



Scripts.com

Backstabbing for Beginners

By Per Fly

1

My name is Michael Sullivan

and I have a story...

I think you're gonna want to hear.

Michael Sullivan?

How long have you been

a lobbyist at Belasquian Banks?

Two years.

A lot of strategy, research and support.

That's a good job.

You're not happy there?

No, I just... I don't want to wake up

when I'm 40 and discover

the only thing I've contributed

to the world is tax shelters,

sweatshops, and holes in the ozone.

You're an idealist?

You know, for as long as I can remember

I've wanted to be a diplomat.

I want to make a difference in the world.

Your father was a diplomat.

- Yeah, US State Department, he...

- Lebanon. 1983.

I'm sorry for your loss.

My father passed away

when I was little.

He was killed in the bombing

of the US Embassy in Beirut

when I was five years old.

One of my earliest memories

is my father telling stories

about the founding of the United Nations.

We'll find a way to end war.

He made it sound like modern day knights

sitting around the Round Table.

I wanted to follow in his footsteps.

By the fall of 2002,

I had applied for a job

at the United Nations four times.

- Hey!

- Uncle Michael!

My sister says it's because

foreign service is in our family legacy.

- Hey little brother, how are ya?

- Hey, good.
- Sorry I'm late.
- You look good.
And just like my mother,
she married a guy she met
while interning at the UN.
So I got you something small,
but something else is on its way, okay?
- Hey, Trevor.
- Hey.
- Nice cake, Lily. Got enough Danish flags?
- Yeah, yeah.
Well, did you hear anything?
No. I'll hear tomorrow.
But how'd it feel?
Good?
No, I was too nervous.
Oh, well, it's their loss.
I'm sure you'll get it.
You've been working so hard for this.
Yeah.
And it's somebody's birthday,
so should we do cake?
Yes!
Happy Birthday to you
Happy Birthday dear Kate
Best candidates keep getting
hired away by fucking hedge funds.
Michael Sullivan.
I knew his father.
Danish passport.
His mother's side,
but he's only 24 years old.
He'll do.
I thought I would start
with some entry-level assignment.
Instead I got a dream job.
Special Assistant
to the Under-Secretary-General...
running the largest humanitarian program
in the United Nations' history.
I couldn't believe my luck.
All I kept thinking was,
"Don't fuck this up. "

The program is called
Oil-for-Food.
It's created in 1995
by Security Council resolution 986,
which has stated that the UN
would manage the sale of Iraqi oil
and use the profits to provide
humanitarian relief in the country
to alleviate the hardship.
Which basically means that our office
is in charge of trying to feed
an entire nation,
over 20 million people.
You have a little reading to catch up on.
We are woefully behind schedule
on our funding status report
to the Security Council.
Your immediate task will be
to help facilitate its completion.
Your predecessor was due to brief
the undersecretary tomorrow.
Tomorrow?
What happened to him?
A car accident in Iraq.
Jesus Christ! Is he all right?
No, he didn't make it.
A bullet-point summary will do.
Pasha will be in his office at nine.
Got a couple of minutes, Michael?
Justin Cutter, Central Intelligence.
Really?
Yeah. We come in all shapes and sizes.
Okay, can I help you with something?
Listen, we think Oil-for-Food
is being gamed for private gain
by a bad guy or bad guys unknown.
Possibly with help from the inside,
- which is where you are, so...
- Look, I... I just got this job.
I'm not gonna... I'm not gonna spy for you.
Oh, God, no.
No, no, leave that to the professionals.
I don't want you to do anything
that makes you uncomfortable, Michael.

Just keep your eyes and ears open,
that's all.
For God and Country.
I was aware going in
that the Oil-for-Food program
had become something
of a political football.
The program budget
was 10 billion dollars a year.
The entire rest of the UN
operational budget was only two.
There was crazy money to be had.
Special interests circling like buzzards.
The program was simple.
Because of the economic sanctions imposed
against Saddam Hussein
after the first Gulf War,
Iraq's economy had crashed.
People were starving and dying
from a lack of basic medicine and staples.
The Oil-for-Food program
was designed to provide Iraqi citizens
with what they needed to survive.
While at the same time, preventing Saddam
from developing his alleged
weapons of mass destruction.
Under UN supervision,
Iraqi oil was being sold at market prices
to pay for humanitarian aid.
Our job was to keep it funded
by making sure everything
went by the book.
I'm here to present the summary.
He'll be with you in a minute.
...this fucking regime!
Unbelievable.
Yes, I sorted it.
There's always a solution.
No, we chartered
a load of taxis, filled them.
That should last the outlying villages
till we get the trucks back.
You call this a summary?
Fucking War and Peace.

Sorry, sir, I was trying to be thorough.

Thorough?

Yes, sir.

Fuck.

Well, just give me the highlights, kid.

Otherwise we'll be here till spring thaw.

Yes. We have,

decreased the malnutrition rate,

reduced child mortality.

We've also,

made big strides

in access to water and electricity.

There are, however, some,

systemic distribution failures,

particularly in the North.

The Kurds are getting shorted,

wheat, milk, diesel fuel

to the benefit of Tikrit,

who are getting seemingly

more than their fair share.

Saddam's hometown, what a surprise.

Yeah.

There are also all these

after service fees, in the contracts.

I'm pretty sure they're kickbacks.

If you wanna take a look,

I highlighted and aggregated them

on page 26 to 29.

It's a lot of money, sir.

In some places it's as much as 30 percent.

Sit.

Kid.

Sit down!

The first rule of diplomacy

is that the truth is not a matter of fact,

it's a matter of consensus.

