

CONSTITUTION: UPRIVER

(FIRST DRAFT)

EXT. - SUMMER - FOGGY, DARK DIRT ROAD ALONG A SMALL RIVER IN  
NORTHERN VIRGINIA - NIGHT

LONNEY WOODS is walking, talking softly on his cell phone.  
He's disheveled and exhausted, having made a harrowing  
escape. He's dark, suave, rugged, and sexy, late-30s.

LONNEY

I can't see 10 feet in front of me.  
I haven't seen fog like this since  
we foiled that assassination plot  
in London. I can't believe we got  
laid in Buckingham Palace! That  
brunette . . .

MARKHAM (O.S.)

Easy, man. Now's not the time.  
OK, I've got your coordinates.  
Make a right. You're about 100  
yards from the boat.

Lonney approaches the boat and is shocked by what he sees.

LONNEY

Boat! It looks more like a hobo  
pop-up camper. (beat) You sure no  
one's gonna know I'm here?

MARKHAM (O.S.)

Trust me, man, my operatives just  
placed that boat yesterday. They  
told me there's not a soul around  
for 15 miles.

LONNEY

How long do I have to stay here?

MARKHAM (O.S.)

Let's see. How long does it take  
to protect an FBI agent from the  
U.S. government when it's trying to  
kill him? We were lucky to get you  
out of the White House alive.  
Listen, man, you don't out the  
President's Chief of Staff for  
lying to Congress and then fly off  
to the Ritz for a rubdown and a  
blow job, you know what I'm saying?

LONNEY

Tell me something I don't know, OK?  
(beat) All right, I'm about to get  
on the boat. It's dark as shit  
here, Markham. You sure I'm alone?

MARKHAM (O.S.)

Like I said, not a soul for 15  
miles. And nobody knows you're  
there. Just stay put until you  
hear from me. I'll call you  
tomorrow.

LONNEY

Yeah. I better get the lay of the  
land. Boat. Whatever. Thanks,  
Markham. I owe you. Bigtime.

CUT TO:

INT. - The Oval Office - NIGHT

MARKHAM

(shutting off his cell phone)

They don't call me Markham the  
Magnificent for nothing, Mr.  
President. Now, excuse me while I  
send out the press release telling  
the good American people that  
Lonney Woods has resigned to spend  
more time with his family. He's  
gone fishing. Permanently.

P.O.V. THE PRESIDENT BEHIND HIS DESK, TALKING TO MARKHAM.

THE PRESIDENT

Family, huh? Markham, you're good,  
aren't cha, boy? Now who was it at  
Yale that told me you Harvard boys  
weren't all about loyalty to the  
hand that feeds?

(looking around, as a GRANDFATHER CLOCK CHIMES 9 pm)

THE PRESIDENT (CONT.D)

Where's my hot chocolate? I like  
my hot chocolate at 9 pm, right  
before bedtime. If I can't drink  
my darned liquor, can I have my  
darned hot chocolate on time? I  
can't say my prayers if I haven't  
had my hot chocolate.

CUT TO:

EXT. - the boat - NIGHT.

Lonney steps aboard the boat. He opens a door and STEPS INSIDE. It's pitch black. A WOMAN speaks.

SHAZ  
(quietly)  
Hello, Lonney.

Lonney pulls out his gun and cocks it.

SHAZ (CONT'D.)  
Nice gun. Nicely cocked.

LONNEY  
(still quietly)  
Who the hell are you?

SHAZ  
Shaz.

LONNEY  
Shaz! What kind of a name is that?  
And what the hell are you doing  
here?

SHAZ  
I could be asking you the same  
thing. But I won't. I know what  
you're doing here.

LONNEY  
Is there a light in this crate?

SHAZ  
I wouldn't put a light on, Lonney.  
There's a sniper in the water.

LONNEY  
OK, Shaz, you have 10 seconds.  
Tell me what's going on. And make  
it brief. Or I'll kill ya.

SHAZ  
I wouldn't do that, Lonney. One  
spark and we both blow. The sniper  
isn't out there to shoot you,  
Lonney. He's out there to make the  
spark. The boat's wired. To look  
like that little stove over there  
that you can't see exploded -- and  
made the boat blow up. Just a  
little accident.

LONNEY

How the hell do you know this?

SHAZ

I'll tell you later. We need to get out of here.

LONNEY

That's not the way it's supposed to go down. Markham said to stay here until -- until he calls me tomorrow.

SHAZ

You're life's hanging in the balance by a little, little thread, Lonney. And Markham's about to snip it.

LONNEY

You're full of shit. I've worked with Markham since we graduated from the Academy.

