

PRINTS

Past Lives Lawyer Extraordinaire

"Pilot"

by

Michael Cassata

mjcscripts@yahoo.com

TEASER

EXT. ZURICH, SWITZERLAND - BANK ENTRANCE - DAY

CRISTOF PALICHENKO, 50s, Russian, expensive suit and overcoat, exits a black, tinted SUV, flanked by body guards and strides confidently up to the building.

Unbeknownst to Palichenko or his guards, a MAN, 40s, black suit and overcoat, watches from across the street. He contorts his face in obvious disgust at Palichenko, flicks his worn out toothpick to the ground and pats the bulge in his overcoat.

INT. SWISS BANK - OFFICE - DAY

Luxurious office. Hand-crafted Oak desk. A sturdy, metallic box rests off to the side.

Palichenko sits across from OSCAR SCHMIDT, 50s, high-brow demeanor, but obviously uncomfortable in the presence of such a well-known underworld figure.

Oscar Schmidt slides a pen and paper across the desk as respectfully as possible.

SCHMIDT

Everything is all set, Mr. Palichenko.
We received the Past Lives Transference
Will papers from your lawyer this
morning and your secured account will
be established-

PALICHENKO

What do you mean will be?

SCHMIDT

(short, nervous smile)
Once you sign the papers, everything
will be activated.

Palichenko nods and retrieves another set of papers - sheets of music - from his briefcase. They are old and faded and no doubt valuable to their owner.

PALICHENKO

And what about these? I want to make sure they are absolutely secure.

SCHMIDT

Ah, I see you're a lover of music. Might I ask what they are?

PALICHENKO

No, you may not.

SCHMIDT

Of course, forgive me, I forgot my place. (beat) Please, you can place them in this container, which only you will have the code for.

PALICHENKO

Very good, Herr Schmidt.

Palichenko signs the papers and places the music sheets in the container on top of some innocuous items already in place.

SCHMIDT

And rest assured, they will be kept at a constant temperature suitable for optimum preservation.

PALICHENKO

I would expect no less.

Schmidt closes the box and nods to Palichenko, who stares at Schmidt, still unimpressed with his buoyant demeanor.

Schmidt suddenly realizes the intrusion and turns around to stare at something extremely interesting on the ceiling.

Palichenko punches in a code and the box SEALS SHUT.

PALICHENKO

Any time now, Herr Schmidt.

Schmidt cautiously turns around and nods appreciatively.

SCHMIDT

Well then, let's go and deposit your extremely secure account box.

PALICHENKO

It had better be.

EXT. ZURICH, SWITZERLAND - BANK ENTRANCE - DAY

Palichenko and his guards exit the building and head for the SUV illegally parked on the street directly in front of them.

A small, metallic object flies overhead and lands twenty feet away.

Palichenko and his guards spot the object and freeze as it CLANGS here and there and finally stops ... they wait for the inevitable blast, but a plume of smoke releases instead.

A few of the guards laugh, but not Palichenko.

The MAN who watched from across the street earlier emerges from behind and unveils a submachine gun.

MAN

Palichenko!

Palichenko turns and glares at the man in obvious recognition.

MAN (CONT'D)

You bastard, take this to the bank!

GUNFIRE!

The continuous blast cuts down Palichenko and his men.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. TRENTON'S OFFICE - MORNING

Clean but sparse, one-room office. Not a whole lot to look at, but it's got a big window with a great view of a standard Washington D.C. office building across the street.

TRENTON LOCKE, 28, eighty-five percent clean cut and equally confident, plays solitaire at his empty desk.

A KNOCK at the door.

Trenton straightens his black tie, which rests nicely on his pale white shirt. He likes the G-man look from a time he once heard someone call "The Fifties", but then again, so did everyone.

TRENTON

Door's open!

MR. WI NO, 40s, Asian, permanent grin yet stolid, pin-striped suit, walks in and examines the room scientifically before approaching a waiting Trenton whose literally only ten feet away.

MR. WI NO

Trenton Locke, I presume.

TRENTON

The one and only.

MR. WI NO

The one and only ... I like that.
Kind of like a man without a past.

TRENTON

If you mean a past life - that's right.

MR. WI NO

But you do investigate other people's past lives?

TRENTON

That's what the license says ... past lives lawyer extraordinaire.

(Mr. Wi No raises an eyebrow)

Well, maybe not all that, but true nonetheless.

MR. WI NO

Then you have access to the Past Lives Identity Database?

TRENTON

A privilege that comes with the license.

MR. WI NO

I'm curious then, why aren't you working for one of the big firms?

TRENTON

I did, but found them to be all about the easy money - no desire to dig into the difficult, obscure life lines.

MR. WI NO

Bottom line, I guess.

TRENTON

Isn't it always? Anyway, are you looking to pin down one of the missing links in your life line, Mr...

MR. WI NO

Wi No, Mr. Locke, that's Mr. Wi No.

TRENTON

Then why hire me?

Mr. Wi No looks confused then catches the joke.

MR. WI NO

Ah, very amusing play on words, but I must confess for these people, there is much we do not know.

Trenton glances at a card in the deck.

MR. WI NO (CONT'D)

Shall I continue?

Trenton scoops up the sprawled deck of cards in one quick motion, swiftly shuffles the deck like a professional dealer, sprays the deck from one hand to the other like a magician before tucking the cards into the corner of the desk - all to Mr. Wi No's disguised delight.

TRENTON

Hit me.

MR. WI NO

Have you ever heard of Dominic Tardio?

TRENTON

Can't say that I have. Sounds Italian.

MR. WI NO

It is.

TRENTON

And he's an associate of yours or is this a standard background check for employment?

MR. WI NO

Please, Mr. Locke, let me finish.

