

# I am The President.©

*The Hero's Story:*

*He searched for a hero and found one in himself ©*

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# I am The President<sup>©</sup>

Grey storm clouds blacken the sky of a fall afternoon in New York. Ice-cold winds whistle around the huddled body of Kevin Waters, a twenty-two-year-old theatre arts grad and wannabe rock star, as he strums on his beat-up acoustic guitar staring intently across the East River toward Manhattan. Of Irish descent, with long dark hair, his eyes twinkle with intelligence and fun. He gets up, straddles his beat-up KTM dirt bike, zips up his black leather motorcycle jacket, pulls on his crash helmet and flicks his cigarette into the dark waters below. Pulling his guitar onto his back, he pauses to watch a helicopter land on the flat roof of a distant skyscraper. Smiling to himself, he revs the engine of the bike to a thunderous roar and moves off into the damp, busy Manhattan bound traffic; the heel of his boot scrapes the roadway, leaving sparks arcing behind him.

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Outside NYU there is pandemonium. Twenty police on horseback are attempting to hold back hundreds of political supporters mixed with rowdy demonstrators filling the street. Police move in from all sides, linking arms, attempting to hold back the mob.

Elite Security Detail (ESD) special agents in dark suits flank a Kennedy-esque figure, Richard Randal, the Senator from California as he strolls onto a balcony above the crowd with his beautiful smiling wife Barbara. The leading candidate for the United States Presidency, Richard Randal is an attractive, poised man in his late fifties, of Irish decent. He switches on a smile and addresses the crowd. "My friends," he says, "The environment is declining, natural disasters are increasing, and our economy is ailing. Already there is civil unrest in our streets. I support a strong military presence in all our major cities as part of our fight against rising domestic and continuing international terrorism. Our troops will be our protection. We must pull together as a nation, cooperate and make this sacrifice if we are to maintain our personal, economic and national security. The political correctness of previous administrations has failed to identify those individuals causing unrest and threatening our peace, for fear of infringing on their civil liberties. As a result, terror cells supporting every faction imaginable have spawned throughout this country, necessitating our military to be deployed in all our major cities. Their presence is absolutely necessary to protect the American people."

A cacophony of cheering, booing and shouting fills the air. Kevin, on foot, jeers the Senator as he pushes through the demonstrators. He too is angry, disillusioned, unemployed, going nowhere and fed up with, as D. J. McLaren, the opposition candidate, puts it: "Our present political system keeps ordinary people fearful and hard-up, while the rich and powerful indulge their whims at the expense of those less fortunate than themselves."

Climbing a lamppost, his guitar dangling from his back, Kevin gets far above the crowd and secures himself. He pulls a bottle rocket and an empty beer bottle out of his inside jacket pocket. Placing the stick of the rocket in the beer bottle, he lights the fuse and points the rocket in the general direction of the balcony. "Anarchy!" he shouts.

Gold and silver sparks streak over the crowd. Everyone looks up in awe as the rocket heads straight for the balcony. Richard Randal, shielding his wife, ducks as the rocket smashes into the room behind him. A gleaming switchblade of fire acrobats around the room, igniting official documents and scorching prized furniture. ESD agents surround the Senator and his wife with automatic weapons on hair-trigger hassling them away to safety while burning draperies dance a fire ballet in the windows. Panicking security guards cannot get the red fire extinguishers working.

Police on horseback charge the unruly, now cheering crowd, hitting people indiscriminately with nightsticks, clearing a path through the demonstrators. Riot police run into that space; with batons and Lucite shields they smash their way toward Kevin who is down from the lamppost and running like crazy with his guitar in hand. They are almost on him. One cop smashes at Kevin with his nightstick and misses, knocking the guitar out of Kevin's hand. The cop trips over the guitar, stumbles, slips and falls, causing other cops to fall over him. Kevin keeps going. A cloudburst drops a torrential downpour; hundreds of demonstrators run in every direction searching for cover. In the mass confusion Kevin gets away free.

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That night, in the back streets of a Brooklyn slum, kids commandeer a burned-out brewery; a tangled mess of steel silhouetted against the clear night sky. Inside, six hundred drunken kids smash around in a space meant for ninety.

A band of young men dressed in black and bones amble on stage. They are *Anticrisis*, radical, aboriginal monsters of rock, slamming their audience with hardcore drumming and searing guitars.

Their deafening pounding volume beats the crowd into frenzy. The dance floor is a somersault of writhing bodies, gothic madness and total mayhem.

Kevin, the *Anticrisis* lead singer, pushes through the audience, jumps up on stage. Snatching the microphone, he raises his clenched fist high above his head and chants: "We don't want laws! We don't need laws! Anarchy! Anarchy!" The crazy, enthusiastic audience, energized and wild, repeats the chant. The whole dance floor is alive with dancing violence. Kids climb on stage; bouncers throw them back. A kid kicks another in the head. A scuffle breaks out; kids are getting buried in the mosh pit. The entire audience is chanting: "We don't want laws! We don't need laws! Anarchy! Anarchy!" Twelve security heavies pound into the fray. Fists fly and bodies with them. The audience is way out of control, alive with belligerent happy confusion. Crazy kids are on the stage, jumping off it spread-eagled into the mosh pit of wild dancers, while security bouncers try to stop them. One bouncer is pounding a kid's face into the side of the stage. Kevin

jumps on the bouncer but he kicks out at Kevin, knocking him down. Kevin gets up, angry, looping a mike cord around the bouncer's neck; he pulls him backward, toppling him off the stage, choking, into the kicking crowd below. Tearing down the black backdrop, Kevin incites the audience to madness pitch, chanting into a microphone "We don't want laws! We don't need laws! Anarchy! Anarchy!"

Fifty riot police, sinister and nasty, pour through the doors, enjoying their work, attacking the crowd, who fight and bleed. Kevin makes a run for it through the back of the theatre into a side-street lit by flashing blue police lights. Two cops, stone-faced and dangerous, grab him immediately, pushing him down a dark puddle-filled alleyway. They beat him black and blue.

"Don't you screw with the law, boy!" screams the cop as he gives Kevin a final kick.

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Wet, bruised, bloodied and in pain, needing some comfort and first-aid, Kevin crawls home to the rundown tenement apartment in Brooklyn he shares with his mother Janice. She is a straggly mess in a bathrobe, a tired alcoholic. She was once a beautiful woman, but poverty, booze and disappointment have taken their toll. Now in her late fifties, she is obese, burned-out and living on the fifth floor of a backstreet ghetto apartment with dreams of what might have been. Tattered pictures on the wall feature Janice in glamorous studio portraits from her "modeling days."

Today, as usual, she is very drunk and swimming in cigarette smoke. She gazes sadly at Kevin's injuries, her eyes welling with tears. She tends to his wounds, as she has a hundred times before. He is still her little boy. She tries to soothe Kevin and dress his wounds but she is faltering and shaky, pushing a cotton swab too close to his eye. He pulls away. "I lost my guitar today," he moans. "I don't want to lose my eye as well! Angrily he pushes her away. Peeling off his black leather motorcycle jacket he throws it across the kitchen table, spreading it out flat, pushing aside a pile of old newspapers onto the floor. Under the dirty kitchen sink, he remembers some old white paint in a jar with a brush sticking out of it. Using it, he scrawls *ANARCHY* over the back of the jacket. "There you go, Mom," he laughs "This is what I am."

Kevin scans the CBS TV news footage of the NYU demonstration showing a smoking balcony; inside, firemen douse the last glowing embers of an ignited sofa while security guards mill around looking threatening and confused. The news announcer intones: "Senator Richard Randal, an international investment analyst from Los Angeles, is predicted most likely to win this year's race for the American Presidency. This afternoon he was a victim of a goodwill firework gone wrong when a bottle rocket from a well-wisher accidentally flew into the balcony where Senator Randal was standing. No one was hurt. Senator Randal, seen here with his wife Barbara, was in a jovial mood when he spoke to us moments after the event. "I am glad the bottle rocket missed me but it's nice to see that people are ready to celebrate my presidency even before I am elected!" He

laughs and extends his hands in a conciliatory gesture toward the people and press below him.

‘What a joke,’ moans Kevin. “I fire a bottle rocket at Randal because he is a lying piece of shit and he still comes up smelling like a rose. He sure is something.”

“No he’s not!” screams Janice. “He’s nothing! You’re better than him.” She throws her whisky glass at the TV set, crying and hysterical. “That could be you up there!” she yells.

“What are you on about, mother?”

“You’re better than him,” she rages, angry and screaming “You are! You are! That lousy Richard Randal is your.....” Janice clutches her chest, yelling in pain. “It’s my heart. Jesus, oh my god, I’m having a heart....” She falls to the floor in agony.

Kevin nervously comforts his mother while quietly calling for an ambulance. He keeps calling. No ambulance arrives. When eventually one does come, Kevin is asleep; his mother lies dead in his arms. The paramedics ignore Kevin’s tearful pleas to treat his mother’s body with more respect. He can’t argue with them. He is devastated. They take her body to the morgue. Kevin is alone.

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On a cold, wet, dismal afternoon, on a forgotten piece of ground at the back of the old Brooklyn Cemetery, Kevin peers down into his mother’s grave, a single rose atop her cheap pine coffin. The lone gravedigger shovels earth onto the coffin; it lands with a lifeless rumble, like impatient fingers drumming on a countertop. Kevin walks away from the sound. Following him, the priest puts his limp arm around Kevin’s shoulder offering him a tissue for the helpless tears rolling down Kevin’s cheeks.

“Is there some way I can help you?” he asks soulfully.

“No,” says Kevin. “ I’m on my own now. My Mom is gone. My Dad’s dead. No brothers or sisters. No job. I don’t know what I’m going to do. Something better turn up.”

“Pray to our Lord,” comforts the priest. “He will show you the way.”

“I doubt it,” says Kevin, “My Mom lived her whole life nailed to a cross of disappointment. Jesus did nothing for her and even less for me. I’ll find my own way, thanks.”

“I will pray for you,” says the priest. His weak, wet clammy clasps Kevin’s hand and shakes it. Kevin turns away, wiping his hand on his jeans as he walks away.

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Back at his mother’s apartment, Kevin tearfully picks through his mother’s meager possessions. There is not much there. Amy, the greedy long-term neighbor and Janice’s

best friend from next door, eagerly bags up Janice’s clothing. “Oh, this is lovely,” she says, holding up a floral dress. “I remember when your mother was slim like me, she always looked good in this dress.”

“Take it,” says Kevin calling from his mother’s bedroom. He is preoccupied with his mother’s grubby old hat box on top of the wardrobe. This is where Janice kept

all her secrets. Kevin was always forbidden to look inside the box and never had. Now he is rummaging inside with the all enthusiasm of a breathless treasure-hunter. Beneath a red hat with a feather, a sparkly black evening scarf, his mother's press cuttings, souvenirs and cheap trinkets, he finds his mother's private papers and an old sealed manila envelope. The faded writing shows it is addressed to Mathew Randal, 5757 Maple Drive. Beverly Hills, California. The name doesn't register for Kevin; it means nothing to him. The envelope had been posted some twenty-two years before and postmarked "Undelivered – Return to Sender."

Stepping into his mother's private world, Kevin tears open the envelope and finds an old black-and-white photo of a man looking adoringly into his mother's eyes. Scrawled on the back of the photo are the words "To My Darling Mathew, Yours Always, Janice."

Attached to the top of the photo is a tiny snapshot of a newborn baby and a handwritten love letter addressed to Mathew D. Randal. In it, Janice explains how she loves Mathew with all her heart. How lost and sad she is without him. How he has forgotten her. How they shared so much. How the baby photo is "Your boy Kevin." Where are you, Mathew?" Janice's letter asks. One day, she promises, my Kevin will make you proud.

Maybe he too will want to follow in your footsteps and serve his country like your boy Richard has."

Kevin is rocked to his core as he puts it all together. "So, this Mathew Randal is my father and Richard Randal is his son?" Kevin hears his own words echo in his head. He can't believe what he's thinking. He dare not; the words stick in his throat "Richard Randal, the same Richard Randal, that's running for The Presidency of the United States of America, is... *my half-brother?* "

Shocked, dismayed and trembling, Kevin double-checks. He's right. He has a family after all.

"Did my mother ever mention anything about my father to you?" Kevin asks Amy. "Yeah," replies Amy, "she boasted about how you were special because your father was all caught up in the politics and big-time. Apparently, he was a big-time asshole, always whizzing round the world.

"He was married; he used your mother up and then he dumped her. When your mother found out she was pregnant she tried everything to contact your father. He was always out of the country. He already had a family. His wife sought out your Mom. Apparently the woman was in a wheelchair. Your Mom said she was a bitter, nasty old bitch. She offered your Mom money for an abortion. Your Mom told her to go screw herself and she brought you up on her own."

"She told me my father was dead," whispers Kevin. "She said he was a salesman."

"According to her," says Amy "he certainly sold her up the river all right. Apparently, he was kind of well-known. He had his name in the paper. She wouldn't tell me who he was. She wouldn't tell me anything. She said she didn't

want it getting back to you because she was frightened if you found out you might leave her just like he did. Hopefully he's dead by now," says Amy.

"Maybe I've got a brother?" laughs Kevin holding his mother's letter.

