

Cool Gray Dawn

Episode #11: "The Canard"

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Cool Gray Dawn

"The Canard"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INSERT QUOTE AGAINST BLACK SCREEN:

"'It is unnatural in a large field to have only one shaft of wheat, and in the infinite Universe only one living world.' - Metrodorus of Chios, Greek Philosopher, circa 350 B.C."

INSERT EXCERPTS FROM "THE MIKE WALLACE INTERVIEW," 3/8/58, AMERICAN BROADCASTING COMPANY:

Reporter MIKE WALLACE patronizingly interviews former U.S. MARINE CORPS MAJOR DONALD KEYHOE who claims the Air Force and CIA have covered up the existence of UFOs. Keyhoe gives the names of military and civilian pilots, engineers and technicians who have seen UFOs or tracked them on radar.

EXT. HIGHWAY NEAR HOLLOMAN AIR FORCE BASE, NEW MEXICO - NIGHT

Headlights on a passing truck illuminate a road sign that reads "Holloman A.F.B., LEFT LANE/U.S. ROUTES 70, 82 EAST/Alamogordo (arrow pointing straight ahead)."

EXT. ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO - NIGHT

Stock footage of a frontier town, barely updated since its inception in 1912.

INT. "MEMPHIS WEST" NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

A honky-tonk where jaunty couples line dance to live music. At the bar, a distraught CARL EATON, 45, gulps a shot of bourbon. The BARTENDER offers him another but Eaton declines.

EATON

There a phone in here?

The Bartender points to the corridor at the back of the room.

EATON

Gets up, sidesteps the dancers and heads into the dimly lit CORRIDOR. Next to the Men's Room, he sees the...

PHONE BOOTH

Eaton enters; the door sticks and won't shut. He sits, puts a dime in the coin slot and dials "OPERATOR."

MEN'S ROOM

A man, ASASHIN, walks up to the door and pauses.

INT. LATHAM'S APARTMENT - KITCHENETTE - NIGHT

WARREN LATHAM, still in his suit, is frying eggs. O.S., "Take Five" by The Dave Brubeck Quartet plays on the hi-fi. The phone RINGS O.S. He sets the skillet aside and enters the...

LIVING ROOM

Latham curiously glances at his watch: 10:57. He lowers the volume on the hi-fi and picks up the phone.

LATHAM

Hello?

OPERATOR (O.S.)

I have a collect call from a Carl Eaton for a Warren Latham. Is this Mr. Latham?

LATHAM

Yes.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

Will you accept the charges?

LATHAM

Eaton... Yeah, I'll accept.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

Go ahead, Mr. Eaton.

Silence.

OPERATOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Mr. Eaton, go ahead, please.

PHONE BOOTH

Eaton is slumped, eyes shut, blood trickling from his nose - dead. Asashin finishes writing a "202" phone number on a matchbook cover, pockets it and hangs up the handset.

LATHAM'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

Over the phone comes a CLICK.

LATHAM

Hello?

OPERATOR (O.S.)

I'm sorry but the calling party appears to have hung up.

LATHAM

Wait. Operator, can you tell me  
where he was calling from?

OPERATOR (O.S.)

Alamogordo, New Mexico.

LATHAM

Thanks.

He hangs up and turns up the volume on "Take Five."

EXT. COCKROACH ALLEY - DIRECTORATE OF PLANS - DAY

CIA personnel enter the nondescript building.

INT. LATHAM'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

The television is on, tuned to the "Jack LaLanne Show."  
Latham enters just as COLLETTE DOWD emerges from his office.

COLLETTE

Your schedule is on your desk,  
along with the newspaper.

Latham nods. Collette anxiously follows him into...

LATHAM'S OFFICE

Latham lays his briefcase on his desk and takes off his coat.

COLLETTE

There's a story in there about  
those two unknown satellites.

LATHAM

Idiots were supposed to hold off  
until the findings came in today.

COLLETTE

What if they aren't asteroids?

LATHAM

You're worrying for no reason.

COLLETTE

But what if they aren't?

She's trembling. Latham takes her hand and points to the TV.

LATHAM

Hey... Russians, Martians, whatever -  
I'm not worried 'cause nobody's  
getting past him.

On TV LaLanne exercises. Collette grins and hangs up his coat.

LATHAM (CONT'D)  
What have you got for me?

COLLETTE  
Mr. Kensington is back.

LATHAM  
With harrowing tales of his time  
spent as a hostage, I'll bet.

COLLETTE  
Pity the poor man who had to  
debrief him. Talk about torture...

LATHAM  
(amused)  
You got anything IMMEDIATE?

COLLETTE  
Berard at nine; SMOTH at the usual  
place before close of play; oh, and  
Colonel Wesley Spencer called.

LATHAM  
He say what about?

COLLETTE  
No, he just asked if you'd meet him  
for lunch at 'The Canard.'

Latham sits and cocks his head; something is on his mind.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)  
I've been there; it's nice.

LATHAM  
No, it's not that... I got a collect  
call last night from Carl Eaton.

Collette shrugs; she looks puzzled.

INSERT SCENES:

- West Berliners stand amid the ruins of their city and watch  
U.S. C-47 military transport planes fly overhead.

- A grounds crew at Tempelhof Airfield, West Berlin  
distributes boxes labeled "C.A.R.E.-U.S.A." to civilians.

- Inscribed on the fuselage of a C-47: "LAST VITTLES FLIGHT/  
17,835,727 TONS AIRLIFTED TO BERLIN."

- At a hofbrau, Berlin Airlift crewmen celebrate. Eaton and  
WESLEY SPENCER, both in uniform, flank Latham (in civvies),  
all happily hoisting beer steins.

- Eaton, dead inside the phone booth.

(Use stock newsreel footage of the Berlin Airlift.)

SUIT WORDS TO ACTION

LATHAM (CONT'D)

He and Spencer flew in Operation  
VITTLES when I was in West Berlin.

COLLETTE

The Berlin Airlift.

LATHAM

My first posting in the Company.

COLLETTE

Must have been exciting.

LATHAM

(remembering fondly)

C-47 'Gooney Birds' flying round-the-  
clock into Tempelhof Airfield...  
Eaton - he was some pilot. I doubt  
he slept more than 2 hours a night.

COLLETTE

And he's over at Andrews now?

LATHAM

No, he's with the Company, Office of  
Scientific Investigations.

COLLETTE

Wow, must be pretty smart.

LATHAM

Oh, yeah. He called me last night  
from New Mexico. Collect. I accept  
the charges then - click! - he  
hangs up, the goldbrick.

BACK TO SCENE

He shrugs, puzzled. Collette smiles and goes back to her desk.

FILM SEQUENCE:

A clip from the 1956 film "U.F.O." showing UFOs flying in  
formation over Tremonton, Utah on July 2, 1952, shot by  
Warrant Officer Delbert C. Newhouse, U.S. Navy. Newhouse  
describes the event in an interview with a U.S.A.F. officer.

("U.F.O." is a documentary distributed by United Artists.)

END OF FILM SEQUENCE.

INT. BERARD'S OFFICE - DAY

WILSON BERARD, STEWART KENSINGTON and Latham each review a journal, photos and a report in folders titled "MAIER TAPE."

BERARD

On top is last month's *Journal of Space Flight*. There's a report in there on two sisters in Chicago, Mildred and Marie Maier.

KENSINGTON

The Doublemint Twins.

BERARD

What?

KENSINGTON

The Doublemint Twins. You know...  
(sings the jingle)  
'Double your pleasure, double your fun...' They sang it originally.

Self-satisfied, Kensington beams. Latham rolls his eyes.

INSERT SCENES FROM THE MAIER SISTERS' LIVING ROOM:

A) Victorian, replete with lace, wingtip chairs, a sofa and a storage trunk; two spinsters, MILDRED and MARIE MAIER listen excitedly to a ham radio connected to a tape recorder.

B) Eaton introduces himself to the obsequious sisters; they serve him tea, which he sniffs then sips warily.

