digesting the new situation...

Zandman gets up and repositions a photo frame on the wall to be perfectly horizontal.

ZANDMAN (OFF)

Yes... Of course I will... In your
clinic... I'll be there... Thank you
for calling!

(MORE)

ZANDMAN (OFF) (cont'd)
(hangs up)

ZANDMAN
The ophthalmologist. He wants to
discuss with me some 'Experimental
procedure'.

MIRA
Will you?

ZANDMAN
Of course I will!

85 INT. LANZANI'S CLINIC - DAY

Lanzani prepares an espresso, while Zandman sits beside a
coffee table.

LANZANI
I had a good friend in London, Jim
Jackson. We were specializing in
ophthalmology.

Lanzani shows Zandman photos from the graduation ceremony.

LANZANI (OFF)
That's me. That's him. Anyway, I
returned here, while he became a
professor at King's College
University Hospital. The best!

The coffee maker steams, and Lanzani turns off the stove.

LANZANI (OFF) (cont'd)
It so happens that he is a leading
researcher in Age-related Macular
Degeneration (AMD), which is what you
have.

LANZANI
Sugar?

ZANDMAN
No, no sugar, I'll have some milk,
please.

Lanzani brings milk to the table.

LANZANI

We had a friendly conversation yesterday, and it turns out that next week he will be at Princess Mary's Hospital. It's a British military hospital in Akrotiri. Cyprus.

Lanzani pours coffee into the two cups on the table. Zandman adds milk.

LANZANI (cont'd)

The bottom line is that I took the liberty of arranging an appointment for you this Friday at 21:00.

ZANDMAN

What can I say?! It's wonderful! It's on short notice. I'll have to check for a ticket.

LANZANI

You are not the first patient I have referred to him. The best way to get there is by helicopter with an air taxi service, which takes you from wherever suits you to his clinic. Door-to-door service. It isn't cheap, but it's worth the price.

He writes a telephone number on a prescription page. Then he crumples it and throws it into the bin. He writes the number again on a blank page and gives it to Zandman.

LANZANI (cont'd)

That's their number. You tell them your preferred departure point.

(They get up)

Think about it and let me know.

(pause)

Jackson's first consultation is free.

86 INT. TA UNIVERSITY CAFETERIA - MORNING

Koppel and Mira are having breakfast.

MIRA

You should have seen him - smiling, optimistic. A different person. He was so excited about it.

(Pause)

Aren't you excited?

KOPPEL

Not at all.

MIRA

Try to be empathic.

KOPPEL

I'm intrigued.

MIRA

Why intrigued? If this professor can help him, that would be fantastic! Cyprus is a half-hour flight.

KOPPEL

Which travel agent did you call?

Mira shows him the note, and he dials.

INSERT: 050-5920507... > AVRI (PILOT)

He puts the cellphone on the table.

MIRA

What's wrong?

KOPPEL

Tomorrow you cancel the flight. You say he is sick.

MIRA

Why on earth?

Koppel calls Avri.

KOPPEL

(Hebrew)

Hi Avri. It's doctor Koppel... Just a question - Can you take me to Crete?... Too far, I see... What about Cyprus?... Why not?... No life vests... Forget it. Thanks!

(Hangs up)

This 'travel agent' is CIM's pilot.

MIRA

CIM's pilot?

KOPPEL

I know him, that's why I have his number.

MIRA

I don't follow you.

KOPPEL

No professor is waiting for him anywhere! Zandman will board CIM's helicopter at night. No passport control, no nothing. Ten minutes after crossing the coastline, the helicopter will turn back and land at the CIM helipad.

MIRA

So what's the point?

KOPPEL

The point is that Zandman will not get out. No one will know how he disappeared.

Mira stops chewing.

KOPPEL (cont'd)

General Videla practiced it in Argentina.

MIRA

What a mess!

She pushes her plate away.

KOPPEL

Don't be surprised if I disappear too. PUFF! These people are creative.

MIRA

I'll have to tell him something.

KOPPEL

Tell him the flight is postponed.

(Pause)

Listen carefully: CIM regards him as 'toxic'. You will not receive a dollar from them. They will destroy this project. They have already inspected all your drawers. They are now in Zandman's apartment.

MIRA

What's your plan now?

KOPPEL
 Tomorrow I'll give Zandman the
 analysis and offer him a fake
 contract.

MIRA
 Why delude him? It's really cruel.