TRENTON

Absolutely.

MR. WI NO

I would like you to tell me who he is today.

TRENTON

Wait, you mean this guy's not alive anymore?

MR. WI NO

No, is that going to be a problem?

TRENTON

Usually works the other way around is all. People mostly want me to find out who they were, but it shouldn't be too hard.

MR. WI NO

Good. I'll send you his relevant information to get you started on your search. How long should it take?

TRENTON

A few days, I'd say. I'll let you know if I hit any interesting road blocks.

MR. WI NO

Let's hope not. It is very important that we identify him in this life.

TRENTON

I'd ask what it's all about, but I probably don't want to know and you probably don't want to tell me, right?

MR. WI NO

Ah, ignorance is bliss, but rest assured, this is all academic in nature.

TRENTON

Anything to help the eggheads. You mentioned a list of names?

MR. WI NO

Did I?

TRENTON

You said these people.

MR. WI NO

Let's see how you do on this one first.

TRENTON

You're the client.

MR. WI NO

We know, Mr. Locke, we know.

Trenton turns over the top card...

TRENTON

Ace of spades, that's a good sign.

MR. WI NO

Oh, and one more thing, it's best if you don't contact whoever he is today ... once you find out, that is.

(Trenton cocks an eyebrow)

We'd just like you to identify him. We'll take it from there.

Mr. Wi No exits and Trenton turns over the next card ... a joker!

TRENTON

Joke's on somebody.

INT. TRENTON'S HOUSE - FOYER - MORNING

Trenton walks through the door and immediately notices his old man, MR. LOCKE, 60s, frail, sitting on the floor in front of the stairs.

TRENTON

Dad!

No reply!

Trenton rushes over. Mr. Locke's head is slumped toward his chest. Is he dead?

Trenton nudges him ... he suddenly moves then groggily come to.

TRENTON (CONT'D)

Wake up, Pops. You scared me to death.

MR. LOCKE

(looks up, slowly focuses)

Huh ... oh, Trenton. I must've fallen asleep.

He COUGHS hard.

TRENTON

Are you okay? I mean, why are you sitting on the floor?

MR. LOCKE

(COUGHS again)

Damn walker slid that way. Too far for me to get to.

TRENTON

(spots the walker across the room)

Jesus, Dad ... here, let me help you.

MR. LOCKE

Yeah, I thought I could make it, but I ain't as strong as I use to be.

FAMILY ROOM

Trenton slowly guides Mr. Locke to his recliner. The old guy eases into it, trying to suppress another hideous COUGH.

MR. LOCKE

Why are you home - is it lunchtime already ... or did it happen again?

TRENTON

Nothing happened. (beat) Pops, it's cold in here...

(Trenton notices an open window)

You can't keep having the window open. You're going to kill yourself.

MR. LOCKE

May as well speed up the process.

TRENTON

(shakes his head)

What's that smell?

MR. LOCKE

That's why the window's open - another failed experiment.

TRENTON

Dad, it's not worth you getting even more sick!

Trenton stomps into the next room to close the window.

MR. LOCKE

I still think you should see my friend until I figure this damn thing out.

The doorbell RINGS.

TRENTON

(reemerges)

I don't need any psycho babble B.S.

MR. LOCKE

Is that what you call what I do?

TRENTON

You're a pharmacist, it's different.

MR. LOCKE

He's good and he can help.

The doorbell RINGS again.

MR. LOCKE (CONT'D)

Hey, I just realized, you'd better get the door!

TRENTON

All right, but do a search on a Dominic Tardio while I see who it is, will you?

MR. LOCKE

A new client?

Trenton nods and drags himself to the door.

FOYER

Trenton opens the door.

A POSTMAN, 40s, professional, old style uniform, holds a small, thin, electronic device.

POSTMAN
Trenton Locke?

TRENTON
This time around, you bet.

COUGHING comes from the background. The postman eyes Trenton momentarily.

POSTMAN
Congratulations, sir, on your birthday.
(extends the device)
Please place your palm on the pad.

Trenton looks at him curiously as he complies.

The postman studies the device, nods and Trenton removes his hand.

INSERT - DEVICE

Trenton's palm print...

MATCH VERIFIED!

BACK TO SCENE

The device CLICKS and immediately a sealed, golden envelope SLIDES out of the bottom.

The postman hands the letter to Trenton.

POSTMAN
Have a good day, sir.

TRENTON
Thank you, I guess.

The postman walks away purposefully as Trenton stands a bit bewildered.

Trenton CLOSES the door and stares at the envelope.

FAMILY ROOM

Mr. Locke awaits anxiously, but stares in horror as Trenton pulls out a lighter.

TRENTON

So this is it, huh? This is what everyone waits twenty-eight years for?

MR. LOCKE

If you burn that I'll kick your butt.

TRENTON

How come you never told me about my birth parents?

MR. LOCKE

I knew it! (beat) Well, I can't say that I haven't thought about it...

Trenton throws an anxious, hopeful look.

MR. LOCKE (CONT'D)

But you've got a great life ahead of you. Your practice is starting to take off and you've got a great girl. Knowing would only distract you.

TRENTON

I know, but-

MR. LOCKE

Believe me, it's for your own good. Besides, you have a unique opportunity most of us in this life don't get-

TRENTON

I know, I know ... I don't have the past to shackle me down. My destiny's in my own hands.

MR. LOCKE

That's right! Think about the future and forge your own path. Don't worry about the past, especially one that wasn't yours.

Trenton puts the lighter to the corner of the letter.

MR. LOCKE (CONT'D)

Now that letter there, that's another story, it has your real past.

TRENTON

Same thing, different problem.

Trenton flicks the lighter a couple of times unsuccessfully.