"What?" says Amy now preoccupied with stuffing Janice's old clothes into a big black garbage bag.

"Nothing," says Kevin. "Forget it."

He ushers Amy and her bags out of the apartment closing the front door on her willingness to strip the entire apartment.

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The next day Kevin is at Richard Randal's Manhattan party headquarters, acting like an indignant relative trying to get in the front door. "I just found out Senator Randal's my father's older son and I'm his half-brother," Kevin insists, face-to-face with a massive square-headed Marine at the door. "And my sister's Mother Theresa." snaps the expressionless Marine, "Forget it, the Senator's back home in L.A." He slams the heavy glass door in Kevin's face.

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Kevin sells his motorbike back to the dealer he bought it from and buys a cheap ticket to L. A. He carries with him his mother's love letter to Mathew, the baby picture and the photograph of "his parents" when they were in love. Kevin stares at the photos before stuffing them and the love letter into his wallet. A white van blows its horn in the street below. It's the shuttle, taking Kevin to JFK.

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In Los Angeles it is hot and smoggy. Kevin takes a cab to Beverly Hills but 5757 Maple Drive no longer exists. At the Beverly Hills Post Office he looks for Mathew Randal in the L A directory. There are a few listed but no one who could possibly be his father. He calls directory enquires and again draws a blank. Unable to locate where his Dad is, Kevin decides he has no choice but confront his brother Richard Randal.

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The taxi drops Kevin outside Richard Randal's campaign headquarters on downtown Wilshire. Kevin hides his excitement behind cool sunglasses as he swaggers in dressed in black. He is hip, proud and sure of himself. He demands that the Latina receptionist he has been ogling give him an appointment to see Richard Randal straightaway because he is Mr. Randal's brother and she needs to "get on it." The Latina refuses to be intimidated by Kevin's attitude. "I won't help someone who is rude to me," she says with greasy politeness. Kevin is irritated and offended. "What the hell? He yells. "I've come all the way here from New York. Who are you?" What is your name? I know my rights!" he splutters. Two security guys come up behind Kevin. Grabbing him firmly they drag him outside and throw him into the street. "That's the last nut-job for me today," says one security guard to the other. "My shift's over. You and Harry can deal with the rest."

Kevin is still shouting, "Richard Randal is my brother!" as the security guards walk away.

Across from him sits a beautiful twenty-something young woman sipping coffee at the chic Outside Café. She is Lily Lancaster, recently moved to L.A. from the East Village New York. She just got a job as a reporter for Hollywood Movie Magazine. She is all girl, delicious, hip and very smart. Dressed in a faded blue miniskirt and a trashed tweed jacket, she helps Kevin to his feet. "I know how it is," she says motioning Kevin into the seat beside her. "I got very annoyed in there myself earlier. They are not very helpful. I had a prearranged interview with Richard Randal about the effect of his early acting career on his political aspirations and he blew me off. Then you get thrown out and you could be Senator's brother."

"I am his half-brother," corrects Kevin, "and I'm in pain. "I'm hurt," he moans, looking longingly at Lily. "It's the inside of my thigh."

"Stop!" Lily laughs, blushing. "Tell me, how it is Richard Randal is your brother?" Lily listens intently to Kevin's story as they sit drinking cappuccino, admiring each other and swapping the occasional story about New York.

"Your story could be good for both of us," Lily explains. "I used to be a reporter for a New York liberal rag. The paper folded. Nobody wanted a reporter like me. I was out on my own. I had a really tough time. These days it's all about news candy and how everyone wants it and eats it. I had to adapt. I used to do all that sleuthing stuff. Now I'm just a paparazzo with a pen."

"I've got to meet with Randal," says Kevin "It's the only way I can find my Dad if he's alive,"

"Problem is," says Lily, "Randal is difficult to get to because he has so much protection and so many advisors around him. He's focused on the election. He is effectively insulated from life's realities,"

"That's why he spouts so much political crap no one can believe in," moans Kevin. "He wants to put troops in all the major cities. How screwed up is that? He definitely needs a change of heart on that one."

Lily agrees. She loves Kevin's radical attitude; they get on well. Kevin makes Lily laugh. He shows her the letter and the photo of his Mom and Dad. Lily wants to believe Kevin but she remains skeptical. "So you reckon you're a member of the Randal clan?" she says. "Prove it to me. Come with me tonight to this Youth Charity fundraiser I'm going to. It's being held at some home in Bel-Air. I have one invite only but maybe I could get us both in. The PR guy at Richard Randal's office gave me the invite as a consolation prize because I didn't get the interview he promised me. He says I can try again tonight. Richard Randal is going to be there on a meet and greet for the California primary. So, if you wanted to introduce yourself... I could get a few photos.... it would make an incredible exclusive."

"Count me in," enthuses Kevin. "I'm great at parties."

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Lily drives Kevin into Hollywood. She eases her silver Mini convertible into the freeway traffic, cruises to Sunset and takes the streets to the sleazy Hollywood Stars Motel at Normandie. Lily, now convinced she's on to a big story, pays for

Kevin's room, leaving him there to get changed while she drives to her apartment to get ready for the evening.

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On the way home, Lily drops in at her paper-strewn offices overlooking Hollywood and Vine. She tells Jodie, her Valley girl assistant, to find out everything she can about Kevin's father. "According to my source, Mathew Randal has been off the scene for awhile. He may even be dead. Find out everything you can about him including love affairs, offspring, business dealings, politics and wives, whatever, and let me know as soon as you can."

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Kevin attempts to make himself look presentable in his thrift shop evening jacket, black T-shirt and jeans. He slicks his long hair down, shaves and he still looks a mess. Lily returns in the Mini, looking stunning in a low-cut, red dress.

"Jesus!" yells Kevin. "You look good enough to eat."

"Down, boy," says Lily, pushing him away, laughing.

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Kevin and Lily drive to a floodlit estate in Bel-Air. Outside, cars, limousines, and police fill the street. A faceless security agent stops the Mini to check on them. "Sorry, sir," he says to Kevin. "It's a formal affair. You've got no invite and I can't let you in dressed like that, even if you are press."

"Take the Mini," says Lily, exasperated. "Let me see if I can pull a few strings; no promises though. Be back here in exactly twenty minutes." Kevin, excited to get into the party, is pissed off they won't let him in. He drives away from the estate and disappears into the darkness, parking a few blocks away in the shadows. On foot, he cuts through the gardens of the adjacent houses, making his way back to the estate. It's an assault course of garden walls and rose bushes, but he handles it all like he's James Bond, never missing a trick, staying low, hidden by the underground shadows.

At the estate wall, Kevin climbs a large tree bough overlooking the fundraiser. Hundreds of guests in formal eveningwear fill the gardens. Shrubs and bushes sparkle with light.

Beneath him, under a rose-covered gazebo beside the pool, three middle-aged men are chatting, congratulating Senator Richard Randal as he stands proud and strong. His wife Barbara looks up at him adoringly. Kevin stays absolutely still, fascinated, listening.

One of the men is reading from a newspaper clipping quoting the only opposition candidate D. J. McLarren.

"Richard Randal is a one-time actor, a political mouthpiece who has learned his lines well under the expert tuition and the hidden agenda of his mentor Neil Vennor. Randal has a lust for power and is not afraid to cut a few corners to get elected. Once an honorable man, he has sacrificed his ideals in the pursuit of the presidency for its star power."

Randal laughs aloud, "What's he talking about? I've already got star power." The men around Randal echo his laughter, aligning themselves with his candidacy.

Neil Vennor, a dark, sinister man in his late sixties, approaches Randal accompanied by Laxton a towering, muscle-bound brute from ESD who is the agent in charge of Vennor's undercover dirty-work. With a snap of his fingers Vennor dismisses the men congratulating Randal. They peel away saying hesitant goodbyes, hastened by Laxton's cold stare. Randal looks indignant, mourning the loss of the attention. His wife Barbara looks concerned and moves toward him as if she wanted to protect her husband but he sheepishly reassures her and she reluctantly turns away, about leaving Vennor and Randal alone.

Vennor, a nasty Dick Cheney-type, is a Halliburton-style CEO addicted to power and his own adrenaline. He finances, controls and manipulates Randal's bid for the White House. He wastes few words. "I just got the figures, Richard," he says almost surreptitiously. "We are on top of all the major polls above the margins. Since the media got hold of that story about McLarren taking contributions from that drug cartel, it's over for him. Congratulations, Richard, the Presidency is in your pocket."

"No one's got *this* country in their pocket," Randal sneers.

Vennor laughs, clamping his hand painfully on Richard's shoulder. "You would be surprised, Richard. You would be surprised."

Laxton hears Kevin move in the tree above. He pulls out a Walther P99 pistol and trains

it on the sound. Startled and scared, Kevin scrambles up the tree farther. Slipping, he

loses his balance and falls heavily through the gazebo roof into the shallow end of the pool. Everyone is scared out of their lives. Richard Randal leaves by a side entrance hustled away by ESD agents in sunglasses, while other undercover agents pull Kevin out of the pool, dripping wet. Guns fill his vision; he's dragged to his feet, thrown against a wall and searched for weapons. His clothes hang on him like a sopping wet towel. Kevin protests, "Senator Randal's m..."

"Shut it!" snaps Laxton, his gun aimed directly in Kevin's face. Kevin shuts it.

Lily photographs everything. Perry, another ESD agent from Laxton's team, confiscates her camera, checks her identification and tells her she "would be best advised to leave now and ignore what she's seen."

A tall, distinguished, Bohemian man in his mid-forties with shoulder-length hair, edges his way through the gathering crowd. The elite know him and like him. He is dressed in a blue velvet evening jacket, his shirt is open and his tie hangs loose. ESD agents nod and let him through. Kevin is led away for questioning but the man butts in.

"Let the kid go, Vennor!" he says coldly. "Tonight's a celebration. Let him go right now! We're here to support youth, not to chastise them!"

The crowd murmurs their agreement. The man moves forward determinedly, making his presence felt. All eyes are on Vennor. "Okay, let him go," grumbles Vennor. ESD agents politely escort a smiling Kevin away from the pool and off the estate. Vennor, white with rage, turns away. He whispers to Laxton, "What

was the kid saying about Randal? Check him out. I want to know everything about him and keep that songwriting liberal out of my face, will you? I never liked him!"

"Whatever you say, Mr. Vennor," says Laxton bowing his head. "You're the boss."

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Kevin, soaked to the skin, finds the Mini. Driving away, he sees Lily trailing down the road with her red high-heeled shoes in her hand. "I thought I'd had it in there;" laughs Kevin, "but some guy stepped in and saved me. He was great."

"You're the one who's great," compliments Lily. "You're completely mad, you know, trying to get into the party like that." She smiles seductively at Kevin. He makes a grab for her. She gently pushes him away. "Let's get you out of those wet things," she says. "We'll go to my place and dry you out."

"I sink ziss is a very good idea!" jokes Kevin, imitating Einstein.

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Lily takes the freeway to her downtown loft, an artsy space overlooking the twinkling lights of the city. Inside, Eastern and eclectic furnishings reflect Lily's designer taste and "groovy" lifestyle.

Kevin sprawls on the bed, feigning sleep, wearing a white towel like a toga. His mind is full of visions of Lily. She breaks the spell, ordering him off the bed and relegating him, protesting, to the couch.

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Sunlight pours through the tarnished loft windows, spinning shadows through the white linen draperies. The phone wakes Kevin. Jodie, Lily's assistant, is calling. Lily eagerly picks up the phone, putting it on speaker so Kevin can hear. "Mathew Randal was a tough, self-made millionaire, a software entrepreneur famous for his flamboyant sales methods and his humanitarian approach to his workers and their unions. He was a U.S. trade ambassador for a while and a Washington lobbyist but when he complained in the press about the "insanity of American politics" it put an end to his political career. His wife Elizabeth died suddenly during their divorce proceedings, leaving her husband Mathew and *two* sons, Richard, the presidential candidate and his younger brother Tony.

"Wow!" cheers Kevin. "I've got two brothers?"

"We did a piece on Tony Randal last fall." Jodie continues, "The City of L. A. honored him for his work for the Disney charities. He makes his money writing film scores for the movies. Now he lives alone, somewhere up near Outpost at 4940 Mulholland."

"I don't believe it!" Kevin cheers. "Two musicians in one family. Forget Richard Randal -- let's go find Tony!"

"Shut up, will you, Kevin?" Lily says, "Sorry, Jodie, what about Mathew Randal?"

"That's what's so weird," says Jodie. "There is so little information about him available. I think he must be alive because he hasn't turned up in any obituary. He was making headlines up to a couple years ago but now he is completely off the radar. He's probably lying on a beach somewhere and all the entries on the web are too old to be any use."

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That same day Lily drives Kevin to Tony Randal's home high in the Hollywood Hills overlooking Los Angeles. As they arrive, Tony pulls up on his all-black Harley Night Rod Special. Kevin is surprised. He has seen Tony Randal before; he was the guy who rescued him from Vennor the night before. Tony, trying to place Kevin, asks, "Who are you?"

"I'm your brother, well, your half-brother actually," says Kevin smiling.

Tony is dumbfounded. He is an intuitive man; sensing an affinity with Kevin, he says the man in the photo of Kevin's parents does indeed look remarkably like his own father in his younger days. He reads the love letter. "Looks like we might well have the same father," laughs Tony.