KOPPEL
 Don't you understand? It's not the
 contract. It's not the money. It's
 his life!

(Pause)
 We'll have to smuggle him away.

MIRA
 That's a tricky game we are playing.

KOPPEL
 Perhaps.

She caresses his hand.

MIRA
 I hate this. I hate you.

KOPPEL
 I can feel that.

MIRA
 You intoxicate me.

87 EXT. LATROUN VINEYARD - DAY

THE MONASTERY BELL RINGS.

The Chinese businessmen leave the vineyard with bags full of
 stones and enter their luxury car.

88 EXT./INT. LUXURY CAR - DAY (TRAVELING)

CHINESE MUSIC

The Chinese drive their car, enjoying the music.

ROAD SIGN TO TEL AVIV

89 EXT./INT. 'PEST CONTROL SERVICES' VAN - DAY (TRAVELING)

The 'PEST CONTROL SERVICES' van parks under a tree close to the sharp curve where the warning sign poles are on the margin.

POV OF THE RED-BEARDED (BINOCULARS): THE LUXURY CAR APPROACHES THEM.

The Red-haired holds a transmitter, ready to move the switch.

POV OF THE RED-BEARDED (BINOCULARS): THE LUXURY CAR IS ABOUT TO TURN AT THE CURVE.

RED-BEARDED

Now!

The luxury car misses the curve and dives into the ravine.

CRASH NOISE

The Red-haired removes the transmitter's batteries and wraps it up. The Red-bearded goes to the curve.

POV OF THE RED-BEARDED: THE OVERTURNED CAR EMITS SMOKE AND FLUID.

The Red-bearded enters the 'PEST CONTROL SERVICES' van that leaves the scene.

90 INT. CIM HEADQUARTERS/LEIDER'S ROOM - DAY

LOUD AIR BUBBLES

Leider sits at her desk facing Koppel.

LEIDER

Very funny!

She turns the screen back to her.

POV: KOPPEL'S SELFIE GIVING THE FINGER, THE TANTRA EROTIC FIGURES IN FRONT OF THE SWIMMING FISH. BABA LOOKS AT THE FISH.

LEIDER (cont'd)

Anything to say?

KOPPEL

I assume you didn't call me to show me that.

LEIDER

I don't like your jokes, Doctor Koppel.

KOPPEL

With all due respect, ma'am, this is not a joke. I don't like being followed.

LEIDER

Like it or not, that's our practice here. It has proven effective for many years.

KOPPEL

I still don't like it. I'm a scientist, not a criminal.

LEIDER

You are an employee like everyone else here. No exceptions.

KOPPEL

I don't think I can tolerate this practice.

LEIDER

You have no choice.

KOPPEL

Don't I?

LEIDER

Read your contract. You'll be supervised indefinitely. For life.

(Pause)

We cannot tolerate noncompliance. I mean it!

As he exits the room, he bumps into the mustached man and the Redheads as they enter.

91 INT. CIM HEADQUARTERS/KOPPEL'S ROOM - DAY

Koppel stares at the flamingos.

CELLPHONE NOTIFICATION BUZZ

Koppel taps the cellphone.

POV: MIRA - TURN ON THE TV!

He turns on the TV.

POV: FIRST RESPONDERS BEHIND THE REPORTER CARRYING STRETCHERS FROM THE CHINESE CAR. THE REPORTER HANDS OVER THE MICROPHONE TO A POLICE OFFICER.

POLICE OFFICER

Voltage spikes can confuse the system, causing the steering lock to think the car is 'off' and that the driver has exited the vehicle.

Koppel turns off the TV. He wraps the XRF Analyzer.

92 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS / ZANDMAN'S ROOM- MORNING

Zandman sits at his desk, Mira's thesis in front of him.

Mira enters. She holds some pages.

MIRA

Did you call me?

He signals to her to come to his side. He opens the last page of the draft and looks at her. She glances at him, puzzled. He looks at her poker-faced. He solemnly signs to approve the thesis and hands it to her. She hugs him tightly.

KNOCK ON THE DOOR

ZANDMAN

Come in!

Koppel enters with a bottle of wine . Mira and Zandman are still close.

KOPPEL

Am I interrupting?

MIRA

I finished! He approved it!

KOPPEL

Congratulations, Dr. Hoffmann!

Koppel and Mira embrace. Koppel, still reluctant to let go, tries to hand the bottle to Zandman.

ZANDMAN

Go on, don't let me interrupt.

