

# TO KISS A THIEF

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**TO KISS A THIEF**

FADE IN:

**ST. TROPEZ, FRANCE - DAY**

Moving past the yachts anchored in the harbor and over the artsy, trend-setting main street with its buildings kissed up against each other, then flowing out to --

**THE ROLLING HILLS**

and country along the cliffs overlooking the Mediterranean.

**A DASHING RIDER**

astride an Arabian stallion GALLOPS with wild abandon along the cliff's edge -- waves crashing below, while beyond --

**A SPRAWLING VILLA**

commands a view of the ocean and lush countryside. The villa's as old as the land, but lovingly restored to its original grandeur, including the prominent stables.

**MARCEL**

a stablehand, leaves the paddock area ready to receive his charge, checks his watch, and looks off to SEE --

**THE RIDER**

clear the white perimeter fencing in a mane-flying leap and expertly command the Arabian across the lush grounds.

**A LIMO**

leaves the multi-car garage and pulls up by the stables as the rider dismounts gracefully and Marcel takes the reins.

The RIDER is ELI CROSS -- charming, assured and drop dead gorgeous with a continental flair, yet it's hard to tell if he's American or European -- and he likes it that way. The man is seductive, addictive... and dangerously unknowable.

CROSS

It's time.

MARCEL

Would you like to shower first?

The DRIVER OPENS the limo door for Cross, who slips INSIDE...

CROSS

No, I'll do that on the plane.

### **A BOMBARDIER GLOBAL 6000 JET**

in flight. Luxuriously appointed. Behind a CLOSED door, we HEAR a running SHOWER. Clothes are laid out neatly on a bed -- clothes of stealth -- all black. Out the window --

### **THE DESCENT OVER THE RHINE**

breaks through the puffs of clouds as Germanic castles rise majestically up from the river banks.

### **IN A PATCH OF FOREST**

thick brush gives way as Eli Cross presses through -- dressed all in black -- hiking until he attains the high ground of a CLEARING OVERLOOKING the Rhine and --

### **A RESTORED ANCIENT CASTLE**

resting atop a small hill guarding the bend in the river. Cross pulls wine, bread and cheese from a black sack, sits back against a tree and waits...

### **THE SUN**

drops below the horizon pulling down the curtain of night.

### **THE LIGHTS OF THE CASTLE**

glisten as a Mercedes limo glides across the drawbridge.

### **INSIDE THE CASTLE**

a BUTLER OPENS the enormous doors to the guests, TWO COUPLES, in formal evening attire. The master of the castle, BARON VON HELLERSTADT, STRIDES IN with a glass of champagne.

VON HELLERSTADT  
Dieter, I welcome your friends...  
(grins)  
...to my humble pad.

DIETER  
Baron, where is Siglinde?

VON HELLERSTADT  
Down in a moment. It's her  
jewels... there are so many.

DIETER  
Then take us to your other woman.

### **THE LIBRARY DOORS**

SWING OPEN and Baron Von Hellerstadt swells with pride as he leads his guests over to "the other woman" --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A RENOIR

the voluptuous nudity of "*Rest After Bathing*," hangs in the place of honor over the cavernous fireplace.

**A BLACK ROPE**

DROPS from the PARAPET and DANGLES against the OUTSIDE castle wall -- Eli Cross DESCENDS and SLIPS THROUGH a WINDOW INTO --

**A BOUDOIR**

where he moves with the stealth of a cat toward the GLINT of MOONLIGHT coming from the dresser -- REFLECTING OFF of glistening JEWELS -- laid out for SIGLINDE, who is --

**IN THE BATH**

naked before a floor length mirror, luxuriating in her own image as she DRIPS perfume down her body...

Cross drinks in her delicious sensuality, then turns back to the hard beauty of the JEWELS -- LIFTS them silently with BLACK GLOVES and slips them INTO a black velvet pouch...

Siglinde still naked, ENTERS the boudoir -- stops and stares... then SCREAMS! Her JEWELS are GONE! So is Cross!

**IN THE LIBRARY**

Baron Von Hellerstadt and guests react to the scream and RUSH from the room -- leaving the Renoir alone -- until a PAIR OF BLACK GLOVES reach up to caress its frame...

**DAWN**

breaks through the mist over the Rhine and --

**A VOLKSWAGEN VAN**

CLATTERS across the drawbridge -- Eli Cross is the driver.

**INSIDE THE CAVERNOUS FOYER**

Cross hands Baron Von Hellerstadt his business card.

CROSS  
Guten tag, Baron Von Hellerstadt.

Von Hellerstadt studies the card, then stares at Cross...

VON HELLERSTADT  
You are early.

CROSS  
Yes, is it a problem?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cross matches Von Hellerstadt's stare -- unflinching.

VON HELLERSTADT

No...

CROSS

Good. I need to verify the authenticity before the insurance payment can be made.

VON HELLERSTADT

The thief also took two million euros in jewels.

CROSS

Something we don't cover.

VON HELLERSTADT

I'm aware of that, but --

CROSS

Our policy prohibits contacting the authorities due to the "unusual" way in which you obtained the Renoir.

#### **THE RENOIR FRAME**

still hangs above the fireplace in the library -- but ONLY THE FRAME and a BLANK BACKING with JAGGED PIECES of PAINTING along the frame line -- the Renoir was CUT OUT!

Cross and Von Hellerstadt move toward it with reverence...

CROSS

To desecrate such a work of art is... vile. Tests will need to be run on the pieces remaining. I will require the entire frame.

Cross looks to Von Hellerstadt for help to remove the frame.

#### **OUT IN THE COURTYARD**

they load the frame INTO the back of the Volkswagen van...

VON HELLERSTADT

What are the chances for recovery?

CROSS

They sent me because I am the best. I guarantee its return.

VON HELLERSTADT

Then I will say auf Wiedersehen.

Cross merely smiles...

# **THE BOMBARDIER GLOBAL 6000 JET**

DESCENDS on the sparkling LIGHTS of PARIS at night.

## **INSIDE THE LOUVRE**

the glass-arched ceiling splashes moonlight across the darkened corridor as a FIGURE in STEALTH BLACK pushes a dolly loaded down with a PACKING CRATE.

The dolly stops -- the packing crate is RIPPED OPEN -- INSIDE is the FRAME that once held the Renoir.

An EMPTY WALL SPACE between a Monet and a Cezanne is the EXACT SIZE of the Renoir as the EMPTY FRAME is lifted into place by the stealth figure.

HIS BLACK GLOVED HAND

feels around the frame's edge -- GRABS a JAGGED PIECE of painting -- and PEELS the entire FALSE BACKING from the frame's edge -- REVEALING the UNTOUCHED Renoir UNDERNEATH!

A SPOTLIGHT

SNAPS ON -- trapping the figure in its glare -- it's Cross!

Aiming the light is a MUSEUM GUARD along with the FRENCH MINISTER OF CULTURE, and the CURATOR OF THE LOUVRE.

MINISTER OF CULTURE  
C'est magnifique, n'est-ce pas?

CROSS  
"Rest After Bathing," Auguste  
Renoir, A work of great passion.

CURATOR  
(referring to Cross)  
We honor the passion of the artist.

MINISTER OF CULTURE  
The government of France is once  
again grateful. Merci, Monsieur.

CROSS  
De rien.

## **NEW YORK CITY AND PIER 62**

where longshoremen unload a cargo ship SEEN THROUGH --

A TELEPHOTO LENS

as a shutter CLICKS OFF shots FOCUSING ON --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEIL "GRAB ASS" GRABOWSKI

tattooed forearms and barrel chest -- HEAVING crates onto a truck bed. This is one tough sonuvabitch.

NATHALIE (O.S.)

Oh, Mr. Grabowski, you are a fine physical specimen. And very photogenic.

The shutter CLICKS OFF another photo as --

NATHALIE SEEGER

takes the pictures -- wielding the heavy lens with ease.

NATHALIE (CONT'D)

I think we should meet.

Nathalie dismantles her DIGITAL camera lens -- from ATOP a WAREHOUSE that OVERLOOKS THE PIER. Even in a business pants suit with sneakers -- she's very female.

NATHALIE SEEGER wants life to have a little kick to it -- it's why she does what she does -- likes being single -- wouldn't mind being in love, just doesn't trust it.

#### **PIER 62 LOADING AREA**

as Grabowski SLAMS a boat hook into a wooden crate and RIPS the slats apart -- REVEALING WINE CASES packed inside.

GRABOWSKI

Hey, Bubba, what's that look like to you?