MR. LOCKE

See, even the lighter knows what's good for you.

TRENTON

Nah, it's just an old piece of junk.

Mr. Locke hides a relieved grin, but is interrupted by a sinister COUGH.

TRENTON (CONT'D)

Enough with the window already, okay?

MR. LOCKE

Sure ... now how about that lunch?

TRENTON

Coming right up, Pops, but first, who was Dominic Tardio?

MR. LOCKE

Seems he was an Italian composer who wrote a couple of catchy tunes.

TRENTON

I didn't know composers wrote tunes.

MR. LOCKE

Okay, so he wrote some major pieces that some snobs in Europe liked. Now let's eat!

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Trenton and ALLISON BEESELY, 28, smart and passionate, drink coffee at a table next to a large window.

Trenton playfully grabs Allison's drink. She dares him with a watchful eye, but just before it reaches his lips, Allison grabs his forearm, at which point, Trenton lights up her face with a kiss.

TRENTON

You always fall for those.

ALLISON

Which ones?

TRENTON

The unexpected ones.

ALLISON

Maybe I'm secretly setting you up?

TRENTON

It's not in your nature.

ALLISON

Well, maybe not, but at least it's not in my nature to avoid the truth.

(Trenton shrugs ignorantly)

You know what I mean, did you get your letter?

TRENTON

Yep, raised seal and all.

ALLISON

Isn't it the coolest thing ever?

TRENTON

You sound like you're twelve.

ALLISON

Oh be quiet. I can't wait for tonight to open mine.

TRENTON

I'm impressed you actually waited.

ALLISON

If I hadn't been out of town on business, I'd already be collecting my inheritance.

TRENTON

Oh, so you were the Queen of England.

ALLISON

I might let you be my butler.

TRENTON

I'd prefer chauffer, but admit it, you at least peeked.

ALLISON

I wanted to ... but I couldn't.

TRENTON

Of course you didn't - predictable.

ALLISON

You think you've got me nailed, don't you?

Trenton leans back confidently with a laugh.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

You really don't want to know who you were?

TRENTON

Nope.

ALLISON

Please tell me you'll be there tonight - no last minute emergency life line excuses?

Trenton SIGHS.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

I made my dad promise not to probe into your past.

TRENTON

What's he got against me anyway? How can I answer what I don't know?

ALLISON

You won't have to.

(Trenton's looks away)

Anyway, rumor is there's a big assignment coming up.

TRENTON

Making headway in the Time Travel Department, are we?

ALLISON

I hate when you call it that.

TRENTON

Sorry, the Library of Congress. Remind me again what that has to do with time travel.

ALLISON

So now you're a sit down comic?

TRENTON

I'm sure you're at the top of the list.

ALLISON

We'll see. I'll see you tonight then?

TRENTON

It's your past, not mine.

ALLISON

Finally, no more wondering.

TRENTON

I hope you live up to expectations.

ALLISON

Oh, be quiet.

TRENTON

You already said that.

Trenton swigs his coffee, while Allison sneaks in one final peck on the cheek.

ALLISON

Those are the best.

TRENTON

You're right, I didn't expect that one.

INT. PAST LIVES ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY

Trenton steps up to the semi-enclosed counter and throws an unreturned smile at the CLERK, Lucy, 30s, dull expression from years of monotony.

TRENTON

Lucy, why do you always pretend like I've never been here before?

CLERK

If I recall correctly, you once called me a bureaucratic snob.

TRENTON

You, never - that was aimed at some of your colleagues.

Trenton slides his id card to her.

CLERK

Please, you're the same as the attorneys working on this side of the desk.

Lucy punches in a few keys.

TRENTON

One exception, I appreciate the work you do?

CLERK

Uh huh.

TRENTON

So what have you got for me on Mr. Dominic Tardio?

CLERK

(smiles deliciously)

Well, Mr. Locke, it looks like there's a lock on your account.

TRENTON

Nice play on words, but come on.

CLERK

You come on, you haven't paid your annual access fee.

TRENTON

Seriously?

CLERK

Seriously.

TRENTON

I thought my secretary handled that already.

CLERK

Since when did you get a secretary?

TRENTON

(pulls out another card)

Touche. How much do I owe?

CLERK

Fifty-five hundred.

TRENTON

Ouch ... what are the profit margins on that one?

CLERK

Funny. You sure there's enough on this to go through?

Trenton nods, fake smile and taps his fingers.

CLERK (CONT'D)
(hands his card back)
What's the name again?

TRENTON
Dominic Tardio.

Lucy types in the name.

CLERK
Well, Mr. Locke, it looks like there's
a database lock on that account.

TRENTON
You just like saying that, don't you?

CLERK
Anything else I can do for you?

TRENTON
What type of lock are we talking about?

CLERK
I'm not at liberty to say?

TRENTON
But you are at liberty to say whether
or not it's being adjudicated in the
courts right now.

CLERK
(grumbles)
It is not being adjudicated according
to my records.

TRENTON
Thanks, Lucy, let's do this again
soon.

CLERK
Say hi to your secretary ... Next!

EXT. NATIONAL MALL - FOOD VENDOR - DAY

Mr. Wi No secretly watches Trenton from a safe distance as Trenton exchanges a few words with the vendor, BENNY, 40s, stout.

Trenton grabs a bottled drink and walks away, oblivious to the watcher a short distance away.

INT. METRO BOARDING AREA - DAY

Trenton tosses the bottled drink and steps on the train.

TWO GUYS in shiny suits step onto the next car.

METRO CAR

Fairly empty, but Trenton stands, holds on to the overhead pole.

He casually glances at the two guys stepping through the internal car doors.

