

THE PERFECT PLOT

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FADE IN:

EXT. BRITISH COUNTRYSIDE AERIAL VIEW - NIGHT

An affluent area in the British countryside stretches before us. Dozens of garden estates, their courtyards resplendent with fountains illuminated with tasteful spotlights and other trappings of wealth both old and new.

A solitary taxi speeds along the country roads.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

The car's headlights illuminate the hedge-growth at the sides of the road, as the taxi weaves along the meandering road.

It turns down a private road. Ahead, the towering entrance-way of a COUNTRY MANOR.

The taxi drives through into the open courtyard and...

EXT. COUNTRY ESTATE - NIGHT

...Screeches to a halt outside the door.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

MAX, the middle-aged, dishevelled, occupant of the taxi BEEPS the horn repeatedly.

EXT. COUNTRY ESTATE - NIGHT

The large, Oak door of the Manor opens to reveal DONALD COOK, a forty something paradigm of wealth and influence, in a striped dressing gown.

He walks uncertainly towards the taxi and crouches to peer at its unkempt occupant. The beard, the wild eyes, the sweaty, dirty clothes.

DONALD

Max?

MAX

I haven't got much time, Don, get in.

(Beat)

Get the fuck in!

As soon as Donald is within the confines of the taxi, the taxi speeds off into the night.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

Donald glares at the rear-view mirror, into the eyes of Max.

DONALD

I thought you were a screenwriter.
When did you take up Taxi driving?

MAX

About twenty seconds after I killed
the guy that owned it.

DONALD

You killed someone?

MAX

I had to.

DONALD

Are you going to kill me?

MAX

How long have I known you? We're
friends. Not unless...

DONALD

Unless what?

MAX

Forget it. I need help, man. I'm
being chased. I need a place to
crash out. Maybe an empty house for
sale, abandoned farmhouse.
Anything.

DONALD

There's an industrial estate, not far from here. I think there's an old warehouse, and an abandoned scrap-yard or something.

MAX

Perfect.

DONALD

So, are you going to tell me who is after you?

MAX

Ha ha, baby. Are you ready for it? The Illuminati.

DONALD

The Illuminati. For a creative person, this is pretty unoriginal.

MAX

Call 'em what you want. The Cabal, the Committee, the Group, the Corporate Elite, The New World Order. The Business men, who own the Politicians, control the media, the printing press, who run this world Everyone and everything. The Illuminati, man.

DONALD

I'm a Scientist but I don't need to be a psychiatrist to recognise Conspiracy Paranoia.

MAX

Oh man, that would be good. If it was all just a delusion. Fuck, that would be beautiful. Which way?

DONALD

The next left.

The taxi turns onto another road.

DONALD

So, what would these people want with a screenwriter like you?

MAX

Imagine you were in charge of a group so powerful that they wanted, and were able, to run the entire world. The whole shebang. How do you maintain control, man? How do you keep all these people singing from the same hymn sheet, keep them all moving in the same direction?

DONALD

Alright, I'll play. The Military, Laws, ideologies?

MAX

Go more fundamental, man.

DONALD

Reward systems, penalties for failure to comply. Create a psychological need that only you can fulfil, the desire for security for instance.

MAX

Closer. How do they do all that? Stories, man. Stories. That's all there is. A global framework of stories. Make believe legends, myths, misinformation that we fabricate, then push out in the papers, on TV, the radio, over the Internet. Stories created to have a specific psychological effect on the people, to make them behave in a certain way whilst all the time they believe they have free-will. That their actions, their fucking opinions, man, are their own.

DONALD

And you're telling me you're one of these story writers.

MAX

Bingo! All the shit you see on TV, I'm part of a group that invents it all to order.

DONALD

To control world events, you'd need millions involved.

MAX

Pyramids, man. It's just a pyramid scheme. The slaves at the bottom, you somewhere in the middle, the Private Banks somewhere near the top and then at the very apex. The Collective, who run the lot. They set the agenda, their minions just follow orders. They don't even know who they're working for.

DONALD

An old story. Do you have proof?

MAX

Well that's the Huckleberry, isn't it? I have. I've been collecting it, over time.

DONALD

And this all powerful syndicate just let you go with all their secrets?

Max turns the car radio on. Dials in to a News Station.