The consensus right now

is that the sanctions are here to stay.

The Americans and the British

will never lift them,

which means... that if you want

the people of Iraq to survive,

we have to keep Oil-for-Food running.

- Even with all its warts and flaws.

- Sir, you do not need to...
The second rule
is to keep your mouth shut and listen.
Then if it suits, you can talk.
With discretion.
Otherwise, keeping your cards
close to your vest.
Yeah.
Your father was a good man.
You should be so lucky
as to have his heart.
Yeah, so I've been told.
We crossed paths a couple of times.
Must have been '79, '80.
What a tragedy.
Beirut.
Fuck. I'm sorry.
That must have been hard,
a boy growing up without a father.
It was my normal.
I had my cry.
Good.
Fix your summary.
Go home and pack.
We leave for Baghdad on the red-eye.
What? You have other plans?
No, I don't.
Of course not.
Thank you.
I was swept up
in the romance of it.
I mean, this is what I wanted:
high adventure and a worthy cause.
It's like Baghdad was my Casablanca.
More or less sketchy, crazy,
dangerous and stranger
than I could've ever imagined.
The country lived in a state
of permanent self-occupation.
Our Baghdad office
is going to present a problem.
Okay.
We can't let this director
sabotage the report.

Why... Why would he sabotage
his own report?

She.

So the Security Council
will be forced to lift the sanctions,
and everybody can cash in
on the deals they made with Saddam
back before he rolled into Kuwait
and pissed off the world.

Jesus H. Christ, kid.

Gonna have to fucking teach you
everything from scratch.

Every six months we have to justify
our continued existence.

Our job right now is to write a report
for the Security Council
emphasizing all the good
in the Oil-for-Food program
whilst minimizing the challenges.

Not to lie.

No, never lie,
but to choose our facts,
our truths, with the utmost care.

Right.

Can I trust you to do that?

Yes. Absolutely.

There she is.

Madame Dupre.

Trying to backstab us.

Christina.

Hassan Ghazarian.

- Hey, Michael Sullivan. Nice to meet you.

- Nice to meet you.

Did you get the documents

I sent you?

- I did, I've even printed them up for you.

- Oh, great.

You write well.

Sixty percent of the Iraqi people
are solely dependent
upon our suppliers for survival.

Wheat, grain, milk, medicine,
essential infrastructure.

During the last ten months,

we have decreased malnutrition rate
amongst children in Iraq by 50 percent,
thereby reduced
child mortality significantly.
Okay, thank you very much.
Photographers come through.
We're gonna have a photo opportunity,
with Madame Dupre.
It's hard to overstate
how badly Saddam was abusing his people.
Friends of the regime
could get easy access to the medicine.
Others, less fortunate, were left to die
from even the simplest of diseases.
Wait.
They send bad drugs.
Dump on us
their out-of-date prescriptions.
Thank him for, bringing this to me,
and tell him I'll look into it.
He says there's a black market
with Oil-for-Food pills.
Or this innocent child,
please explain to her
why she cannot have
the stem cell therapy that could cure her.
Why she has to suffer
because the West begrudges Iraq
its dignity.
That I can't explain, no.
She asks why you are crying.
I promise I will do anything I can
to help your child.
It sickens me to have to stand there
and listen to your lies.
It's PR, Christina.
Everyone in the field is working so hard.
Well, my report to the Security Council
is going to tell the truth.
Just so you know.
Your report.
The program is a failure.
- The sanctions aren't working.
- How is the program failing?

Medicine is getting through.

- At what cost?

- People are getting basic staples.

At what cost?

Everybody is grifting the system.

Corruption grows like a cancer.

It'll never be perfect,

and surely it's better than doing nothing.

Michael, what's the delay?

Sorry,

there's a small security issue.

We'll be on our way in a few moments.

I know what you're doing.

You want me to sign off

on your moral relativism

so you can throw me under the bus

when it all unravels.

You are mistaken,

I'm just trying to feed a country.

Enough spin, Costa, enough!

The facts will speak for themselves.

My report to the Security Council

is going to tell the truth.

Baghdad is the center

of the universe now, kid.

And this, Al Rasheed, is ground zero.

Boiler room of diplomacy.

Pasha!

Nice to see you again.

Mr. Mohammed, my assistant.

Michael Sullivan.

Count your fingers

after you shake hands with this one.

All major intelligence agencies

are here,

and all rooms are bugged.

Everyone trying to barter in their secrets

and their services.

Information is everything.

The currency, the power.

Look. Listen. Learn.

Everyone

has their own agenda?

Baby Bush thinks Saddam

disrespected his papa.
American neocons?
They're convinced democracy
will bloom here like a fucking flower...
good luck with that.
Putin wants Bush to fail,
China wants the new markets,
half of Europe couldn't care less
whether Saddam gasses civilians
or builds a bomb.
Big Oil... simply wants an end
to the sanctions
so it can suck at the Iraqi teat.
So, about what the doctor told me today.
The grifted medicine, missing supplies.
I smell a setup.
It didn't really feel like a setup.
More nonsense from Madame.
She's not just ineffective,
she's actively inventing proof
of the program's failings.
If we don't do something,
this report's gonna be a disaster.
- Don't you get the final say?
- Sadly, no.
UN protocol requires the regional director
sign off on the report.
And what's our agenda?
Our agenda?
That little girl.
At the hospital.
God help anyone who gets in our way.
Yeah.
I had a son once.
Died... of the flu, just a baby.
Can you believe that?
And my wife...
we couldn't make another.
Sorry.
Thirty years ago.
How did you put it?
I had my cry.
Flu.
You tired?

No.

Youth. Fuck.