He invites Kevin and Lily in for a drink. The house is full of books, plants and light. The living room has musical instruments strewn all around and a Pro-Tools recording setup beside a grand piano. There is with a breathtaking view of Los Angeles all the way to the sea. Rock music from the eighties plays on a distant stereo. Tony and Kevin exchange conversation about music and motorcycles. Tony quickly warms to Kevin, who picks up an acoustic guitar and strums out a few chords. He wants to know all about his father.

"Your father, if he is your father, is still very much alive," says Tony.

Kevin is ecstatic. "I knew it!" he says. "I knew it all along." He shakes Tony's hand too hard, puts his arm around him in a bear hug for a second, then bounces halfway across the room to plant a big kiss smack on Lily's surprised lips.

Tony continues with his story.

"My brother Richard mentioned my father having an affair with a woman named Janice but neither he nor my father knew a child came out of the liaison. You see, my father was an international businessman, always traveling abroad; he was a bit of a playboy actually. He probably did not even know about your mother's pregnancy. He had many, many women. My late mother was always covering up for him. She was an invalid but she held the purse strings in the marriage. I seem to recollect my mother was always paying off my father's girlfriends."

Kevin is amazed; it is all news to him. His mother had told him his father was had died soon after he was born. "She was probably just trying to cover for herself," says Tony sympathetically, "because she couldn't have my father- I mean your father."

Tony continues: "My father was once a well-respected power broker in Washington when he lost control of his publicly-listed company to a hostile takeover by my brother Richard's company Artificial Intelligence Inc. My mother died at just about the same time. She left Dad almost penniless. He lost faith in himself and the family and became a terrible drunk. He is sober now but he made a lot of trouble for my brother. We kept it out of the press. When Richard decided to run for President, he was worried about his opposition making political capital out of my Dad's problems, so he had every bit of information about him he could find erased and then he sent him away on an extended vacation. Right now, like I said, even I don't know where he is."

“What’s the matter with this brother of ours?” snaps Kevin, “He’s lucky to have a father. He should treat him with respect. I’ll remind him about that when I meet him.”

“You won’t get near him,” says Tony. “Vennor will see to that. Richard’s wife Barbara is a good woman who loves him and she’s tried countless times to get Richard to reconcile with his father but Vennor always stops it. If I were you I’d stay away; you’ll be safer if you do.”

“Who is this Vennor guy?” interrupts Lily. “I’ve heard of him.”

“He’s that very unpleasant man who wanted Kevin arrested last night. I think he is capable of anything. He designed and manufactured all the artificial intelligence systems used by the U.S. military and now they are using something similar on the Randal campaign. Vennor has amassed a huge fortune. He is backing Richard for the presidency. He wants America to control the world with him manipulating everything. He has the power. Richard is pretty much his front man, I think. You push this ‘brother’ claim of yours and Vennor will come after you full force!”

“Don’t bother me,” says Kevin in a fake John Wayne voice.

“Oh yes he will” assures Tony. “Stay here tonight? We can talk some more. Let’s get your things from your hotel. We’ll take the Harley. I’ll drive over and you can bring it back, it will give you a taste of a real American bike. I’ll get you a helmet.”

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At the Hollywood Stars Motel, two heavies in dark suits are lurking on the walkway outside Kevin’s upstairs room. Tony pulls the Harley up onto the stand in the motel alleyway. “Something’s wrong, I can feel it,” says Kevin, stripping of his helmet and running upstairs. Tony follows right behind him. The men in suits have disappeared. Kevin’s room is a mess. Drawers hang open. Kevin’s clothes and possessions are sliced up in pieces or torn apart and strewn around the room. Kevin can’t believe his eyes.

“Now I get it,” says Tony, “I thought I recognized those two guys. They work for Vennor. He obviously wants to send you a strong message. Anybody who creates problems around Richard is in for a full work over or worse. I should know,” he adds bitterly gesturing at the mess, “I’ve seen this before. This is typical Vennor. You’d better watch yourself.”

Kevin sadly picks his slashed ANARCHY jacket off the floor. “Looks like they used a razor on it. How juvenile is that?” He drops it on the floor again. “I loved that jacket,” he says. “Those bastards! What does Richard say about this kind of bullshit?”

“Chances are,” Tony, replies, “He doesn’t know or care. He just wants to be President, the crowds, the adulation, the promise of power; it has all got to him. He is a changed man, not the brother I once knew. I loathe his politics. He used to care about ordinary people and now he’s making important political decisions affecting all their lives, using Vennor’s artificial intelligence systems. It’s crazy, it’s that screwed up. Sure, he is doing well in the polls because he is, he says, the only one who will protect us from the very fears of terrorism he’s constantly

feeding us. He's betrayed everything he ever believed in. I don't like to deal with the man even though he is my brother. His wife is cool. She always stands by him; they have been sweethearts since they were both at Stanford. She tries to mellow him out but I think he is still trying to show his father that he is better than he is and, of course, he blames him for my mother's death."

"So the guy's got emotional problems," says Kevin shaking his head, "and he could end up being President of the most powerful nation on Earth. They should give me that job. I'd probably do better than him."

"You might well be right," laughs Tony."

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Kevin drives the Harley back, feeling nervous after seeing his clothes all cut up. Not knowing the bike, he drives carefully, taking it easy through the twists and turns of the narrow road. Feeling the bike's response he begins to enjoy the ride, getting more confident with the bike. He brakes gently into the corners and accelerates out of them with a bit of a roar, having fun, putting his leg out like a speedway racer, making sparks with his boot. Tony hangs on tight.

"You and Richard are so alike," Tony shouts in the wind. "You're both show-offs and both crazy. I'll bet you never listen to your heart either."

"What?" yells Kevin moving into the next corner.

"Listen to the heart of you!" shouts Tony countering his weight on the tiny bike seat.

"What?" yells Kevin

"Listen to your heart!" Tony shouts back.

The hairpin is on them. The bike wobbles on loose gravel and slips on a steel road works plate. Dealing with the sudden movement, Kevin brakes hard. SNAP! SNAP! Both brakes are just GONE! Kevin has no control over the bike. It smashes headlong into the curved crash barrier. The big Harley and its riders fall disastrously onto the asphalt. Tony gets the worst of it -- his body is twisted, he is bleeding, lying on his back pinned under the heavy weight of the Harley. Kevin is dazed, confused and badly bruised but he has only a few minor scrapes. His adrenalin is pumping. He pulls himself up and staggers over to Tony, who is unconscious and barely breathing. Using the handlebars, Kevin lifts the bike off Tony, who is moaning in pain and covered in blood. As he lifts the bike he realizes the brake levers are completely flat against the handlebars, so much so that he momentarily thinks they are part of the bars themselves. The brake levers are so loose and floppy it's like they have no cables attached to them. Kevin pushes the heavy bike a few yards staring into the wreckage of the Harley. The front and rear brake cables have been neatly cut almost clean through. Kevin is now terrified. He gently rummages through Tony's jacket and finds his bloodied cell phone. He calls Lily, hysterical, running his mouth. "I don't know where I am. We were in an accident. Tony's badly injured. I'm fine, I was driving. I braked - the brake cables snapped like twigs. Metal cables don't snap like that. Tony warned me about Vennor. Someone cut those cables. Someone tried to kill us!"

Lily shuts Kevin down. “Kevin, shut up! I’m calling the paramedics. Keep your mouth closed, Kevin; the less you say the better. I’m on my way. I know where you are. Look out for the ambulance”

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The paramedics arrive at the accident scene in a bright red rescue ambulance followed by a fire truck. Kevin tells them he’s okay and directs them to take care of Tony. They leave him sitting by the roadside, running across the rocky ground with bags, stretcher and oxygen to where Tony lies. The senior medic thumps Tony’s chest over and over while the other holds Tony’s nose and blows air into his mouth.

Lily pulls up in the Mini and runs to Kevin. He is still shaky as he tells her about finding his clothes cut up, about the men at the motel and Tony’s warning that Vennor would come after him. “You’re okay?” asks Lily. “Yeah,” answers Kevin. “Tony hit his head real bad and he was trapped under the bike. When I lifted it off him I saw the brake cables really were cut. If Vennor is involved, you’d better stay out of sight. You’d better leave now in case his people show up. If you’re not here you can’t be involved. I’ll call you.”

Lily gets into her Mini as a paramedic runs over. “Did you see the accident, miss?” he asks.

“No, thank God,” she says and drives off down the hill.

Tony is on oxygen as the paramedics hastily push him into the rescue ambulance. As they drive off, a second ambulance arrives and takes care of Kevin. He too is strapped to a gurney and put in a neck brace and taken to the Hollywood ER.

Lily waits on Vista Point overlooking Hollywood, watching Mulholland. The second ambulance rushes by with lights flashing and siren wailing. Lily follows to the Hollywood ER. She chooses a lookout position carefully, sitting in the gardens with the best view of all the hospital’s comings and goings. She waits and watches from behind an old *People* magazine.

In the hospital emergency room nurses attend to Kevin’s cuts and bruises. They give him x-rays: nothing is broken. He is visibly shaken and constantly looking around for Vennor’s men. He is nervous and agitated. The nurse gives him a shot to calm him down. Kevin gives in to the drug and falls into a deep sleep.

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Richard Randal is in The San Francisco Hotel overlooking the bay. Randal, who is here with his wife, has a TV appearance tonight but he is still concerned with security after the breach at the Bel-Air Charity Ball and is discussing the problem with Vennor and Laxton. Vennor assures Randal that the whole thing has been played up in the press as a kid’s prank. “The kid got away but we’ll find him. Relax, I’ve got it under control.”

Perry rushes into the room looking anxious. He reports to Vennor, whispering in his ear. Vennor’s expression doesn’t change; he looks blank, staring ahead. His face remains expressionless as he tells Randal, “Your brother Tony has been in

a serious motorcycle accident up on Mulholland. He's in a bad way. We have a car ready to take you to the airport."

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Richard Randal is panicked when he arrives at the hospital two hours later with his wife Barbara at his side. In a frantic rush, pursued by a dozen press and photographers, they jam into the elevator with four tough bodyguards from ESD. On the third floor they hurriedly make for Room 313 where Tony struggles for life on a respirator, unaware of all the fear and concern around him.

The two doctors meet them outside Tony's room. They tell Randal that although Tony is alive it is very much in God's hands whether he survives. They have done all they can.

"Although he was wearing a helmet," the doctor explains, "he received a massive blow to the head causing severe trauma to both the neck and the base of the spine. Apparently the bike landed on top of him crushing his chest. All we can do now is pray."

Randal and Barbara sit in the room on either side of Tony listening to the slowing ping of his heart monitor, trying to send him silent messages of love and encouragement. They smile limply across at each other; their eyes glisten with tears and hopelessness. The pinging stops and the heartbeat monitor flat lines. The doctor and two nurses rush into the room ordering Randal and Barbara out of the room.

Vennor is in the hall waiting with Laxton and Perry. "Everything okay, Richard?" he says flatly. Randal makes no reply but Barbara, with her arm around her husband's shoulder,

scowls at Vennor mouthing the word "Prick" to his face. Vennor feigns ignorance of her remark, smiling weakly.

The doctor comes out of Tony's room with his head bowed. He looks up, facing Richard squarely and tells him, "I'm very sorry, Senator, we were unable to save your brother."

As he walks away, Randal slumps into a chair staring ahead in disbelief and shock while Barbara attempts to comfort and calm him. He cries and sniffles, warm tears flow uncontrollably down his cheeks. "He was a gentle, good man," he whispers. "Why him? He was always such a careful driver."

Vennor rolls his eyes to the ceiling. "I just got the story," he says in his flat dispassionate tone. "Tony's bike went off the road on a hairpin bend on Mulholland near his home. He wasn't driving; some kid was. The kid lost control, it was a big heavy bike - he dropped it. They went off the road, that's it."

"Who's this kid?" says Randal wiping his eyes, showing both interest and anger.

"He's that same kid we picked out of the pool at the youth charity event," says Vennor.

"He must have tracked Tony down. Maybe Tony took a fancy to him?"

"Don't you talk about that," says Randal angrily. "It's a family thing, Tony was a loner, a private man, just tell me what happened," snaps Randal. "How fast was he going? Had he been drinking?"

"I don't know, Richard, it was a just an unfortunate accident," replies Vennor. "The kid went off the road. Maybe he couldn't handle the bike. It's a heavy bike. There's a lot of accidents on that stretch of road."

"I want to see this kid," insists Randal, "I want to see him now!"

"He is still in the hospital," says Vennor sounding bored. "I'll send Laxton and Perry. He's in the ER. The doctor told me his injuries were superficial but he would be sedated while he checks everything." Vennor motions to his men. "Get the boy."

"I want this kid fucked up!" screams Randal.

"I don't think that's either advisable or practical," interrupts Vennor. "It's best if the kid is not involved. We will put it out there that Tony was driving alone. We've got Tony's bike and enough evidence to put the kid away for life but it doesn't suit our purposes to pursue his prosecution right now. We don't need the investigation or the publicity. The election is ours to win right now. We don't want any problems. Gossip about Tony's death might bring you a few sympathy votes but explaining to the world about his liaison with young men from his own youth charity won't. The press would have a field day; we

would lose everything we have worked for. No, we will announce that Tony was driving alone. It's the only choice we have. You do see that, don't you, Richard?"