C) After viewing the sisters' scrapbook of clippings from their days on the stage, and a rendition of their Doublemint Gum jingle, the put-upon Eaton finally gets the recording.

SUIT WORDS TO SCENES

BERARD

They claimed to have a recording of a radio signal from a UFO.

Kensington smirks; Latham shakes his head in disbelief.

BERARD (CONT'D)

The signal had also been recorded by some ham radio operators; that piqued our interest. So the Office of Scientific Intelligence sent one of their people to get a copy of the recording from the sisters who were, well, a bit eccentric.

BACK TO SCENE

Latham is amused as he reads an excerpt from Eaton's Report: "It was like a scene from 'Arsenic And Old Lace'; the only thing lacking was the cyanide-laced elderberry wine."

BERARD (CONT'D)  
OSI analyzed the tape.

INSERT SCENES:

A) A page of 8-digit binary sets and Julian Day numbers:

01000101 01011000 01010000 01001100 01001111 01010010  
01000001 01010100 01001001 01001111 01001110 00100000  
01001111 01000110 00100000 01001000 01010101 01001101  
01000001 01001110 01001001 01010100 01011001  
1110100001110001001101001111  
01000011 01001111 01001110 01010100 01001001 01001110  
  
01010101 01001111 01010101 01010011 00100000 01000110  
01001111 01010010 00100000 01010000 01001100 01000001  
01001110 01000101 01010100 01000001 01010010 01011001  
00100000 01000001 01000100 01010110 01000001 01001110  
01000011 01000101 01001101 01000101 01001110 01010100  
1001111010111110101 01001110  
100000010111100001111 01010111  
10011100101110000101101011000 01001110  
11111100111110101111110110101 01010111

B) A CIA OFFICER inputs the following Alpha-Binary matches onto computer punch cards:

A 01000001 B 01000010 C 01000011 D 01000100  
E 01000101 F 01000110 G 01000111 H 01001000  
I 01001001 J 01001010 K 01001011 L 01001100  
M 01001101 N 01001110 O 01001111 P 01010000  
Q 01010001 R 01010010 S 01010011 T 01010100  
U 01010101 V 01010110 W 01010111 W 01010111  
X 01011000 Y 01011001 Z 01011010

C) Computer output begins printing on a Teletype machine:

1001111010111110101 base2/10000 base10 = 32.5109 base10;  
100000010111100001111 base2/10000 base10 = 106.0623 base10;  
10011100101110000101101011000 base2/10000000 base10 =  
32.8665944 base10;  
11111100111110101111110110101 base2/10000000 base10 =  
106.1076917

SUIT WORDS TO DECRYPTION ACTION

BERARD (CONT'D)  
OSI concluded it was harmless Morse code from a local radio station, for the most part. The rest were binary numbers and Julian dates, which they decoded.



LATHAM'S OFFICE

Latham, PAUL "BAZZO" BARRY and a skeptical CARLA DILAURIA read through the "MAIER TAPE" folder.

INSERT DECODED TEXT:

**EXPLORATION OF HUMANITY 2437333.27223** (*Julian date, translation: Thursday, Feb-02-61*)

**CONTINUOUS FOR PLANETARY ADVANCEMENT**

**32.5109N 106.0623W 32.8665944N 106.1076917W** (*Geocentric Coordinates: Holloman AFB, KHMN/HMN, Runway 16*)

BACK TO SCENE

DILAURIA

UFOs landing at Holloman...

LATHAM

C.I. says it's a KGB ploy.

DILAURIA

Hm, was there any doubt? Why'd they choose February 2nd?

LATHAM

It's Groundhog Day. How do I know?

BAZZO

Why is this on our plate, boss?

LATHAM

Last month Alaskan NORAD reported multiple sightings over Point Barrow. They asked us for a scientific opinion, so OSI ran a joint study with Cal Tech. They concluded the UFOs weren't Russian because Boris didn't have the technological capability.

DILAURIA

So what were they?

LATHAM

Sunlight reflecting off seagulls.

DiLauria arches an eyebrow but Bazzo grows serious.

BAZZO

I remember two years ago, OSI and the Air Force looked into some UFOs over Air Defense Command in Montana.

DILAURIA

More birds?

BAZZO

Inconclusive. Whatever they were,  
radar tracked them doing Mach 15.

DiLauria is nonplussed. Latham gets up and meanders about.

LATHAM

Look, I mentioned NORAD because  
Berard feels it's a template on how  
to handle this; the opposite being  
how we've handled the Maiers' case.  
The sisters gave a radio interview  
to Bob Ward, an ex-Air Force pilot.  
They told him they gave their tape  
to an Air Force Major named Eaton.

BAZZO

You'd think he'd use a working name.

LATHAM

I know. Ward wrote to him at the  
Air Technical Intelligence Center,  
asking if they'd analyzed the tape.  
ATIC wrote back, saying it had been  
sent to the proper authorities.

DILAURIA

I thought that was the Air Force?

LATHAM

Which is why Ward figured Eaton was  
CIA and wrote to the Director.

Bazzo and DiLauria groan a few expletives.

LATHAM (CONT'D)

OSI responded that the tape had been  
analyzed by another agency, and that  
the Air Force would contact him.

BAZZO

Yeah, right.

LATHAM

No, they did. They said Eaton was  
and still is a major, and that the  
tape had been analyzed by another  
agency who only found harmless Morse  
Code from a radio station.

DILAURIA

Open mouth, insert foot.

LATHAM

So Ward wrote back to Dulles; he  
wanted the name of the tape analyst.

BAZZO

Okay, so how do we get out of this?

LATHAM

You read the Brookings Report?

Bazzo nods but DiLauria shakes her head no.

LATHAM (CONT'D)

NASA asked the Brookings Institute to study peaceful uses of space exploration. Their report postulated on the public's reaction if NASA found evidence of extraterrestrial life, like artifacts left on the moon, or even a face-to-face meeting with the aliens.

DILAURIA

We already know. That story in today's paper has everyone spooked.

LATHAM

That's why the Report suggested the government withhold that information from the public. So Paul's going to see Mr. Ward and convince him the tape had only innocuous Morse Code.

BEGIN FILM SEQUENCE:

- Moscow's May Day military hardware parade in Red Square.
- Fidel Castro and Nikita Khrushchev.
- Civil Defense signs; an atomic bomb detonates.
- The Pentagon; a meeting of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- North American Air Defense (NORAD) command center.
- A U-2 spy plane takes off from Incirlik Air Base, Turkey.
- U.N. troops arrive in The Congo.
- U.S. advisors in South Vietnam with ARVN leaders.
- MI6's original headquarters, Broadway, London.
- The headquarters of West Germany's Federal Intelligence Service (BND) in Pullach, West Germany.
- The headquarters of SDECE, France's intelligence service, Hôtel de Brienne, 14 rue St. Dominique, Paris.
- A document labeled "TOP SECRET" is placed in a briefcase.

- The U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C.

END OF FILM SEQUENCE.

SUIT WORDS TO FILM SEQUENCE

NARRATOR (V.O.)

In a world of global upheaval, of escalating tensions between the superpowers, and the ever-present threat of nuclear annihilation, Prolaxis Global supports the United States and its allies by providing the tools to facilitate optimal decision-making. With effective intelligence collection and analysis through its cross-discipline capabilities, Prolaxis Global maximizes its extraordinary range of knowledge in security, aviation, logistics and operational expertise. Working with its international partners, Prolaxis Global provides independent solutions using professionals who understand the unique, sensitive and exigent security demands of a changing world.

INT. SMALL FILM ROOM

The lights go up, revealing the AUDIENCE - seven well-dressed middle-aged, Caucasian men; on their laps, folders labeled "PROLAXIS GLOBAL." The SPEAKER reenters and walks to the dais.

SPEAKER

You've met one of our experts and now you've seen our presentation. Your time is valuable, so I'll keep this brief. If you're interested in our services, call the number inside your folders and make an appointment to speak with one of our representatives. Again, thank you for accepting our invitation.

