

SPY-IN-LAW

written by

David D Luong

714-467-6028
DavidDLuong90@gmail.com

EXT. WAREHOUSE - ROOF - MOMENTS BEFORE DAWN

TWO ARMED GUARDS patrol the rooftop. They each have UZIs strapped on their shoulders.

A BLACKED OUT CADILLAC ESCALADE pulls into the loading bay.

GUARD ONE

Finally, "the prince" has arrived.

GUARD ONE lights a cigarette and GUARD TWO forces a cough.

GUARD TWO

Put that out, would ya? My asthma's acting up again. Besides, there's no smoking allowed on duty.

GUARD ONE

We've been on duty for 8 hours. That's a bullshit rule anyway.

GUARD TWO

It wasn't a bullshit rule when "Ice Machine" was making these drops. She had a zero tolerance policy about shit like this. No telling what she'd do if she caught you.

GUARD ONE

What are you gonna do about it?

Guard One blows smoke into Guard Two's face. Guard Two huffs and puffs and marches to the other side of the roof.

A YOUNG WOMAN in a black Lululemon sweatsuit and ball cap scales up the side of the warehouse onto the roof. She skulks quietly in the dark behind a large air conditioning unit.

As Guard Two passes the AC unit, the Woman pulls Guard Two into the darkness. He reaches for his UZI, but the Woman attacks with a barrage of punches and kicks. He tries to call out for help, but she produces a baton and knocks him unconscious and lays him down silently.

The Woman steps into the light behind Guard One and we see it's ANGIE BENSON (27, Chloe Grace Moretz type).

GUARD ONE (CONT'D)

(flicks cigarette away)

All done. Happy now?

Guard One turns around and freezes at the sight of Angie. He pulls the trigger on his UZI, but it doesn't fire.

Angie reveals the AMMO CARTIRIDGE that she unloaded while he was distracted.

Guard One turns to run away, but Angie pulls him back by the shoulder strap and chokes him unconscious with it.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

TWO HEAVYWEIGHT HENCHMEN in matching Gucci tracksuits get out of the ESCALADE. The vehicle is completely unmarked except for a DECAL OF CALVIN PEEING on another DECAL OF KONY 2012.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - ROOF - CONTINUOUS

Angie sets up a video camera and zooms in on the alleyway.

ANGIE BENSON
(to her earpiece)
Huntley, this is Benson. I need you to log on and operate the surveillance drones.

RICK HUNTLEY (RADIO)
(groggy)
Angie? What time is it?

ANGIE
I'm sending you my position. Let me know when you've locked on.

RICK (RADIO)
Gimme a sec. What are you doing out in the Field? You're supposed to be the one running Ops Support for ME!

ANGIE
I'm working my own case on the side. I need you to tail the two bogeys exiting the Escalade.

RICK (RADIO)
Roger that. Surveillance drones are locked on... You look good in those sweats!

A Drone buzzes over Angie. It does a wiggle as if to wave at her, but Angie scoffs back and covers up with a jacket.

RICK (RADIO) (CONT'D)
So why are you tailing the Gucci gang? You know, other than crimes against fashion?

Angie yawns. She spots a coffeeshop down the street.

ANGIE
I'll explain later. But right now,
I need a quick coffee break.

RICK (RADIO)
What am I supposed to do? Just sit
here with my joystick in my hand?!

ANGIE
I've been monitoring them all
night. Ping me if there's any
activity and I'll run back.

RICK (RADIO)
Ugh! You'd never cut it in the
Field... You should've asked me to
come on this stakeout with you.

ANGIE
Can we please be *professional* about
this?

RICK (RADIO)
Yeah, you probably wouldn't have
gotten much rest either way.

Angie icks out. She climbs down the warehouse and walks to:

INT. COFFEESHOP - DAY

SEVERAL BARISTAS are frantically making drinks and toasting pastries. The restaurant is completely empty except for:

DEAN VENTURA (28, Charles Melton type) sits at a table covered in mugs and plates. His iPhone is on a tripod.

DEAN VENTURA
(to phone camera)
Here's a fun tip: if you dip the
croissant into the mocha latte, the
butter and the chocolate make for a
stellar flavor-harmony!

Dean dips his croissant into his latte, takes a bite, and makes an exaggerated, almost orgasmic, face at the camera.

Angie enters but goes unacknowledged by the staff. She manages to flag one of the Baristas.

ANGIE

Sorry, I'm kind of in a rush; can I get a black coffee to go?

BARISTA ONE

We're not technically open yet. Can you come back at 7?

Another Barista rushes to serve a breakfast sandwich to Dean and bumps Angie onto the ground. Dean catches this.

DEAN

Uh oh, Sig Alert! Everyone alright?

Dean rushes to help Angie up.

BARISTA TWO

I'm sorry, Mr. Ventura! How clumsy of me! I assure you that we never crash into customers!

DEAN

All good; accidents happen! But I think she's the one you should be apologizing to.

BARISTA TWO

Sorry, ma'am.

The Barista drops off the sandwich and scurries off.

ANGIE

What's going on here? Are you like the Earl of Sandwich or something?

DEAN

Ha, good one! And you're close. I'm a food influencer. The name's Dean Ventura. I'm @FoodAdVenturas.

Dean offers his hand and Angie accepts.

ANGIE

Very clever. What's your real name?

DEAN

Dean Yao Ventura.

ANGIE

Really? Dean Ventura? That name's too perfect to be real. It could be the name of a surf brand.

DEAN

That's the nicest thing anyone has ever said about my name...

ANGIE

So why is everyone here so afraid you? Are you a harsh critic?

DEAN

Me? No way! I try my best to only spread positivity to the world!

(whispers)

Last month, I gave my first two-star review to this fish taco stand and they closed down.

ANGIE

Marco's Fish Hut! I loved that place! You're the reason they closed?!

DEAN

I'm not as powerful as all that. It was probably the week-old tilapia that closed them down.