Koppel puts the new XRF Analyzer box on the table.

KOPPEL

Courtesy of CIM!

He pulls out the lab report and reads aloud:

KOPPEL (cont'd)

Latroun 29A. Nickel, Cobalt, Chrome, Osmium, Gallium, Iridium, Platinum - listen to this! 63.8 Grams per tonne.

Koppel hands Zandman the report. Zandman examines it with his magnifying glass. Koppel and Mira exchange glances.

KOPPEL

It's official. By the government lab.

Zandman turns to the window, wiping his eyes.

KOPPEL (OFF)

The geologist was very curious about its origin.

ZANDMAN

Do you trust him?

KOPPEL

More than I trust myself. We spent a year together. Shared a room.

ZANDMAN

Where did you study?

KOPPEL

Orthopedics.

ZANDMAN

I didn't know you are a -

KOPPEL

We were paratroopers. Mapping minefields.

Koppel reveals a long scar on his leg.

KOPPEL (cont'd)
I missed one.

Koppel opens the bottle and pours.

ZANDMAN
Excuse me for being sentimental.
(pause)
So we have a double celebration!

The three raise their glasses.

MIRA
To Nathanael!

ZANDMAN
To your thesis!

KOPPEL
To Cyrus!

She lays three pages in front of them.

MIRA
Two more in the Indian Ocean, and one
in the Caribbean.

ZANDMAN
What are you talking about?

MIRA
Fresh results. The program delivers.

ZANDMAN
I knew it!

MIRA
I must leave you.

ZANDMAN
What's the rush?

MIRA
The pharmacy is about to close. For
Baba. Sorry. See you later.

She leaves in a hurry.

ZANDMAN
Angel.

KOPPEL
The board would like to meet you.

ZANDMAN

What do they want?

KOPPEL

To know you. Personally, I mean. This is going to be a long marriage, so neither party must develop illusions.

ZANDMAN

Of course.

KOPPEL

We are interested in moving forward.

ZANDMAN

Where to?

KOPPEL

A contract.

ZANDMAN

I had an uncle, a great lawyer. He once told me: 'When two parties sign a contract, they both contrive how not to keep it'.

(Pause)

Anyway, we should hurry. You are not the only one interested in this project.

KOPPEL

I can imagine. The board asked me if your program could be stolen. What if, God forbid, something happens to you?

ZANDMAN

Mira will run it better than I.

Koppel hands Zandman a CIM folder. Zandman reads it with the magnifying glass.

POV: INVESTMENT CONTRACT (BLURRY)

KOPPEL (OFF)

It is just a draft. You can mark, add, or strike out whatever you wish to change. The appendix is a non-disclosure agreement.

ZANDMAN

I'll take a look at it when I'm back from Cyprus.

KOPPEL

Cyprus?

ZANDMAN

Yes, I'm going there for my eyes.
It's a consultation.

KOPPEL

I need something sweet and a cup of
coffee.

They leave the office.

93 INT. TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY / CAFETERIA - DAY

Koppel and Zandman are having coffee near the window.

KOPPEL

Sugar?

ZANDMAN

I hope this ophthalmologist is as
good as they say he is.

KOPPEL

If he recommends an operation, will
you risk it?

ZANDMAN

One hopes for the best, but deep down
you know there's a chance you could
be wrong.

KOPPEL'S POV: THE 'PEST CONTROL SERVICES' VAN PARKS IN THE
PARKING LOT.

ZANDMAN (OFF)

Have you faced a similar dilemma in
your life?

KOPPEL

I'm facing one right now.

ZANDMAN

A surgery?

KOPPEL

Your program. Our project, if I may
say so, will start an economic
disaster. Worldwide. Rare metals
prices will plunge. Stock markets
will collapse. A catastrophe.

PAUSE

ZANDMAN

I admit I never thought about it.

KOPPEL

Me neither. I realized it at our board meeting.

ZANDMAN

Ten minutes ago, you asked me to sign the contract, and now you are telling me this. Quite an upheaval. But you are right. What do you propose?

KOPPEL

I've been grappling with this dilemma for a week. I cannot sleep. I admire your invention. I can see its fantastic benefits for mankind. But the dangers it creates are enormous. And there is now another factor to consider -

ZANDMAN

Which is?

KOPPEL

Your life. You've become toxic. An imminent danger to world economy. You may be kidnapped tonight, and then who knows? And I blame myself for this.