The Audience rises and heads out, led by MAXWELL GAMBLE, 52.

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

The Audience leaves the house. They shake hands with the Speaker and Asashin, then get into their chauffeured limos.

UP THE ROAD

In a Gray Ford, MAX takes pictures of everyone at the house.

INT. BLACK LIMOUSINE - DAY

Gamble opens his PROLAXIS GLOBAL folder then picks up the car's radiotelephone.

GAMBLE

This is General Maxwell Gamble...

EXT. COCKROACH ALLEY - DAY

A view of the four nondescript buildings.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Alone in there, TOM PERCY takes a swig from a metal flask.

INT. OPERATIONS ROOM

The usual PURL of chatter, teletype machines and RINGING phones. Latham and Bazzo meet with JARED STOKES. Percy enters. Latham sniffs the air suspiciously as Percy passes by him.

STOKES

Paul, you'll have a sanitized analysis of the tape from ITEK.

Kensington bounces in and interrupts Stokes.

KENSINGTON

Off to Chicago, Paul?

BAZZO

Yes, sir - Operation Green Men.

STOKES

(to Bazzo)

You'll have Air Force credentials-

KENSINGTON

Won't be as exciting as New York.

BAZZO

No, sir, it probably won't.

STOKES

(growing frustrated)

So remember to wear civvies.

Kensington is about to interrupt when Latham cuts him off.

LATHAM

Did you want to see me, sir?

KENSINGTON

Yes, I wanted to thank you again for what you did in New York.

STOKES

(to Bazzo)

We also sent a wire under Air Force heading to the radio station, alerting them to your visit tonight.

LATHAM

(to Kensington)

I'm just glad it turned out well.

KENSINGTON

I was wondering... When was the last time you changed your blinds?

LATHAM

My what?

KENSINGTON

The Venetian blinds in your office.

LATHAM

I don't know... Never.

KENSINGTON

We should get you some new ones. And those windows of yours... You really ought to get them washed.

Bazzo and Stokes grin mischievously and turn away.

LATHAM

The dirt keeps anyone from seeing inside.

KENSINGTON

No need to live in squalor, man.

LATHAM

No, sir... Was there anything else?

KENSINGTON

Yes. Why not join me for lunch at the Club today?

LATHAM

Sorry, I have a prior appointment.

KENSINGTON

Oh... Well, some other time then.

Kensington jauntily leaves. Latham sighs wearily.

EXT. POINT BARROW LONG-RANGE RADAR SITE, ALASKA - NIGHT

Stock footage of the base. A flood-lit sign reads "UNITED STATES AIR FORCE/POINT BARROW/LONG RANGE RADAR SITE."

INT. RADAR STATION CONTROL CENTER - NIGHT

Indistinct chatter and muted lighting is punctuated by the green glow from radar screens manned by U.S.A.F. personnel. MATTHEWS and WHITTEN, late 20's, sit at adjacent monitoring stations. A white blip appears on Whitten's radar screen.

WHITTEN

I've got a target at 2:00.

MATTHEWS

At Angel's 10, I see it. I'll check with CAA for any commercial traffic.

He picks up his phone. Whitten also places a call.

WHITTEN

It's Whitten, sir. We have a target at 2:00... Right.

He hangs up and monitors his scope. A moment later, sleepy-eyed COMMANDER COLLINS, 42, shuffles over.

COLLINS

Nine A.M. and it's still dark out.

WHITTEN

Civil twilight. You get used to it.

COLLINS

I hope not. What have you got?

WHITTEN

Seagulls again at 10,000 feet. Target's now at 3:00 - wait, 12:00. It's bouncing all over the place.

Collins looks worried. Matthews hangs up his phone.

COLLINS

Can you confirm this, Matthews?

MATTHEWS

Yes, sir. I've got stellar contact, solid on every sweep.

COLLINS

You check with the CAA?

MATTHEWS

No commercial traffic in the area.

The dot on Whitten's radar screen suddenly triples in size.

WHITTEN

Whoa!

COLLINS

What is it?

WHITTEN

Target just dropped from 10,000 to  
below 1000 feet - at Mach 15.

They're stunned. Matthews' phone RINGS; he answers it.

MATTHEWS

Control Center, Matthews.

He winces, jerking the handset away from his ear.

COLLINS

Who is that?

MATTHEWS

I don't know - the guy's screaming.

COLLINS

Put him on speaker.

Matthews flips a switch on his control panel.

MAN ON PHONE (O.S.)

You listening?! There's a huge,  
glowing red object over Dish Row!  
Wait - it's moving... It's moving!

Other radar operators peek over their shoulders at Collins.

COLLINS

This is Lt. Cmdr. Collins; identify  
yourself.

MAN ON PHONE (O.S.)

Lynch, Base Security. The object's  
moving this way. It's right above  
me! What do I do?!

COLLINS

Stand your ground, Lynch. Can you  
see any markings on it?

Silence - all eyes are on Matthews, Whitten and Collins.  
Suddenly RIFLE SHOTS CRACKLE over the speaker.

COLLINS (CONT'D)

What the hell just happened, Lynch?!

MAN ON PHONE/LYNCH (O.S.)

I shot at it... It zoomed back up.

MATTHEWS

Target has ascended to Angel's 10.



LYNCH (O.S.)  
I can't see it. I think it's gone.

WHITTEN  
Target's off scope.

COLLINS  
Lynch, do you want to file a report?

LYNCH (O.S.)  
(a moment, then)  
No, sir. You can tell General Gamble  
it must've been seagulls again.

ACT TWO

INT. "THE CANARD" BAR AND RESTAURANT - DAY

A popular watering hole. A table menu reads "The Canard."  
WESLEY SPENCER gulps a vodka shot and finishes it with a beer  
chaser. He signals for another round. Latham joins him,  
carrying a bottle of Diet Rite Cola and a glass.

SPENCER  
Hey, glad you could make it.

LATHAM  
Beats the alternative.

SPENCER  
Yeah? What's that?

LATHAM  
Lunch with Kensington - one of  
Dante's Nine Circles Of Hell.

Spencer chuckles nervously. Growing somber, he leans forward.  
Latham recoils some at Spencer's strong liquor breath.

SPENCER  
I'm sorry about Bulgaria, man. I-

LATHAM  
Forget it; it's over with.

The Waitress brings Spencer another round. He gulps the shot,  
swigs his beer then lights a cigarette.

SPENCER  
23 years in the military... I  
should've bailed when Eaton did and  
signed up with you people.

LATHAM  
You know, he called me last night.

SPENCER  
(apprehensively)  
You spoke to him?

LATHAM  
Never got the chance; he hung up.

Spencer leans back, oddly relieved at this.

SPENCER  
So you don't know then...

LATHAM  
What is this, 'I've Got A Secret'?

SPENCER  
I got a call this morning from the police in Alamogordo. They found Carl in some night club - a brain aneurysm or something. They said they'd know more after an autopsy.

Latham is stunned - but then something bothers him.

LATHAM  
Why did the police call you?

SPENCER  
Huh? What do you mean?

LATHAM  
I mean, why did they call you? Carl would've been backstopped with pocket litter for just that reason.

SPENCER  
I don't know; he had one of my MATS business cards on him.

LATHAM  
So do I. I also have one from Ace Typewriter Repair. But even if I jump out the window holding my Smith-Corona, I doubt D.C. Metro will call either one of you.

Spencer HUFFS and stubs out his half-smoked cigarette.

SPENCER  
So, you gonna interrogate me now?

LATHAM  
No, but someone will.

Spencer reaches for a cigarette but his pack is empty. He slumps, puts the pack back in his pocket and swigs his beer.

LATHAM (CONT'D)

Why did you want to see me, Wes?

SPENCER

At the end of The War they had me fly to Buchenwald, repatriate our POWs held there. The Jews there... Like walking skeletons. And the ones the Nazis experimented on... You wonder how God could let that happen. Then one day you're back home and you see something, something you can't believe. And you wonder if there even is a God.