Out of the corner of her eye, Angie spots a WHITE VAN turn into the alley.

ANGIE

Are you powerful enough to get them to brew me a cup of coffee?

DEAN

Please take mine! This one's fresh. No backwash or anything!

Dean hands a cappuchino to Angie. She hesitates.

DEAN (CONT'D)

It's OK! Influencers eat for free.

ANGIE

In that case...

Angie grabs the breakfast sandwich.

DEAN

The coffee was free; the sandwich will cost you your name.

ANGIE

Angie Benson. I know, "*that's the name of a boring lawyer.*" Well, you'd be right.

DEAN

Actually, I was gonna say "*that's the name of someone I'm really glad I met today.*"

Angie blushes.

RICK (RADIO)

Hate to interrupt the meet cute, but something is going down. Maybe a deal or a drop?

ANGIE

Thanks for breakfast! Sorry, but I'm gonna have to take it to-go! Nice meeting you, Dean Ventura!

Angie runs out.

DEAN

Wait! What's your @?
(turns to phone camera)
Wow! That was Five-Stars!

EXT. WAREHOUSE - ROOF - DAY

Angie runs back to the camera and checks the monitor, but both vehicles are nowhere to be seen.

ANGIE

Damn! I missed the exchange!

RICK (RADIO)

I couldn't get a good angle from the drone either.

ANGIE

What do you mean?! You couldn't fly to a different angle?

RICK (RADIO)

Angie, this is YOUR job! I don't fly drones. I shoot them down!

ANGIE
 (sighs)
 Well, maybe I can still get an ID
 on the DJ Khaled twins... See what
 you can find on "Dean Ventura."

Guard One regains consciousness and stirs. Angie kicks the
 back of their head and knocks them out again.

RELATIONSHIP MONTAGE

The following moments are displayed via social media posts:

- Dean and Angie's first date at a gastropub.
- Dean hard launches Angie.
- Angie moves into Dean's house.
- The couple decorates the tree for their first Christmas.
- Dean teaches Angie how to cook.
- Dean drops Angie off at court.
- Valentine's Day in Cabo.
- Dean's posts racking up Likes and Views.

INT. DEAN AND ANGIE'S KITCHEN - DAY (VIDEO)

Angie films Dean with his phone as he cooks.

DEAN
 Dean Ventura here, @FoodAdVenturas,
 with another 60-second cooking
 challenge. This time, I'm going to
 be cooking my girlfriend's favorite
 dessert, Bananas Foster, in 60
 seconds or less. Think I can do it?

ANGIE (O.S.)
 Just don't make a mess!

BEEP BEEP. A TIMER appears in bottom corner of the video.

Dean quickly whips up the Bananas Foster. He pours GRAND
 MARNIER into the pan for a flashy flambé finish. He tops it
 with a scoop of ice cream.

DEAN
 Booya! With a few seconds to spare!
 Here, give me the phone. I want to
 get your reaction on camera...

Dean takes over the filming and Angie takes a big bite of ice
 cream revealing a diamond ring in the middle.

ANGIE
 Oh my God! Is this?! Are you..?!

DEAN (O.S.)

Angie, from the moment we met, you have made every part of my life brighter, warmer, and sweeter. You are the butter to my chocolate. Will you marry me?

ANGIE

Yes! Of course, yes! I do.
(kisses Dean)
I'll marry you! I love you so-

The video PAUSES to reveal:

INT. JARED'S HOUSE - OFFICE - DAY

JARED BENSON (whatever age Jeremy Renner is, because it's Jeremy Renner) groans as he watches the proposal video on his computer. Jared pours himself a scotch. On the walls and shelves, there are photos of him and Angie throughout the years.

DING DONG!

Jared checks the security cameras and sees:

EXT. JARED'S HOUSE - DOORSTEP - CONTINUOUS

Angie rings the doorbell. Dean walks up to the porch. As he does this, he is broadcasting himself LIVE.

DEAN

(to LIVE broadcast)

What's up, Deaner Party! Today, I'm cooking for Angie's dad! It's actually my first time meeting him in person so I wanted to make him something delicious! I wanna thank everyone who threw suggestions in the Discord. Prime rib got the most Likes, so that's what's for dinner!

Comments appear onscreen and Dean reads them aloud.

DEAN (CONT'D)

How have you never met him before?
Good question. He's a big time book seller and travels A LOT for work. Which is why I know he's gonna love this homecooked meal.

(MORE)

DEAN (CONT'D)

Did you get his blessing before popping the question? I sent an email but never got a response.

Is he zaddy? thirst emoji.
Honestly, dude has like zero online presence so I don't even know what he looks like.

(to Angie)

Babe, is your dad a zaddy?

ANGIE

Do you need to do that right now?

DEAN

(oopsie)

I'll check in with y'all after dessert!

Dean cuts the livestream.

DEAN (CONT'D)

Sorry, I was feeling nervous so I went LIVE for a confidence boost.

ANGIE

You don't have anything to worry about. Just be yourself; he admires transparency above anything else. And keep the camera away from him. He enjoys his privacy.

DEAN

Is he a fugitive or something?
(off Angie's shush)
It's okay, I can keep a secret.

Jared abruptly opens the door.

JARED BENSON

"Two can keep a secret if one of them is dead." Mark Twain.

Jared hugs Angie.

JARED

Hi, honey... You must be Dean. Angie's told me everything about you. Everything.

Jared extends a hand to Dean, but Dean rushes in for a hug.

DEAN

She hasn't told me much about you,
but I wanna know everything! What
should I call you? Jared? ... Dad?

Jared breaks out of the hug.

JARED

Hmph! You can call me Mr. Benson.
C'mon inside...

Jared lets Angie and Dean in and looks up and down the street
before closing the door.

INT. JARED'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

While Jared shows Dean into the kitchen, Dean looks around at
the photos on the wall. He sees Jared posing with Matt Damon,
Tom Cruise, and cast of *The Avengers* (2012).