Randal sighs heavily and agrees with Vennor. "but after I am President," he says "I want this kid nailed."

"Right now," says Vennor deliberately, "I will pay off the kid and send back to New York from whence he came. He will live the good life and he will love it. We will keep him under surveillance in New York until after you're elected. Then you can deal with him. One other thing, I know how cruel it sounds," he says firmly, addressing both Richard and Barbara, "but neither of you can tell your father about Tony's death, not until after the election is over."

"But Tony is Mathew's youngest son," pleads Barbara, "we have to tell him."

"We have to tell him," Richard echoes limply.

"No," says Vennor firmly, "this is not the time to bring your father Mathew out of hibernation and into the public eye. He's like the proverbial genie; once he's out of the bottle we would never get him back and everything we are trying to do will be ruined. I know he's sober these days but you know what a hothead he can be."

"You're right," admits Randal. "We can't afford the risk - the trouble he would cause in the press would never end."

"My people will keep your father in the dark for right now" soothes Vennor "The press doesn't know where he is anyway. Let's just keep everything under wraps until you are President."

"You're right," says Randal to Vennor, "It's probably best we keep the news of Tony's death away from my father. He had all that heart trouble last year. This news could kill him if it's not broken to him in the right way. You're right, Vennor, let's wait until after the election. We have to think of the greater good now," says Randal pompously. "Tony is dead and nothing will bring him back."

Barbara is livid, "We have to tell your Dad!" she insists. "Tony was his boy; you have to tell him, Richard!"

"No, Barbara," retorts Randal, "we, including you, will not tell my father anything. When the time is right I will break the news to him."

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In the ER Kevin is propped up in a bed. Two plainclothes police officers are taking a report from him. "Someone cut the brake cables," Kevin states.

"Yeah, right," says the 'bad' cop, "that's what they all say when they kill their buddy."

"Someone tried to kill us both!" Kevin insists.

"It's all right, son," says the 'good' cop. "I know it was an accident. I believe you. I'll take care of everything, don't you worry."

The "bad" cop shakes his head and turns away in disgust. "It's about time you learned to take some responsibility," he says as he bites into a sandwich.

"I told you before, the cables were cut, damn it!" Kevin shouts. "I saw them with my own eyes."

Laxton and Perry burst into the room flashing Secret Service ID, pushing between Kevin and the cops. "We'll be taking it from here," Laxton says firmly.

The two policemen look angry and surprised but quickly back down. Laxton tells them to wait outside, confiscating their notes, saying "It's a national security issue."

Kevin is very scared.

A nurse comes into the room to bathe a gash on Kevin's temple. Laxton tells her to "get out and do something useful. We'll take care of him from now on."

The nurse turns immediately and leaves the room, while Kevin yells after her, "Come Back! Come back!" Perry hits Kevin hard in the temple and immediately Kevin is out cold.

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In minutes Laxton and Perry have Kevin strapped down on a gurney, his hospital admission forms in hand, and they are moving him out of the hospital fast, pulling Kevin along on the gurney while the two cops clear the way for them. At the curb they push him into a waiting private ambulance. Lily follows closely but loses them in traffic.

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The ambulance quietly enters the estate of a huge gothic mansion on Sunset Boulevard.

Perry releases Kevin from the gurney, dumping him hard on the cold marble of the mansion's front steps. He drags him inside by the collar into the overwhelming opulence of bronze statues, chandeliers, wood paneling, tapestries, marble floors and a massive sweeping staircase. Kevin is forced to lie on his face. Laxton and Perry grab a leg and an arm each and carry Kevin headlong up the stairs, bumping his spine as they go.

Bound to a chair in a darkened room, Kevin struggles to get free. Neil Vennor

storms into the room “Kevin Waters, you caused the death of Tony Randal,” snaps Vennor, his voice pinched, his eyes furious. “Tony Randal may have bought your cheap hustle about being a Randal, but no one else is going to hear your crap! You are going back to New York. You’re going to disappear and you’re going to forget about this accident or you’re a dead man.”

“You can’t buy me off! yells Kevin. “Someone cut those brake cables. I don’t want your money. Tony’s dead. He was my brother! I want an inquest!”

Laxton hits Kevin full in the face.

“Nobody cut any brake cables and there won’t be an inquest and you don’t have a brother,” says Vennor deliberately. “I have all the evidence. I can pin Tony Randal’s death on you anytime I choose. So let me make you the following offer, Mr. Waters.” Vennor nods to Laxton.

Holding a fat bundle of hundred-dollar bills, Laxton punches them full force into Kevin’s stomach, badly wounding him, making him choke for breath.

“Best to keep quiet, boy, if you know what’s good for you,” says Vennor. “Ten grand now. You keep your mouth shut, you’ll get a handsome monthly allowance, but only if you keep your mouth shut. If not, you’ll have a serious accident, I promise. Think of keeping your mouth shut as a kind of life insurance policy. This was a sad accident. Now forget about it. In case you don’t remember what an accident feels like, let my friend here remind you.”

Laxton hits Kevin full force in the face, knocking him over onto to the floor. “Keep your mouth shut,” he says as he kicks him in the stomach. “Take the money, asshole.”

Laxton’s other brute Perry pulls Kevin up from the floor and holds him in a neck lock, while Laxton repeatedly hits Kevin in the stomach. Kevin drops on his knees to the floor, choking in agony as he falls flat on his face hard.

“You will do as you’re told,” commands Vennor, “or you’ll be the next one we’ll be scraping off the street. Tomorrow morning at 11 am, you return to New York where you will remain and live your life like none of this ever happened. We will be keeping an eye on you. You will forget all about this unfortunate accident and to make sure you do...”

Vennor nods to Laxton, who kicks Kevin hard in the side of the head. Kevin passes out.

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Kevin awakens in a darkened room. Fighting nausea and a massive headache, he stumbles around the room. He tries to open the doors and windows without success. He is a prisoner, a caged animal. He complains over the intercom and is told he “isn’t going anywhere.” Kevin demands food. On the other end the cook consults with one of the guards, who laughs and says, “Give the man what he wants. It could be his last meal.”

Kevin freezes. He is scared, thinking they’re going to kill him, and he wants out of there. He shimmies up inside the room’s oversized fireplace into the chimney,

pulling the fireguard back into the mouth of the fireplace so it looks undisturbed. In minutes the door opens.

The guard, who has brought the food, looks bewildered. Rushing out of the room, he is sounding the alarm. "He's out! He's out! Waters is out!"

Kevin lets himself down out of the chimney. The door is open. He makes it down the servant's staircase. Hidden in the darkness of a child's bedroom he uses the house phone to call Lily. In a whisper, Kevin describes where he is.

"It's Vennor's place", says Lily.

"They say they're flying me to New York tomorrow at 11 am."

"Don't worry. Kevin." says Lily. " Mommy is watching out for you."

Kevin slides out of the room into the corridor. He turns the corner and walks straight into the arms of a burly guard. Kevin is pissed off. "Let me out of here!" he screams. The butt of a gun finds the back of his head and Kevin is soon "fast asleep" on the concrete floor.

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In the early morning down the road from Vennor's house, Lily slumps down inside her Mini. She sees Kevin pushed into a black windowed limousine. Lily follows. The limo is moving down the 405 making for LAX.

At the airport, Lily snatches up a charity collection box rolling around on the back seat of her Mini and races to the departure building. Laxton and Perry are already in the departure lounge sitting on either side of Kevin waiting to put him on a flight to New York. Lily in dark glasses approaches them posing as a charity collector, asking for donations. Distracted by Lily's revealing bra and cleavage, the men dig into their pockets for change. Kevin motions to Lily, "Wait here."

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Laxton and Perry escort Kevin onto the plane and sit him firmly in his seat. "Have a nice day," jibes Laxton, thrusting a fat, money-filled envelope hard into Kevin's bruised belly. "Forget about all of it. You will . . . I know you will." Perry escorts Kevin onto the plane.

The American Airlines jet taxis to the end of the runway. Perry settles Kevin into window seat while he sits next to him on the aisle. As the plane starts to taxi, Kevin moans and heaves, screaming with terrible stomach cramps, writhing in fake agony. Kevin shows the sympathetic flight attendant his stomach bruises. While she confers with the Captain, Perry adds to Kevin's injuries. Under the captain's instruction, the flight attendant calls for an ambulance and paramedics take Kevin off the plane. The copilot holds Perry back. He is very angry at being prevented from boarding the ambulance. Kevin laughs himself silly on his way to the airport terminal.

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Near the airport terminal, Kevin jumps out from the back of the moving ambulance when the paramedic is distracted in conversation with the driver, his head through the glass divider. Kevin scuttles away through the baggage terminal, picks up a duster cap and baseball hat along the way and finds Lily in the departure lounge. He slips a dime into her collection box. She cannot

believe he is back. They kiss for the first time. A friendly kiss turns romantic. Lily's hands feel the back of Kevin's jacket. "What's this?" she asks. "Money," says Kevin, showing her the wad. "Ten grand . . . Money to keep me quiet. They killed Tony. Someone did cut those brake cables. Vennor said there won't be an inquest. That is bullshit. Vennor wants me out of the way but I'm going to use that money against him and find a way to knock some sense into that brother of mine! I'm sure Vennor initially had my clothes cut up to scare me off but when his people saw Tony and me together on the bike they jumped at the opportunity to get rid of both of us, but now Tony is dead and I'm alive. People like you, Lily, the police and the ambulance people all know about me. Now Vennor's got no choice, he's got to keep me quiet and happy. If Richard Randal ever knew he had a half brother who rode the motorcycle that killed his brother and that someone caused that accident by deliberately cutting the brake cables, Richard Randal might have a shit-fit and Vennor would lose his precious presidential candidate. Right now, from Richard Randal's point of view his brother's death was just an unfortunate accident. Meanwhile, Vennor pays me off. I disappear to New York and the rest is history. But you know what? I'm not going. I have a different plan. I'm want to find my father."

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Lily decides it's best if they disappear and hide out with Lily's long-lost "Uncle Floyd" in his secluded Laurel Canyon hillside shack. Floyd, an aging Vietnam vet and an ex-helicopter gunship pilot, is a likeable man, a swashbuckling Errol Flynn hippie-type, a happy hairy near Buddhist, a radical, still angry at the system. He has an in-house computerized recording studio where he ekes out a living creating background music for porn films and repairing computer equipment. He shares his life with his bass guitar and Baby, an affectionate black-and-white Border Collie who never leaves his side. Lily has been close to Floyd since she was a child. She has stopped coming around in recent years because Floyd was always working "sweetening" porn films and the continuous sounds of female heavy breathing, fake moaning and "yes baby" orgasms always resounded around the place. It just got too much for a pretty young woman to take.

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Floyd and Kevin take an instant liking to each other like lifelong friends or father and son. Over a few beers Kevin tells Floyd his story about his brothers Richard and Tony. He tells how Tony told him Randal and he are alike. How neither of them ever listened to their heart. "He was shouting, 'listen to your heart' when the brakes failed. I thought I knew what he meant," says Kevin "But I guess I'm just too upset to listen to my heart right now."

"No, you're okay," comforts Floyd. "You're just listening to your emotional heart, rather than listening to the deep-down heart of you. That's what's wrong with Richard Randal. No man who ever ran for President ever listened to the heart of himself; if he did, everyone would vote for him 'cause we would know in our hearts the truth of what he was promising. There is no truth in what Randal says. He is talking out of his ass. He has sold out to his ego. If you listen to the heart of

you, you will always know what's true and what isn't, and Randal isn't listening. You have to stay true to what you believe in your heart or you'll end up just like Richard Randal. Listen to the voice inside you. It's your gut, your instinct, and your intuition. What do you think kept me alive in 'Nam?"

"Well, okay, I am listening to the heart of me right now," slurs Kevin, who is a bit drunk. "I know Vennor had a hand in Tony's death. Probably he meant to kill us both."

"You'd better be able to prove that," interrupts Floyd flatly. "What about Richard Randal, do you think he was involved in his brother's death?"

I think this was all Vennor's idea," says Kevin. "I haven't seen Randal involved in any of this. From what Tony told me, Richard Randal has problems but killing people isn't one of them."

"Okay, so we should find Tony Randal's Harley," says Floyd. "If the cables were cut, we can capture it in a few photos. The accident was near Outpost so they probably took it to the Hollywood Impound. Let's hope it's still there."

"I thought you wanted to find your father?" asks Lily.

Neither Kevin nor Floyd hear her -- they are already halfway out the door.

It's 11.45 pm when they leave the house. Floyd drives to the Hollywood Impound in his big wheel Chevy truck. Kevin, Lily and Baby are beside him. He tells the gateman they are there to check out "a collision write-off." It's a busy time of night. There is a line of tow trucks behind them all pulling impounded vehicles. The gateman waves them through.

Tony's Harley is way in the back, a tangled wreck of black steel festooned with "Police Evidence" yellow plastic tape. Kevin traces the brake cables -- they are intact.

"I don't believe it!" he exclaimed. "Someone's replaced the damn brake cables!"

"It's okay, Kevin, you made a mistake," soothes Floyd. "You hit your head. You were in a daze."