He looks past Latham, out the front window.

SPENCER'S P.O.V. - AN UNMARKED SERVICE VAN

Is double-parked across the street; behind the wheel, Asashin.

BACK TO SCENE

Spencer is visibly shaken.

LATHAM

What is it?

He turns and looks out the window, just as the Van leaves.

SPENCER

I have to go.

LATHAM

Why? What's going on?

SPENCER

Nothing. I just forgot I have to be some place.

He gulps his beer while staring at Latham's cup of soda.

LATHAM

Who was that out there?

SPENCER

No one was out there.

He gets up. Latham grabs Spencer's arm.

LATHAM

What are you afraid of, Wes?

SPENCER

(jerks his arm free)  
For Chrissakes, will you back off?!

He takes a tiny envelope from his cigarette pack, drops it on the table and leaves. Latham opens it. With a toothpick he pokes at the white powder inside.

EXT. CHICAGO, ILLINOIS - DAY

Stock footage of the cityscape and The Loop (circa 1960).

INT. RADIO STATION - CORRIDOR

BOB WARD, 55, peers through an interior window into a studio. The clock reads 3:05. Beneath a lit "ON AIR" sign, DJ JACK changes a record while silently jabbering into the microphone.

Toting a satchel Bazzo enters, led by an INTERN who introduces him to Ward. Bazzo flashes his Air Force ID. DJ Jack flips a switch and "Small World" sung by Johnny Mathis plays O.S.

BREAK ROOM

"Small World" continues O.S. Ward and Bazzo sip coffee.

BAZZO

Why a call-in show?

WARD

I was bored spinning records. One day I went off-script, going on about what aliens must've thought when they saw Sputnik. In comes the GM, saying there's more action on the switchboard than in a co-ed's dorm room. So we ran with it.

BAZZO

So you believe in UFOs.

Ward sighs and scoops a little sugar from the bowl. He drops a few grains on the table, brushing away all but one.

BAZZO (CONT'D)

That's some kinda diet you're on.

WARD

For this one grain...  
(points to the sugar bowl)  
That's how many stars there are in the Milky Way. Take all the sand at Lake Michigan and that's billions of suns, just in our galaxy. You really think ours is the only one orbited by a habitable planet?

BAZZO

No, but it doesn't mean we're being visited by any of them.

WARD

Why? 'Cause they haven't landed on the White House lawn?

BAZZO

Be a good start.

WARD

Maybe they consider Earth the ghetto of the galaxy.

Bazzo chuckles.

WARD (CONT'D)

Look, I was a Senior Pilot. I know what I've seen up there.

Bazzo raises his hands, conceding the point. He pulls a folder from his satchel and hands it to Ward who opens it.

BAZZO

ITEK's analysis of the Maier tape.

WARD

ITEK... Dick Mahorn's company?

BAZZO

Yeah, you know him?

WARD

T25, Miss Lace, 498th Bomber Group. He was the A.C.; I was the co-pilot.

BAZZO

Hm... Well, all ITEK found was Morse Code from a local radio station.

Ward thumbs through the report.

WARD

The Morse Code operator who analyzed the tape... His name in here?

BAZZO

No. Air Force policy prohibits the disclosure of any personnel involved in an investigation.

WARD

(huffs)

What about getting a transcript of the tape?

BAZZO

Sorry, the file was destroyed.

WARD

What kinda bullshit is that?!

BAZZO

When a case is without merit, ATIC destroys the file rather than have it take up wasted space.

WARD

Since when did the Air Force become like Jimmy Hoffa's Teamsters?

He gets up and leaves, taking the report with him. Bazzo does a slow burn as "Small World" ends.

EXT. CHICAGO - ILLINOIS STATE BUILDING - DAY

Stock footage of its downtown location on North LaSalle.

INT. CHICAGO CIA STATION - OFFICE - DAY

On a desk is a RED ROTARY-DIAL PHONE; its subscriber name label, **DE7-4926** (CIA's actual Chicago station number in 1960). Bazzo sits at the desk, handset to his ear. He's livid.

BAZZO

Why the hell didn't Mission Planning know Ward had flown with Mahorn?

INT. LATHAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Latham is on his Red phone.

LATHAM

What?

CROSSCUT BAZZO WITH LATHAM

BAZZO

Ward flew B-29s over Japan with ITEK's CEO! All he has to do now is call Mahorn and the Op's blown.

LATHAM

Alright, I'll call ITEK. Mahorn lives in Boston. Call the station; have them send a man to his house in a radio car. If I can't reach Mahorn, I'll tell the station to disrupt his phone service.

BAZZO

What about Mission Planning?

LATHAM

Later. Now get a move on.

He hangs up the Red phone and picks up the Gray one.

KENSINGTON'S OFFICE

Kensington brushes his tuxedo. There's a KNOCK on his door.

KENSINGTON

Come.

Latham enters.

KENSINGTON (CONT'D)

Ah, Warren. You missed an excellent lunch: Blackberry brandy grilled pheasant, wild rice, grilled fruit kabobs. Mmm... What did you eat?

LATHAM

A BLT.

KENSINGTON

(smirks)

Oh... So, what can I do for you?

LATHAM

Mandarin Two called in. Seems Mission Planning missed the fact that Bob Ward-

KENSINGTON

The Chicago radio host?

LATHAM

Yes. He and Itek's CEO, Dick Mahorn, flew together over Japan.

Kensington stops; he's panicked.

KENSINGTON

My God, if Ward calls him-

LATHAM

I already have a call in to Mahorn's office. And I've got the Boston station on standby to cut his home phone line if need be.

KENSINGTON

You mean disrupt his service.

LATHAM

Yes. But we have a larger problem here: drinking on duty.

Kensington grins, relieved. He scoffs as he resumes grooming his tuxedo.

KENSINGTON

We all tend to overindulge, from the Director on down. But that hardly qualifies as a problem.

LATHAM

When it affects a mission it does.

KENSINGTON

(annoyed)

Then remind them to exercise due diligence; otherwise it's a non-issue. Anything else?

LATHAM

You know about Carl Eaton from OSI? He wrote the report on the Maiers.

KENSINGTON

Yes... An aneurysm wasn't it?

LATHAM

So I heard. Anyway, I met with Colonel Wesley Spencer earlier, and I got the distinct impression he knows more about Eaton's death than what's been reported.

KENSINGTON

Wait - why would he know anything?

LATHAM

Eaton, Spencer and I have been friends since The War. Eaton called me last night, apparently just before he died. For some reason he hung up before we could talk.

KENSINGTON

(skeptical)

And that's why you think his death was suspicious?

LATHAM

Spencer was on edge, especially when I asked why the police contacted him. I also saw that he was being watched.

KENSINGTON

By whom?

LATHAM

I don't know. But when Spencer saw the man he panicked.

(MORE)



LATHAM (CONT'D)

He took off and left an envelope  
with some white powder in it. OSI  
is analyzing it now.

Kensington pauses and sniggers.

KENSINGTON

Sounds like a little cocaine-  
induced paranoia.

LATHAM

No, he's a boozehound. I'd like to  
put a mandarin on him.

Kensington is incredulous. He stops brushing and faces Latham.

KENSINGTON

You can't be serious.

LATHAM

Sir, I believe Eaton was terminated  
and Spencer was somehow involved.

KENSINGTON

Then call in the FBI.

LATHAM

A mandarin could dig a lot further.

KENSINGTON

But there are no reasons to. And  
I'm not authorizing resources based  
on your friend's habit. We're not  
social workers. The answer is no.

Latham is deflated. He nods and leaves.

FILM SEQUENCE:

In a 1954 BBC interview, BOAC pilot CAPTAIN JAMES HOWARD  
describes several objects that shadowed his plane for 18  
minutes while en route from the U.S. to Britain.

END OF FILM SEQUENCE.