ZANDMAN

It's not your fault. My legacy, if any, will stem from the idea, not from the application.

KOPPEL

It's either your idea or your life. It is your last chance now. Stop everything, destroy the program, and vanish to an unknown island where nobody knows you, or -

(Pause)

I will support you no matter what choice you make. You invented this beautiful yet dangerous creation, so it's your decision.

KOPPEL'S POV: THE 'PEST CONTROL SERVICES' VAN PARKS IN THE PARKING LOT.

KOPPEL (OFF)

My concern now is to make sure that nobody harms you. Do you see the van there?

ZANDMAN'S POV: THE 'PEST CONTROL SERVICES' VAN PARKS IN THE PARKING LOT. A BLURRY SPOT IN THE CENTER.

ZANDMAN

I see a white van.

KOPPEL

It belongs to CIM.

PAUSE

ZANDMAN

Am I being followed?

KOPPEL

Your office and your apartment are bugged. Spy cameras.

ZANDMAN

And you know this, and let me talk?

KOPPEL

A trick. They believe that you are cooperating.

ZANDMAN

This is really too much! I no longer know who I'm dealing with. This CIM is a fraud! You tricked me!

(Pause)

I am running out of time. I'll do business with the devil if I have to. I'll find another devil. A more ethical one.

KOPPEL

Don't expect any ethics. I know what I'm talking about.

ZANDMAN

So what should I do now?

KOPPEL

You go back to your office and work as if nothing happened.

(MORE)

KOPPEL (cont'd)

Then, take a taxi home and carry on as usual. We'll talk in the morning and decide how to proceed.

ZANDMAN

OK, If you say so.

KOPPEL

Do not talk to anybody. Text me if there is anything unusual.

ZANDMAN

What about you? Aren't you in danger?

KOPPEL

We all are.

ZANDMAN

I'll get back to work now.

As Zandman leaves, Koppel dials his cellphone.

KOPPEL

Do you know the botanical garden?... I'm waiting for you there. In the greenhouse.

94 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS/MIRA'S ROOM - DAY

Zandman runs the program.

POV: SOME AREAS ON THE SCREEN ARE BLURRED.

He looks tired and wipes his glasses while the program continues to run.

DISTURBING LOUD BUZZ

Zandman becomes alert and looks at the screen.

POV:

Cyrus - Earth Passing ±0

August 25, year: 2025 04:45:36

POSITIVE Encounter

Zandman taps on the keyboard.

INSERT:

coordinates for Cyrus - Earth Passing

East 34.41 North 29.01

Ras-Bandura (Egypt)

Zandman glances at his wristwatch and taps the keyboard as he watches the screen.

INSERT: A SATELLITE MAP OF THE SINAI PENINSULA

PRINTER PRINTING NOISE

He pulls the printed page, folds it, and puts it in his pocket. He dials his cellphone.

ZANDMAN

I need a taxi, please... Tel-Aviv University... One person... No luggage... To Eilat... Yes, I know it's a long way... Right now... Zandman, Professor Zandman... No, I don't mind a female driver... At the main entrance... In ten minutes...

He hesitates for a moment, then writes a note:

INSERT: CHECK THE LAST HIT. I WENT TO VISIT. SEE YOU TOMORROW! NATHANAEL

He puts the note on his desk and arranges his pens and pencils around it. He puts the XRF Analyzer, a hat, and a water bottle into a backpack and exits the office.

He waits for the elevator, but suddenly turns to the emergency staircase and exits the building by the back door.

95 INT. TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY/BOTANICAL GARDEN GREENHOUSE - DAY

Koppel and Mira wander between the plants.

MIRA

How beautiful.

KOPPEL

Was the pharmacy open?

MIRA

It was just an excuse. I didn't want to disturb you. I've been on this campus for 3 years and I never came here. Paradise!

KOPPEL

And we are Adam and Eve, I suppose.

MIRA

Good thinking.

KOPPEL

We know where the snake hides. But where is God?

MIRA

Don't worry. He can hear us.

KOPPEL

And I thought there are no microphones here.

They stop by a sign that reads:

DON'T TOUCH! - CARNIVOROUS PLANTS!

They watch a fly approaching a snap trap of a Venus flytrap (*Dionaea muscipula*).

KOPPEL (OFF)

Watch your Paradise.

The flower closes rapidly around the fluttering insect.

MIRA

(shivers)

Brr... Any news from your CIM people?