"No way!" interrupts Kevin angrily. "The cables must have been cut through. Look at these cables, they're brand-new, there's not a mark on them! This is a cover-up! Someone has swapped them out. Wait a minute -- these cables are grey! Everything on Tony's Harley was black, solid black!"

"Oh my God, you're right!" shrieks Lily "Everything on his bike was black!"

Floyd takes date-inscribed photographs of the Harley, the brakes and its new cables. "This is heavy shit, man," he mutters. "You must be right. They wanted to kill you both but they only got Tony. They've obviously got this wreck ready for evidence and they will probably hold onto it with the brake cables intact it in case they decide they need to pin Tony Randal's death on you, Kevin. And with you not going to New York and staying here they might just come after you for it. Whatever, you're going to need help on this one or you're dead meat. You need a heavy-hitter on your side who knows the press and a load of lawyers to put them in their place. What about your father? Wasn't he some kind of big time heavyweight?"

"Yes he was, and Jodie will find him," interrupts Lily defensively. "She called me

this morning; she thinks she has a lead on him. I didn't want to say anything until she was sure."

"Finding my father would be great," cheers Kevin "But who knows what condition he's going to be in when we do? What Vennor does is my problem. No one is coming to save me. This is my responsibility."

"That might be true, says Floyd firmly, but what's going on here is wrong. I'm with you, Kevin, you're *not* ever going down for driving Tony Randal to his death." He grabs Kevin's hand and shakes it. "Brothers," he says.

"Brothers," responds Kevin. Baby barks her agreement too, while Lily looks on, shaking her head. "I'd better find your father before you both get killed."

"If they have this bike as evidence," says Kevin, "I could be accused of killing Tony at any time."

"I don't think so," says Lily in a singsong voice, smiling all over her face. "Look what I found over there in the trash bin!" Held lightly between her finger and thumb is a grease-smudged plastic bag with two black motorcycle brake cables poking out of it.

Kevin carefully opens the bag with a pen, not wanting to contaminate it. "All the bits are in here," he cheers, showing it to Floyd. "Anyone can see these cables have been cut through."

Floyd photographs the evidence. "I'll tell you what," he laughs, "why don't we steal all the evidence?"

Lily rolls her eyes.

A "borrowed" engine hoist from "Vehicle Wrecking" lifts Tony's bike into the bed of Floyd's truck. Kevin slings an old blue tarp over the bike and they all drive out into the night unnoticed, using the impound rear gate.

At Floyd's house the three of them unload the bike with an engine hoist, lowering it into the inspection pit in Floyd's garage. They cover the opening with a wooden hatch, they cover that with carpet, and park Floyd's vintage '65 Caddy over that.

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Lily mails the black brake cables in their bag along with the bike photos and bike location for safekeeping to Gerry Steadier, a criminal defense attorney friend of hers in Oregon. She includes statements by Kevin, Floyd and herself, detailing their involvement with the accident, the bike, Vennor, and Richard Randal.

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Kevin is kicking back, sitting in front of the television with Lily watching the CBS evening news and thumbing through the latest issue of People magazine. He turns the page and is confronted with a full-page photo of Richard Randal's face smiling back at him. He turns the page quickly, cursing under his breath.

On TV the newscaster announces: "Tony Randal, brother of Presidential candidate Richard Randal, was buried in Los Angeles today, after he was killed in a motorcycle accident in Hollywood, California. He had been driving alone when it is thought he hit a patch of oil. Let's go over now to Jason Small for his report from Forest Lawn Memorial Park."

"It is a sad day for the music industry with the loss of Tony Randal, the eminent

writer of Linda Ronstadt's *You Are Mine* and the classic 80's Grammy nominated score from the film *The Lonely One*. As you can see, hundreds of people and many music industry celebrities are here today to pay their respects and to honor a man who has lifted the hearts of so many. Richard Randal, the Republican candidate for the U.S. Presidency and brother of Tony Randal, is stepping up to the microphone."

Richard Randal smiles and waves to the crowds like a candidate seizing the opportunity to greet the voters. At the microphone his tone sobers. "Today I buried my brother, a man whose tireless spirit created so many wonderful songs for us all to enjoy. The pain of his needless and accidental death gnaws at the very core of my being. He was indeed a man whom I loved deeply and I will miss him every day. As he would have wanted, I will carry his memory with me into my race for the Presidency and on to the White House."

Kevin's face is white with anger and he screams. "That lousy piece of shit! Exploiting Tony's death to get more votes." Kevin is out of control, swimming in rage. He screams at the TV, frantically ripping Richard Randal's full-face photo page out of the *People* magazine. Tearing out the eyes and nose, he slaps the photo on his own face like a mask, and pointing at the TV he yells. "I am the President and I am coming for you!"

Richard Randal's image on TV waves to the crowd.

Lily looks shaken; she turns off the TV. Floyd rushes into the room. "Jesus Christ, what's going on?"

Kevin, his face screwed tight, determined and fixated, screws up the paper mask and throws it in the trash. He speaks in a grave tone. "I am going to screw up Randal's run for President," he says quietly. "The President represents every American, I am part of him. So I am the President and so are you. Randal betrayed Tony's memory and that means he will likely betray the people he aspires to represent. Randal is as fake as the mask I made of him. He is nothing but an actor, mouthing the lines to get in power. He doesn't fool me. I know in my heart I can bring Randal down and expose Vennor for the murdering bastard he is. I'm so sure I can taste it."

"I'm with you," encourages Floyd. "All my life I've wanted to do something about these lousy politicians who are screwing up America. You're going to need a big voice for that big heart of yours, Kevin my boy, and I've got just the thing," laughs Floyd. "Look it, I got this off my gunship in 'Nam. Ideal for any respectable anarchist such as yourself." He pulls out a large black suitcase from under his bed. Inside are a powerful radio transmitter and twenty-foot telescopic aerial.

"With this baby," says Floyd, "You can block out the sound from any radio or TV transmitter within 150 feet and broadcast your own message right over theirs. It can really screw things up!"

"You're not joking!" raves Kevin, "That would really cause a stir but wouldn't they recognize my voice?"

"No way," says Floyd smugly. "We'll pre-record whatever you want to say, put it through my old Vocoder, add a few special effects and hey, I'm a genius, you'll

sound like a man from Mars.”

Lily is scared. “You’re both crazy! You’ll get us all killed!”

“No, we’ll be fine,” replies Kevin “I’m listening to my heart like Tony said and right now I know I can bring some justice to this presidential race.”

”In Floyd’s recording studio, Kevin, Lily and Floyd work together on Kevin’s first Presidential Speech. Kevin is full of poetry and prose, ready to change the world. Floyd re-creates Kevin’s voice on his sound equipment; weird and eerie vocal sounds chase through the house until the pre-recorded speech is finished and Kevin’s voice is disguised to sound electronic and God-like.

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It is dark; Kevin, Lily and Floyd rent three horses from the Sunset Ranch for an evening ride. They race them up just past the Hollywood sign to the TV relay station above it. Lily hides the horses among the trees. Kevin and Floyd scale its barbed-wire barricades and scamper across the compound to the radio transmitter at the heart of the station’s broadcasting system. In minutes Kevin’s strange, synthesized electronic voice crackles over the top of the KCAL TV show, “The Californian Candidate.” On TV screens across the state, Senator Richard Randal’s silenced image mouths Kevin’s words:

“Today and tomorrow are ruptured dreams hanging from a cliff by a fingernail. The only way to change your fate is to listen to the heart of you, listen to your heart. Is Richard Randal the man you want for your next President? Is he telling you the truth? Listen to your heart. Randal wants troops in the streets of America. Do you? He wants your vote to line the pockets of the rich. Do you? Does Richard Randal have your best interests in mind? Ask yourself the hard questions. Listen for the answers in the heart of you. Listen to your heart. I am the President! So are you! The voice in your heart speaks the truth!”

As Kevin’s crackling speech ends, Kevin and Floyd hurriedly dismantle the transmitter and race like lunatics back to the horses. In a moment, they are all racing down the hill, their horses’ hooves thundering. They get away unseen.

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News of “The President’s’ Speech” erupts across the national media and captures the public imagination. They have found the romantic figure they needed to verbalize the feelings they have in their hearts. At last someone has appeared who expresses what they really want to say. Thousands of people from both parties openly support “The President’s Speech” and its listen to your heart message. They marvel at the audacity of The President’s piracy. Every newspaper promises daily revelations. Hard Copy launches “The Hunt For The President.” The police, FBI and CIA search too. They find nothing. There are no leads.

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Richard Randal and Vennor walk through a sound laboratory in the Rand Corporation. Computers and strange sounds echo across the room. Vennor reassures Richard. “It won’t happen again. I’ll see to that!”

Marc, the nerdy sound technician, tactfully interrupts. "Discovering his natural voice is proving extremely difficult, sir. We could leave it to the tracking people. It's probably just some kid with a ham radio. Next time he tries it we'll have him in a minute."

"You don't leave here until you get him," snaps Vennor.

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Sitting in Floyd's garden surrounded by newspapers, Kevin has a broad grin on his face and an arm around Lily. Floyd reads aloud from an article about the speech.

"The President's audacity, charm and intelligence prove to be a match with the ideas of the ordinary voter."

"I've got to do that again!" interrupts Kevin. "Instant fame, here I come."

"It's too risky," says Floyd. Lily fends off Kevin's amorous advances as she tries to make him see sense. "You're crazy, they'll kill you!"

"Rubbish!" says Kevin, who has had a few beers. "I love doing this Presidential thing. I'm going to deliver my Presidential keynote speech at Randal's next rally next Tuesday."

"And just how will you be disguised on this suicide mission?" interrupts Lily flippantly.

"I've got just the thing, my lady," says Kevin like a Southern salesman as he rummages through the trash bin. He finds, flattens out and holds up the torn-out People magazine full-face photo of Richard Randal. He holds it up to his face and stares at Lily.

"So now you're going to be Richard Randal?" asks Lily incredulously.

"Why not?" says Kevin, "we'll print Richard Randal masks by the thousands on card-stock, put two elastic bands on the sides so it holds onto your ears. Randal's face will be on one side and my manifesto will be on the other. I'll pay for everything with the money Vennor so kindly donated. We'll give Richard Randal masks away free at this next rally. We will give them to the young and old, the rich and the poor and everyone and his mother! They will all be wearing the masks and impersonating Randal. I will just disappear into a sea of Richard Randal masks. Nobody will know who's who. Floyd, have you got a copier?"

"There's one in the back office," says Lily in a sarcastic, bored tone.

So, my darling Lily," purrs Kevin, "go to the store and get me a nice new copy of People magazine, a couple of reams of card-stock and a bag of elastic bands and we're in business."

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Demonstrators fill the lawn and streets around the Los Angeles Federal Building. Flag wavers are slowing traffic on Wilshire. Senator Richard Randal is due to speak. Kevin, Lily and Floyd, hidden behind Xeroxed Randal masks, hand out masks to the crowds of angry social and political groups rallying in support of the homeless, the unemployed and the disenfranchised.

The masks are a hit. Hundreds of people put them on. The protesters think the masks are hilarious as they act out being Senator Richard Randal.

Network TV cameras pan endlessly across the noisy crowd, settling only to focus on cheering masked revelers.

The TV commentator jokes, "The number of candidates for the U.S. Presidency seems to be increasing."

Wearing a mask, Kevin appears onstage at the speaker's podium. The cameras are on him. Wearing a white paper jumpsuit, he snatches the microphone and defiantly thrusts his closed fist in a revolutionary gesture up to the sky. He shouts: "I am the President and so are you! The voice of your heart tells the truth!" Floyd's radio transmitter sends Kevin's pre-recorded Presidential message directly into the rally's PA system booming it out over the crowd. "I am the President. I will save you all. You can trust me. I speak honestly. I am the voice of your heart. Listen to your heart."

Three tough security guards make grabs at Kevin. He jumps into the audience, disappearing into a sea of Randal faces. As he runs, he rips off the paper suit that hid his street clothes. The crowd cheers Kevin's haunting alien voice as it floats ghostlike all around them.

"The voice in my heart says the homeless and the vets must be housed and fed. We must all must be saved from the insatiable economies of greed and selfishness that are ruining our environment. Is Richard Randal going to do that? No! He wants troops to occupy our cities. He wants surveillance of you and your neighbors. He breeds fear to get votes. My heart knows this is madness! Your heart knows this is madness. Save yourself from Richard Randal! You know the truth. It is in your heart. Listen to the heart of you! Listen to your heart. Fight for what you believe in. Govern yourself! I am the President and so are you. The voice in your heart speaks the truth!"

The crowd is in uproar, applauding, cheering and whistling, acknowledging their champion.

Revolutionary salutes are everywhere. The crowd cheers in an ever-widening chorus. Lily and Floyd push through the crowd, throwing handfuls of Randal masks over the heads of people in every direction. Everyone is pushing and shoving to get theirs. Everyone wants a mask, gets a mask and wears a mask. The police cannot quell the crowd's high spirits or keep them in order.

The Press fights to get to Senator Randal's limousine as it arrives at the rally. Hordes of news media, photographers and cameramen besiege Randal, as he gets out of the limousine, thrusting microphones in his face, demanding his comments about the incident. Irritated, Randal flares up. "This masked fool is a damned nuisance. His inflammatory message makes a mockery of our Presidency."