DEAN

Holy cow! You've sold books to a
lot of famous people!

JARED

How's that?

DEAN

Angie says you're a rare book
dealer. You must be the best to
work with all these celebrities!

JARED

Oh yes, the books. That's right...

DEAN

Speaking of which, this is for you!

Dean hands a wrapped book to Jared. While Jared is unwrapping
it, Dean takes out his phone and to record Jared's reaction.

JARED

(unimpressed)
The Great Gatsby.

DEAN

It's a first edition! I'm told it's
a very rare book.

JARED

Oh... great. I couldn't tell
without my readers.

DEAN
Readers? Why you don't look a day
over 45!

JARED
Thanks for the book, Dean. I'll
take good care of it.

Jared shoves it into his bookshelf haphazardly. When he looks back at Dean, he sees Dean recording him.

Jared's reflexes kick in and he twists Dean's wrist, causing him to drop the phone. Jared stomps on it, leaving broken glass and microchips.

DEAN
Ow! My phone!

JARED
No cameras in my house! Didn't
Angie tell you?

DEAN
I was just trying to capture a
memory... Aw man, I'm not gonna be
able to make a post tonight.

JARED
Post? That's right. You're an
Internet chef, aren't you?

DEAN
Uhh kind of? It's hard to explain.

JARED
Give it a shot, because I'd like to
understand what it is that you do.

DEAN
Well I'm technically not a chef; I
don't get paid to cook. I earn ad
revenue and endorsements off my
cooking tutorials and challenges.
But my most popular posts are my
reviews: restaurants, appliances,
once I compared onions from Trader
Joe's and Whole Foods.

(whisper)
Whole Foods... mushy onions!

JARED
But if you're not a chef, why do
people care about your opinion?

DEAN

I'm an Influencer; one could argue that I have more insight than the average chef. They might eat at the best restaurants in town, but I get flown out to try THE BEST dishes from around the world! And whereas a chef might use 4 or 5 different knives, I get sent a whole set from all THE BEST brands!

Dean pulls out his knife bag and unveils his collection of beautiful designer knives.

JARED

I see what you mean... It IS hard to explain.

Dean starts chopping prime rib with a meat cleaver.

DEAN

You wanna take a crack? It's easier than it looks; cutting through bone only takes about...

JARED

20 lbs of pressure. Yeah, I know.

Jared takes the cleaver, makes a few cuts, then winces.

JARED (CONT'D)

Ahh! That's enough for me. I've got a bad shoulder.

DEAN

I know THE BEST physical therapist!

JARED

I bet you do. But a stiff drink will do just fine. You want one?

DEAN

I'm all good here, Mr. Benson!

Dean holds up a bottle of Prime Energy Drink. Jared exits to:

INT. JARED'S HOUSE - LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Angie looks at a photo of her mother. Jared enters.

ANGIE

What do you think? Isn't he great?

JARED
Nice guy... very chipper.

ANGIE
You'll get used to it.

INT. JARED'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Dean overhears the conversation going on in the lounge.

INT. JARED'S HOUSE - LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Jared pours himself a glass of whiskey.

JARED
Is he always ON like that?

ANGIE
He's not on, he's just a genuinely optimistic guy.

JARED
Optimists see the world through funhouse mirrors. Everything and everyone is "THE BEST!"

ANGIE
That's why I love him.

JARED
And that's why I worry about you. A guy like Dean can't protect you. Will he even be able to provide for you when this whole Influencer thing goes away?

INT. JARED'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Dean frowns and returns to cooking.

INT. JARED'S HOUSE - LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Jared downs the whiskey. Angie takes the glass from Jared.

ANGIE
I don't need him to take care of me, Dad. We're equals; I'm strong in ways he's not and he's strong in ways I'm not.

JARED

Sure. But take it from me, it's hard enough always looking over your own back; I don't want you to lose sleep looking out for his too.

Jared looks back at the photo of Angie's mother.

JARED (CONT'D)

Or live with the guilt of not being able to.

ANGIE

Speaking of guilt, I have bad news: I failed the Field Test again.

Jared isn't upset. He's almost relieved.

JARED

I'm sorry, hon. I really thought your third try would be the charm.

Jared opens up to give Angie a consoling hug.

JARED (CONT'D)

But there's no shame working in Support. Plus, it's safer; you can work into your old age, unlike me.

ANGIE

I don't get it. I aced my hacking and manipulation assessments. Do you think you could make a call?

JARED

... sure, I'll see what I can do.

INT. JARED'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Jared, Dean, and Angie eat in silence. Angie notices the tension between Jared and Dean.

ANGIE

This Cabernet is great, Dad! What do you think, Dean?

DEAN

It's *the best!* I mean, it's good. Like mid-to-good.

JARED

With opinions like that, I can see why the Internet loves you.

DEAN

They love me because I take care of them. I protect them from mushy onions!

JARED

Sounds like made up solutions to made up problems.

ANGIE

What's going on with you two?

DEAN

Your dad doesn't think I can take care of you. I heard him in the other room. My job isn't made up. My engagement rates are up there with Cuisinart and Skittles.

JARED

Listen to the silver-tongued snake slither round. Well I don't care about clicks or views. Angie's the only thing I care about! How are you going to protect my little girl from danger? By filming it for the whole world to see?

ANGIE

Dad, I'm not you little girl who needs protecting!

DEAN

What do you know about danger? The only thing book dealers have to worry about is papercuts and reading in low light. I'll have you know the culinary world isn't all crab cakes and soufflés. I've got thick skin from oven burns!

Jared gulps down the rest of his wine.

JARED

You're clueless, Dean. You don't even know who you're marrying.

ANGIE

DAD!

Dean looks at Angie and wonders what Jared could mean.

INT. DEAN'S PRIUS - NIGHT

Dean drives with a vacant stare as Angie tries to soothe him.

DEAN

Not a strong appetizer, but I'll win him over with the main course!