RADIO PRESENTER (O.S.)
...evacuations are continuing from
the city centre as fire-fighters
continue to tackle the large blaze
that has so far claimed twelve
lives and threatens...

Max turns it off.

DONALD
You killed those people?

MAX
I started it. In my Apartment
Complex. It's just plausible enough
that I could be dead to give me a
chance to get away. Collateral
damage. Nice euphemism, isn't it?
One of my colleagues invented it. I
had no choice, Don. There's bigger
things at stake.

DONALD
Max. Pull over, let me out, turn
yourself in. I'll vouch for you,
anyone will be able to tell you've
had some kind of psychotic episode.

MAX
Where's this fucking scrapyard?

DONALD
(BEAT)
Right at the end of this road, then
straight down for a few hundred
yards.

They drive down a deserted road. At the end of the road is an
iron gate, padlocked. The taxi comes to rest in front of it.

EXT. SCRAPYARD - NIGHT

Max gets out, scurries to the boot and pops the trunk.

An unconscious woman hog-tied in the back.

Max ignores her, snatches a tire iron from the boot.

He heads for the gate, smashes the padlock and slides the gate open. He climbs back in the taxi drives the car through the gates and parks in the courtyard of the disused scrapyard.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

Donald points off into the darkness.

DONALD

There are offices over there. No-one will find you. You can let me go now.

Max hands Donald a piece of paper.

MAX

Would you like to read your own suicide note?

Donald snatches it from him.

DONALD

What the hell is this? It's in my handwriting, but I never wrote it.

Max takes a mobile phone from his pocket, opens a video file.

ON SCREEN

The digitised Donald Cook holds court from behind a desk.

DONALD

...I have released a virus. Highly contagious with a 97% fatality rate. The ultimate cure for overpopulated Earth. A reset button that will...

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

Donald leans back against the seat in shock.

DONALD

That's impossible. I've never said any of that.

MAX

I know you didn't. I wrote it all. They're calling it Operation Fresh Air. They digitised your face, like they did with Bin Laden. Are you starting to believe me, yet?

DONALD

If this is real, and I'm not saying it is. Have you considered it's just a test?

MAX

I have. Have you considered it's a test for you? How long have you worked for them?

DONALD

Six years. I couldn't have completed my research without their help.

MAX

What are you going to tell them? If it was a test of me, I've already failed. If it's a test of you there's four possibilities. One, if it's not just a test and it's real, and you tell them about me they are going to kill me, then kill you and use your research to kill billions. Two, if you don't tell them, and it's true, you and billions of others are going to die anyway. Three, if it's a test and you don't tell them, they'll kill you.

Four, if it's a test and you do tell them, then you'll be murdering me. And they'll know that you've been compromised.

DONALD

There's another possibility. I created the test to test your loyalty.

MAX

I thought of that. That's why I kidnapped your daughter. Tell me you created the test, I'll let her go.

DONALD

I didn't create it. What are we going to do?

MAX

Man, I knew I could rely on you. I've got the proof on them, we can stop them, together. First we'll...

EXT. SCRAPYARD - NIGHT

The lights in the yard go on.

MAX

I thought you said this place was deserted?

DONALD

They've found us. Get out of here, drive!

Max tries to start the car. It's dead.

MAX

Shit! Get out!

The door locks engage themselves. They're trapped in.

MAX

They're controlling the fucking taxi! It's impossible, there's no way they could have known which taxi I'd take.

DONALD

Smash the glass. Smash the fucking glass.

The pair punch and kick at the glass, their efforts bounce off ineffectually.

A huge magnet swings into action above them. It hovers above the car then sweeps down and Attaches itself to the roof.

DONALD

Oh, God no.

The taxi lifts from the ground.

Max and Donald's attempts at escape get more and more frantic. They scream as the car swings inexorably towards the cavernous mouth of the METAL CRUSHER.

The taxi is fed inside the machine. Max and Donald's screams are drowned out by the sound of the metal being compacted.

The taxi, now a square lump of metal, is ejected from the machine. A man, silhouetted by the spotlight behind him, walks towards it. He raises his wrist to his mouth.

SILHOUETTE

The re-write was a success. Project Fresh Air has the Green-light.

The man leaves. The lights of the scrapyard go out.

The metal cube is left to stand in the moonlight. If you look closely, you can see the blood pouring down the side.

FADE TO BLACK.