The train slows, an old woman stands, blocking the aisle and moves to the sliding door ... the train stops.

SERGEI, 30s, Russian, shiny suit, sits in the seat next to Trenton, while NICOLI, 30s, Russian, shiny suit, stands in front of Sergei, right next to Trenton.

Trenton eyes them oddly for being so close on a somewhat empty train.

The train jerks and pushes forward.

SERGEI

(to Nicoli)

Have you heard this song?

NICOLI

Sounds Italian.

Trenton, trying not to be obvious, looks up blankly, not hearing anything. He's confused.

SERGEI

It is. One of Dominic Tardio's most popular.

Now they've got his full attention. He eyes the two men suspiciously.

NICOLI

Never heard of him.

SERGEI

Not many people alive today have.

NICOLI

Sounds like a man forgotten by time.

SERGEI

Probably for the best. I never liked this piece. I say he should be left well enough alone, forgotten just like his music.

The train slows to a stop.

Nicoli and Sergei head toward the opening doors.

SERGEI (CONT'D)

Nothing good ever comes from digging into the past.
(slaps Trenton on the back)
Wouldn't you agree, mister?

Sergei and Nicoli step off the train.

The doors close.

Sergei and Nicoli stare at a bewildered Trenton as the train pulls away.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

Allison's family sits next to a large window towering from floor to ceiling.

COLONEL BEESELY, 50s, military uniform, stern, Allison's father, sits at the head of the table. To his left sit MRS. BEESELY, 50s, quiet; KATRINA, 20s, snappy; and her husband GREG, 30s, reserved. Allison sits on the Colonel's right anxiously checks the door.

COLONEL

(to Greg)

Did today's news affect business at all?

GREG

Stocks shot up at first, but actually closed lower when they announced how far away the stuff is.

KATRINA

I heard the Chinese might get there first, Daddy.

Allison throws Katrina a ridiculous glance and resumes her doorway vigil.

COLONEL

Just rumors, honey. We're light years ahead of them. Don't you worry.

KATRINA

That's what I am worried about.

Greg looks at her curiously.

KATRINA (CONT'D)

If they truly are that far behind, then why not attack us before we can get it. Surely, they've got nothing to lose.

Allison jumps up and waves at Trenton.

The Colonel's face tightens before addressing Katrina.

COLONEL

Let's hope they're not that desperate.

Allison grabs Trenton's hand and sits him next to her.

TRENTON

Sorry, I'm late. What did I miss?

MRS. BEESELY

Not much, Trenton. Nice to see you.

KATRINA

Not much! We've already eaten.

ALLISON

Oh, be quiet, Kat. He told me he was only going to be here for dessert.

COLONEL

Actually, we were discussing today's news and the growing tension with China.

Trenton nods blankly. Allison stiffens a little.

COLONEL

What do you think we should do about them?

Trenton ponders reluctantly while Allison bites her bottom lip. The others wait for the return volley.

TRENTON

I don't really think about it.

COLONEL

I don't see how one cannot.

Trenton shrugs, but is saved by CHELSEA, 19, bubbly, Allison's sister, who trots in - the life of every party. Relief washes over the table.

CHELSEA

Sorry, sis.

KATRINA

Well look who's here?

Colonel Beesely shoots Chelsea a disapproving look. Chelsea sticks her tongue out at Katrina and kisses her father on the cheek.

CHELSEA

Oh, Daddy ... at ease soldier.

Fighting a growing smile, the Colonel shakes his head. Chelsea kisses her mom, runs her hand through Greg's hair causing him to blush, and winks at Trenton as she sits next to him. Trenton shakes his head and smirks at Allison who rolls her eyes, but is relieved.

CHELSEA (CONT'D)

Did I miss the unveiling yet?

MRS. BEESELY

Be still, Chelsea.

A WAITRESS places a cake on the table with a palm print design below the number twenty-eight and a single lit candle.

ALLISON

No, you're just in time, little sis!

Allison blows out the candle.

CHELSEA

I bet she was a teacher.

KATRINA

I bet you were a mime.

ALLISON

That would explain her constant babbling this time around.

MRS. BEESELY

Girls!

The three girls stop, look at each other and grin.

Chelsea sticks her tongue out at Katrina, while Allison pulls a golden envelope out of her purse.

COLONEL

Chelsea.

Allison carefully TEARS the envelope open, pulls out a letter and reads to herself ... a smile emerges.

ALLISON

Hah!

CHELSEA

Well, what is it? Who were you?

MRS. BEESELY

Yes, dear. Don't keep us waiting.

Allison smiles satisfied and hands it to her father.

ALLISON

Well, I was an insurance salesman in Mexico and a teacher from Portland-

CHELSEA

I knew it!

ALLISON

But I was also...

(looks at Colonel Beesely)

Why don't you tell them, Daddy.

KATRINA

What? Who was she?

COLONEL

Your sister was a ... private detective.

LAUGHTER.

Colonel Beesely hands the paper to Mrs. Beesely.

CHELSEA

You - a private detective ... where?

COLONEL

St. Petersburg.

CHELSEA

Florida?

Allison shakes her head.

MRS. BEESELY

Russia, dear.

KATRINA

What else?

ALLISON

That's it.

CHELSEA

That's it! Only three? You had six,
right, Daddy?

Colonel Beesely nods.

KATRINA

I guess we know what that means.

MRS. BEESELY

Oh, hush, Katrina.

GREG

Maybe she can use her investigative
skills to find out about her other
lives.

Shocked, everyone looks at Greg.

CHELSEA

A joke ... was that a joke, Greg?

Everyone LAUGHS.

Allison sits down, exhausted and happy, while the
paper gets passed around. Mrs. Beesely serves cake.