ANGIE

If it makes you feel any better, my dad hated all my exes.

DEAN

Thanks. But it's a bummer that he's so cold and brusque. It must have been hard growing up with an overbearing dad like that. But on the sunny side up, I can tell he really cares about you.

ANGIE

He wasn't always this way. He used to be a pretty jolly guy, believe it or not. But after my mom passed, he never forgave himself.

Dean considers this as he pulls into:

EXT. GAS STATION - CONTINUOUS

Dean pulls over at the stall behind a blacked out Escalade blasting 00's hip-hop music. TWO MEN in Gucci tracksuits step out. Angie clocks this and sits up in attention.

The backseat window rolls down to reveal JIMMY SERCHE (late-20s, a coked-out Jean-Ralphio type). Jimmy squints with recognition as Dean gets out of his car to fill up his Prius.

Jimmy hops out of the Escalade in his gaudy leopard-skin suit and green alligator shoes.

JIMMY SERCHE

No fucking way! Dean Ventura? It's you, isn't it? It IS fucking you!

DEAN

(chuckles)

Yeah, it's me!

Jimmy snaps at his men.

JIMMY

Lobo! Pay for this man's gas! His money's no good here!

DEAN

Please, that's not necessary!

LOBO, Gucci Gang Member 1, takes the gas nozzle from Dean. Lobo swipes his own card and pays for premium 91 octane.

JIMMY

Mr. Ventura, I'm your biggest fan! Please let me do this small favor for you. Volk! The windshields!

VOLK, Gucci Gang Member 2, grabs a squeegee and starts cleaning Dean's windshield. He gives Angie a menacing look.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

And this must be the lovely new fiancée! I was just watching your proposal video last night. Did you see my comment?

DEAN

I caught a few this morning...

JIMMY

It's a new account - 280 followers, but I'm trying to get like you!

DEAN

Well, best of luck and thanks for the gas and wash!

JIMMY

Maybe you could do me a favor in return, DV.

DEAN

Maybe! What can I do for you?

JIMMY

I'm in the food game too, you see! Got a few restaurants downtown. Would love it if you could put one on "*The Dean's List!*"

Jimmy smiles and flashes his gold and diamond grill at Angie.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Bring the lady! We'll treat you both out to a schmanging evening.

DEAN

Oh gee, that's a kind offer, but...

Angie spots the CALVIN PEEING/KONY DECALS on the SUV.

ANGIE

That sounds great, doesn't it Dean?
Get his card and let's set a date
night. I'm getting tired.

Jimmy gives his business card to Dean.

JIMMY

Mi scusi, my fair lady. I bid you
two adieu... Lobo! Volk! ¡Vámonos!

Dean looks down at the business card. It reads:
James Nikolas Serche
Eatery Engineer, Flavor DJ, & Bistro Industrialist
@JSerche69

On the corner of the card is the logo for:

EXT. FORK KNOX - NIGHT

Angie takes a picture of Dean next to restaurant signage.

ANGIE

Thanks for bringing me here, babe.
I know it's bougier than the usual
restaurants you review. I just
wanted to try something fancy.

DEAN

You know I can't resist a pun name!

INT. FORK KNOX - CONTINUOUS

A host takes Dean and Angie's coats. Jimmy emerges from
behind the host stand.

JIMMY

Mr. and Future-Mrs. Ventura! We're
honored to have you dine with us
this evening!

DEAN

Jimmy! Are you the maître d'?

JIMMY

God no! I'm too busy doing big boss
shit. I'm just making sure my two
guests of honor are treated right!

Jimmy takes a selfie with Dean.

As Dean and Angie are shown to their table, Angie looks
around to see several criminal figures sitting in the booths.

She makes eye contact with CHARLENE "ICE MACHINE" SERCHE
(mid-50s, Melissa McCarthy as Miss Trunchbull) in the corner
booth. She's sporting a velour tracksuit and kangol.

After Dean and Angie are seated, Jimmy returns with wine.

ANGIE

Who's the woman in the VIP booth?
Seems like a big deal.

JIMMY

She is; that's my Mama! You could
say she's the Queen of Fork Knox!
We save that booth just for her.

ANGIE

That's Charlene "the Ice Machine"?!

JIMMY

(suspicious)
How do you know my mother?

ANGIE

I'm a defense attorney. A lot of my
clients are "associates" of hers.

DEAN

Why do they call her "the Ice
Machine?"

JIMMY

(ominous)
'Cuz everything that comes out of
her is cold as ice...
(light-hearted)
Except me! Haha! Get it? She's a
nice lady. But please never look at
or speak to her. **Ever.**

Jimmy brandishes the wine bottle.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

A 2009 Cristal.

JIMMY
 (sycophantic)
 This isn't hospitality. It's mercy!
 Please enjoy a few more glasses
 before you record your review.

DEAN
 About that... Jimmy, I appreciate
 all your hard work, but I think it
 would be best if I didn't review
 Fork Knox.

JIMMY
 (giggles stop)
 What do you mean?

DEAN
 One of my New Years resolutions is
 to stop spreading negativity. My
 reach has grown so large that one
 negative post can ruin a business,
 which is the last thing I wanna do
 to you.

JIMMY
 Then don't post a negative review.
 Tell everyone how much you loved
 Fork Knox and give me Five-Stars!

DEAN
 (chuckling)
 I can't do that. I just can't. You
 get it, right?

Jimmy takes back his bottle of wine and hands it to Volk. He
 snaps his fingers and Lobo brings him a briefcase.

JIMMY
 Oh, I get it! Real recognize real
 and I've read The Art of the Deal!

Jimmy opens the briefcase and reveals it's full of Ziploc
 Snack Bags containing meth, cocaine, and heroine.

DEAN
 Jesus, Jimmy! What is this?!

Jimmy looks and realizes this is the wrong briefcase.

JIMMY
 Ah shit. That was supposed to be
 \$50,000! What the fuck, Lobo!