You know, for someone who speaks
for other people for a living,
you don't talk much.

I couldn't help but notice
you were not surprised
when the doctor spoke
of black market medicine.

No, I wasn't.

Will you tell your boss?

Yeah. We already know
there's some corruption in the program.
Outside Baghdad it's much worse.
Rations diverted, power cut off.
Extortion, bribes.

I'll, make sure Pasha knows that, too.

You have something you want to ask me?

Is it about Madame?

That your boss wants you to find
the secret button

he can push to bend her to his will?

I can tell you.

It does not exist.

I'm just trying to do my job.

But... your predecessor, Abhek,
his car accident was not an accident.
That's a pretty big accusation to make.

Why are you telling me this?

He was murdered
because of something he uncovered.

Something in Oil-for-Food?

I don't know.

Maybe.

He was fearful of someone
inside United Nations.

A facilitator of corruption.

You need to be very, very careful.

Good evening.

Please.

The Mukhabarat, you see, were concerned
to inspect your sleeping chamber
for the existence
of any surveillance device.

This as a courtesy,
for your security, of course.
Why don't you start
by telling me who you are?
Are you enjoying your visit
to Mesopotamia, Mr. Sullivan?
First one, if I'm not mistaken, yes?
Such a difficult, stressful time
for everyone here.
The Great Satan
keeps threatening to bomb the city.
Meanwhile, the sanctions cut deep.
- Baghdad puts...
- Why don't you get to the point?
You will find on the bureau behind me
an envelope containing a small honorarium.
We greatly admire the work
you are doing for the Iraqi...
It's late.
I'd like you to leave, please.
No disrespect was meant by it.
Don't forget your envelope.
Can't blame them for trying,
it's nothing.
You handled it perfectly.
Yeah.
What about what the interpreter said
about Abhek?
I don't believe it.
Perhaps she's a spy for Saddam
sent to rattle us.
You look like shit, kid.
Fuck, eat something.
I'm sorry.
Excuse me.
I'd been warned,
but I was still shocked
by the criticism from UN staff
against the sanctions.
Pasha was right,
every department had an agenda.
They were working at cross-purposes,
and they played
right into Madame Dupre's hands.

Shut up!
You sound like Saddam's puppets,
all of you.
Do I need to point out
the serious fucking consequences
to the Iraqi people,
if we fail to continue...
- You violated...
- Are you fucking kidding me?
It's not our place to question
the decisions of the Security Council.
We implement them.
Absent of all politics.
And yes,
it's a hard fucking job sometimes.
But if you can't do it,
I suggest you turn in
your fucking credentials and go home.
I knew from my research
that our biggest worry was Kurdistan.
As long as Saddam was in power
it was gonna take all
of Pasha's considerable diplomatic skills
to keep the Kurds
from undermining the report.
The rations, when they come,
are always half what was promised.
The North is a protectorate,
so unfortunately...
They had been hurt harder
under the sanctions than any other region,
and while Oil-for-Food
was providing some relief,
it had helped sustain
the very regime that oppressed them.
The Kurds have plenty of money
to buy their own food,
- from that black market oil!
- Minister, if you would allow me...
The Kurdish conflict with Iraq
goes back nearly a century.
Saddam Hussein took it
to a whole new level.
Forced displacement,

mass detention and torture.
And then, when that didn't work,
he resorted to land mines
and cluster bombs,
sarin gas and nerve agents,
killing tens of thousands
and crippling tens of thousands more.
A reign of terror
that included the worst single act
of chemical genocide ever committed
against a civilian population.
Kurds are dying for simply being Kurdish.
And in a shuttle diplomacy
between two sworn enemies,
I watched Pasha work his magic.
...about how
the most beloved food to Allah,
is that which is touched by many hands.
- Fuck! This is all I need.
- The Kurdish minister's right, though.
From what I've been told,
they're getting completely screwed.
I know he's right.
It's in the fucking field reports
but we have to keep a lid on it.
The choice can't be
to feed everyone or feed no one.
It has to be to feed as many as possible.
I have to go back
to New York tomorrow.
I need you to stay focused.
Of course.
Here's your travel itinerary.
You are connecting through Kuwait,
you land in JFK at 5:00 p. m.
Dupre is going to freeze you out
of the final report.
Her opus indictment of Oil-for-Food.
Okay, then why am I staying here, then?
In a few days,
you'll receive some photographs.
You'll want Hassan to see them
because you won't understand
what they could mean.

Your task is to make sure
he shows them to Dupre
by insisting he shouldn't.
- You're asking me if I'll...
- A trap, yes.
She'll fall into it,
and we'll be rid of her.
Kid, it's diplomacy.
It sometimes requires removing obstacles
that stand in the way
of a successful outcome.
Can I trust you again with this one?
I mean, how big of a lie
am I gonna be telling?
Not lie.
Just the opportunity
to draw a wrong conclusion.
Morning.
Just so you know, Madame says
you won't be reading the report
until it's finished
and she signed off on it.
Well, Pasha said he wants me to help.
People in hell want ice water.
We're just pawns in a bigger game,
you and me.
Sorry, Michael.
Hassan.
At least you can help me arrange
an interpreter for a field trip.
I want to open one of these
boxes and check the expiration date.
He says he's the company representative.
Tell him I want to open
one of these boxes.
These pills expired in 1999.
Sick people will get sicker or die
because of these.
Every box needs to be checked,
the out of date medicine
needs to be destroyed,
and the manufacturer will have
to replace it at their own expense.
I should warn you,

everyone here thinks I'm your prostitute.
Well, I guess we should
split the check, then.
You can't really just have a date
with an unchaperoned woman in Iraq.
There are rituals and traditions.
Do you wanna call it off, then?
Did you tell your boss
what I said about Ahbek?
Yeah, I did. He, ...
he thinks you might be a government spy.
So are you? A spy?
Is that a serious question?
That's a pretty evasive answer.
No.
Now it's my turn to ask you.
Okay.
What are you doing here?
Well, I'm doing a status report
for the Oil-for-Food program
and then I'm gonna ...
I mean today, with the spoiled medicine.
What you did had nothing to do
with writing your report.
You took action.
It was risky and ... rather brave.
Was that just to impress me?
I'm not here to just be a functionary.
I took this job for a reason,
because I want to help people ...
and I want to make a difference.
Make a difference?
Exactly.
I'll drink to that.
Cheers.
They're not gonna bomb Baghdad,
not without getting
the UN staffers out first.
- Mr. Sullivan?
- Yeah?
- This has come for you.
- Thanks.
Lil, I gotta go. Who sent this?
It was left on the night desk, sir.

Are those Oil-for-Food trucks?
Yeah,
but I don't know the source of them.
If they're real,
they are proof that we're being gamed
by Saddam's regime.
Yeah, if.
I still don't think we should trust them.
Using our trucks to deliver weapons,
I mean, what the fuck?
I'm just gonna pack 'em up
into a courier pouch,
- see what Pasha thinks...
- No, no, no.
- Let me show Christina first.
- No, no, no chance.
It's okay. What do you call it?
"Chain of command. "
Okay.
Hi.
Hey.
I need to show you something.
Okay.
They are friends.
Okay.
So, this place isn't here, officially.
These are the graves
of Kurdish civilians that...
Saddam Hussein one day decided
no longer needed to live.
Gas, sarin, tabun, VX.
The smell of sweet apples.
He doesn't care
about your sanctions or resolutions.
He's the Angel of Death. Azrael.
You're Kurdish.
My parents were intellectuals,
active in PUK.
Killed in Halabja.
I'm sorry.
Nobody in Baghdad
knows I'm Kurdish, Michael.
If Saddam's police find out,
they will disappear me.

My friends, they helped Ahbek uncover
a criminal conspiracy
Saddam is using to skim billions
of dollars from Oil-for-Food.
Ahbek claimed there is a whole system
of corruption
that reaches to the highest levels
of the same Western government
that supports sanctions.
Okay, how did Ahbek know this?
There is a rumor, of a list.
A list that contains names of people
and organizations all over the world
who are all getting paid off by Saddam
to keep this system running.
And Ahbek had seen it.
- Did you bring it?
- Yes.
May have had it
on his computer.
You sure nobody saw you?
The office was empty,
everyone had gone home.
Ahbek, what's going on with you?
I'm going north across the border.
It's not safe for me here.
He made a back up.
But it's encrypted.
We don't have the resources
to decipher it.
Why didn't you take it to someone
more senior in the UN?
I mean, anyone. Madame Dupre?
Nobody would listen to her.
It's important who delivers the list.
No one can accuse you of being partisan
or of having any agenda but the truth.
I'm not gonna front this, Nashim.
I'm not gonna do that.
No, I don't want that.
I just want you to take it back with you
and find someone
who can break the encryption.
Then, together we can decide what to do.

Shit! It's the Mukhabarat.
Are you fucking kidding me?
Jesus!
There must be a mistake,
I'm a... I'm a UN official.
The young diplomat.
You know, it's very dangerous for you
to be in this godforsaken desert
unescorted.
The Mukhabarat were concerned
that you might have been kidnapped
by nefarious individuals.
Consider this a courtesy.
Your papers.
I tell you this with all humility,
Mr. Sullivan,
because I'm sure it won't happen again.
Your recent visit to
the pharmaceutical distribution service,
that was,
unnecessarily provocative, yes?
It would be in everyone's best interest,
in the future,
were you to decide such inspections
were no longer necessary.
She is my interpreter, all right?
I told you!
Go! Now.
Before they change their minds.
Get in the car.
He kept my papers.
It's only a question of time now
before they find out who I am.
Nashim Huesseni.
- Where is the girl?
- What girl?
The Kurdish girl.
- I don't know what you're talking about.
- You're lying!
- I don't know what you're talking about!
- Don't lie!
- I don't know where she is.
- We saw you with her.
Yeah, I know,

but I don't know where she is, okay?
Let me just... let me just make a call.
I don't know where she is.
Get out!
You have no jurisdiction here!
Out!
It's Michael Sullivan
with the Baghdad Oil-for-Food office.
Yeah.
I need to arrange a UNLP
for one of our staffers.
Yeah, the name is Nashim Huesseni.
- Hey.
- I took all I could carry.
This will get you into the US.
The High Commission for Refugees
will help you get a visa.
I don't know,
I can go to Kurdish part of Turkey.
- I have some friends there.
- No, you'll be safer in New York.
We'll get you to the US
then we de-encrypt the list together.
Go. You cannot be seen with me.
Whatever happens...
just promise me you'll let me know.
Whatever happens... happens.
Right?
Thank you.
Would you please come to my office?
Immediately.
Do you really expect me to fall for this...
This... I don't even know
what to call them.
Garbage.
What was the plan?
Trick me into releasing them?
And then force me out
when the evidence comes that it's false?
I'm at a loss to even know
what you're talking about.
Madame, I was sent some documents
and Hassam wanted to show them
to you, that's it.

You are finished in the UN,
do you hear me?
Your career is over!
What would you have him do?
He got some photos...
Shame on you.
Shame on both of you!
The report is finished.
It tells the truth
about the failure of Oil-for-Food.
The files are digital,
watermarked, time, date,
and I have secure copies,
so you can't change anything
when it goes to New York.
The battle is over, Costa,
and you have lost.
The Security Council will make
their decision based on the facts.
She's gone, Pasha.
Well, fuck.
Nothing more for you to do there, kid.
Take the next UN flight, come home.
Don't worry about it.
Excuse me, sir. Can I see your passport?
Yeah, sure.
Mr. Sullivan?
I'm gonna need you to come with us.
Michael, how you doing?
I have nothing for you.
No, that's okay, I got...
I got something for you.
Christina Dupre is dead.
They found her a few hours ago
alone at home.
Heart attack.
At least... that's what they're saying.
Wait, w... what do you mean,
"That's what they're saying?"
What do you think happened, Mike?
I don't... I have no idea.
How would I...?
Your boss, what does he think?
If you have questions for Pasha,

you should just ask him yourself.
Did he ever mention anything about a list?
No. Why?
Michael...
is there anything
you wanna tell me right now?
No.
Thanks.
- Hello?
- You're home.
Yeah, yeah, I just got in.
Did you hear about Madame?
Yeah.
Terrible.
We had our disagreements, but...
This just breaks my heart.
And,...
and the report?
Hassan assures me that he doesn't share
Madame's determination
to blow up the program.
He'll sign off,
as her successor,
on whatever we need to get re-funded.
Madame was wrong.
Being fucking dead doesn't change that.
You've got two days to clean this up.
What do you mean
I've got two days to clean this up?
I've been thinking I might need you
to present the oral summary.
Wait. Do you want me
to present the report?
To the whole fucking Security Council.
Isn't that breach of protocol, Pasha?
I can do what I like.
Besides,
they should be hearing from somebody...
close to the ground,
and whom else can I trust to do it?
Okay, yeah.
Are you kidding me?
This is such a big deal.
For somebody at your pay grade

to stand before the Security Council?

Yeah, no, I know,

it's a great opportunity.

What?

Where did you get this?

A friend in Baghdad.

No.

I mean, I can't crack this.

Do you know anyone who can?

Do you even know what's on the drive?

No.

Do you know anyone who can crack it?

I'll give it a try.

Do you mind if I... if I hold onto this?

Yeah, keep it.

Hi, yeah, I was given this
as a possible contact number for her.

Yeah, exactly, Michael Sullivan.

No, I understand, yeah.

Just... the number I gave you,
if you could make sure you
or one of your colleagues gets,
gets back to me
if you hear anything at all.

Madame Dupre's death
hung over Oil-for-Food like a cloud.

But Pasha had a clear path
to what he wanted.

I focused on writing the report.

I didn't want anyone to doubt
that I deserved to be in that room.

I couldn't help thinking about my father.

Whether he had stood before
the council like I would.

Whether he would think
that what I was doing was right.

You okay?

I'm okay now.

They have 100 percent
fucking certainty WMD's in Iraq,
and zero percent certainty where they are.

Let me call you back.

Finished.

Pending your review and Hassan's sign-off.

That's my boy.
Good work.
I got a call...
from Oversight, about your UNLP request
for our sexy little translator.
They asked me to look into it.
I believe she's in New York now.
Right.
She's Kurdish.
She needs asylum. The D-4 were after her.
They killed two of her countrymen.
Kurds don't have a country.
She makes friends like you everywhere.
Oldest trick in the book: the honeypot.
CIA calls it the "dangle" now.
Seduce the mark, tell him fairy tales.
It's not just the Russians, notice:
CIA, M15, Interpol...
Girl has a big following.
Pashmerga sent her to school in England,
got her phony papers
and a job at the Baghdad UN.
What did she want you to do?
Nothing.
I bet she's highly skilled
in the soft arts.
What you did is stupid... and illegal.
I'll make it go away.
But in future, if you're gonna do
these things, come to me first.
Who gave you this?
It doesn't matter.
You've been using me.
No.
Yes.
You said you wanted to help.
- Our meeting wasn't like that, I really...
- Fucking bullshit, Nashim,
I know how this works.
Do you?
Yeah.
Yes, okay,
I am guilty of taking a job in Baghdad
and trying to find a way

to help my people get free
of a dictator who wants to exterminate us.
And, yes, I talked with men
who might be of help.
But I didn't sleep with any of them, okay?
I didn't have to.
Nashim, you have asked me
to risk my life for a list
that I don't even know
where the fuck it came from.

This is...

I'm sorry, but this is who I am.

Do you want me to leave?

- Hi.

- Hey.

Came to wish you luck.

- Hey, man. Thank you.

- Knock 'em dead.

Michael.

- Ready?

- Yeah.

- You'll do great. Relax.

- Thanks.

In an unusual move at today's
United Nation's Oil-for-Food vote,
Under-Secretary-General Costa Passaris
yielded his chair
to his executive assistant,
Michael Sullivan,
to present the report
on the status of the program.
The, Oil-for-Food program
continues to achieve
its core mission
of providing humanitarian relief.
The request
for continued funding comes in the wake
of the sudden death
of Baghdad field director,
Christina Dupre,
who was a vocal critic of the program.
And against the backdrop
of intensified efforts
to find Saddam Hussein's suspected caches

of weapons of mass destruction.
Continuing resolution 986,
the council has voted unanimously
to extend funding for another 180 days.

Michael Sullivan
addressed the press
after the Security Council vote.
Thank you.

I don't understand why
he would want to invite me. Why?
I know. Me neither.
- Let's get a drink, okay?
- Here you are.

My protg:

Timur Rasnetsov.
Costa insists
you are the hero of Oil-for-Food.
And here is Nashim.
Lovely.
Welcome to the USA.
Thank you.
Where is your drink?
I think we even have
some arak tucked away.
So, how have you been?
Fine, thank you.
Great.
Well, enjoy your evening.
You must be the young diplomat
Michael Sullivan
my husband is always talking about.
Nice to meet you, pleasure.
I'm Melina, Pasha's wife.
Ah, of course, yes, yes.
Pasha gushes about you,
and Pasha doesn't gush about anyone.
Well, he certainly taught me a lot.
It can never work.
Is that a proud papa
overprotecting his surrogate son?
Don't patronize me.
Is it so unthinkable
that I could be in love with him?

You are what you are.
You cannot fool me.
You gave him the file on me.
Listen.
If you do anything
to compromise the kid or hurt him,
I will have you deported so fast
your hijab will spin.
You know what,
I have to,... I have to go.
My apologies,
I have to deal with something.
H... How long have you known that guy for?
He came with a delegation,
we just met. Why?
He was the one that tried to bribe me
in my hotel in Baghdad.
Apparently he's very well connected.
Could be useful.
I gotta go.
What the fuck
was that man doing at the party?
I don't know.
What did Pasha want?
He threatened me.
Your boss threatened me.
- Hello?
- Michael, my guy came through.
You better come see this.
You're not gonna believe this.
Saddam has been selling
oil vouchers at a discount
to people who turn around,
resell the vouchers
at the going oil peak rate
for a huge profit.
Saddam gets a kickback,
a share of the difference
between his discount and the going rate.
How much did he make?
I don't know,
could be over a billion dollars.
Jesus Christ.
Do we know if these are real?

They look real.
And it looks like a system.
There's a list of all the major players:
politicians, businessmen, bankers.
We're talking highly-placed people
at the very heart
of most First World governments.
And they are taking
millions of dollars in bribes.
This is real. Of course, it's real.
Well, to prove it you're gonna need
records of the actual transactions.
You need to give this to Pasha.
This is a UN internal matter.
You do not want to be left
holding the bag on this.
Amongst the encrypted documents
I found this, video codec.
How long does it run for?
- Seventy-one minutes.
- Seventy-one minutes is a strange time.
Yeah.
I started to scroll through it,
but it's all pretty much the same.
Zoom in.
Scroll back.
I knew it.
I fuckin' knew it. I knew...
I knew that he was involved.
We need to make the list public.
We can't do that.
They'll just deny it.
And then all we do is destroy the UN.
We need to find someone
to start asking questions.
The media, your congress.
The truth will come out.
Look, all these powerful interests
at play,
they will decide what the truth is.
Pasha will be the sacrificial lamb
and my career is over.
- You're not part of this.
- Of course I'm fucking part of this.

I just gave a speech
about the integrity of Oil-for-Food.
What are you saying? Do nothing?
I don't know what I'm saying.
What's going on?
Michael! Stop it!
Michael!
- Hey, man, you okay?
- Yeah, yeah.
You need me to call 911?
- Where is she?
- I don't know.
Call your friend, tell him I will trade
what he wants for Nashim.
He's not my friend.
Pasha, I have a video of you
taking a fucking bribe from him.
You gonna come inside, kid,
or do we have to do this out here?
We're gonna do this out here.
I take a cut, sure.
Why not? Everyone else has.
I put my whole career on the line
for this mission, every fucking day.
Come inside, kid, it's cold.
Rasnetsov is a fixer.
He's a very dangerous man.
Nothing in Iraq runs, nothing without him.
And who runs him?
Highest bidder.
Moscow, Beijing, Saddam,
hedge funds, mafia, greed.
Rasnetsov is the bridge
between politics and reality.
And whose side are you on, Pasha?
Ah, I thought I heard you come in.
Sit down, Michael, please.
I'll make that call.
Coffee?
Yeah, thanks.
Did you enjoy the party last night?
Yeah, we had a great time, thank you.
You left so early. I wondered.
Yeah, my friend,

she wasn't feeling too well.
Ah. It's flu season.
Yeah.
Well, I'll leave you to it.
They've handed her over to immigration.
Okay, well, she has papers.
I think you'll find they're missing.
She's become an irritation.
If she gets deported to Iraq
they will execute her for treason.
They'll send her back to Baghdad
where I still have some sway...
No, you call him back and tell him
I'm not gonna give up the list
until Nashim is set free.
That's not how it works.
- You need to trust me.
- I did trust you, Pasha.
I trusted you
and you fucked me at every turn.
Look where we are.
Committing crimes and taking bribes.
The crime would have been to do nothing,
to watch innocents suffer and die.
What about Dupre? What about Abhek?
What was the justification for that?
We didn't make the storm.
And we can't control the storm.
All we can do is plot our course,
set our sails, and try to do our best.
As we did, and we do.
Best for who, Pasha? Best for you.
Not best for Nashim.
Not best for her people.
Ah, look, maybe you love this spy, fuck.
Who am I to argue with the heart?
Don't let her get you killed.
We can help her people,
but we have to do it our way.
Bush's coalition of the willing
is going to invade Iraq
in a matter of days now.
Consensus is changing,
and the new truth is Saddam is history,

and Oil-for-Food
can be successful framework
for rebuilding of a new free Iraq
in which the United Nations...
not the carpetbaggers
and craven governments
who created this nightmare...
the UN can take the lead fucking role.
You and me, kid.
We can save the world...
and save your girl.
Trust me.
My fellow citizens, at this hour
American and coalition forces
are in the early stages
of military operations
to disarm Iraq, to free its people,
and to defend the world from grave danger.
Over the next 24 to 48 hours,
perhaps as many as 3,000,
3,000 Tomahawk cruise missiles,
satellite guided precision bombs,
laser guided bombs
would be dropped at various targets
not only in Baghdad, around Baghdad,
but elsewhere around the...
Six weeks after the invasion
I was back in Baghdad
to work on Pasha's plan to put the UN
in charge of rebuilding the new Iraq.
The sanctions were lifted.
The free market would power the country.
Free elections would give
every citizen a voice,
and oil would pay the bills.
Pasha still had strong connections.
And he kept his promise to me.
Nashim Hussein.
The days when we were together.
Blank pages.
I missed you.
I have something for you.
A new passport and a visa, so...
Here. You can stay as long as you want.

And what about the list?

I gave it to Pasha.

- You traded the list for me?

- Yeah.

- Why?

- I didn't exactly have a choice.

I made a judgment call, okay?

And what do you think

is going to happen with Pasha now?

Pasha can still do

a lot of good in the UN.

- You are dreaming.

- I'm not dreaming.

I'm not dreaming, I'm not, okay?

Consensus has changed,

and with Saddam gone

we can actually do a lot of good.

- Finally...

- Just by thinking

you can work with the criminals

to take what you want, you are lost.

Well, it wasn't exactly a fight

we were gonna win, was it?

I put all my fucking life on this.

Who are you to decide that for me?

You said it yourself.

It's very, very fucking complicated.

No, not this part.

This part is very simple.

- I don't want to be a part of this.

- No, no, no.

I can't.

Nashim, Nashim, wait, wait, wait.

Nashim!

I'm told you aren't answering your phone.

What the fuck?

- Yeah, I've been busy.

- Yeah.

I heard.

Your Kurd took a walk.

Relationships are a train wreck.

Come on, kid.

You wanted a career in diplomacy.

Well, you're missing your golden moment.

See you at the office.
Pasha, I have those medical contracts
for you to...
I was on my way out.
Pasha.
bientt.
It's good to see you again, Michael.
You think I like it?
He's got the world in his pocket, kid.
All the major fucking players
in the reconstruction.
I don't understand.
When did he get back into this?
He never left,
he just moved into the shadows
as the stakes got higher.
There's no one else.
We've been through this, Michael.
I'm not gonna fucking deal with him.
What?
This is how it works.
The optimism of liberation
was short-lived.
It turned out nobody had made plans
for what to do after Saddam was gone.
The Americans had purged everyone
who had been loyal to the regime,
which meant there wasn't anybody left
who knew how to run the country.
Renetsov,
and all the other fixers like him,
filled that vacuum of power,
and now took control of the game again.
Iraq spiraled into anarchy,
chaos, and terror.
All those countries that had been
scamming Oil-for-Food before the war,
well, they got ready to carve Iraq up.
Like it was one big pie.
And me?
I was going through the motions.
I'd lost my faith in it.
Hello?
It's Nashim.

Hey.

- You okay?

- I need to see you.

Can you come downstairs?

Sure.

Michael, good to see you.

Yeah.

I got someone you gotta meet.

We need your help, Michael.

Michael Sullivan,

Mr. Shaswar Rauf.

Yeah, we met before.

He will play a central role
in the new Iraq.

You ever heard of a guy named Rasnetsov?

- Yeah.

- Yeah? You ever met him?

A few times, before the invasion.

How 'bout after?

No, I didn't.

Well, now him and his criminal
gang from Oil-for-Food are back,
and they're creating a mess in Iraq.

Yeah.

You know, there was a list of,...
individuals and organizations that were...
helping Saddam fleece Oil-for-Food.

- You guys know about that, don't you?

- Yeah,

but there was no way
to prove what was on it.

No, proof was in the Iraq Oil Ministry.

Official files that were taken
by the US troops
after the government fell.

Proof that is probably still
in the basement of the UN somewhere,
if anyone cared to look.

Look, forget about the list.

- We don't want the list anymore.

- You don't want the list.

Too many powerful people. Too political.

It's a coalition of the fucking greedy.

No one gives a shit about Iraq.

Everyone just wants
the money and the crude.
Yeah, and that's why
we need to stop Rasnetsov.
And Pasha can give him to us.
Michael, we have strong intel
that your boss is involved.
Pasha's never gonna help you.
Well, maybe he just needs a little push.
And we're hoping
that maybe you can convince him.
You think I can convince Pasha?
Pasha's never gonna do it,
he's never gonna listen to you.
We can protect the UN
from any unpleasant blowback.
Diplomacy.
- What?
- Diplomacy.
Something Pasha said to me once.
So now you're the one
working with the criminals.
It's not the same.
Why isn't it the same?
We have the momentum now.
The Kurds are going to be
an important part of making...
Kurds have been fighting the same war
for pretty much 7,000 years.
You really think
this is gonna change anything?
Who can say?
But for sure it's not up to you
to decide that for us.
Come with me.
I can't.
Neonatal medicine.
Yeah, they're new vendors.
French Canadians.
They want exclusive rights
to the whole of the northern region.
That's fairly greedy,
especially for the Canadians.
- Well, I can...

- They'll need to be willing to pay
a hundred grand to make it happen.
You, do the legwork
with the Kurds
and the Provisional Authority,
I'll handle the rat, we split fifty-fifty.
Fifty thousand dollar pay off?
No, shekels.
Christ, of course dollars. What the fuck?
Thank you.
Pleasure to see you again, sir,
under so much more
favorable circumstances, yes?
Ah, you must be one of the Canadians.
Cutter, sir. No.
Ah, American.
I wasn't, ...
You didn't tell me
that Provisional Authority
would be sending someone
for such a routine agreement.
They didn't.
We're not exactly here
about medicine, Mr. Passaris.
They'll need to be willing
to pay a hundred grand
to make it happen.
You do the legwork with the Kurds
and the Provisional Authority,
I'll handle the rat,
we'll split fifty-fifty.
Oh, kid.
Fifty thousand dollar pay off?
No, shekels.
Christ, of course dollars. What the fuck?
It's like a surprise party
without the cake.
What do you want?
Give us Timur Rasnetsov
and resign your job.
Or we'll have to drag you
and the United Nations
through a scandal of historic proportion.
This happens with or without you,

with or without me.
Rasnetsov is protected
by multinational companies
who have governments who protect them...
same people who just
brought Saddam to his knees
and put you here.
Holding court, judging me.
You think your place at the table now
was not bought and paid for?
We paid with our lives,
if that's what you mean.
What you call corruption is simply
the growing pains of a new democracy.
And you are indeed fools
if you think you can
put the brakes on it now.
Let's let the politicians
worry about that.
We will settle for the rat.
You want me to commit suicide.
We can protect you.
You know that's not true.
Well, just set up a meeting.
Give him the envelope
for the Canadian deal.
We'll catch him red-handed.
What the hell?
Not bad, kid.
Well played.
He's late.
Yes?
Fucking country.
Is it okay if I join you?
I'll be stepping down, going home.
I've lost my taste for it.
I wanted you to hear it from me.
I've recommended you
for a position in UNESCO.
Special Assistant.
You'll be the youngest one
in the whole UN.
Did you know?
Oh, kid.

How can even you think that?
These fucking lunatics,
they're killing each other every day.
That's the truth of it.
That's your truth, Pasha.
And I'm not part of it anymore.
Don't.
Don't do anything dumb.
You can't fight the storm.
I realized everybody knew
about the corruption.
They just didn't want it exposed.
Every permanent member
of the Security Council
had something to lose, someone on the list
who could embarrass them.
It would all be covered up.
But the UN couldn't survive these lies.
I had to do something.
Risk something... to make a change.
If I tried to list
his accomplishments,
we would be here into tomorrow.
But in his 40 years of service
to the cause
of world peace
and our humanitarian mission,
the crowning achievement would have to be
his successful implementation
and operation of Oil-for-Food.
Hi. I'm Trevor Owen from Oversight.
I spoke to John earlier.
- Saddam's palace files.
- Right, yeah.
Which boxes?
All of them.
They're sealed to the public,
but as you're from Oversight,
and as long as you don't take
anything with you...
go crazy.
Thank you.
Mr. Passaris,
job well done.

Thank you.

- Where's Michael?

- He's cleared his desk, sir.

Think I found it.

You know what we're gonna have to do?

Fuckin' family.

My name is Michael Sullivan,

and I have a story...

I think you're gonna want to hear.

These are the raw numbers

for how much money was involved,

and that is billions, not millions.

Jesus.

And, this is the list of everyone

who received vouchers there,

bribes and kickbacks.

You can corroborate the names

with the deposit records

right here

with the list of contracts on file.

This is massive, Jesse.

You realize the minute this breaks

you'll have a lot of enemies.

Yeah, I know.

We, we could protect you,

cite you as a confidential source.

No, anonymity is part of the problem.

If nobody takes responsibility

for the truth

then we are leaving it up to consensus.

I have to own it.

We begin this evening

with the United Nations,

the Oil-for-Food controversy and scandal.

And the call,

on the part of the United States senator,

for the resignation of Kofi Annan.

Obviously these are serious allegations,

which we take seriously.

The UN secretary-general today

ordered an investigation

of Costa Passaris,

the former undersecretary

who a whistleblower claims

was behind the Oil-for-Food scandal
that has rocked the United Nations,
and implicated a long list
of prominent businessmen
and political figures across the world.
Incompetent and corrupt.
The weaknesses in the Oil-for-Food program
raises serious questions
about the United Nations' ability
to enforce sanctions and administer
a humanitarian aid program in the future.
The documents The Telegraph
have come up with
were reportedly found
in Iraq's Foreign Ministry
in the anarchic days
after the US-led invasion.
The Wall Street Journal
reports having documentation
of kickbacks and bribes
in the form of oil vouchers
worth billions of dollars.
But according to federal authorities,
Passaris himself has fled the country.
I'm with The Wall Street Journal.
I'm... We're doing a follow-up
on the Oil-for-Food scandal.
I've come to get your side of the story.
I don't have a side.
And it's the kid's fucking story.
I'm not running away, okay?
Make sure you write that.
Not hiding from anybody.
And yet here you are
in a place without extradition.
It was difficult.
Write that.
Complicated.
Messy with Saddam's ugly nonsense
and the usual First World duplicity,
but we did more good than bad.
I don't care what anybody fucking says.
And the kid did great.
The choice, as I see it,

is between cynicism and candor.
You know, if everyone cared so much
about Iraq as they said, then...
this story would have been celebrated
as a conspiracy of saints.
But the truth?
The truth isn't about
the lies we told each other.
It's about the lies we told ourselves.
More than two thousand companies
from 56 different countries took bribes
or paid kickbacks to Saddam Hussein.
Over twenty billion dollars got diverted
from the Oil-for-Food Program.
Implicated were some of the most
prestigious corporations in the world.
One hundred and seventy-two
organizations and individuals
highly placed in their governments
received bribes.
My name is Michael Sullivan.
My father was a diplomat.
I tried to follow in his footsteps.