COLONEL

Allison, maybe Greg's right. Maybe
you can put those old detective
talents to use and help Trenton here
find out who his birth parents were.

Allison springs straight up and pushes a plate off the table ... CRASH!

Trenton shakes his head and glares at Colonel Beesely.

ALLISON

Daddy, you said you wouldn't!

Trenton throws his napkin on the table and despite Allison's efforts, gets up and storms out.

COLONEL

What? What did I say?

ALLISON

Don't give me that. You promised you wouldn't and you did it anyway.

Emotional, Allison searches for Trenton.

COLONEL

He's hiding something, honey. How can a past lives lawyer not know his own past lives?

ALLISON

It's a good thing you're retiring. I wouldn't put it past you and the snoops you work with to dig into his past.

COLONEL

I don't appreciate the accusation. Besides, I'm not retiring.

ALLISON

What?

COLONEL

These are dangerous times and they've asked me to stay on to oversee a very important classified mission.

ALLISON

Well congratulations, and thanks for ruining my birthday!

Allison speeds toward the door.

COLONEL

Something's not right, I'm telling
you!

Allison sends a neighboring table's cup CRASHING to
the floor and races out of the restaurant.

MRS. BEESELY

Now why did you go and do that?

COLONEL

Maybe I should have him checked out.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - MONUMENT - EVENING

Trenton tramps into the empty, circular, monument with
selections of CRIMSON JAMES's writings inscribed on
panels. He spins and faces a statue of the legend,
SIGHS, and sits on a marble bench.

ALEXA PETROVICH, 30s, pantsuit, focused, approaches.

ALEXA

I didn't think anyone else knew about
this place.

TRENTON

You, me, and him, it seems.

ALEXA

We should consider ourselves lucky
then, Mr. Locke.

Trenton stiffens and shoots her a suspicious look,
shifts to get a better look at her outfit in the dim
light. Alexa cocks an eyebrow.

TRENTON

Sorry, just checking to see if you're
wearing a shiny suit.

ALEXA

My name is Alexa Petrovich.

TRENTON

And you want me to track down one of your past lives, right? Sorry, but the office is closed at the moment. Come see me tomorrow.

ALEXA

I'm not here about one of my past lives.

TRENTON

Really, then how do you know my name?

ALEXA

Have you ever thought about using your talents in another way?

TRENTON

That sounds strangely curious and creepy at the same time.

ALEXA

A man with your potential could be of great service, especially in these seminal times.

TRENTON

History repeats itself, Ms. Petrovich. There's nothing new about today.

ALEXA

The government thinks differently.

TRENTON

So you're with the government? Well if you're here to collect, I already paid my overdue fee today.

Alexa notices Allison approaching and stands up.

ALEXA

Consider what I said ... I'll be in touch.

Alexa quickly leaves.

Trenton shakes his head, glances at the full moon and then at the statue.

TRENTON

I bet there were even crazies when you were around?

Allison walks up, curious and slightly jealous.

ALLISON

Here you are. Who was that woman?

TRENTON

Alexa Petrovich. Do you know her?

ALLISON

No.

TRENTON

How about your father, maybe he does?

ALLISON

I came to apologize. He told me he wouldn't do that.

TRENTON

Forget it.

ALLISON

No, I don't want to forget it. I want to talk about it.

TRENTON

Fine. Then why the hell is he so interested in my past?

ALLISON

I think he's more interested in the fact that you're not.

Trenton scoffs.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Come on, he's an intelligence officer. He's curious by nature.

TRENTON

(stands, uneasy)

Maybe he knows something I don't.

ALLISON

What do you mean?

TRENTON

I mean, there's got to be good reason why my dad won't tell me about my birth parents. Maybe your dad knows why.

ALLISON

I doubt that. My father's not a snoop.

TRENTON

Well, he's sure a pain in the ass.

ALLISON

Oh, be quiet. (beat) Trenton, what did that woman want?

TRENTON

Some crack for her pipe.

(Allison shoots a disapproving look)

No, huh ... get a load of this, she wants me to work for the government.

ALLISON

Isn't it kind of late to be recruiting?

TRENTON

Big Brother never sleeps.

ALLISON

Well, have you thought about it?

TRENTON

For about two seconds then I remembered I have a job ... my own firm, in fact.

ALLISON

I wouldn't go that far. You kind of need some other lawyers or even a secretary at the least.

TRENTON

So I've heard.

(notices Allison's dour look)

What's wrong, it's not like it's the first time things have gotten tense between your father and me.

ALLISON

I'm worried he might do something.

TRENTON

He's retiring ... what can he do?

ALLISON

That's just it, he's not retiring. In fact, he's taken on a classified job and the more serious you and I get, the better the chances are that he might do some digging.

TRENTON

You really think he would? There are laws, you know?

ALLISON

For the rest of us, but not in his world.

EXT. NATIONAL MALL - FOOD VENDOR - DAY

Trenton approaches as a departing customer takes a bite out of a hotdog.

TRENTON

How goes it, Benny, any news?

Benny slowly prepares a hotdog and drink.

BENNY

Your musician turns out to be Angela Milton in this life.

TRENTON

Let me guess, a blackjack dealer in Iowa?

BENNY

More like an old lady living right here in D.C.

TRENTON

So what kinds of skeletons are in her karmic closet?

BENNY

Ever hear of Cristof Palichenko?

TRENTON

Nope, sounds Russian.

BENNY

He was, but to be more accurate, an Armenian-born Russian, who also went by the name Maloyan.

TRENTON

Was Maloyan a blackjack dealer?

BENNY

No, he was the head of a Russian family crime syndicate - a very bad dude, I'm sure.

TRENTON

Makes you think twice about sweet old ladies, doesn't it?