Jimmy shuts the briefcase and throws it back at Lobo.

DEAN

Jimmy, let me make this perfectly clear: I did not enjoy my time at your restaurant. The food was overpriced and under seasoned. The ambiance was pretentious and a little seedy. And worst of all: the name. Really Jimmy? "Fork Knox?!" How are you going to waste a clever and tasteful pun name like that?! It evokes Americana and rustic charm. What's with the new age, neo-Euro vibe?!

A single tear falls from Jimmy's eye.

DEAN (CONT'D)

I'm insulted that you would even attempt to pay me off. I wouldn't put you on my List for all the money in the world!

Angie pulls up in Dean's Prius. Dean stumbles into the car. After a beat, Jimmy throws a tantrum.

JIMMY

How could you fuck that up, Lobo?! The drug case is like SO MUCH fucking heavier than the cash! You ruined my shot at Five Stars!

Volk whispers something to Jimmy that puts fear in his eyes.

INT. FORK KNOX - MAMA'S SPECIAL BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy sits before Charlene "Ice Machine" Serche.

CHARLENE "ICE MACHINE" SERCHE

What are you doing sobbing like a brat at the toy store? Do I not give you everything you want? Do you need a Suck-Me-Off Elmo?

JIMMY

No, Mama. You give me everything!

ICE MACHINE

Then why do you embarrass me in my own restaurant! You can't even handle playing Manager!

JIMMY

Sorry, Mama. You see, I was trying to elevate our profile.

ICE MACHINE

I don't want you to elevate shit! This is just a front for the real business. Keep our profile as low as possible; I'm talking subterranean, do you understand?!

JIMMY

I just want to put Fork Knox on *The Dean's List*... That's Dean Ventura's list of Five Star restaurants.

ICE MACHINE (CONT'D)

Nuh uh...
Don't care...

ICE MACHINE (CONT'D)

You suffer from ambition just like your father. He couldn't appreciate all I did for him either, God rest his soul. Got himself on some CIA watchlist. You want that?

JIMMY

But he wouldn't even give me a One-Star review! I'm getting less than a Star! I look like a fool!

Ice Machine spots a MOBSTER lighting up a cigar. She holds up a hand to silence Jimmy so she can focus on the Mobster.

ICE MACHINE

Put. That. Out.

MOBSTER

Me? This is a \$200 cigar!

Ice Machine snaps her fingers. Lobo and Volk bring the Mobster over to her table.

Ice Machine presents her hand so that the Mobster can kiss her ring. The Mobster rolls his eyes and kisses the ring.

As he bends over, Ice Machine takes the cigar out of his mouth and smashes his head on the table. Then, she puts out the cigar right on his bald spot.

MOBSTER (CONT'D)

OW! I'm sorry, Ice Machine!

ICE MACHINE

I never ask twice! This is an old building!

(MORE)

ICE MACHINE (CONT'D)

You'll set the sprinklers off and ruin my night! Next person that smokes in here, I'll put it out in your eye!

The Mobster sobs back to his table. Ice Machine casual sips her wine and focuses back to Jimmy.

ICE MACHINE (CONT'D)

(giving in)

Nobody makes my prince look like a fool. Just keep it lowkey; break some bones and get your One-Star.

JIMMY

Yes, Mama. I'm getting Five-Stars from that prick! He breaks my heart, I'm gonna break his!

Jimmy pulls up Angie's Instagram. It's a Post of her at:

INT. STARBUCKS - DAY

Angie is typing up a report on the Serche Crime Syndicate. An earpiece hangs from her ear.

RICK (RADIO)

You're sure it was THE Ice Machine? Elusive matriarch of the Serche Crime Syndicate? No one's seen her in a decade. Most intel say she's probably dead.

ANGIE

Yes. I'd never forget that face... Fork Knox has been open for 16 years but there's barely any record of it online. Dean says it's like they just opened for business a year ago. It's got to be a holding company for the Serches to launder their illegal income streams.

RICK (RADIO)

Alright, what's the plan? We gonna assemble a SWAT team so we can bust in and crack skulls?

ANGIE

Pump the brakes, Danica Patrick. You wouldn't believe who's in her pocket.

(MORE)

ANGIE (CONT'D)

I wouldn't believe it myself, if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes. Which is why we can't risk her catching wind of this investigation until I can figure out everyone who's in on it.

RICK (RADIO)

But that could take months... Not that I wouldn't mind being the sexy voice in your ear while we wait.

Angie spots Lobo and Volk pull up to Starbucks in their SUV.

ANGIE

You've got to be kidding me.

RICK (RADIO)

That was just an off-color joke. Please don't report me again!

ANGIE

Jimmy's goons are here.

Lobo and Volk grab rope, a gag, and a hood from the trunk.

RICK (RADIO)

Really? What are the odds of that? Do you need me for backup?

ANGIE

Listen carefully. They're going to take me. And I'm going to let them.

RICK (RADIO)

Let them take you? Why?!

Angie packs her laptop, phone, and badge into her briefcase.

ANGIE

Dean humiliated Jimmy last night; he must be after me for payback. This is perfect! I can get all the evidence I need by going undercover as their hostage.

Angie puts on a **decoy flash drive earring**.

RICK (RADIO)

That's too risky for an Operations Officer like you, Angie. You're not authorized to go undercover!

ANGIE

I'm completely safe. They're two low rent thugs with no training. I could take them both with my arms behind my back.

RICK (RADIO)

You could get demoted for breaking protocol. I could get demoted for helping you!

ANGIE

Then don't tell anyone about this. And look after Dean for me!

Angie removes her earpiece and puts it in her briefcase.

RICK (RADIO)

No! Angie! I HAVE to call this in!

She goes into the bathroom and stows her briefcase in the closet. When she exits the bathroom, Lobo and Volk are outside waiting for her.

ANGIE

(false panic)

Omigosh, you scared me! What are you two doing here?

INT. JARED'S HOUSE - OFFICE - DAY

Jared's computer is pinging. Jared comes to check it out. His eyebrows furrow and he rushes off in a fury.

INT. DEAN AND ANGIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dean is reviewing frying pans on a LIVE broadcast. The kitchen is lit like a mini film set. The adjoining rooms and halls are dark and obfuscated compared to the bright kitchen.

DEAN

(to LIVE broadcast)

We got a huge gift from Wendelmen's Cookware today. They sent us four frying pans: non-stick, stainless, ceramic, and the classic cast iron!

EXT. DEAN AND ANGIE'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

FOUR HENCHMEN sneak in through gate. They're in tactical gear, earpieces, and white facemasks, except for one in a red facemask. RED MASK gestures to the WHITE MASKS to enter.

RED MASK
He's gone LIVE. Don't get caught on camera or it's your ass!

INTERCUT KITCHEN/BACKYARD

White Mask 1 enters the hallway and watches Dean cook.

Dean holds a non-stick frying pan up to the camera.

DEAN
First of all, I'm not even going to test the non-stick. Guys, stop buying these; they are made with dangerous chemicals and if you cook with them, those chemicals will end up in your food!

Dean sets the non-stick pan aside and turns around to get the next frying pans... SHADOWY FIGURE grabs the non-stick pan.

White Mask 1 seizes this opportunity and makes his way towards Dean. Suddenly, the Shadow grabs him by the face, pulls him back into the hallway, and knocks him out with the non-stick pan.

RED MASK
Go see what's taking him so long.

Red Mask sends in White Masks 2 and 3.

Dean holds a stainless steel and a ceramic frying pan up to the camera.

DEAN
Stainless steel is the most durable and ceramic is the most delicate. Which is why you're likely to find stainless used by professionals and ceramic used by home cooks.

Dean sets both frying pans down. The Shadow picks them up the stainless steel pan.

White Mask 2 and White Mask 3 move towards Dean while he is turned the other way.

The Shadow catches White Mask 2 off guard and knocks him out with the stainless steel pan. The Shadow strikes again at White Mask 3, but he is alerted of the attack.

White Mask 3 grabs the ceramic pan to block the strike. However, the ceramic pan is shattered by the steel pan. Disarmed, White Mask 3 gets knocked out by the Shadow.

RED MASK

What the hell is going on in there?

Red Mask goes in, withdrawing a handgun.

Dean holds a cast iron frying pan up to the camera.

DEAN

But nothing beats the cast iron.
Humans have been cooking with iron
for centuries because it can do it
all! It's also the heaviest pan and
it locks in heat, so don't forget
to wear your mitts!

Dean puts the cast iron pan on the stove to heat up.

Red Mask enters the room and shoots the phone.

DEAN (CONT'D)

AHH! MY PHONE! NOT AGAIN!

RED MASK

You're coming with me!

Red Mask sees his men unconscious in the hall.

RED MASK (CONT'D)

What did you do to my guys?!

Red Mask points the gun at Dean and fires.

The Shadow emerges into the light. It's Jared, dressed in all black clandestine gear. Jared tackles Dean out of the way.

DEAN

What the flip?! Mr. Benson?!

JARED

Stay down!

Jared gets up and starts throwing knives from the knife block at Red Mask. Red Mask dodges and gets nicked by a few knives. This prevents him from getting a clear shot at Jared.

Jared runs out of knives. Red Mask shoots at Jared, but he reaches for the cast iron pan to deflect the bullet. However, the hot handle burns Jared's hands and he drops it. Red Mask takes this opportunity to rush at Jared.

The two tussle. Jared knocks the gun out of Red Mask's hand, but his shoulder freezes up, giving Red Mask the upperhand. Red Mask wrestles his way on top of Jared and starts to choke him out. Jared slowly loses his consciousness and the fight.

DONG!

Red Mask is knocked out. Standing above him is Dean holding the hot cast iron pan with a pair of oven mitts.

DEAN
(to cast iron)
It can do it all...

INT. DEAN AND ANGIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Jared regains consciousness as Dean puts a cold compress on his forehead. Jared knocks Dean's hands away and sits up.

JARED
Where's Angie?

DEAN
She's probably still at the firm.
What the heck is going on, Mr. B?
Who are these guys?

Jared sits up and spots the Four Henchmen stirring around on the floor.

JARED
I'll explain later. But first, do you have any rope?

INT. DEAN AND ANGIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Jared has all Four Henchmen gagged with apples and trussed with kitchen twine like turkeys. Dean is sweeping up the aftermath of the fight.

JARED
Angie was taken. And whoever took her also sent these guys for you.

DEAN
What?! Who would do such a thing?

JARED

That's what I'm gonna find out.

Jared pulls the apple out of Red Mask's mouth.

JARED (CONT'D)

I'm guessing red wasn't a fashion choice so this means you're in charge. Who sent you?

RED MASK

I ain't telling you shit.

Jared punches Red Mask, but his shoulder gives out again.

RED MASK (CONT'D)

That all you got, Command-old?

The henchmen all laugh.

JARED

Punch him for me.

DEAN

Me?

JARED

C'mon! Punch him! We gotta find out who sent them. Sooner we do that, sooner we can save Angie. You're wasting precious time!

Dean walks up gingerly to Red Mask.

DEAN

Hey man, we don't have to play these games. Just tell us who sent you and nobody has to get hurt.

Red Mask spits on Dean. The henchmen laugh. Jared kicks Red Mask in the mouth and knocking out teeth. The laughter stops.

JARED

I still got hips motherfucker! Just because my shoulders blown doesn't mean I can't still fuck you up!

(whispers to Dean)

Actually, I think I just threw out my hip. You gotta take over now. Just pretend he's a hunk of meat.

Jared hands a meat tenderizer to Dean.

DEAN

Look, I don't want to hurt you, but I will. So tell us who sent you.

Red Mask doesn't reply so Dean smacks Red Mask in the face with the meat mallet.

RED MASK

Serche.

JARED

You were sent by the Serches?!

DEAN

As in Jimmy Serche?

JARED

You're mixed up with the Serche crime family?!

DEAN

I don't about any crime family, but I know Jimmy. Maybe I can give him a call and we can talk this out!

JARED

Don't be a dummy! These guys ain't here to talk. If this is who he sent for you, who knows what he could've done to to Angie!

DEAN

Why would Jimmy go after Angie? Is he still upset about the review? She's got nothing to do with that!

Dean smacks Red Mask again and again. Jared pulls him back.

JARED

Whoa whoa! I like this side of you, Dean, but you gotta let him talk.

(to Red Mask)

Is that was this is? Some grudge about a bad review?

Red Mask nods.

JARED (CONT'D)

Where is he keeping her? Tell me or I let the kid hit you again.

Red Mask doesn't answer. Jared picks up a grater and hands it to Dean. Red Mask looks at Dean with fear.

DEAN

What am I supposed to do with this?

JARED

You're the foodie. Figure something out. Grate him!

DEAN

GRATE him? Grate him? You want me to grate this man? What exactly do you expect me to grate?

JARED

(with deep consideration)
Knuckles... Elbows... Personally, I'd go with the face.

DEAN

You want me to grate his face? Don't you think that's excessive?

JARED

Me? Oh yeah, WAY over the top. But "Teddy Tight-Lips" is the one asking for it since he won't tell us where Angie is.

Dean hesitantly puts the grater against Red Mask's face.

DEAN

Please don't make me grate your face. Just tell us where she is.

RED MASK

I don't know... I don't know!

Dean drags the grate along Red Mask's face. Blood pours down his cheek as flecks of skin fall through the grooves.

RED MASK (CONT'D)

(pleading)
OW! PLEASE! STOP! I DON'T KNOW! OW!

JARED

Stop stop stop. I've tortured a lot of secrets out of a lot of people. That's the sound they make when they're telling the truth.

DEAN

What kind of book dealer are you?!

Jared shoots Red Mask in the head. Dean screams.

Blood splatters onto White Mask 1's mask, staining it red.

JARED

Guess that makes you in charge now.
Where is Jimmy keeping my daughter?

Jared pulls the apple out of White Mask 1's mouth.

WHITE MASK 1

I really don't know! I swear!

Jared shoots White Mask 1 and ungags White Mask 2.

DEAN

Jesus, he said he didn't know!

JARED

Where is Jimmy's hideout?

WHITE MASK 2

They don't tell us anything!

Jared shoots White Mask 2 and ungags White Mask 3.

JARED

Last chance!

DEAN

Please just tell us and he won't
shoot you!

WHITE MASK 3

Don't shoot! I'll tell you, I'll
tell you! The Serche's have a
compound by the docks. It's where
they load and unload everything:
drugs, guns, girls, you name it!

DEAN

(sigh of relief)
There! He told us. Now let's put
the gun down and cool off...

Jared shoots White Mask 3.

DEAN (CONT'D)

What the flip, Mr. Benson? What the
fucking flip?

Jared grabs Dean by the collar and points the gun at him.

JARED

That's what I should be asking you!
How did you get my Angie mixed up
with the Serche crime family? Are
you working with them?

DEAN

What do you mean? I'm Dean Ventura!
You know me; I'm Angie's fiancé!

JARED

I don't buy it. I don't buy the
nice guy act. I don't even buy the
name. "Dean Ventura," did you steal
it from some tropical travel agent?

Dean starts flailing around and accidentally kicks Jared in
the knee, causing him to collapse.

DEAN

If I was in on it, why did I save
your life? Why not just let them
kill you?

Jared recalls this and holsters the gun. Dan helps him up.

JARED

Hmph. You may have talked your way
out of this one.

DEAN

(gesturing to the 4 bodies)
All this killing was totally
unnecessary! Has anyone ever told
you you're way too paranoid?!

JARED

Yes. It's why I'm still alive...
It's also why I was discharged.

DEAN

Discharged? Who are you?

JARED

Benson. Jared Benson. I was
formerly a spy for the CIA.

EXT. SERCHE COMPOUND - LOADING DOCK - NIGHT

Ice Machine is inspecting shipping containers which are full
of drugs, firearms, and other contraband.

She spots a blacked-out SUV pull up. Lobo and Volk exit, bringing out Angie, who is tied up with tape over her mouth.

INT. SERCHE COMPOUND - JIMMY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy is watching porn at his desk. Ice Machine barges in.

JIMMY

MOOOM! What happened to knocking?!

Ice Machine shuts the laptop and slaps Jimmy across the face.

ICE MACHINE

What did I tell you?

JIMMY

I'm over 18 now! I used my own credit card this time!

ICE MACHINE

You can explore yourself, but not at work! Now I thought I told you to break some bones—you make them into a fool! But if you kidnap his girlfriend in broad daylight, that makes you a double fool!

JIMMY

I'm not a double fool, Mama! I have a plan.

ICE MACHINE

Your plan better be to kill her and call it even.

JIMMY

Once I get that Five Star review, I'll kill them both! Win-win!

ICE MACHINE

You're dumber than collecting cat piss in a colander. You get that from your dad, God rest. I want this wrapped up by Friday!

Ice machine marches out of the office.

ICE MACHINE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

And close your blinds. All your men can see your little Jockey pepper!

We see Jimmy's office is in the middle of the warehouse.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - NIGHT

Jared unlocks a high-tech door to reveal a spy safehouse. On one wall, there are computers, guns, and spy gear. On the other, there are canes, orthopedic shoes, and pain meds.

Jared starts loading his go-bag with equipment. Dean enters slowly, still shaking from the trauma.

JARED

Sorry for turning your place into a slaughterhouse. I'll send over a clean up crew first thing in the morning. In the meantime, you can stay in my safehouse.

DEAN

I'm still trying to understand. So you're like Liam Neeson from Taken? You're gonna use your "special skills" to rescue Angie?

JARED

You seem to understand pretty well.

DEAN

And Jimmy is part of a crime family? I fucked with the wrong crime boss's son, but now he fucked with the wrong ex-spy's daughter?

JARED

It's not entirely your fault. There is more to the story; I didn't want you to find out this way, but Angie is also works for the CIA.

DEAN

What? But she told me she was a lawyer. She even helped me fight that parking ticket.

JARED

We have a past with the Serches. Back when I was still a spy, I was building a case against them. Somehow, Ice Machine, the head of the family, found out... She killed my wife Rebecca as a warning.

DEAN

Oh my goodness, that must have been devastating. How did you deal with it?

JARED

I didn't. I already lost my wife, I couldn't lose Angie too! So I didn't retaliate. I backed off like a kicked dog.

DEAN

I meant how did you deal with the grief?

JARED

You mean like did I cry about it?

DEAN

When I was 9, my dad died in a hit-and-run. I got depressed, angry, and I started acting out. So my mom sent me to live with my aunt and she taught me how to bake. I was able to channel all my emotions into food. That's how I processed the pain of losing my Dad.

JARED

Angie never told me you grew up without a Dad... I dunno, I guess I got defensive, started putting up walls, kept a closer eye on Angie. Taught her how to defend herself and watch out for danger. But I guess it wasn't enough.

Jared tries to reach for a rifle on the top shelf and falls down in pain. Dean rushes to help him back up.

DEAN

Are you sure you're up to this?

JARED

Agh! That spinning back kick really did a number on my sciatica.

Dean helps Jared to a chair and sits him down.

JARED (CONT'D)

Sorry... I'm falling apart. I'm not as strong as I used to be.

DEAN

You don't have to apologize.

JARED

Yes, I do! Don't you realize my weakness almost got us both killed?

DEAN

That's nothing to be ashamed of. Your body is your body and that's okay! Besides, I think you look great for your age!

JARED

Stop it! This is more of that snake talk! Doesn't matter how nicely you phrase it: I failed! I could have died, you could have died, and then nobody would be able to save Angie. In the spy game, you're either STRONG or you're DEAD! You got that?

The door opens. RICK HUNTLEY (early 30s, Liam Hemsworth type) walks in, gun drawn.

Jared draws his weapon as well. Dean ducks for cover.

RICK

Freeze!

Jared and Rick make eye contact and put their guns down.

JARED

Boy am I glad to see you!

RICK

Thank God, you're alright!

They give each other a pound hug. Dean looks up cautiously.

JARED

What are you doing, tying your shoes? Get up. Rick, this is Dean. He's... well, he's Angie's fiancé. Dean, this is Intelligence Officer Rick Huntley. He's Angie's ex-partner; he's the one that informed me of Angie's abduction.

DEAN

Ex-partner?

Rick shakes hands with Dean.

RICK

Nice to finally meet you. Angie put together quite the file on you. It feels like I already know you.

DEAN

Angie has a file on me? And she let her "ex-partner" read it?

RICK

We've worked dozens of ops together with a lot of sleepless nights. We tell each other everything. All of our deep, dark, carnal secrets.

DEAN

Just to be clear, you two were partners *in the CIA*, right?

RICK

Until last year, when she started investigating the Serches on her own without telling me.

JARED

What?! She's been looking into the Serches? Why would she do something so reckless?

RICK

I blame myself. This is why partners should never date!

DEAN

That settles it..

RICK

Where are we at?

Jared activates the computer and pulls up a satellite image of the Serche Compound at the docks.

JARED

We know she's somewhere in the docks. The Serche Compound is estimated to be somewhere between Pier 21 and Pier 40 which doesn't give us much to go on. Even if we do figure out the exact location, it'll be guarded like a fortress. We'd need a small army.

RICK

Maybe we can call in an airstrike. Set off some explosives via drone.

JARED

Pump the brakes, Dale Earnhardt. We can't risk harming innocent civilians or Angie.

DEAN

What if we can figure out exactly where the compound is? Could we sneak in and and rescue Angie without them noticing?

RICK

(sarcastic)

Brilliant idea. But how do you supposed we do that? Ask nicely? Angie is a hostage. They've got her guarded up like President Andrew Johnson on theatre night.

JARED

(only to Rick)

See what I've been working with?

DEAN

Yeah, we ask nicely. I can ask the "**Deaner Party**." That the Discord Server that my fans created. It's full of restaurant owners, grocers, fishermen... If their compound is on one of the piers, then someone in my network will know.

Dean grabs a smartphone from wall of gadgets and logs in. Jared and Rick look impressed.

JARED

I'm still struggling to wrap my head around your "job."

PING. Dean's phone gets a notification.

DEAN

Got it. My boy Pierre says he's worked there a few times before as a fill-in chef. Pier 34.

RICK

Nice going, FoodiePie! With this info, I can sneak in through the kitchen and extract Angie.

JARED

She's my daughter. If anyone is gonna risk their neck, it's me.

DEAN

I'll go. I'm the only trained cook here. She's my fiancée; my neck is just as worthy as yours.

JARED

Kid, that's noble of you. But there are like 80 men in that Compound. Any one of them could beat the meat out of you. There's probably a 64 year-old guard who's 2 weeks from retiring. Even he'd kick your ass.

DEAN

I'm not completely useless. I have two good shoulders and a healthy sciatic nerve. So I'd say I have a better chance than you against that 64 year-old... I'm the one that unleashed Jimmy's wrath on her. Let me go undercover and make it right!

Jared looks at Rick. Rick shrugs.

RICK

He's already got the perfect cover.

JARED

(considering)

Alright... Let's teach you how to be a spy.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO READ THE REST OF THIS SCREENPLAY,
PLEASE CONTACT DAVID LUONG (WWW.DAVIDDLUONG.COM).**