A reporter insists, "Are you listening to your heart when you call for troops in our cities?"

No, I am not!" snaps Randal. "I don't let *my* emotions interfere in my protection of the American people."

"Maybe you should," laughs the reporter. Murmured agreement fills the air.

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The radio and TV networks report massive public and media coverage and support for Kevin's "Presidential Speech." It plays repeatedly on every news program. Political pundits from both sides of the aisle welcome the controversy, saying it spells the end of political correctness and creates a healthier democratic atmosphere where they and everyone else can say what they really think.

In subways and cafes, homes and classrooms across the nation, "Listen To The Heart of You" is on everyone's lips. Celebrities are speaking from their hearts about the important issues they have chosen to ignore for fear of alienating their public. Like the great American public, they agree with the tenets of "The President's Speech." "You must listen to your heart, take full personal responsibility for your own life, and govern yourself."

On TV all over Los Angeles, children wear Richard Randal masks to school and read Kevin's Presidential manifesto aloud in class. Their teachers encourage them to speak out about what they truly feel in their hearts and encourage them to express their innermost feelings about what it means to listen to your heart and govern yourself.

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Vennor looks down from his tower office in Century City to the street far below. He is talking to Richard Randal. His voice is taut. "This idiot who is playing President is getting all our press. He has us on the run, Richard. You put him down to the press again and we will never make it to the White House. We've got to laugh at the little prick. We are losing ground. The opposition is having a damn field day!"

Randal admits he is angry. "The worst of it is," he says, "This guy is saying the things I should be saying."

"Don't be bloody stupid." snaps Vennor, shaking his head.

"Don't talk to me like that, Vennor. "Maybe he is right," retorts Randal.

"Get out," Vennor snaps.

Randal storms out of the room shouting backwards. "He's not wrong about everything"

Vennor does not even look up

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Vennor calls the sound lab at Rand.

Marc answers nervously, "No, sir, we're no farther along."

Vennor slams down the phone. "Who is this damned anarchist? " he says to the room. There is something somewhere in the back of his mind. He cannot put his finger on it. He has an idea and calls Laxton in.

"Remember that kid?" asks Vennor, "the one who claimed to be Randal's half-brother? What exactly did you find in his motel room?"

"Nothing much," says Laxton. "A few of his clothes, some food, an old leather motorcycle jacket. We cut it up; it was probably his pride and joy. It had ANARCHY scrawled across the back of it."

Vennor laughs aloud. "Gotcha!" he whispers to himself. "And precisely where is

Kevin Waters now?"

"I put him on the flight to New York myself, sir."

"Did he arrive?"

Laxton phones while Vennor stares down at the city below.

"Perry is saying Waters disappeared after he was taken off the plane in Los Angeles, sir. He is looking for him. He has checked all the hospitals, and the local police are on it."

"Then he's still in L.A.," says Vennor cold with rage. "Find him and find him fast and don't mention any of this to Randal, I don't want him troubled, got it?"

"You're the boss, Mr. Vennor."

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Kevin chases Lily around Floyd's garden. She runs just ahead of him, laughing, smiling. He catches her and they fall into each other's arms in a kiss. Kevin fondles her. She pushes him away gently.

Kevin goes back in the house to watch TV. CNN World News features "The Federal Building Masquerade." Kevin is delighted to see his masked self on television and enjoys the stir he has created. He calls back to Lily in the garden.

"Any news on my Dad yet?"

"Jodie's still working on it," says Lily, walking into the house. "Someone obviously doesn't want him found. They've covered his tracks really well."

"We got to find him," says Kevin. "Before Randal and Vennor find me."

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The next day Randal and Vennor leave for a rally in New York amidst a flurry of publicity. At LAX, in front of twenty microphones, Richard Randal appears confident and self-assured with his wife at his side. He rouses the press. "We will lead the people of this country forward to greater personal security and prosperity."

"But will you listen to your heart?" asks a reporter. Irritated, Randal heads to the departure lounge almost dragging Barbara behind him. A gaggle of reporters follows while protesters call out after him. "Listen to your heart, Senator!" Barbara smiles her limp smile of sympathy while Randal laughs happily, hiding his deep anger.

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All in the same day Kevin, Lily and Floyd leave Floyd's home separately and fly out on different flights to one destination - New York. They check into a rundown hotel in Queens.

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Laxton is at the Hollywood Stars Motel, checking on Kevin. Using his .357 Magnum as his search warrant he asks the clerk to check through the motel records. He finds Lily Lancaster's signature on a receipt for a Hollywood Entertainment Magazine MasterCard paying for Kevin Waters' motel bill.

He drives to Lily's magazine offices. Jodie is alone in her office when Laxton introduces himself.

"My name is Harry Jackson," Laxton says with a smile. "I'm here to see your Lily

Lancaster. I'm from Life Magazine! We have a job for her. We had an appointment."

"There must be a mistake," Jodie says "Lily's in New York with her boyfriend Kevin for a few days."

"It's a matter of some importance," says Laxton politely. "Perhaps I could get her number?"

"She been staying at her Uncle Floyd's," says Jodie, finding Floyd's Rolodex card. "Let me get..." Laxton snatches the card from her.

Jodie, frightened by Laxton's move, tries to cover up. "They're not there. That's not the right number. You're wasting your time. Leave your number. I'll get her to call you." Laxton ignores her and walks out, stuffing the Rolodex card in his pocket.

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In the evening twilight, Kevin and Floyd operate the freight elevator to the roof of The Chase Manhattan Bank in Manhattan. Dressed in coveralls, they pass as elevator repairmen. Working at super-speed, Kevin and Floyd release a shiny white Bell Jet Ranger helicopter from its moorings on the helipad. Floyd starts the rotors turning while Kevin barricades the access door to the roof. With Kevin on board, Floyd flies the helicopter over the edge of the building then dives straight down between the skyscrapers and across the city. "Hi Ho Silver!" he cheers as they skim past open-mouthed late-night office workers cocooned in the glass menageries of Manhattan. Kevin hangs on for all he's worth, exhilarated and terrified, his body screaming YES while his eyes spin out of control in sensory overload like cherries in a one-armed bandit. Sanity returns as they fly just above the water, crossing the East River toward a deserted, dark, rundown area of the Brooklyn docks and into the belly of a big, empty, warehouse.

Lily immediately closes the doors behind them. She has brought over the suitcase transmitter and huge old battered public address system she found online. Working together, the three of them paint the white chopper with bright ITV Day-Glo orange quick-drying lacquer. Kevin adds fake "ITV News" decals to the body of the helicopter and changes the identification numbers. Over the sparkling new orange craft Floyd sprays heavy matte black water-based paint, disguising the helicopter yet again and covering up its new color and identification markings. Using old pallets he found on the dockside, Kevin builds a large flat wooden "Presidential Platform" to stand on for the flight into Manhattan. It is slung from four steel cables attached to the under-belly of the helicopter.

Floyd installs the public address system with its four huge trumpet speakers, each one attached to one of the four corners of Kevin's presidential platform. Attached by chains, their faces point down, dangling like huge bells, ready to deliver Kevin's pre-recorded Presidential speech. They are ready to take Manhattan.

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In Laurel Canyon Laxton lets himself into Floyd's shack with his credit card.

Newspaper cuttings of the “President’s” adventures are stuck all over the kitchen wall. There is a big photo of Kevin and Lily on the fridge, next to one of Kevin, masked, on the stage of the Federal Building, waving to the crowd. Laxton has seen enough.

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In New York, Vennor gets a call from Laxton.

“It’s him, Kevin Waters,” he says. “He’s the one wrecking your campaign, Mr. Vennor, sir.”

“I knew it!” snaps Vennor. “Get rid of him. Bust him -- murder, drugs, I don’t care.”

“Sure thing, Mr. Vennor,” says Laxton. “But right now it looks like he’s in New York!”

Richard Randal bursts into the room. “That prick is on TV again right now!” he blurts out in disbelief. “That same idiot, wearing a mask of me, just interrupted CBS news. He says he is going to be at our rally in Central Park.”

“He’s a dead man,” snaps Vennor. He shouts into his other phone. “Seal Central Park NOW! No one gets in or out. I want this kid’s head on a pole.”

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Kevin, Floyd and Lily roll the speaker platform out onto the wharf. They do a final sound-check. Kevin stands on top of the speaker platform wearing goggles over his Randal mask. He belts himself onto a wooden frame support on the platform to keep himself upright during the flight. He jams his feet into two nailed-down stirrups on the leading edge of the platform as the helicopter, with Lily and Floyd in it, lifts off. The steel cables pull tight above his head. All around him on the platform are thirty bulging black trash bags. They contain thousands of Randal masks ready to respond to Kevin’s quick-release mechanism that will pour them from the platform into the open sky.

Floyd turns the chopper into the wind. The platform swings and lurches beneath them, creaking eerily. Kevin, with gloved hands, is hanging on for dear life. The helicopter steadies under its payload. Floyd is on top of the world, cheering himself on, loving it, flying low over the water, past the Statue of Liberty, deep into the heart of Manhattan. With the press of a button, Kevin’s loud Presidential Speech repeatedly echoes down from the helicopter public address system through the shops, offices and streets like it was the voice of God. Thousands of people cheer and shout up at Kevin as the chopper flies through the webs of skyscraper corridors, Kevin’s eerie, electronic voice blaring across the wind.

“I am the President. I will save you all. Authority is the enemy. Self-government is the rule! Listen to the heart of you. Listen to your heart; it is your invisible government. Don’t vote for Randal. Listen to your heart and govern yourself!”

Floyd swoops the chopper down to street level, through forests of tall buildings, racing over massed traffic and thousands of pedestrians. Masks pour down to hundreds of people looking up at the ticker-tape parade of printed faces. Motorists blast their horns. Stopped cars jam traffic as their drivers jump out of their cars greedily scooping up Richard Randal masks from the street.

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In Central Park tension is high. Huge crowds wait in restless anticipation. Every crazy in New York is there. Security is tight. Police mingle with the crowd. Vennor's men are everywhere. Their PA crackles: "This rally is cancelled. Return to your homes." Simultaneously, "I am the President. I will save the world. Authority is the enemy! Self-government is the rule!" blasts down from the speaker stage as Kevin's helicopter zooms in over the treetops, cascading thousands of masks across the amazed and delighted crowd. Kevin is waving furiously. His electronic voice booms over the speakers. "Listen to the heart of you, it's your invisible government. Listen to your heart, govern yourself." The crowd erupts in a crazy, jumping, pushing and exhilarated spree of madness. Everyone reaches upward trying to grab a Randal mask falling toward them as the masks cascade down from the helicopter platform like oversized confetti. Police helicopters are above Floyd's helicopter issuing loudspeaker warnings. "Land immediately or risk being shot down."

Kevin releases himself from the platform and climbs up the swinging rescue ladder and into the helicopter with Floyd and Lily. Floyd clears the crowd and with police helicopters in hot pursuit, turns down Fifth Avenue, past The Empire State Building, Greenwich Village and Chinatown. Over the Hudson Kevin releases the cables holding the speaker platform. It falls out of the sky, tumbling down and down smashing into the water below. Free to maneuver, Floyd has the helicopter flying at full power in a moment. "Catch us if you can!" he laughs, making a run for it. Floyd knows the way. "It's like 'Nam all over again!" he raves. A huge billowing cloudbank is in front of them. Floyd flies up into it and then down inside it, down and down, deep into the mouth of the cavernous cooling tower of a power station. The rising hot steam dissolves and washes away the matte black paint that once disguised the chopper, leaving it sparkling ITV Day-Glo orange, bearing the decals of an ITV News chopper.

Floyd lifts the helicopter out of the tower and out of the cloudbank. They fly unrecognized and ignored by the police air patrols. It's not the one they are looking for. Kevin, Lily and Floyd are beside themselves with laughter.

That night Floyd lands the helicopter back at the docks, parking it inside the massive warehouse. He locks the doors. Then he, Kevin and Lily take a circuitous drive to their backstreet Queens hotel.

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Richard Randal is sitting with his wife watching TV in his New York hotel suite. A newscast item entitled "Helicopter Havoc" fills the screen. Outraged, Randal calls Vennor. "You missed him again! The CIA, the FBI and the air police all lost him. I don't believe this crap!" Barbara tries to calm her husband. He squeezes her hand in reassurance but yells at Vennor anyway. "Get this clown out of my campaign!"

"Calm down. Shut up and do as I tell you!" snaps Vennor. "You'll lose nothing. I will get it under control."

"Bullshit," retorts Randal. Barbara leans into husband, kisses him and murmurs,

"I know you don't want to hear it, but I can still remember when we were at university and 'listen to your heart' was your mantra."

"Shut up, Barbara, just shut up!" snaps Randal. "If Vennor doesn't catch this creep, my campaign will be over and you'll never get to be First Lady."

"Like I give a damn," says Barbara walking away from the TV.

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The radio and TV networks report massive public and media coverage and support for the "The Helicopter President." Coverage plays repeatedly on every news program on all networks. Political pundits from both sides of the aisle welcome the controversy. D. J. McLarren, Richard Randal's opponent, makes a statement on national television. "While I cannot agree with the way this message has been publicized, I believe the call for us all to listen to our hearts spells the end of political correctness and creates a healthier democratic atmosphere where they and the public at large can say what they really think rather than cowering behind the fear-laden bureaucracy promoted by my opponent Richard Randal."