BENNY

His money is still in Russian accounts, but under her name.

TRENTON

And the U.S. won't allow her to make a future claim against her Russian inheritance because she acquired it through illicit means.

BENNY

Whoever your contact is, he's good.

TRENTON

He's the unsavory type ... a guy you wouldn't want to meet in an alley.

BENNY

I see, a good man to have on your side...

(Trenton grins proudly)
...until he's no longer on your side.

Trenton's look turns to astute appreciation.

TRENTON

I couldn't agree more.

Trenton turns to leave.

BENNY

Oh, sir...

(extends a bag of chips)
...two guys in suits have been watching us from across the street.

TRENTON

Come on, Benny, this is a city of suits.

BENNY

Yeah, but theirs are unusually shiny.

Trenton

(grabs the chips)
Thanks.

Trenton glances at the two shiny suits, recognizes them from the train, and quickly walks the other way.

PARK

Trenton's breathing increases and worry floods his eyes.

He passes an old man with a cane, glances back and spots the two closing ground.

Trenton tosses his remaining food at a garbage can, but the bag of chips misses ... he hesitates, habitually not wanting to litter, picks it up, tosses it properly then keeps moving quickly.

COMMERCIAL SIDEWALK

Trenton picks up the pace, times it and darts across traffic ... his pursuers follow.

Trenton weaves clumsily through people, notices he's lost ground and sprints!

ALLEY

Trenton slips in and presses his back to the wall...

...he breathes heavily, quickly, almost pants, eyes dart frantically...

Heavy footsteps get closer...

Trenton presses his palms to his temples in obvious pain, grabs his stomach, falls to one knee and PUKES!

Sergei turns the corner with Nicoli not far behind.

Sergei kicks Trenton, who rolls over just missing his vomit.

SERGEI

We told you not to do it! Now look
what you force us to do?

Sergei flashes a knife, Nicoli draws a gun.

SERGEI (CONT'D)

(to Nicoli)

No, too many people around who might
hear it. We do it the old fashioned
way.

Trenton takes a deep breath and looks up, but something is different ... his eyes gleam and his fear from a moment ago vanished.

Trenton's alter ego or split personality, BEN MIN, emerges.

BEN MIN

You just messed with the wrong guy,
scum bags.

SERGEI

Get a load of this guy!

NICOLI

Make it quick.

Sergei lunges forward, but meets Ben Min's fist as he sidesteps the assault then uses Sergei's momentum to redirect the knife into Sergei's belly!

Nicoli draws his gun ... Ben Min lunges and knocks the gun away before it goes off, grabs Nicoli by the throat and slams him against the wall.

Ben Min stares him in the eye and smiles devilishly ... he's going to enjoy it.

A salvo of voices grows nearer...

Ben Min thinks quickly and releases Nicoli, who takes off.

Ben Min runs the opposite way down the alley leaving a dead Sergei in a bloody mess.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. TRENTON'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - DUSK

Trenton staggers in as Mr. Locke emerges from his office.

MR. LOCKE

Trenton, you missed lunch, did something ...

(notices Trenton's bloody shirt)

Oh my god, are you all right?

TRENTON

I'm fine ... it's not my blood.

MR. LOCKE

Fine my butt. It happened again, didn't it?

Trenton nods as he falls into the chair, leans forward and rubs his eyes.

MR. LOCKE (CONT'D)

Are you sure you're okay, no cuts or bullet wounds - what's gotten into you?

TRENTON

I don't know, Pops, I can't remember a thing.

MR. LOCKE

I wondered when you missed lunch again. Now give me that shirt and I'll toss it in the incinerator.

TRENTON

Good thing you're a chemist. What time is it anyway?

MR. LOCKE

Time for dinner, but more importantly, time for you to see my friend.

Trenton removes his shirt.

TRENTON

I'll only agree to seeing him off-line.

MR. LOCKE

Of course, this type of thing is better left off your permanent health record. I wouldn't have it any other way.

TRENTON

I'm starving.

Mr. Locke COUGHS wickedly.

MR. LOCKE

Now see what you've done ... gone and got me all excited.

TRENTON

(rises, concerned)

Here, Dad, sit down while I get you some water. I'll make us dinner.

MR. LOCKE

While you do that, I'll give him a call.

INT. TRENTON'S OFFICE - MORNING

Trenton scrolls through his computer while flicking his lighter, which fails miserably to produce a lasting flame.

A KNOCK at the door.

TRENTON

Entre!

An old lady, ANGELA MILTON, 70s, beaming eyes, beehive hairdo, cautiously steps in.

ANGELA

I was hoping to catch you yesterday but didn't have any luck. I'm sure not what I used to be.

TRENTON

Sorry about that, I was out in the field all day. Please, have a seat.

ANGELA

Thank you.

TRENTON

So how can I help you, Ms...?

ANGELA

Milton, Angela Milton.

(Trenton cocks an eyebrow)

What is it, did I say something wrong?

TRENTON

Of course not ... Milton ... wasn't there a philosopher named Milton?

ANGELA

I believe that was Mill and if I remember correctly, Locke was one too.

TRENTON

Touche, now what can I do for you?

ANGELA

I'd like to set up a Past Lives Transference Will.

TRENTON

Well that doesn't seem like it should be too difficult.

ANGELA

That's what every lawyer I've been to has said.

TRENTON

Oh, and how many is that?

ANGELA

Three and it's always the same story. They say the government put a hold on any transfer of my money because of something that happened in my family's past.

TRENTON

Your Milton family past?

ANGELA

No, I was a Russian in one of my past lives.

TRENTON

And you passed down your Russian money onto this life?

ANGELA

Yes.

TRENTON

But if there's a hold on your account, then how did you collect on the Russian transfer?