MID-SHOW BREAK

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. - LAFAYETTE SQUARE PARK - DAY

Latham and LAWRENCE JONES stroll; in the background, the White  
House. Latham is clearly abstracted. Jones SNAPS his fingers.

JONES

Earth to Latham, come in.

Latham looks at Jones and grins sheepishly.

LATHAM

Sorry. What did you say?

JONES

I said you're lucky Mahorn agreed to be indisposed. And you didn't even have to shut off his phone.

LATHAM

Oh, we did that anyway.

He glances up at the sky.

JONES

It hasn't fallen yet, Henny Penny.

Latham does a double-take.

JONES (CONT'D)

That's Chicken Little to you natives in the colonies. Anyway, before I go into why I asked you here, why don't you tell me what's on your mind.

LATHAM

I need you to put eyes on one of my Desk Officers, Tom Percy.

JONES

Why? You think he's doubling?

LATHAM

No, I think he's a drunk. I need to know if anyone else knows.

JONES

Hmm, the KGB loves to flood the city with honey traps during the holidays. I'll keep an eye on him.

Latham nods his thanks. Jones pulls an envelope from his pocket and hands it to Latham who pauses before opening it.

LATHAM

No white powder in here, is there?

Jones is befuddled. Latham waves him off and pulls out photos of the Audience taken outside the Manor House.

JONES

The house is in Arlington. Tax rolls list the owner as Prolaxis Global.

LATHAM

Never heard of them.

JONES

They're a private Intel and security firm based in Johannesburg.

LATHAM

Hm, business must be booming.

JONES

As far as we can tell, their clients are international businessmen - except for him.

(points to Gamble)

Major General Maxwell Gamble, U.S. Air Force, Strategic Air Command.

LATHAM'S P.O.V. - PHOTO OF GENERAL GAMBLE

Shaking hands with the Speaker while Asashin looks on.

BACK TO SCENE

Latham recognizes Asashin.

LATHAM

Why were you watching Gamble?

JONES

We were watching a British national. Gamble surprised us. Warren, you've already lost enough friends in the African and Asian ecumene because of Eisenhower's 'Europe First' policy. If the KGB gets wind of this...

LATHAM

(pained)

I know... Who are these two with Gamble?

JONES

They work for Prolaxis Global.

EXT. ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE - DAY (DUSK)

Stock footage of the base.

INT. FLIGHT OFFICE - DAY (DUSK)

CAPTAIN WILLARD mans the Duty Desk; behind him, the MATS flight board. Spencer enters, heavy-footed, his jacket open.

WILLARD

Thought you were off today, Colonel?

Spencer grunts something unintelligible as he lumbers past the Desk. Willard rolls his eyes and returns to his work.

DUTY OFFICER'S ROOM

From his locker Spencer removes a M1911 pistol. With his left hand he shoves it inside the waistband of his pants.

SPENCER

Crosses the parking lot and gets into his Ford. He grabs the steering wheel and quickly pulls his hand off. He rubs his fingers against his palm. He wipes the steering wheel with his sleeve, then starts the car and drives away.

I/E. SUITLAND PARKWAY - SPENCER'S FORD - DAY (DUSK)

Spencer shakes his head, trying to focus. Traffic around him HONKS. He pulls onto the shoulder and pushes open his door.

INT. SPENCER'S FORD

Spencer leans out and vomits. He shuts the door and slumps back in his seat, quickly slipping into semi-consciousness.

In the rearview mirror a car pulls up. A Man wearing gloves gets out, walks up to the passenger-side door and opens it.

ASASHIN

Gets in, his revolver peeking from his shoulder holster. As he puts an envelope labeled "Jenny" into Spencer's pocket, he sees Spencer's M1911 and grins.

He yanks out the M1911, RACKS THE SLIDE, then wraps Spencer's right hand around the stock, forefinger on the trigger.

He lifts the muzzle to Spencer's right temple and...

EXT. ACROSS SUITLAND PARKWAY - SPENCER'S FORD

MUZZLE FLASH. Blood and brain matter SPLATTER onto the driver-side window. Traffic WHOOSHES past. Asashin alights, gets into his car and drives away.

EXT. STREET - APARTMENT HOUSE - NIGHT (EVENING)

An MGA is double-parked out front; a MAN, 30, leans against it. A WOMAN, 25, leaves the building, toting a small suitcase.

INT. APARTMENT - AT THE WINDOW

Percy bleakly watches the Man put the suitcase behind the seats. The Couple get into the car and drive off.

UP THE STREET - BLUE COUPE

Black MI6 Officer FIONA takes pictures of The Couple. She lowers her camera. As the MGA passes, she writes: "19:30."

Percy's wife leaves with unknown white male in late model MG."

INT. RADIO STATION - STUDIO

The "ON AIR" sign is lit. A 24-hour wall clock reads 21:05. Ward is at the microphone; beside him, KATE MILLS, 40.

WARD

Getting back to that story in *U.S. Aerospace Technology Weekly*... It was unsettling enough to the few of us who read it, but then to open today's paper and see it. I mean, come on, now everyone's on edge. Look, I get it - two unknown satellites orbiting the Earth is news, of course. But no one knows if they're man-made or natural phenomena. Why not just wait for the government to announce its findings. What's one more day? Anyway, I don't think they're man-made.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Typical two-star room. The clock radio is on, tuned to Ward. A beer sits on the nightstand. Bazzo leaves the bathroom in his robe. He plops on the bed and grabs his beer.

WARD (O.S.)

Mars is at its closest approach to Earth, and typically that's when UFO sightings go up. So here to discuss this, the Maier tape and other UFO news is my guest, director of the Center For Unknown Aerial Phenomena, Kate Mills. How are you, Kate?

MILLS (O.S.)

I'm fine, Bob.

WARD (O.S.)

I'm curious... What's your take on these two unknown satellites?

MILLS (O.S.)

I agree with you; they're not man-made.

WARD (O.S.)

Glad someone's on my side.

MILLS (O.S.)

But... Saying they're not man-made doesn't mean they aren't artificial.

WARD (O.S.)

Whoa! Hang on... Are you suggesting they're extraterrestrial in origin?

MILLS (O.S.)

Yes. And the government - and by that I mean the CIA - is covering this up, same as the Maier tape.

Bazzo groans and bangs his head back on the headboard.

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. - NIGHT

A light snowfall makes the Capitol appear luminescent.

INT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE

A gaggle of men and women mingle. Percy is lost in his drink. A BLONDE eschews the balding lotharios and approaches him.

Fiona sees this, excuses herself from a suitor and heads to...

THE LADIES' ROOM

On the wall is a LOCAL FIRE ALARM. Fiona enters, sidestepping a TIPSY WOMAN who's leaving. Fiona looks about - it's empty. She pulls the Fire Alarm lever. A bell CLANGS insistently.

AT THE BAR

GROANS and COMPLAINTS replace cooing as everyone scurries out.

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON HOTEL - STREET - NIGHT

The Guests spill into the street; some glance at the sky. An ungallant Percy hails a taxi and gets in, leaving the Blonde in the lurch. Fiona approaches her.

FIONA

Can't win them all.

Fiona winks at her and leaves while the Blonde glares.

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. - 704 3RD STREET, NW - NIGHT

The Unmarked Service Van is parked at the corner. Latham walks to the front door, Chinese take-out and briefcase in hand. He eyes the Van curiously as he enters the building.

INT. LATHAM'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Latham sits on the couch. "I Didn't Know What Time It Was" by Stan Getz and Gerry Mulligan plays on the hi-fi. Chinese food shares the coffee table with photos of Percy, his wife, her paramour and Fiona's SITREP. The phone RINGS; he answers it.

LATHAM

Hello?

CLICK - the caller hangs up. Latham is wary. He quickly hangs up, turns off the lamp and hurries to the window.

LATHAM'S P.O.V. - UNMARKED SERVICE VAN

A MAN in overalls gets out and goes around the corner.