Across the nation, the "Listen To Your Heart" message and manifesto is on the streets, in subways and cafes, in homes and classrooms. Celebrities speak from their hearts about the important political issues they have up until now stifled or ignored. Like the great American public, they feel inspired and motivated to speak out. They relate to the words of "The President," feeling it enhances personal freedom and responsibility.

A popular movie star from the Sundance Film Festival leads the public dialogue on what it means to "Listen to the heart of you." What is personal responsibility? What does it mean to have an invisible government and why do we need it to save America and the world from itself?

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Back in Los Angeles, Lily and Kevin are in Floyd's house. The house phone rings. Lily picks up. It's Jodie. "What happened?" she says, "I called and called you. You forgot your cell phone charger, right, Lily? Doesn't matter. Thank God, I've got hold of you. An awful man called Harry Jackson came to the office asking for you, Lily. He said he had an appointment, he said he was from Life Magazine and had a job for you. I'm sorry, but he got Floyd's address."

"There's no Harry Jackson at Life Magazine," says Lily coldly.

Vennor's men have caught up with them. All at once, the pressure is on. Kevin loses his cool, blaming Lily for being silly, involving "a dumb-ass Valley girl like Jodie." He scolds her for not finding his father "because he is likely the only one who can help us put all these wrongs right." She tells him if he "wasn't so busy trying to impress everyone he could do to do something about finding his father himself. Kevin tells her to shut up. It is too much for Lily. They are both scared but she has had enough and can't take anymore. She drives off in her Mini and won't let Kevin go with her. Kevin is devastated, running behind Lily's car yelling out his apologies as she drives away. He hides in the bushes where he can watch and wait for Floyd to return. It's safer there than in the house if Laxton does arrive.

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Floyd casually drives his truck up the canyon. Laxton drives up beside him in a Range Rover and shoves him off the road into a tree. "Got you!" he yells, pushing a gun into Floyd's face. Dragging him out of the truck, he throws him back against the hood. Baby is barking and snarling at Laxton, who kicks wildly at the dog as it tries to attack through the truck window.

"Your life isn't worth shit!" snarls Laxton to Floyd. "I know what you have been up to.

You could go to jail forever but right now you're going to frame your President Kevin Waters and you're going to do it willingly." He waves a kilo of cocaine in Floyd's face. "Do this my way and you and the girl reporter might get to stay alive - otherwise, you're all dead." Laxton shoves his gun barrel in Floyd's mouth. "You're going to do what you're told, right?" Floyd, his eyes bulging, nods his agreement.

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When Floyd gets home, he is very jittery. Kevin taps on the shack window. Floyd lets him in, bursting into detail about his run-in with Laxton. The blood drains from Kevin's face.

"Laxton has planted a kilo of cocaine under the seat of my truck," says Floyd. "I'm to send you out in the truck to Hollywood to get gas. The police will be waiting. Laxton says he'll kill me if I don't do it."

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Kevin calls Lily. He is sorry, really truly sorry. It's all his fault.

Lily interrupts him> "I told you it would end like this," she says crying almost uncontrollably. "I need time to think what to do." Kevin tries to reassure her but Lily is not listening. "I'm going to Echo Park. If I feed the ducks it always makes me feel better," she gulps. "I'll call you when I'm ready."

"Wait! Wait," says Kevin, but it's too late. Lily has turned the phone off. He calls back. Lily's answering service is on. "Give me the truck keys, Floyd. I need to get to Lily before they do."

"The cops will be all over you," warns Floyd.

"Don't you worry about me. You take care of yourself," says Kevin "I've got to get to Lily. Laxton has threatened to kill you and me. Bet your bottom dollar he is going after Lily too. Give me the damned keys."

"Wait a minute," insists Floyd. He takes Laxton's bag of cocaine and pours it down the sink and fills up the bag with white flour.

"Screw them," he says. "I've still got a few tricks left. Two Thunder Flash Smoke Grenades will create a lot of smoke and panic. I bought them online ages ago. I love America!"

In the garage Floyd and Kevin work on the truck. Floyd beams with pride. His fireworks are ready. "You're primed and ready to go," he says, "Now go get Lily and keep going."

Kevin jumps in the truck. "I'll be back," he says, mimicing Schwarzenegger.

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Sure enough, at Hollywood and Vine, two cops pull Kevin over in a patrol car, their guns out. The sergeant searches the truck and finds the bag of flour taped under the passenger seat and assumes it is cocaine. Kevin is ready; the sergeant rips the flour from the seat, triggering both Thunder Flash Smoke Grenades slung under the truck. Flour fills the air like a smoke screen. The cops dive for cover while Kevin jumps into the police car. "Good old Floyd!" he yells. He is racing down the road and out of the smoke before the cops realize what is happening.

Almost at once, three police cars are closing in on Kevin, four cars back in a high-speed chase on the Hollywood Freeway. Kevin slides the car broadside down the Highland off ramp and onto the open road. The police cars are two hundred yards back. At a turning into the hills, Mulholland Drive, Kevin uncouples the Winchester pump-action shotgun from the dash. As he tears through the bends he once rode on the Harley, he jams the pump-action down hard on the accelerator. Hidden by the next corner, flying at mad speed, the car flies along the road and off it. Kevin bails a moment before it rolls like a stone down the hillside into the brush; hidden, he waits. Smoke is billowing up from the valley far below. Kevin hears a wireless voice on the road above him. "Rescue teams are on their way." A police officer on the road nudges his partner. "It's over for another barbecued teenager."

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Kevin follows a coyote path through the long grass back to civilization. Soon he is lost in the Hollywood tourist crowds. In a gaudy gift shop, he buys himself a new T-shirt, a Yankees baseball cap and Elvis sunglasses. He takes a cab to Echo Park.

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When Kevin arrives at Echo Park, the serene fountains are playing in the lake, sending cascading water high into the silver sunlit air. Children are having fun running, laughing and chasing around carefree and happy. Mexican families with picnic food sprawl out on the lawn basking in the late afternoon sun.

Lily sits by the lake all alone. Kevin quietly approaches her. He sits down beside her as she continues to stare at the mallard ducks on the lake. Quietly, Kevin takes her hand, begging her to forgive him, telling her that he does care and he will protect her. He kisses her gently, easing her into hearing about Laxton's threat. Telling her they have to leave. United this time by love and the threat of a common enemy, Lily and Kevin take off in the Mini, speeding toward Laurel Canyon, determined to get Floyd out of there.

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Sneaking into the Floyd's Laurel Canyon shack, the door is ajar, the TV is blaring - no one is around. The red message light is flashing on the answering machine. There is a message from Jodie. "Kevin's father is stashed on Paradise Island, Vennor's Resort Hotel on Grand Bahama."

"Floyd!" Lily screams out as she switches on the bedroom light. There is blood on the walls, across the floor, everywhere. On the bed Baby, Floyd's sweet dog, is

massacred, almost dismembered “They got Floyd!” she screams. “They killed him!” Kevin sees the dead dog and stifles back the tears and involuntary spasm in his stomach so as to guide Lily away from the scene. “Floyd’s not here, he says calmly. He is probably fine. Don’t worry.”

“He’s dead! He’s dead! I know he’s dead!” screams Lily. She is still screaming when they hear frantic car tires squealing and spinning at the bottom of the driveway to the house. Laxton’s and Perry’s car is stuck so they are charging up the drive to the house with guns drawn. Kevin and Lily are in the Mini in panic. Gunfire! Heads down, Kevin drives, wheels spinning, over the edge of the hill, where a car like this shouldn’t go. “Oh my God!” Down, down, faster, out of control, down. “Watch out!” Through the bracken, a coyote trail “Yes! Between the trees”, gunfire, four shots, “They all missed!” White with fear, terrified, then the flat, “Thank you, God,” and exhilaration, panic and smashing down onto the road below with a horrendous bang, the car bottoms out, loses a fender, hubcaps, a piece of exhaust. “Keep going, go! Go! Go!” In a minute they are over the hill and down into Hollywood hiding in an alley ‘till dark.

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Kevin and Lily leave the battered Mini in the long-term car park at LAX and take a flight to Miami. The next day they are in Grand Bahama.

It’s another sunshiny day in the Bahamas. Dancing mirror silver clings to the waves, crashing on cool, white sand in a thousand million sparkles.

In the foyer of the Paradise Island Hotel, Lily locates and phones Kevin’s father in his penthouse suite. A monotone voice answers. Lily asks for Mathew Randal. “Tell him I have a message from Janice Parrish.”

“He doesn’t know Janice Parrish,” comes the immediate reply. The phone goes dead.

“I’m going up anyway,” says Kevin. He takes the elevator to the ninth floor and the stairs to the penthouse. Peering into the corridor, he sees Laxton and Perry muscling a tall, white-haired man in his seventies, his legs buckling as the agents drag him into the elevator.

“Nothing at all to worry about, Mr. Randal,” coos Laxton. “A change of plan, that’s all.”

“It’s him, I know it is,” says Kevin under his breath. “That’s my father!” He can hardly contain himself. His spirits soar.

The three men disappear into the elevator. Kevin runs frantically down the fire exit stairs. Grabbing Lily, he pulls her through the lobby and out of the hotel. Mathew is being helped into a limousine that speeds away. Kevin spots a dirt bike across the street. In a second he is on it, tearing at the wires under the gas tank. At once, the motorcycle is roaring.

Lily jumps on behind him. “You’re amazing, Kevin Waters!”

Kevin yanks on the throttle and the bike rears up. They race off after the limo holding back just a little to avoid being seen by the limo driver.

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At a deserted wooden jetty, Vennor’s men hustle Mathew on board a high-speed

cabin cruiser. The engines roar. "They're moving out!"

Off the bike, Kevin races down the covered jetty, dragging Lily behind him. She falls. Kevin tries to help. "Go!" she shouts. "Get your Dad!"

"I love you, Lily Lancaster," Kevin whispers under his breath as he makes a headlong dash at the moving cruiser. He misses. Splashing in the sea, he grabs the dinghy dancing in the cruiser's wake. Half-drowned but unseen, he drags himself into the dinghy. With a huge effort he pulls on the rope between the two boats, narrowing the distance between them until he can jump aboard the cruiser. Grabbing a fire extinguisher, he creeps up behind Laxton and smashes it hard into his head. Turning immediately, he blasts Perry with its contents, sending him backwards over the side. Laxton sways to his feet. A final kick puts him into the sea. The cruiser races on to Florida.

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Mathew Randal is lying down below deck. "Who the hell are you?" he says, "Where's Laxton and Perry?"

"They decided to take a swim," Kevin laughs, extending his hand, "Pleased to meet you, I'm Kevin Waters."

Kevin pulls his wet wallet from his pocket. "Look at this photo," says Kevin.

Mathew stares at Janice's photograph and reads the inscription.

"This is Janice?" he asks in confusion.

"She's my mother and you," says Kevin. "And you . . . You're my father."

"I never knew we had a child. I would . . ."

"And I thought you were dead," Interrupts Kevin, "When my mother found out she was pregnant with me, she went to see your wife, 'cause she couldn't find you. All your wife did was offer her money for an abortion but she wouldn't have any of it. You broke her heart."

Kevin shows his father the love letter from his mother, soaked and almost illegible, Mathew reads it. "I'm so sorry, my boy" he moans sadly. "I never knew. I loved your mother". He puts his arm around Kevin and shakes his hand. "I'm glad to know you, son."

The cruiser hammers on. Kevin comforts Mathew as he tells him the story of Tony's death and the cover-up. How the bike's brake cables were cut. How Vennor wouldn't allow an inquest probably because of his, or his men's, personal involvement. "Vennor's a murdering bastard!" sobs Mathew. "I will kill him. He will do anything for power."

Overwhelmed with tears and sadness, beneath his grief Mathew is crazy with anger; he can't understand why he wasn't invited to Tony's funeral. "Richard obviously deferred to Vennor as he always does," Mathew mumbled. "Vennor wanted to keep Tony's death and you away from me until after the election. You don't know the lies this man is capable of, Kevin. He's probably got Richard thinking Tony's death would kill me. Vennor wants to control this country and he's manipulating Richard any way he can to make sure it happens. He always has encouraged Richard to go against his better judgment."

"I want to shake them both up," enthuses Kevin.

“Me too, son,” says Mathew, grinding his words and drying his eyes.

“So what should we do, Dad?” says Kevin trying on the word “Dad” for size.

“Just listen to your heart, son,” Mathew snuffles and smiles to himself remembering the idea from his past, cheering himself up.

“Tony said the same thing to me right before he died,” said Kevin.

“He got that from me,” says Mathew. “I always used to tell Tony and Richard the same thing: that the voice of your heart is the voice of the hero within you. I got that from my father. He taught me this poem. Both my boys knew it. Mathew recited: “There is the hero in your heart. Your genius, your champion, your mentor. This is the voice you hear in your heart, saying I am the hero you know you are.” **FIX?**

“Well I am the President,” Kevin chimes in proudly.

Mathew does a double-take. “You? You are the one in the mask, the one screwing up Richard’s campaign? The one who tells everyone to listen to their heart?”

“I am none other than he!” cheers Kevin, as he bows with a Shakespearean flourish.