ANGELA

I tried it here first, but was unsuccessful. Thank God the Swiss still allow these transfers to take place without questions.

TRENTON

And a little persuasion.

ANGELA

A little persuasion can go a long way in this world, Mr. Locke. So can you help me?

TRENTON

I guess my question is why you don't just put your money in another Swiss account and avoid the US altogether?

ANGELA

I tried, but the Swiss have been getting a little too comfortable with the Chinese and who knows what the situation will be like when I come around next time. I'd feel more comfortable leaving my money in a U.S. bank.

TRENTON

Certainly understandable. I tell you what, I'll conduct a quick preliminary inquiry and see what the lay of the land is.

ANGELA

How long might that take?

TRENTON

A couple of hours. What do you say we meet this afternoon to discuss what your options might be?

ANGELA

That would be wonderful, Mr. Locke. Thank you for your time.

TRENTON

Not a problem, but let's say we meet for coffee instead of in this dreary office?

ANGELA

I do love coffee.

TRENTON

Great, then how about the Lost Horizon café at four-o'clock.

ANGELA

Good choice.

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Trenton and his psychologist, DR. BARRERA, 50s, sport coat, sit in comfortable chairs across from one another in front of a large window.

DR. BARRERA

I partly specialize in cases like yours.

TRENTON

That's good because I'm not here to prepare my tax return.

DR. BARRERA

If I were unethical, I might have you file two.

TRENTON

Whoa, sense of humor at the patient's expense, Doc ... I like that.

DR. BARRERA

Great, then let's get down to business. What are some of your fears?

TRENTON

Are you serious?

DR. BARRERA

Humor me.

TRENTON

Swing sets give me the creeps.

DR. BARRERA

Then you probably don't like helicopters either.

TRENTON

Are you making this stuff up? What do those two have to do with each other?

DR. BARRERA

More than you might think. Besides, we all make things up in order to cope with our neuroses.

TRENTON

Yeah, but I'd prefer to cope with mine by remaining ignorant about them.

DR. BARRERA

Is that why you haven't opened your past lives letter?

TRENTON

How do you know that? What has my father been telling you?

DR. BARRERA

He hasn't told me anything. It is just a common occurrence in people with your condition.

TRENTON

Common occurrence, huh? You mean to tell me there are a bunch of people walking around out there with split personalities? No wonder half the people I've met can't remember me.

DR. BARRERA

I prefer the term alter ego.

TRENTON

I always did like batman, but why can't we lawyers have a comic hero to look up to?

DR. BARRERA

At least yours isn't Mr. Hyde.

TRENTON

You'll always have The Incredible Hulk, I suppose.

DR. BARRERA

Very good, Trenton. Now let's try and focus ... the brain is very complex and has a marvelous ability to compartmentalize events, information, memories, even past lives. But sometimes, a past life event is so strong that it bullies its way past the brain's security system and emerges.

TRENTON

That sounds a lot better than being a simple nutcase.

DR. BARRERA

The easiest way for us to find out would be for you to discover who you were in your past lives.

TRENTON

I'm not opening my letter.

DR. BARRERA

Then let's try to attack this from a different angle.

TRENTON

Like what?

DR. BARRERA

What happens just before the switch takes place?

TRENTON

Sometimes I vomit, but I absolutely always get a splitting headache and my breathing increases, so much so that it seems like I'm running out of air.

DR. BARRERA

And then you black out.

TRENTON

I don't pass out or anything, I just can't remember what happens.

DR. BARRERA

And how do you feel when you come back?

TRENTON

I feel fine, a little rested, but always hungry.

DR. BARRERA

How about the most recent time, what were you doing?

TRENTON

I was running away from two guys.

DR. BARRERA

They were chasing you?

(Trenton nods)

Were you afraid they were going to hurt you?

TRENTON

They certainly weren't there to sell me Girl Scout cookies.

DR. BARRERA

Do you remember the very first time it happened?

TRENTON

Sure, I was a kid and I almost drowned. I remember going under, panicking and then wham ... that's all I remember. The next thing I know I was lying on the ground next to the river.

DR. BARRERA

Interesting.

TRENTON

Yeah, well you don't have to live through it.

DR. BARRERA

Tell me, is fear always a factor when it happens?

Trenton looks at the psychologist in a new light.

TRENTON

You think it's a defense mechanism
against fear?

DR. BARRERA

Or anxiety or both ... just a possibility
anyway.

TRENTON

Interesting.

DR. BARRERA

Well, like you said, I don't have to
live through it.

TRENTON

(grins)

So what do I do now?

DR. BARRERA

I'm afraid right now you can only
confirm our suspicion by paying
attention to the time leading up to
the change.

TRENTON

That's it?

DR. BARRERA

And see if you can remember anything
at all once you come back.

TRENTON

Thanks, Doc, I'll tell my father you
said hello and I'll keep the bat suit
in the closet.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. COFFEE SHOP - AFTERNOON

Trenton drinks coffee at a table near the window with his back against the wall.

He checks his watch then stiffens as Mr. Wi No swings the door open and approaches confidently.

MR. WI NO

Mr. Locke, funny seeing you here.

TRENTON

More than a coincidence, I'd guess.

MR. WI NO

Were you expecting someone else?

TRENTON

That depends-

MR. WI NO

Please don't ... Ms. Milton won't be joining you. Besides, I thought part of our arrangement was that you were not to contact her.

TRENTON

It was, but nothing I could do when she reached out to me.

MR. WI NO

Of course, I see.

TRENTON

How did she happen to look me up, by the way?

MR. WI NO

I don't know, I'm sure she's just as resourceful in this life as she was in some of her past lives.