KOPPEL (OFF)

I tried to resign, but they won't let me leave. It's a Catholic marriage.

MIRA

Did you tell them you were Jewish?

KOPPEL

Not funny! They eliminate disobedient scientists. Just as the ancient clergy did.

KOPPEL

I can't bear the idea that I am complicit in his killing.

MIRA

You couldn't have foreseen all this.

KOPPEL

I should have known! It's unforgivable.

(Shouts to the sky)

Do you hear me?

Mira taps her cellphone.

MIRA

He doesn't answer. I mean, Zandman.

She looks at her wristwatch.

MIRA (cont'd)

My Baba!

They walk briskly towards the office.

96 INT./EXT. IN THE TAXI - DAY (TRAVELING)

Zandman sits in the back seat with his bag pack. The **Female Driver** adjusts her rear-view mirror to check on him.

FEMALE DRIVER

May I turn on the radio?

ZANDMAN

Sure.

She turns on the radio.

ASTROLOGER (V.O.)

This week, the sun is shifting from Cancer to Leo. Venus is in a harmonious position with Neptune and Mars.

Zandman looks at the car in front of the taxi. He covers one eye.

POV: THE PLATE NUMBER. THE BLURRY SPOT APPEARS.

He covers the other eye.

POV: THE PLATE NUMBER. THE BLURRY SPOT IS BIGGER.

ASTROLOGER (V.O.) (cont'd)

Leos may feel a strong urge to care for others and experience significant emotional changes.

The Female Driver lowers the radio volume.

FEMALE DRIVER

Do you believe in astrology?

ZANDMAN

It's nonsense.

FEMALE DRIVER

There's always something good! Just listen!

Zandman looks at the landscape. He falls asleep.

ASTROLOGER (V.O.)

Next week, the Moon, Venus, and Neptune will align. This is a great time for home improvements: update your furniture, paint your apartment, and tend to your garden...

97 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS - DAY

Koppel lets Baba out of the wicker picnic basket. Mira reads Zandman's note and hurries to run the Cyrus program. The screens flash red alarms.

LOUD BUZZ

MIRA

(Troubled)

Jonah!

She points to the screen.

She calls Zandman, but there is no answer. She texts him.

INSERT: CALL ME ASAP!

Koppel gets closer to the screen.

POV:

Cyrus - Earth Passing ±0

August 25, year: 2025 04:45:36

POSITIVE Encounter

KOPPEL

Anything wrong?

Mira types frantically.

POV: THE NUMBER "0+" FLASHES CONSPICUOUSLY.

INSERT:

coordinates for Cyrus - Earth Passing

East 34.41 North 29.01

Ras-Bandura (Egypt)

Mira displays a satellite map of the Sinai Peninsula.

KOPPEL (cont'd)
 Congratulations!

MIRA
 Look closely.

KOPPEL
 Ras-Bandura. I snorkeled there.
 What's the problem?

MIRA
 Look at the date!

POV: THE NUMBER "0+" FLASHES CONSPICUOUSLY.

KOPPEL
 What does it mean?

MIRA
 Zero means now.

KOPPEL
 You have a bug in the program.

MIRA
 There is no bug. Zero is zero.
 (Pause)
 It's happening tonight.

They both glance at each other and at the screen again.

POV: THE ON-SCREEN TIME CLOCK COUNTS DOWN EVERY SECOND.

MIRA (cont'd)
 The bloody program goes forward too.
 (pause)
 It will kill him.

She dials but gets no answer. She texts.

INSERT: COME BACK RIGHT AWAY!

MIRA (cont'd)
 (to herself)
 This is bad.
 (louder)
 If this fragment hits -
 (Pause)
 He must have misread the date.

MIRA (cont'd)

He wouldn't have gone there if he had seen it. He's rational. He probably took a taxi.

Koppel signals 'be silent'. They leave the office without locking the door, and run to the back door to exit the building.

98 EXT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS / PARKING LOT - DAY

The Redheads enter the building with attaché cases.

99 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS / ZANDMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

The Red-bearded attaches a silencer to his handgun and opens the door. They find Baba pissing on Zandman's table. The Red-haired approaches a spy camera.

RED-HAIRED

(To the spy camera)

Check his last conversation. Quick!

The Red-bearded offers Baba a cake and milk from Zandman's refrigerator.

TECHNICIAN A (V.O.)

Ras Bandura something. He went to Eilat.

RED-BEARDED

Did you say Eilat?