SHAZ

That doesn't guarantee loyalty. Remember that assassination plot in London? You and Markham went there to save the Queen? Didn't you think it just a little odd when you and Markham waltzed into Buckingham Palace with two modern day ladies-in-waiting? You think that just happens just because you're so good-looking? They were all spies, Lonney, working inside the Palace. The only reason they didn't off the Queen was because they changed their minds.

Lonney pauses, changing his tone slightly. He realizes Shaz just flattered him.

LONNEY

How do you know I'm good-looking? You can't see me.

SHAZ

Your looks - and your reputation - precede you.

Lonney's back to business.

LONNEY

What are you talking about, they changed their minds. Why?

SHAZ

Counterintelligence. Those weren't ladies-in-waiting. And Markham was on their side, Lonney. Don't you know by now that the President's cabinet is full of megalomaniacs, and he's just their prissy pawn?

LONNEY

What the hell good would it do to kill the Queen?

SHAZ

It's not about the Queen. It's about diversion, Lonney. Diversion. Wag the dog. The focus of our government isn't to govern anymore, Lonney. It's to get. And the easiest way to get, is to do it without the people noticing, because it's *their* money, and *their* freedom, see? And the government's taking it all, bit by bit.

LONNEY

This is too fuckin' much. (beat)  
And what do you get out of it?

SHAZ

Right about now, my life, if I'm lucky, and yours, if you're smart.

Shaz gets up to leave.

LONNEY

I wouldn't do that, Shaz.

SHAZ

The cow went down the mountain.

LONNEY

How did you know that?

They both go out the door.

SHAZ

Professor Joe Turner at the Academy. He was the only one I could trust. I called him before I came here and explained what was going on. I asked him what I could say to you to get you to believe me. Now let's get out of here, before it's too late. Sound travels through water like money through a politician's hands, you know.

All of a sudden THEY hear a SHOT and dive onto the shore as the boat EXPLODES.

EXT. - THE SHORE NEXT TO THE BOAT, WHICH HAS DISAPPEARED INTO THE WATER. LONNEY AND SHAZ ARE HIDING IN THE TREES.

SHAZ

(whispering)

Shut up and don't move. (beat)  
He'll be coming out of the water any minute.

LONNEY

Hey, I'm used to calling the shots. Besides, how do you --

SHAZ

Not this time. I said can it, hot shot. You've just been through hell. (beat) Call it woman's intuition.

The SNIPER comes out of the water, passing dangerously close to Lonney and Shaz. They hear a CAR pull up, then the Sniper speaks to the driver.

SNIPER (O.C.)

Yeah, he's in hobo heaven. Let's go.

The Sniper gets in, and the car drives away.

Lonney pulls a small FLASHLIGHT out of his pocket and breathes an audible SIGH of relief.

LONNEY

I want to get a load of what you look like.

Lonney lights up her face. He is stunned. She's gorgeous, brunette, early 30s.

SHAZ

I've been waiting a long time to meet the great Lonney Woods.

Shaz grabs him, flips his onto his back, and kisses him. She's clearly turned on by danger. He kisses her back, passionately.

SHAZ

I've been waiting a long time to do that, too.

Lonney suddenly realizes that he's let his guard down. Even though she saved him, she could be the enemy, just like the girl at Buckingham Palace.

LONNEY

(brusquely)

Now is not the time, Miss - what's your last name, anyway?

SHAZ

Lincoln, like the President.

For some reason, Lonney really likes that. But he pushes her away. The flashlight's still in his hand; he lights up both of their faces. They've been through the mill - dirt on their faces, their clothes askew. Like two kids who've been playing in the dirt, they somehow feel free as they size each other up. Their desire is palpable.

LONNEY

(shaking himself)

OK. For the moment, I owe you my life. But that doesn't mean I trust you.

SHAZ

Is that the way you kiss women you don't trust? (beat) Let's go.

Lonney knows he's been busted. His countenance breaks for a minute, and he gives her a big, sexy grin.

LONNEY

Go where?

SHAZ

(looking at her watch)

We have to do a 5-minute mile to meet the car, just upriver. Ready?

She takes off running. Lonney looks around, realizes he has no other choice, and takes off after her.

CUT TO:

EXT. A crossroads - NIGHT

Lonney and Shaz run up to the crossroads, exhausted, and no car is in sight.

Shaz's hair is mussed, her breathing's heavy, she looks sexy. Lonney wants to touch her.

SHAZ

Shit! He's late.

LONNEY

(musing)

OK. While we wait for your car, clue me in a little. What's this all about?

SHAZ

(taking a deep breath)

The White House has gone off the deep end. There's no end to the corruption. It's insidious. It's becoming a monarchy - exactly what we waged the entire American Revolution against.