TRENTON

Makes sense, I suppose. I imagine you also know that her past lives stretch back to Dominic Tardio?

MR. WI NO

Yes, you did a very good job. I'd like to know who your contact is.

TRENTON

I don't keep all my eggs in one basket nor do I kiss and tell.

MR. WI NO

Good to know.

TRENTON

So why was it so important to find the present life of an obscure Italian composer who died a long time ago?

MR. WI NO

Let's just say that Dominic Tardio - now Ms. Milton - has in her possession a mathematical formula encrypted in Tardio's musical scores.

TRENTON

Formula for what?

MR. WI NO

Oh, some egghead stuff, as you called it, that those in my community are very interested in.

TRENTON

I see ... Well, if there's nothing else, Mr. Wi No, I'll be on my way and send you a report tomorrow ... along with a bill.

MR. WI NO

Very good, but you make it sound as though we are severing ties. Have you no interest in helping me further?

TRENTON

It's tempting and as I recall, you did mention a list.

MR. WI NO

I did.

TRENTON

Then it depends, has anything untoward happened to Ms. Milton? She's just an old lady, you know?

Mr. Wi No displays an extended wry smile.

MR. WI NO

Books these days have many faces, Mr. Locke.

TRENTON

You haven't answered my question.

MR. WI NO

Not to my knowledge. Like I said, this is a purely academic exercise.

TRENTON

Of course ... and which university do you work for?

MR. WI NO

That's neither here nor there.

Trenton cocks an eyebrow and stands to leave.

MR. WI NO (CONT'D)

Oh, and Mr. Locke, don't ask me how I know this, but if I were you and I didn't want my fiancée's father to know about my past, I would be at Wisconsin and the river at five-o'clock today.

Trenton wrinkles his eyebrows then checks his watch.

TRENTON

That's only forty-five minutes from now.

MR. WI NO
I guess you'd better hurry.

TRENTON
What's really going on here? How
would you know that?

MR. WI NO
I have a lot of resources and I just
wanted to return the favor ... you've
helped us out more than you know.

TRENTON
You're lucky I don't have time to
get to the bottom of this if what
you say is true.

MR. WI NO
Only one way to find out.

Trenton glares then dashes out of the cafe.

EXT. POTOMAC RIVER - BENCH - EVENING

Trenton steps behind a tree and catches his breath. He
eyes the Colonel, who sits on a bench fifty yards away
watching the river pass by.

The area is quiet and empty.

Trenton scans the landscape and spies a suspicious
character with an envelope making a b-line for the
Colonel.

Trenton puts his hands to his head in sudden agony and
drops to his knees.

The suspicious character hands the Colonel the
envelope and continues until he disappears.

Ben Min watches the Colonel stick the envelope in his
left breast pocket and walk his way.

Ben Min steps out from behind the tree, startling the
Colonel.

BEN MIN
Hand it over, Colonel.

COLONEL
Hand over what?

BEN MIN
That document in your pocket.

COLONEL
That's classified information. I'd
stay out of it if I were you.

BEN MIN
You might want to take your own
advice.

COLONEL
Since when did you grow a pair?

BEN MIN
The moment you crossed the line.

COLONEL
I don't like the accusation.

BEN MIN
Your daughter won't like it either.

The men's eyes lock ... Ben Min casually opens the
Colonel's coat, reaches in and removes the envelope.

The Colonel doesn't resist, but scowls defiantly.

COLONEL
I'll find out, you know?

BEN MIN
Not if you know what's good for you
... and your daughter.

The Colonel fumes.

Ben Min walks away, envelope in hand.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - EVENING

Trenton stares at the envelope, runs his finger around the edges.

Allison sneaks up behind him, pecks him on the cheek and reveals a gold-plated cigarette lighter.

ALLISON

Since you have a fascination with burning stuff and always run out of matches, this is for you.

TRENTON

Looks a lot better than my current one that's on the fritz. Where'd you get it?

ALLISON

Josh brought it back from a recent assignment.

TRENTON

Josh again, huh? I'd rather have something you were able to pick up yourself, but thanks, I like it.

ALLISON

Just promise me you won't burn anything too valuable.

TRENTON

We'll see.

ALLISON

And you may get your wish sooner than you think.

TRENTON

Sounds like someone reeled in a big fish.

ALLISON

You can say that again.

TRENTON

How big?

ALLISON

Even you would make the trip for this one.

TRENTON

You like dangling your clearance over my head, don't you?

ALLISON

Of course, but this one really is big. It may finally help put distance between us and China.

TRENTON

Sounds dangerous ... be careful.

ALLISON

I will. So what's with the envelope?

TRENTON

Top secret ... supposedly, this holds the key to my past lives.

ALLISON

Doesn't look like the envelope they're delivered in.

TRENTON

You're right, it's not. Do you want to know where I got it?

ALLISON

I'm not sure. It sounds like a trick question.

TRENTON

Let's just say I wasn't the intended recipient.

ALLISON

What is this, a riddle? What's going on?

TRENTON

Your father's name is written on the back.

ALLISON

Then how did you get it?

TRENTON

That's classified.

ALLISON

What do you say we drop it for now
and get something to eat? I'm tired
of all this cloak and dagger talk
and don't want to ruin the evening.

Trenton slides the envelope into his coat pocket.

TRENTON

I couldn't agree more.

INT. TRENTON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Trenton shuts the door, pulls out the Colonel's
envelope and walks over to a safe behind his desk.

He presses a few buttons and the safe UNLOCKS. He
opens the safe, stares pensively at the golden
envelope already inside and places the Colonel's
envelope on top of it.

Trenton pulls out his new lighter, glances between the
lighter and the envelopes ... shrugs, locks the safe,
shuts the office light off and leaves.

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW