

CONFESSIONS OF A DANGEROUS MIND

EXT. BAR - DAY

Barris sits on the curb, nursing his wounds. Byrd exits the bar and casually approaches.

BYRD

You're a pretty angry young fella, aren't you? Can't fight worth a damn though.

BARRIS

Screw off, fag. Don't think I haven't seen you watching me in that bar for a week now.

BYRD

Kind of a loner, I'd say. Fairly bright. A tad anti-social. Mad at the world. Can I buy you lunch?

BARRIS

Look, there's a schoolyard half a block down. Why don't you go trolling there?

Barris gets up and starts to walk away.

BYRD

I could teach you at least thirty different ways to kill a man with a single blow, Mr. Barris.

Barris stops.

BYRD (CONT'D)

Might help you in future bar fights. Just a thought.

Barris just stands there.

BYRD (CONT'D)

Oh, and there's money in it. Good money.

Barris turns.

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INT. DINER - DAY

Barris and Jim Byrd sit in a booth. Barris is wolfing a hamburger. Byrd sips coffee.

BARRIS

(mouth full)

... and I figure if I can keep afloat until I come up with my next game show idea, then all will be copacetic.

BYRD

That sounds great, Chuck. Y'know, I've never known a television producer before. I'm impressed.

BARRIS

Yeah, yeah. So what's this money deal you were talking about?

BYRD

Well, I work for a government agency, and I can always use good, enthusiastic men to help me carry out my directives.

BARRIS

What kind of work? What government agency?

BYRD

(matter-of-fact)

Problem solving work. For the Office of Diplomatic Security.

BARRIS

Office of what? Never heard of it. Is that the fucking CIA or something?

BYRD

Please be discreet, Mr. Barris.

BARRIS

(whispering)

Jesus, it is the fucking CIA! Hell, I'll be a spy! Where do I sign up? Are you fucking with me? You're fucking with me, aren't you?

BYRD

Hardly. And you wouldn't be with the company. You'd be a contract agent. Independent. No official tie to any agency. Is that understood?

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

BARRIS

(beat)

Why me?

BYRD

As you know, I've been watching you. For years, actually. I've only let you know about it for the last week.

Chuck stops chewing.

BARRIS

Jesus.

BYRD

I'm happy to report you fit our profile,
Mr. Barris. Are you interested in this
work?

Long pause.

BARRIS

Well, what's the profile?

BYRD

Are you interested in this work, Mr.
Barris?

BARRIS

Yeah, sure, I wanna be a secret agent.
Contract agent. Whatever. Get to fuck
beautiful Eastern European women. Wear a
trenchcoat. Sounds like a kick.

BYRD

The work we do is very serious. It's
essential in quelling the rise of
communism and allowing democracy to gain
its rightful foothold around the globe.

BARRIS

Sure. Yeah. Okay. That's good.

CONFESSIONS OF A DANGEROUS MIND (2)

INT. DATING GAME SET - LATER

Barris paces on the darkened set. He is trying to think. A shadowy figure appears at the top of the bleachers and creeps down the aisle. Barris is deep in thought and doesn't hear. The man appears behind Barris and locks his arm around Barris's neck. Barris is startled, choking and flailing trying to remove the arm. He can't. Finally the man releases Barris and tweaks his crotch. Barris turns wildly around. It is Jim Byrd.

BYRD
Boy, didn't I teach you anything?

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

BARRIS
You son of a bitch!

Barris swings at Byrd. Byrd easily blocks the punch.

BYRD
You're so rusty, it's embarrassing.

BARRIS
You're a stupid fucking turd, you know that?

BYRD
Can I buy you lunch?

INT. MARTONI'S - DAY

Jim is downing his bourbon and signals the waitress for another. Barris, still pissed, sips a martini.

BYRD
Ah, lighten up, hombre.

BARRIS
My fucking neck hurts. Okay?

BYRD
Poor baby. Look, I've been put in charge of a fairly large wet operation and I could use your help.

BARRIS
Have you noticed, Jim, I've got a tv show on the air? I don't need to kill people for hire anymore.

BYRD
I know you don't need to. But you'd like
to.

BARRIS
That's insane.

Byrd shrugs, unconvinced. He sips his drink.

BYRD
Think of it as a hobby. An avocation.
Something you do to relax. You can be an
assassination enthusiast, a murder bug.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

BARRIS
I've got important things to think about
here. I don't have time to fuck around
with you.

BYRD
Okay, I'll help you out with your little
show. Tit for tat. That's the kinda guy
I am. I've seen this Dating Game of
yours, Chuck. And I have a thought.

BARRIS
What, now you're a television producer?

BYRD
Hey, I'm CIA operative John Q. Public
when it comes to tv and that should make
my opinion of interest to you.

BARRIS
Let's hear it then.

BYRD
Well, what do you have now? The couple
gets sent to some stupid second-rate
Hollywood shitcan restaurant, right?
Sets you back fifty bucks? That's not
too exciting a prize to us vicarious-
living boobs out in TV-land.

BARRIS
Yeah, what's your point?

BYRD
Up the stakes, Chuckles. Send 'em to

some exotic locale. Europe, Southeast Asia, for example.

BARRIS

The network's not going to let me send two unmarried kids on vacation together.

BYRD

(shrugs)

Send 'em with a chaperone. Some respectable old lady with a sewn closed snatch.

BARRIS

(considering)

Y'know, that's not half bad.

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CONTINUED: (2)

BYRD

I'm telling ya. And... And sometimes you can be the chaperone, Chuckie. Let's say we have a job for you in Austria. You, a successful tv producer, above suspicion, chaperones the young couple, and while you're there, blam! you take care of some Company business. It's the perfect cover. TV producer by day, CIA operative by night.

BARRIS

I told you, I don't have to kill people for money anymore.

BYRD

Chuck, when I said you fit our profile, very little of that had to do with you needing the money. Some of it, but very little. You liked it with Renda, Chuck. I saw it in your eyes. You liked it but you botched it. Don't you want to get really good at something, Chuck?

Barris stares at Byrd.