BACK TO SCENE

Latham turns off the hi-fi. He reaches into the record cabinet and pulls out his M1911 pistol, then turns off the lights.

LATHAM'S APARTMENT BUILDING - THIRD-FLOOR HALLWAY

Quiet and carpeted. The elevator begins to HUM.

LIVING ROOM

Latham waits beside the door. The elevator bell DINGS O.S.; its doors BURR open and close. Silence.

Using his M1911, Latham reaches across the door and slides the metal cover off the peephole. Ambient light streams in.

The peephole suddenly goes DARK. Pfft. A silenced GUNSHOT BLOWS through it, the bullet SMASHING a table lamp. Quick, muffled footsteps fade O.S. Latham opens the door.

THIRD-FLOOR CORRIDOR - THE BACK STAIRWAY DOOR

Slowly closes. Latham races to the back stairs. WET SNEAKER FOOTPRINTS blemish the landing and steps leading downstairs.

Suddenly there's a SKID, several THUDS and a GROAN - someone has fallen. Latham races down the steps to the...

SECOND-FLOOR LANDING

Asashin lies there, rumpled and bleeding; his pistol lies in the corner. Latham checks him for a pulse. He secures the weapon and rifles through Asashin's pockets but finds nothing.

Latham lifts Asashin onto his shoulders in a fireman's carry and heads back upstairs.

LATHAM'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

Latham lays Asashin on the couch then picks up his phone.

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. - 704 3RD STREET, NW - NIGHT

With LIGHTS FLASHING and SIREN BLARING, an AMBULANCE, with Max driving, leaves the apartment building (the Harrison).

INT. MI6 SAFEHOUSE - BASEMENT HOLDING CELL

Dimly lit. Max and Jones carry a hooded Asashin to a heavy wooden chair and strap him down. Max shines a klieg light on Asashin's face while the DOCTOR fills a hypodermic needle.

Jones whips off the hood. Asashin GASPS for air and SQUINTS. The Driver rips open Asashin's right sleeve and wipes clean his forearm. The Doctor slides the needle into a vein.

Jones crosses to a metal door and opens it - in walks Latham.

EXT. CHICAGO (THE LOOP) - STREET - NIGHT

Ward leaves the radio station. The "El" (elevated train) rumbles overhead.

EXT. TAVERN - NIGHT

Ward enters. He glad-hands some old sots and sits at the bar.

INT. MI6 SAFEHOUSE - BASEMENT HOLDING CELL

The lights are on. Latham, Jones, the Doctor and Max stand around Asashin who, straps removed, recites nonstop.

ASASHIN

'The chair van Gogh had seen was obviously the chair I had seen, but incomparably more real than the chairs of perception.'

JONES

He's done resistance training.

ASASHIN

'What about human relations? How could one reconcile this timeless bliss, of seeing as one ought to see, with the temporal duties of doing what one ought to do...'

LATHAM

I know that; it's from 'The Doors Of Perception' by Aldous Huxley.

JONES

Hm, I didn't know there was a *Classic Comics* version.

Latham sneers at Jones. The Doctor turns to Latham.

DOCTOR

Reciting some lines might trigger an autonomic specificity response.



LATHAM

A what?

ASASHIN

'To be shaken out of the ruts of ordinary perception; to be shown for a few timeless hours the outer and inner world...'

DOCTOR

Think of watching a comedy at the pictures. You have a heightened response - laughter, say, instead of a chuckle - because you're sharing the experience with the audience.

LATHAM

And reciting lines from the book will do what?

DOCTOR

Make you part of his experience.

Not entirely convinced, Latham grabs a stool and sits in front of Asashin. As he leans forward...

ASASHIN

'But if the retired rubber goods merchant had sat still enough...'

Jones grins slyly. Latham gives him a sidelong glance.

LATHAM

'It has been a retreat from the outward datum into the personal subconscious, into a mental world more squalid and more tightly closed than even the world of conscious personality.'

Asashin pauses; he grins at Latham and leans forward.

ASASHIN

'The man who comes back through the Door in the Wall will never be quite the same as the man who went out.'

LATHAM

'There isn't any need for a civilized man to bear anything that's seriously unpleasant.'

ASASHIN

'When a man has a thing before his eyes, how can he be said to hope for it?'

LATHAM

What thing? What did that man see?

ASASHIN

Asashin didn't see what Eaton and  
Spencer saw.

Jones mouths "Asashin." Latham is growing angry.

LATHAM

That why they were targeted? You  
have orders to kill them, Asashin?

Jones grabs Latham's shoulder. Asashin is dour, then jocular.

ASASHIN

'I can't explain myself, I'm afraid,  
sir, because I'm not myself.'

Latham nods, angry at himself. He takes a deep breath.

ASASHIN (CONT'D)

'If I had a world of my own,  
everything would be nonsense.  
Nothing would be what it is, because  
everything would be what it isn't.'

JONES

(sotto voce to Latham)  
Lewis Carroll.

LATHAM

'The time has come to talk of many  
things: Of shoes and ships, and  
sealing wax, of cabbages and kings.'

Asashin smiles.

LATHAM (CONT'D)

Who gave that man his orders?

ASASHIN

That flaming asshole.

Jones grins. Latham thinks a moment, then turns to Jones.

LATHAM

I think that's also an Air Force  
term to describe a jet turning on  
its afterburners.

(to Asashin)

Was that General Gamble?

ASASHIN

Higher. Gamble only protects The  
Meeting - just three more months.

JONES  
What's in three months?

LATHAM  
(somberly)  
Groundhog Day.

EXT. CHICAGO - TAVERN - NIGHT

Closing time. Ward leaves, less sure-footed than when he arrived.

EXT. ELEVATED TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

A nearby WINO bobs and leans. Ward shuffles to the far end and PLOPS DOWN on a bench. He leans back and shuts his eyes.

A MAN IN A PEA COAT enters the platform and sits near Ward.

A train RUMBLES into the station; it's brakes SQUEAL, muffling a brief struggle. The doors open. The Wino straggles on; the doors close and the train leaves.

ON THE BENCH

Ward lies there motionless, eyes and mouth open in a death mask. The Man In The Pea Coat starts to strip him.

ACT THREE

FILM SEQUENCE:

Excerpts from a 1953 BBC short "An Unidentified Object," an interview with Royal Air Force pilot Terry Johnson and navigator Geoffrey Smythe who sighted a UFO in November 1953 (YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SeMrXqJ6OdE>).

END OF FILM SEQUENCE.

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. - DAY (MORNING)

People bundled against the cold queue for a city bus.

INT. LATHAM'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Latham enters, bleary-eyed. Collette jumps up from her desk.

COLLETTE  
(upset)  
Where have you been? I've been  
trying to reach you all morning.

LATHAM  
If I wanted to be nagged, I'd get  
married.

COLLETTE  
Colonel Spencer is dead.

Latham is stunned.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)  
The Park Police found him in his car, along with a suicide note. They also found your name and our public number on the back of his MATS card.

LATHAM  
(ruefully)  
In case he jumped out the window holding his typewriter.

COLLETTE  
Huh?

Latham shakes his head. She hands him a report.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)  
That came in from OSI.

As Latham reads, he grows horrified.

BERARD'S OFFICE

Berard, Kensington and Latham are in a discussion.

BERARD  
Thallium sulfate?

LATHAM  
Exterminators use it as rat poison. It's odorless, tasteless...

KENSINGTON  
Why would Spencer want to kill you?

LATHAM  
Because he'd been ordered to.

KENSINGTON  
By whom?

LATHAM  
Whoever wanted Eaton dead.

Kensington scoffs and looks away. Latham is growing angry.

LATHAM (CONT'D)  
Spencer told me the police called him because his name and number were on a MATS card Eaton had.  
(MORE)

LATHAM (CONT'D)

So he wrote my name and number on his MATS card in case anything happened to him. That way I'd make the connection with Eaton.

KENSINGTON

What connection? Eaton didn't kill himself.

LATHAM

When the three of us were in Berlin, we used to play cards a lot. Eaton and I were always teasing Spencer when it was his turn to deal because he'd deal backwards - you know, counter-clockwise. That's because he was left-handed. Yet he commits suicide by shooting himself in the right temple?

Kensington looks away. Berard leans back, in serious thought. Latham shows them a photo of Gamble, the Speaker and Asashin.

LATHAM (CONT'D)

I got that from SMOTH.

BERARD

Max Gamble... There's a loose cannon.

KENSINGTON

No, I've known him for years.

BERARD

He was quoted calling the White House soft on communism. If the Secretary hadn't intervened and reassigned him to the Northern Tier, he'd have been forced to resign.

Kensington is embarrassed. Latham is very concerned.

BERARD (CONT'D)

Why was SMOTH watching him?

LATHAM

He wasn't. He was watching a British national meet with Prolaxis Global.

BERARD

Not those bastards.

LATHAM

You know them?

BERARD

You're aware conflict diamonds are funding the rebels in The Congo?

LATHAM

Yes.

BERARD

Well, one measure the government took to end the trade was to hire Prolaxis Global. The result was that massacre of Congolese mine workers.

Kensington sighs and looks away, sickened by this.

LATHAM

SMOTH saw Gamble meet with Prolaxis Global and thought I should know.

Berard shakes his head, concerned. Kensington sees this.

KENSINGTON

Sir, whatever Gamble is up to, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations should be handling it - not us.

LATHAM

And if he was involved in Eaton's death?

KENSINGTON

You have no proof of that!

BERARD

Gentlemen... Warren, I understand your feelings here - two of your friends have died. But I have to agree with Stewart. Turn this over to AFOSI by close of play today.

Resignedly, Latham nods. He gets up and leaves.

LATHAM'S OFFICE

The door is open. DiLauria sits as Latham meanders about.

DILAURIA

I don't understand why you didn't tell them about Asashin.

LATHAM

Right. Tell them I'm swapping lines from Aldous Huxley and Lewis Carroll with a guy I've got drugged and stashed in an MI6 safehouse.

(MORE)

LATHAM (CONT'D)

And this, mind you, after twice  
being warned to hand this over to  
the Air Force or the FBI.

DILAURIA

But he did try to kill you.

LATHAM

That comes with the furniture.  
Besides, I just learned Gamble and  
Kensington are old pals. If I had  
said anything, Kensington would be  
on the phone to Gamble the second I  
got out the door.

DILAURIA

Then what other choice do you have?

Latham sits. He takes the photo of Gamble, the Speaker and  
Asashin from his desk drawer and stares at the Speaker.

LATHAM

(perplexed)

Asashin said the orders came from  
above Gamble. But I still think  
he's the key to this.

DILAURIA

Why? Because of some supposed  
meeting in three months?

LATHAM

All I know is Eaton and Spencer saw  
something that got them killed.

DILAURIA

(snarkily)

Yeah, the UFO that's supposed to  
land at Holloman.

LATHAM

Eaton was found near Holloman.

Just then Collette rushes in, memo in hand.

COLLETTE

This just came in.

She hands Latham the memo. He's aghast and gives it to  
DiLauria.

DILAURIA

(reads)

'Bob Ward was found under a bench  
at the Quincy El stop. He was nude  
and suffering from hypothermia.'

LATHAM

I saw that in The War. Hypothermia sets in and the person gets confused. They think they're overheating, so they take their clothes off.

COLLETTE

Kensington was also copied on this.

KENSINGTON'S OFFICE

Kensington is livid and has Latham in the woodshed.

KENSINGTON

How the hell did this happen? Barry was supposed to persuade Ward there was nothing on the Maier tape. Just how did you misinterpret that to mean kill him?

LATHAM

Ward died from hypothermia.

KENSINGTON

Yes... Found under a bench, naked and fetid. A bit sordid, even for you.

LATHAM

That doesn't sound like Paul.

KENSINGTON

It sounds familiar to me. And you're supposed to be so clever.

LATHAM

If Ward wasn't going to come around, Paul would have called me.

KENSINGTON

Obviously he didn't feel a need to.

LATHAM

Instead of prejudging him, shouldn't we wait to hear his side of it?

KENSINGTON

Why? You're such an inveterate liar I'm sure you'll have evidence proving Ward deliberately froze himself to death.

LATHAM

(through gritted teeth)  
Was there anything else, sir?



KENSINGTON

Isn't that enough?

Latham leaves.

FILM SEQUENCE:

Excerpts from an interview with original Mercury Seven astronaut Gordon Cooper about his 1951 encounter with UFOs while flying an F-86, a UFO landing on a dry lake bed, and Project Bluebook. (From "Sirius: The Film," Sirius Disclosure Project; [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsEd\\_b1C8DY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsEd_b1C8DY))

END OF FILM SEQUENCE.

INT. MI6 SAFEHOUSE - BASEMENT HOLDING CELL

The Doctor gives Asashin another injection. He, Jones and Max watch as Latham has another literary exchange with Asashin.

LATHAM

'Soma: All the advantages of Christianity and alcohol; none of their defects.'

ASASHIN

'Oh, I wish I had my soma!'

LATHAM

'But aren't you shortening her life by giving her so much?'

Asashin suddenly becomes reflective. Latham hands him the photo of Gamble, the Speaker and Asashin.

LATHAM (CONT'D)

'She remained in her little room... In bed, with the radio and television always on... There she remained; and yet wasn't there at all, was all the time away, infinitely far away.'

Now melancholy, Asashin drops his head.

LATHAM (CONT'D)

'What's in those caskets?'

ASASHIN

Eaton... Spencer.

Latham points to the Speaker.

LATHAM

Understand, he put them there, not that man.

(MORE)

LATHAM (CONT'D)

'No wives, or children, or lovers  
to feel strongly about... He had no  
desire to see them.' Help me to see  
him.

Fighting back tears, Asashin looks Latham in the eye.

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

A view from across the road.

INT. FOYER - DAY

Very traditional. The Speaker is on the phone.

SPEAKER

Yeah, I'm on my way.

With car keys in hand, the Speaker leaves the house.

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

The Speaker gets into his Peugeot 203 and drives off.

EXT. ARLINGTON, VA - CHERRY VALLEY PARK - DAY

The Speaker parks on Nelson Street and enters the Park at  
Custis Trail. It's empty. He waits by a post bearing the  
Park's name. On the trail approaching him comes Latham.

LATHAM

Waiting for Asashin?

The Speaker eyes Latham curiously and shrugs.

SPEAKER

Sorry, I don't know what you're  
talking about.

He starts to walk out the Park.

LATHAM

Leave the Park and you'll be shot.

DiLauria appears at the entrance to Custis Trail. She pulls a  
silenced Colt M1911 from her handbag. The Speaker stops and  
turns around.

LATHAM (CONT'D)

Let's take a walk... Now.

The two men stroll along Custis Trail. DiLauria trails them.

LATHAM (CONT'D)

General Maxwell Gamble came to see  
you the other day.

SPEAKER

Did he?

Latham stops; the Speaker and DiLauria along with him. Latham rabbit-punches him across the bridge of his nose. The Speaker YELPS and grabs his nose - blood drips from his fingers.

LATHAM

(pointedly)

You play games with me, or try to run, or even raise your voice a bit too loud, and I'll start by blowing off your manhood. Capisce?

The Speaker's smart-ass attitude disappears. He nods. Latham hands him a handkerchief and the two resume their stroll.

LATHAM (CONT'D)

What did Maxwell want?

SPEAKER

To hire us. He called our number after the presentation and asked to meet with a representative.

LATHAM

Has he?

SPEAKER

No. There've been some preliminary discussions, but he hasn't met with us to finalize anything yet.

LATHAM

What exactly did he want you to do?

The Speaker hesitates. Latham reveals his own M1911.

SPEAKER

There's some event at Holloman Air Force Base next February. He asked if we'd provide security.