LONNEY

And just what do you intend to do about it?

SHAZ

The President's a puppet, and his entire Cabinet, as I already told you, is filled with megalomaniacs.

LONNEY

So what else is new?

SHAZ

You don't get it, do you? Democracy is at stake in this country.

LONNEY

Democracy's always at stake. This is the United States of America.

SHAZ

(becoming frustrated)

This isn't a joke, Lonney! The Constitution's being sold up the river to the highest bidders!

LONNEY

Sounds like conspiracy talk to me.

SHAZ

Conspiracy talk, huh? Remember James Madison? He was the fourth President of the United States?

LONNEY

I double-majored in history and poli-sci at Georgetown before I joined the FBI.

SHAZ

Double major. I'm not surprised. (beat) Madison said, and I quote, "The day will come when our Republic will be an impossibility. It will be an impossibility because wealth will be concentrated in the hands of a few."

Lonney's eyes take on a faraway look. He remembers his days at Georgetown, when he was a young idealist, and completely inspired by his studies of the great presidents.

LONNEY

(suddenly inspired)

"By rendering the labor of one, the property of the other, they cherish pride, luxury, and vanity on one side; on the other, vice and servility, or hatred and revolt."

SHAZ

"The people are the only legitimate fountain of power, and it is from them that the constitutional charter, under which the several branches of government hold their power, is derived."

LONNEY

"Where an excess of power prevails, property of no sort is duly respected. No man is safe in his opinions, his person, his faculties, or his possessions."

SHAZ

You're beginning to get it, hot shot. James Madison was one brilliant president.

LONNEY

Yes, he was. Why isn't the current one ashamed to show his smirking, inarticulate face in public? I was brought up to respect and revere the office of the President of the United States. But as I got older, I also learned that facts don't lie. This one stole the election, then he entered a war that most American don't want, under false pretenses.

SHAZ

"War should only be declared by the authority of the people, whose toils and treasures are to support its burdens, instead of the government which is to reap its fruits."

LONNEY

(nodding slowly)

Right. The military-industrial complex that was Eisenhower's prophesy. During the last days of his presidency, he told the American people that it was a threat to democracy itself.

SHAZ

And the military-industrial interests that were once a by-product of policy, have now come to define the policy itself.

LONNEY

Wag the dog.

SHAZ

And you heard what Eisenhower's kids revealed in 2004, didn't you?

LONNEY

No, I was getting laid in Buckingham Palace that year, remember?

SHAZ

Eisenhower originally called it the military-industrial-congressional complex. But in the end they decided to leave out the word "congressional." You know, "protect" the public from the truth. Pretend the politicians aren't at the head of the line with their hands out to the arms dealers.

LONNEY

I'm an idealist, not a cynic, Shaz, but I hate to say that I'm not surprised.

SHAZ

Lonney, this was Eisenhower's main concern: *that only with the collusion of members of Congress could the apparatus of the defense sector grow to wag the dog.* (beat) Dammit, Lonney! Markham told me you'd be on our side! He told me you were a true patriot!

Lonney softens. The gravity of what Shaz is telling him finally sinks in. He realizes that he not only admires her patriotism, but he's also falling in love with her.

LONNEY

OK, Shaz, I'm convinced. I know it's true. But the question remains: what do you intend to do about it. What can you do about it?

SHAZ

The key is the phrase: "only with the collusion of members of Congress." We need to identify the ones who are colluding in the military-industrial complex. And eliminate them.

Lonney is visibly taken aback. Shaz is talking assassination on a mass scale. But desperate times call for desperate measures, and it looks like the only way.

CUT TO:

Headlights coming down the road. A big white Cadillac SUV drives up. MARKHAM is at the wheel.

A gamut of emotions run across Lonney's face - relief, confusion, anger, gratitude. He walks around to the driver's side.

MARKHAM

(relieved to see him)

Lonney!

LONNEY

You sonofabitch!

Lonney pulls Markham out of the car. He's about to punch him and instead, throws his arms around Markham in a bear hug.

MARKHAM

Lonney, man, Lonney! It's me, Markham! Hey, we're on the same team!

SHAZ

Lonney! I only said what I did about Markham to test your loyalty! We're in this together! Markham is counterintelligence inside the White House! He sent me to get you off that boat before it blew!

A shiny BLACK HUMMER comes out of nowhere and drives by fast. The window is down on the passenger side, and a gun is sticking out.

SHAZ

Lonney!

Lonney hits the dirt, diving behind the Cadillac. A bullet hits Markham, and he goes down. Another bullet hits Shaz. The Hummer speeds away.