TECHNICIAN A (V.O.)

He took a taxi. An hour ago.

100 INT./EXT. TA UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE - DAY

Koppel and Mira are about to leave campus in the yellow Jeep. He stops and dials.

KOPPEL

(Hebrew)

Hi Avri, it's Koppel... Are you busy now?... In the pool... Yes, right now... A Bedouin lamb stew... Two persons... Sort of romantic... Exactly. I knew you'd join us!... Ras-Bandura... You'll manage.

(MORE)

KOPPEL (cont'd)
 It's night, you know the Egyptians...
 Good! At the helipad in half an hour.
 (hangs up)
 Touch and go.

MIRA
 We may die there together.

Koppel kisses her.

KOPPEL
 It will be my pleasure.

MIRA
 What a cinematic cliché.

KOPPEL
 I don't mind. We won't feel anything.

101 INT. GAS STATION - DAY

The Female Driver brings a tray with sandwiches and drinks to the table.

FEMALE DRIVER
 That's for you. That's for me.
 Anything else?

ZANDMAN
 Napkins, perhaps.

FEMALE DRIVER
 It's a long way to Eilat. It's a good
 idea to have a break.

ZANDMAN
 I didn't take any food.

FEMALE DRIVER
 Something urgent, I suppose?

ZANDMAN
 Yes. I'm in a hurry.

FEMALE DRIVER
 Nothing serious, I hope.

ZANDMAN
 It is serious. But exciting.

FEMALE DRIVER
 Let me guess?

ZANDMAN
You have twenty questions.

FEMALE DRIVER
Are you getting married?

ZANDMAN
No.

Zandman counts on his fingers.

FEMALE DRIVER
Meeting your family?

ZANDMAN
No. Pass me the salt, please.

FEMALE DRIVER
Buying property?

ZANDMAN
No.

FEMALE DRIVER
Selling property?

ZANDMAN
No. The water.

FEMALE DRIVER
Some business?

ZANDMAN
No.

FEMALE DRIVER
It's a tough one.

ZANDMAN
Go on, go on, take your time.

FEMALE DRIVER
You don't look like a businessman.
Are you?

ZANDMAN
I wish I were. Fourteen.

FEMALE DRIVER
Are you in construction?

ZANDMAN
No.

He goes to the cashier to pay. He's back.

FEMALE DRIVER
This instrument you carry, something scientific?

ZANDMAN
Yes! Good question! Twelve.

FEMALE DRIVER
Are you in the oil business?

ZANDMAN
You are getting close now.

FEMALE DRIVER
You drill something?

ZANDMAN
You got me! Let's go.

They go the taxi.

102 EXT. THE BOAT DOCK IN EILAT - SUNSET

Zandman tips the Female Driver a very large note and exits the taxi.

ZANDMAN
I don't want you to drive back now.
It's dark, and you must be tired.
This is for the hotel here. Let's
meet in the morning. Don't drive now!

POV: A FISHERMAN REPAIRS A NET ON AN OLD FISHING BOAT.

Zandman approaches the fisherman. They discuss briefly, and the fisherman assists him onto the boat.

The taxi leaves the parking lot as the 'PEST CONTROL SERVICES' van enters. The Redheads enter the 'EILAT SEA EXPERIENCE - SPEEDBOAT RENTAL' office.

103 EXT./INT. CIM HELIPAD/BLUE HELICOPTER - SUNSET

Koppel and Mira approach AVRI, who is busy with the pre-flight check.

KOPPEL
Mira, Avri.

AVRI

Oily.

KOPPEL

No extra load! But we'll have some lamb on the way back.

Koppel walks aside and dials his cellular.

AVRI

He has a sense of humor.

KOPPEL

Doctor Koppel here... Sorry for disturbing you, ma'am... Quite urgent, yes... A meteorite is going to strike here...

Avri removes the window covers, tie-downs, and chocks.

KOPPEL (OFF)

...Tonight, that's why I'm calling you... South of Eilat... On the Sinai coast...

Avri inspects the main rotor blades.

KOPPEL (OFF) (cont'd)

...We don't know how big... There will also be a tsunami...

Avri inspects the tail rotor blades and verifies that they spin freely.

KOPPEL (OFF) (cont'd)

Yes, it's Zandman's program...

Avri inspects the engine compartment and the landing gear.

KOPPEL (OFF) (cont'd)

I would notify the Navy... Flight control... The Egyptians... Jordanians, anyone around the Red Sea...

Koppel signals Mira to get closer.

KOPPEL

Have you decided to eliminate Zandman?

LEIDER (SPEAKER)

We do not use the term 'eliminate'.

KOPPEL
It is a bad decision. If I may
express my opinion.

LEIDER (SPEAKER)
That's what you are paid for. Go on.

KOPPEL
This program could save millions!...
People, not money!...

Avri enters the cockpit.

KOPPEL (cont'd)
You kill him just because someone
might steal his program? That's
ridiculous!

LEIDER (SPEAKER)
Now you listen to me. This tsunami
event, this hit, you said it
yourself - It happens maybe once
every ten thousand years. But the
stock market is tomorrow! What do I
care about what happens in ten
thousand years? I care about today!
That's my responsibility!

The rotors start to spin.

KOPPEL
I'm sorry, I can't hear you... Sleep
tight, ma'am...
(hangs up)

KOPPEL (cont'd)
I still think it's a bug.

Mira and Koppel board the helicopter.

The helicopter takes off.

104 EXT. RED SEA - SUNSET (TRAVELING)

The fishing boat departs from the port, towing a small
dinghy. Zandman wears an orange fluorescent life vest.

105 EXT. THE BOAT DOCK IN EILAT - SUNSET

The Redheads board a red speedboat.

106 INT. CIM BLUE HELICOPTER - NIGHT (TRAVELING)

AVRI

Eilat from Bravo-Juliet-Yankee, Eight hundred, above you in ten minutes, on the low route to Sharem, as per flight plan...

(pause)

Bravo-Juliet-Yankee confirm Alpha.

Avri removes his microphone.

AVRI (cont'd)

(Hebrew)

In Ras-Bandura, I report an engine failure, right?

Koppel gestures thumbs-up.

AVRI (cont'd)

This is Egyptian territory. We land, have this lamb stew, coffee, and head back home.

Koppel gestures thumbs-up.

107 INT. FISHING BOAT - NIGHT (TRAVELING)

The fisherman enters the cabin with a wriggling fish and throws it into the sink. He heats a frying pan.

ZANDMAN

(Hebrew)

How long will it take us?

FISHERMAN

(Hebrew)

About an hour. Depending on the wind.

The fisherman turns on the radio.

GREEK MUSIC

He cleans the fish and fillets it while the music is playing.

FISHERMAN (cont'd)

I can't dock there. It's too shallow.

ZANDMAN

I'll take your dinghy.

FISHERMAN

Alone?

ZANDMAN

Alone. I have a meeting there.

The fisherman's face expresses his astonishment.

108 EXT. THE RED SPEEDBOAT - NIGHT (TRAVELING)

The Redheads hold binoculars.

POV: THE FISHING BOAT CABIN LIGHTS AND NAVIGATION LIGHTS ARE ON.

109 INT. FISHING BOAT - NIGHT (TRAVELING) (CONT.)

The fisherman adjusts the motor speed and checks the direction.

FISHERMAN (OFF)

(Hebrew)

Ras-Bandura is Bedouin area, you know.

ZANDMAN

I didn't know that.

He serves the fish, and they eat.

FISHERMAN

They won't approve of anyone meeting a Bedouin woman there at night. Especially a Jew.

ZANDMAN

I'll keep that in mind.

The fisherman points to his temple signaling 'you are crazy'. He checks the GPS position.

FISHERMAN

We've arrived.

The fisherman turns off the motor. Zandman wipes his mouth.

FISHERMAN (cont'd)

I prefer you pay me now. Just in case. Perhaps somebody sees you meeting a woman.

Zandman pays him.

ZANDMAN
Be back here at sunrise!

FISHERMAN
For the dinghy too, please. Thanks.

ZANDMAN
Can your wife make me a sandwich?

FISHERMAN
I'll bring her along. We'll have
Shakshuka!

The fisherman helps Zandman board the dinghy. Zandman is rowing to shore.

110 EXT. THE RED SPEEDBOAT - NIGHT (CONT.)

The red speedboat stays still and silent. The Red-hair watches the fishing boat through thermal binoculars.

The Red-bearded loads a silenced handgun.

111 INT. CIM BLUE HELICOPTER - NIGHT (TRAVELING) (CONT.)

Koppel, sitting near Avri, offers Mira his hand.

AVRI
Eilat from Bravo-Juliet-Yankee, Eight
hundred, above you in five minutes.

112 EXT. RAS-BANDURA BEACH - NIGHT (TRAVELING)

Waves lap at the shore. A fishnet is hung to dry between palm trees. Stalks of white plastic chairs against the palm trees. A camel sits by a Bedouin tent.

Zandman, still wearing the orange life vest, steps out of the dinghy into the shallow water.

113 INT. CIM BLUE HELICOPTER - NIGHT (TRAVELING) (CONT.)

The helicopter hovers.

BOOM!

An explosion flashes on the horizon, illuminating the sky with a bright yellow-green glow. Green meteor fireballs and yellow fireworks fill the air.

NOISE OF SHATTERING GLASS AND METAL FRAGMENTS

A window pane is cracked.

LOUD BLAST

The helicopter trembles. Mira holds Koppel's hand tightly.

THE PROPELLER ROTATION NOISE VARIES.

Mira's eyeballs bulge with terror. Koppel hugs her.

Avri struggles with the levers and pedals to control the aircraft.

AVRI

Bravo-Juliet-Yankee MAYDAY MAYDAY
MAYDAY.

STATIC NOISE DISRUPTS COMMUNICATION.

AVRI (cont'd)

Bravo-Juliet-Yankee MAYDAY MAYDAY
MAYDAY declaring emergency landing.

Avri force-lands the helicopter on the highway. All three breathe a sigh of relief.

114 INT./EXT. THE FISHING BOAT - SUNRISE

QUIET MURMUR OF SEA WAVES

A breakfast table for three is set up. The fisherman and his wife look out at Ras-Bandura beach. Debris and many white plastic chairs float nearby.

HELICOPTER NOISE

POV: CIM HELICOPTER APPROACHES, HOVERING ABOVE RAS-BANDURA BEACH.

115 INT. CIM BLUE HELICOPTER - SUNRISE

HELICOPTER NOISE

CIM helicopter hovers over Ras-Bandura beach. Avri checks the magnetic compass.

POV: THE MAGNETIC COMPASS SPINS CONTINUOUSLY.

AVRI
(Hebrew)
Crazy compass.

Koppel and Mira look at the damaged waterfront.

POV: THE DINGHY IS HANGING FROM A PALM BRANCH. THE OVERTURNED RED 'EILAT SEA EXPERIENCE' SPEEDBOAT LIES NEARBY WITH TWO MUD-COVERED CORPSES PARTLY TRAPPED BENEATH IT. ZANDMAN'S BODY WEARING THE ORANGE LIFE VEST LIES FACE DOWN.

Avri lands the helicopter, and the three get out. They approach Zandman's body. His hand still clutches the XRF Analyzer.

MIRA
His best friend, Cyrus, killed him.

Avri and Koppel approach the overturned speedboat. They push aside the palm trunk that covers the speedboat. They lift the speedboat enough to let them pull the Redheads bodies.

AVRI
(Hebrew)
God Almighty! What were they doing here?

Avri enters the helicopter. Koppel notices the silenced handgun and puts it in his jacket, and joins Mira at Zandman's body. They turn him face up.

POV: THERE IS A BULLET HOLE IN ZANDMAN'S FOREHEAD.

KOPPEL
Died of natural causes, as they say.

HELICOPTER ROTOR START NOISE

MIRA

Let's go home.

116 INT. DEPARTMENT OF ASTROPHYSICS/ENTRANCE HALL - DAY (CONT.)

A mourning poster of Professor Nathanael Zandman (in English / Hebrew) is affixed to the glass door. People gather silently around a coffin covered with a black cloth. Kaminski places a university wreath on the coffin.

KAMINSKI

(In Hebrew)

Nathanael Zandman was the modern
Giordano Bruno.

Among students and colleagues, familiar faces are seen: The female taxi driver, the fisherman and his wife, the ER doctor, the Russian tow-truck driver, the cafeteria personnel, Leider, and Lanzani. Koppel and Mira are holding hands.

KAMINSKI (OFF)

Nathanael was the epitome of a man of science. His originality, ethics, and compassion made him a true leader, inspiring admiration. He was unanimously elected to be the department's head - a position that he tragically did not realize. He was a dear friend. Both our country and the entire scientific community will miss him greatly.

Mira places the 29A plastic box on the coffin. Leider stretches her hand to Koppel, but he gives her the car keys instead. He then hands her the silenced handgun.

KOPPEL

I believe It's yours.

FADE OUT

THE END