Mathew bursts out laughing. “Good for you. You’re great!” he says. “I’m your biggest fan!”

A hail of bullets slices into the bridge, fired from a green speedboat a hundred yards behind and closing fast.

“It’s Laxton and Perry!” Mathew shouts. “Come on, son. Let’s give ‘em hell! I am the hero and so are you!” he yells, raising his fist in revolutionary salute. Kevin thrusts his fist into the air with him.

Mathew races below deck, his energy and purpose returned, his blood charging through his veins. He reverses the main fuel tank valves. Tons of diesel fuel flows into the sea behind the cruiser.

Dodging bullets, Kevin fires a flare at the fuel. The sea is alight directly in front of the speedboat. Laxton, Perry and their driver jump clear. The speedboat, in flames, burns out of control as it races out to the open sea.

The cruiser’s stern is aflame. Kevin and Mathew run to the bow; a sandbar looms right in front of them. The cruiser plows up over it and explodes. The huge blast throws both men into the water. Kevin helps his father wade ashore. They are back in the U.S.A.

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Hidden in the secrecy of the plush Hotel Bel-Air, Mathew is on the phone to his attorney. He is in top form. “Get Lily Lancaster back to the U.S. absolutely as soon as possible. She is probably at The Paradise. Keep things quiet. I don’t want anyone knowing I’m back.”

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Kevin is hidden behind sunglasses standing at a desolate corner of the Van Nuys Airport waiting on the tarmac beside his father’s limo. Lily gets off the plane. Security people go out to meet her but she runs past them, her arms reaching out for Kevin. She is crying. Kevin kisses her passionately. The limo scoops them up

and delivers them to the back entrance of the Hotel Bel-Air.

"Take them to rooms 102 and 103," says the security officer to their chauffeur.

"We only need one room," insists Lily with a smile.

Security directs the lovers to the privacy of Room 102.

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Lily meets Mathew at dinner, sensing that he is an important part of a profound change she sees in Kevin, who is much more confident, self-assured and manicured. He has a radiant smile and wears handsome new clothes but he still has a twinkle in his eye.

"I'm going to do one last public appearance as the President," Kevin announces flatly.

"No!" sobs Lily, "They'll kill you!"

"No they won't," laughs Kevin. "My father is going to be there. He has arranged for us to get a special pass for the Peace Rally in Washington. It will be great. Richard is making his same old stump speech. We will be right on stage with him. My father is going to tell him he has another brother. Sure, it will shake things up. Nobody is going to try anything with my father there. It will be fine. I am just going to be me. No more theater, no fuss, no funny voice, no anger, just me."

- - -

In his office Vennor is focused and deliberate as he talks with Laxton. "What happened to Matthew Randal and Waters when the cruiser blew up?"

"They won't bother us again, sir," Laxton smirks confidently. "According to our latest report it was a devastating explosion. Nobody survived."

"What a pity," answers Vennor. "I'll tell Randal about his father's death after the Peace Rally. Right now I think he deserves some good news." Vennor picks up the phone and calls Richard Randal. "Good news, Richard, the problem we had that character who was screwing up the campaign is over. The problem is solved, it should be a clear run to the White House from here on in. What happened? Let's say this. I understand his father died and he felt he was unable to carry on."

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Kevin, Mathew and Lily, cocooned in a white limousine with blackout windows, join thousands of people at the candlelit peace rally on the lawn in front of the White House. Kevin is nervous, disguised in a dark suit, tie and sunglasses. Police are everywhere. Mathew's limousine drives straight in. The crowd parts as the limo pushes gently through the crowds to the stage. The police examine their passes; Mathew, Lily and Kevin climb the stairs onto the floodlit stage. The crowd is enormous, stretching down to the White House.

Choosing his moment, Kevin dons a Randal mask and walks up to the microphone. A crowd of thousands applauds wildly and cheers him on with rapturous enthusiasm. Voices in the crowd build chanting "listen to your heart! Listen to your heart!"

The security police move toward Kevin with guns drawn. "Get back!" Mathew shouts. He places himself between Kevin and the guns. "You know me, I am

Richard Randal's father," he announces. "Stand down. This is my youngest son; he is speaking here today. Stand down." Mathew gestures for the police to back away. He walks toward them with his arms wide open and the police move back. Kevin speaks clearly and resolutely into the mike. "Give me two minutes and I'll tell you what is in all our hearts." The crowd surges forward cheering and chanting. The police hesitate. The audience knows it is making history. People in the hundreds mass and move closer and closer to the stage, chanting "listen to your heart. Listen to your heart!"

A riot could erupt. The security police on stage back off.

A frantic voice comes over all the walkie-talkies screaming, "Shut him down! Shut him down!" Nobody obeys.

"I'm listening to my heart and it says give him his two minutes," says the producer in the first TV truck. "Me too," says a voice. "Me too," echoes another. The word passes from truck to truck, from person to person. Everyone is ready to listen. Every TV camera, reporter and paparazzo focuses on Kevin. He is "live" across the nation illuminated by hundreds of press photoflashes.

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Richard Randal, Barbara Randal and Vennor are driving to the Washington Peace Rally in a limousine. Richard Randal takes a cell phone call. "Okay," he says, leaning toward the limousine TV. "Thanks." He snaps on the TV. The coverage of the "President" fills the limousine. "Oh my God," moans Richard, "It's him again," he says in disbelief. They're going to let him speak on national television. I don't believe this is happening. You told me this problem was over, Vennor. We're going to lose everything. Look at this guy; we might as well make him President right now." Vennor ignores Randal. He stares out of the window with a blank look on his face. Barbara tries to calm her husband but he pushes her hand away. "Not now, Barbara, not now." He turns to Vennor. "You told me you had dealt with this, now shut him down!"

Vennor is seething with anger, his knuckles white with rage. He whispers into his cell phone, cupping his hand over his mouth. "Take him out," he says. Streets flash by. Not hearing what Vennor says, Randal is outraged by the events on the television. He yells at Vennor again. "Deal with this, will you!"

Vennor issues his order again but this time it's much louder because he is having trouble whispering through the anger exploding in him. "Take him out!" Richard Randal almost hears this time. "What was that, Vennor?" he quizzes. "What the hell were you saying?"

"Nothing," snaps Vennor. "I'll take care of it, just watch the show, eh?" He whispers another order into his phone unheard.

The TV cameras close in on a spot lit Kevin at the microphone. Behind him, a silhouette of the White House, in front of him thousands of candles twinkle in the night. The crowd is silent. Kevin has a *new* voice, natural, resonant with purpose, dynamic with strength. "Listen to the heart of you. The voice in your heart is the voice of the hero in your heart, the hero who never submits and can never be beaten. In your dreams, are you not a hero, a conqueror of evil and a

defender of love? Always live up to that finest ideal of yourself. Fight always for the survival of love in your heart and you will become the hero you know you are. I am the Hero, so are you. The voice of your heart speaks the truth. Vote for yourself. Find the hero in you!"

Kevin, exultant, tears off the mask. A shot cracks. A bullet tears through his shoulder, knocking him down. Pandemonium erupts in the terrified crowd: panic erupts on stage. People are screaming. Everyone is trying to run away from the stage, knocking each other over, losing control.

Kevin is in pain from a flesh wound. Lily comforts him while his father shields him. Police surround them with guns drawn while hundreds more try to control the panic of the crowd. Paramedics rush to Kevin's aid. It's all on TV.

Richard Randal has seen the "masked man's soliloquy;" he had seen him shot down in cold blood. Stunned, shocked and motionless he stares in frozen disbelief at the screen. He reaches out for Barbara's hand as he says to Vennor. "You ordered that man shot?" Vennor stares out of the window. "You did this? You prick. What kind of animal are...." Randal's voice trails off as Barbara pulls his attention back to the TV. "Isn't that your father?" she asks. Richard Randal he sees his own father tending to Kevin's wound, caring for him - like a loving father for his injured son. The TV commentator announces, "Richard Randal's father is back. He says he's tired of being in hibernation. Today he brought his youngest Kevin with him to this Peace Rally in Washington D.C. Unfortunately, Kevin was shot when he posed as his older brother Richard Randal wearing a mask of the Presidential candidate."

"I have a brother?" asks Randal of no one in particular.

The TV cuts to Federal agents pushing through the crowd. A gunman is in custody; his sniper rifle is held high above the crowd. The cameras close on the gunman as he tries to hide his face. Richard Randal recognizes him. "It's Laxton!"

A crack, a shot from nowhere; a moment of bliss appears on Laxton's face. His legs buckle. He is bleeding from the temple. He falls on his face. He is dead before he hits the ground.

In that moment Richard Randal has an epiphany. Everything falls into place. Now he sees how blind he has been. He shudders, humiliated at his own stupidity, knowing he has continually denied every truth he has ever known in his heart. He screams at Vennor, "I know it! You did this! You did all of this! You fucking crazy bastard! You are finished. I'll fix you!" With one full-bodied movement, Randal smashes his right elbow directly into the side of Vennor's face, bouncing his head hard into the limousine window as the vehicle enters the rally VIP area. Richard grabs Vennor by the scruff of his neck, dragging him out of the limousine like a dog, pulling him stumbling and protesting, through the crowds of press with a hundred flashing cameras. He slams Vennor's head first into a police patrol car, yelling to the cops, "This man is responsible for the killing of at least one ESD agent. I have proof. My wife and I are both witnesses to him giving the order. Lock him up!" The police handcuff Vennor. Richard reaches into

the limousine extending his hand to his wife Barbara, who is sitting frightened and trembling alone in the back seat. "Come on, honey," he says. "I need you now; things are going to be better. I love you and right now I need you more than ever."

Without a backward glance, Senator Richard Randal marches through the crowd toward the stage, into the crowd, hand in hand with Barbara. They are booed, jostled and shoved but Richard holds his head high, wrapping his arm firmly around Barbara, protecting her as they walk.

Onstage, Richard and his wife embrace Richard's father like long-lost friends. They meet Kevin, who is sitting up nursing a flesh wound to his shoulder. "You okay, little brother?" Richard smiles. Kevin smiles back, although wincing in pain. Richard walks to the front of the stage and grabs the microphone. The crowd boos and hisses. Richard's nervous throat-clearing echoes through the candlelit darkness. The crowd silences as he speaks in the spotlight. "For many years I have worn a mask of hypocrisy and arrogance. I have been heartless and greedy. I knew those closest to me were manipulating my political campaign for their own ends but I ignored the voice in my heart because my vanity and ego wanted me to be President no matter the price. I was wrong. I have betrayed my family, the American people and myself. I have not acted in any way like the hero I know I am in my heart. I have let myself down and I have let you down. I am deeply sorry. . . I beg your forgiveness . . . From this day forward, my heart's promise to you will be that I will be the hero in my heart and I will fight to improve the quality of all our lives. There will be no troops in our cities! The homeless will be housed and fed! The air will be clean again! I may never be your President but I want to be my hero and yours. I will fight every day from now on to build a better life for all Americans. Vote for yourself! Listen to the heart of you, find the hero in you!"

The crowd is a deafening chorus of wild applause and the people's cheering fills the air, jamming it with goodwill.

Richard turns away from the crowd. Barbara rushes up to him, throws her arms around him and kisses him. She looks younger, so happy she could burst. "I have waited so long to hear you stand up for what you believe," she says. "I love you, my darling." Richard smiles broadly, embracing her, sighing deeply with relief. He looks happy but very shaken. He grabs the hand of his new brother. "Thank you," he says quietly. "For bringing my hero back to me." Kevin smiles through his pain.

Turning to his father, Randal shakes his hand and embraces him again. "I've let you down, Dad. I am so sorry, I let Vennor convince me not to tell you about Tony's death," he whispers in Mathew's ear. "Please forgive me. I want to be your son again."

"You always were, Richard, you always were," comforts Mathew, clamping his arms around his son. Tears roll down Richard's cheeks. Barbara embraces Richard. "Now we can start over," she says. "Now we can be ourselves again." Kevin kisses Lily passionately while the crowd cheers them on.

A snapping sensation at Kevin's ankles interrupts Kevin and Lily's kissing. They look down to see a black-and-white Border Collie puppy. Someone whistles. The puppy races away across the stage, joining Floyd walking toward them with a big smile. "Thought you might be here," he says casually. Kevin, Lily and Floyd furiously hug one another, so glad to be alive.

"What the hell happened to you?" quizzes Kevin. "All that blood in your house -- we thought we were dead."

"Nah! You should have seen the other guy," laughs Floyd. "My Baby died saving my life, poor thing. She bit that Laxton right in the balls. She just wouldn't let go. Because of her I got away. She saved my life. This little puppy here is my new Baby..... I slipped away to New York. I mean I couldn't just leave that nice shiny helicopter sitting at the docks wasting away, could I? So I took a trip to Miami. That's where I found Baby; it's very pleasant there this time of the year."

Lily and Floyd embrace again. Kevin steps up to the microphone; fighting the pain in his wounded shoulder he defiantly thrusts his closed fist into the night sky, shouting: "I am the hero, so are you. The voice of your heart tells the truth! Empower the hero in you!"

The entire audience surges forward toward the stage, wildly cheering and applauding their champion. Hero! Hero! – I am hero"

Lily takes Kevin's hand. They turn to each other and kiss while the crowd chants, "I am hero!"

THE END