LATHAM

Why? The Air Force has its own security force.

SPEAKER

There are some people he feels will compromise the integrity of the event. Our job would be to insure they don't interfere.

LATHAM

Meaning what?

SPEAKER  
Meaning terminate them.

LATHAM  
Just what the hell's going on at  
this event?

SPEAKER  
He didn't say.

LATHAM  
Your man Asashin was ordered to  
terminate three men - one of them  
being me. Who gave the order and  
why?

SPEAKER  
I don't know who exactly.

LATHAM  
Don't piss me off.

SPEAKER  
I'm serious! I don't know. Whoever  
it was used a cut-out. All we were  
told was that the other two had seen  
something they weren't supposed to.

LATHAM  
And me?

SPEAKER  
It was assumed the one in New  
Mexico had told you what he'd seen.

They come upon a glade; a bench is nearby. Latham motions for  
the Speaker to sit; he joins him. DiLauria sits alongside the  
Speaker, her hand inside her handbag.

LATHAM  
You have the names of the people  
you're supposed to terminate?

SPEAKER  
Maxwell is bringing it.

LATHAM  
When?

SPEAKER  
Tonight.

Latham looks at DiLauria. She lays her handbag on the  
Speaker's thigh; he starts to tremble.

SPEAKER (CONT'D)  
He's coming to the house at eight.

LATHAM  
Who's going to be there?

SPEAKER  
Me, one of the reps.

LATHAM  
That's it? That's a big house.  
Where's everyone else?

SPEAKER  
In D.C. at a banquet.

LATHAM  
What about the staff?

SPEAKER  
They're off at six.

Latham stands.

LATHAM  
Get up.

The Speaker stands; DiLauria is behind him.

LATHAM (CONT'D)  
We're going to hang out for a while.  
Oh, one more thing. That radio host  
in Chicago, Bob Ward - was that your  
people?

The Speaker nods. The three start walking.

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - NIGHT

The Speaker's Peugeot is parked in the driveway. A dark Sedan pulls up behind it. Maxwell gets out. He carries a satchel as he walks to the front door and RINGS the doorbell.

The Speaker answers the door. Maxwell steps inside.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

A typical home office. The door opens. The Speaker and Maxwell enter. Sitting behind the desk is Latham.

SPEAKER  
This is Mr. Simmons, General. He'll  
be your lead operative.

MAXWELL  
Simmons...

Latham stands. He and Maxwell shake hands. They all sit.  
Latham opens a folder on the desk.

LATHAM/SIMMONS

Do you have the list?

Maxwell pulls a manilla envelope from his satchel and hands it to Latham who pulls out the contents: A list of names with home and work addresses, then several photos.

MAXWELL

The names are on the back.

Latham turns over a photo; a name is written on the back. He puts everything back in the envelope and puts it into the folder.

MAXWELL (CONT'D)

I want confirmation each time a target is eliminated. Use the number I gave your people earlier. All calls are to be made between 2200 and 2400 hours, Eastern Standard Time. Other than that, I want no further contact. Is that clear?

LATHAM/SIMMONS

Absolutely.

MAXWELL

You have any questions?

LATHAM/SIMMONS

No.

SPEAKER

We just need your signature.

Latham takes a multi-page contract from the folder and puts it on the desk. He attempts to hand Maxwell a pen.

MAXWELL

I have my own; it's a Montblanc.

He pulls a small case from his satchel, opens it and takes out his Montblanc pen. The Speaker points.

SPEAKER

Sign here...  
(flips a page)  
Here...  
(flips another page)  
And here.

Maxwell signs. When he's done he pulls a certified check from his satchel.

MAXWELL

Who do I give this to?

SPEAKER

Me.

Maxwell hands him the check.

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - NIGHT

Maxwell exits, gets into his car and drives away.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Latham holds out his hand. Reluctantly, the Speaker hands over the check. The two enter the...

LIBRARY

Where a Prolaxis Global REP sits in a leather chair, bound and gagged, nude, with fresh bruises on his face. DiLauria sits across from him, her M1911 pointed at his genitals.

The Rep SQUIRMS and farts. DiLauria wrinkles her nose.

DILAURIA

What, again?

EXT. WASHINGTON, DC - COCKROACH ALLEY - DAY (MORNING)

CIA Officers flash their badges as they enter the buildings.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Percy swigs from his flask, then puts it in his suitcoat pocket. Latham enters. Percy nods. He's about to leave when...

LATHAM

Hang on, Tom.

Percy stops.

LATHAM (CONT'D)

You're going to the Infirmary.  
Right now.

PERCY

I don't understand.

LATHAM

Dr. Patterson is there waiting for you.

PERCY

The psychiatrist?

LATHAM

Uh huh. Your record is going to show that you're taking 30-day's leave due to stress. What you'll be doing is spending that time at Bethesda while Patterson treats you for alcohol dependency.

PERCY

What are you talking about?

LATHAM

You're a drunk, Tom. I had one of SMOTH's people tailing you. If it hadn't been for her, you'd have been caught in a honey trap.

PERCY

What?

LATHAM

(pointedly)

The blonde at the bar; she was KGB. SMOTH's officer pulled the fire alarm to get you out of there.

Percy looks away, embarrassed.

LATHAM (CONT'D)

I'm giving you a chance to save your career. If you refuse, I'm putting in your DD 201 that you're unfit for duty. You'll be out of the Company by the end of the week.

Percy nods; he cannot look Latham in the face. He starts to leave...

LATHAM (CONT'D)

Leave the flask.

Percy puts the flask on the sink and leaves.

EXT. WASHINGTON, DC - LAFAYETTE SQUARE PARK - DAY

Latham and Jones stroll while federal workers pass them on their way to lunch.

LATHAM

I'm putting the FBI on my Christmas list.

JONES

Really. Had a visit from the ghost of Christmas past, did you?



LATHAM

(amused)

I'm gift-wrapping Prolaxis Global, General Maxwell and their murder-for-hire scheme for the FBI's A.D.

JONES

I imagine Kensington won't be too happy, having pegged you and your mandarins as a bunch of perverted psychopaths - not that he was wrong, mind you.

LATHAM

And to think I wasn't going to use you as a reference.

JONES

(grins)

What about the Air Force? Are you letting them in on this?

LATHAM

No. Someone there - someone above Maxwell - orchestrated all this. I don't want it covered up.

JONES

From what I hear on the radio, all CIA does is cover things up.

Latham smiles wanly; something is bothering him.

LATHAM

I know. That worries me but not for the reasons you think.

JONES

What do you mean?

LATHAM

People on The Hill claim we're not held accountable for our actions, essentially doing whatever the hell we want to do.

JONES

Well, to some extent that's true of both our services. Our masters are far less interested in the means than they are the results.

LATHAM

Yes, but private security firms like Prolaxis Global aren't accountable to anyone.

(MORE)

LATHAM (CONT'D)

They're this shadow layer of Black Ops, employed by a handful of anonymous people in- and outside the government to execute their own political agendas. Look, they murdered three people to cover up God knows what, and yet who's being blamed for implementing a cover-up? We are.

Latham is frustrated and soughs.

JONES

Well, there's always the possibility General Maxwell will talk. More arrests, more answers.

LATHAM

If Maxwell were your man, would you let him talk?

JONES

(grins slyly)  
See you at lunch.

They go their separate ways.

INT. RADIO STATION - STUDIO

DJ Jack reads news copy over the air.

DJ JACK

'According to astronomers at the University of New Mexico, the two unknown satellites discovered orbiting the Earth are actually asteroids trapped by the Earth's gravitational field.' So you can relax, folks; the Russians ain't coming.

(puts a record on the turntable)

Okay, that's it for the news. But I've got something for those of you who stare into space when you're supposed to be working - a blast from the past: 'Destination Moon' by The Ames Brothers.

DJ Jack flips a switch and "Destination Moon" sung by The Ames Brothers plays O.S. He leans back in his chair and reads an "OUTER SPACE" comic book.

END