BUBBA's even bigger than Grabowski and just as refined.

BUBBA

Damaged shipping crate.

GRABOWSKI

Yeah... Total loss.

Grabowski SLICES OPEN a wine case and EXTRACTS a BOTTLE.

BUBBA

Helluva shame.

GRABOWSKI

Terrible tragedy.

Grabowski FLIPS the bottle to Bubba. A group of longshoremen gather 'round. Bottles are TOSSED with wild abandon. Guys SNATCH them out of the air until ONE is CAUGHT by --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATHALIE SEEGER

stepping into the midst of the rough longshoremen.

NATHALIE  
Mr. Grabowski...

Grabowski looks up from the wine crate...

GRABOWSKI  
Me?

NATHALIE  
Mr. Neil "Grab Ass" Grabowski?

GRABOWSKI  
(proud grin)  
Yeah.

BUBBA  
She's got you pegged.

NATHALIE  
We need to talk.

GRABOWSKI  
The ex-old lady send you?

NATHALIE  
No. We should do this alone.

GRABOWSKI  
You're a fine lookin' babe. We just  
gonna talk?

The longshoremen are gettin' into this...

BUBBA  
Bring her back when you're done.

Nathalie hands her bottle to the mountain that is Bubba.

NATHALIE  
Don't let the wine go to your head.  
(to Grabowski)  
What's it gonna be, Mr. Grabowski?

GRABOWSKI  
You got somethin' to say, say it.

NATHALIE  
I'm Nattie Seeger, a free-lance  
private investigator hired by the  
insurance company you're ripping  
off with your disability claim.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GRABOWSKI

I can't do shit with this back.

NATHALIE

I have photos of you doing all sorts of shit with that back.

BUBBA

That's our boy.

NATHALIE

However, I'm giving you the opportunity to return the insurance company's money before I submit the proof. No legal repercussions.

GRABOWSKI

I gotta pay alimony with that money!

NATHALIE

You haven't paid alimony or child support in six months.

GRABOWSKI

I ain't payin' the bitch for the kid.

NATHALIE

You are the child's father.

GRABOWSKI

Look, she had the kid, not me. All I did was screw her.

NATHALIE

All it takes to earn the title.

Grabowski GRABS her by the ASS and PULLS her into his GROIN.

GRABOWSKI

Wanna go a few rounds with the champ?

NATHALIE

I'm only going to tell you once to let go of me.

GRABOWSKI

(laughs)

Or what?

(serious)

I oughta do you right here.

The longshoremen are itchin' for a show...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BUBBA

Do her, Grab Ass! Do the bitch!

Grabowski's lips move toward hers -- but stop when he finds a Sig-Sauer 9mm "short" pressing against his nuts.

NATHALIE

We're not in love and I'm not in the mood.

Grabowski GRABS her hands -- holds the gun against his genitalia.

GRABOWSKI

You wanna screw me with this?!

Grabowski starts HUMMING her gun.

NATHALIE

This is not smart.

The longshoremen take sides: "Do her!" -- "Shoot him!" -- "Nail her!" -- "Blow his balls off!" Propelled by the jeers, Grabowski humps harder!

NATHALIE (CONT'D)

Back off!

GRABOWSKI

I'm gonna do you now!

He lets go of the gun and grabs her suit jacket! A GUNSHOT RIPS the air! Everyone stops.

A SMOKING HOLE

has been blown through Grabowski's pants -- below the groin!

NATHALIE

Sorry. I missed.

GRABOWSKI

You bitch!

The longshoremen WHOOP IT UP: "Now that's sexual harassment!"

Grabowski is pissed -- walks toward her with cold, dead eyes.

GRABOWSKI (CONT'D)

This time you better kill me.

Nathalie knows she's going to have to shoot him unless...

A CARGO NET

swinging overhead from a crane gives her a way out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

NATHALIE

slips the gun in her pocket -- CLAMBERS UP a pyramid of crates -- LEAPS OFF -- grabbing onto the net, which SWEEPS her off the dock and OUT OVER the water -- but not until --

Grabowski has made a FLYING LEAP at her legs -- and latches on -- carried OUT OVER the water with her!

THE CARGO NET

sweeps over a docked private yacht. Grabowski is heavy and claws at Nathalie -- stripping her grip from the net -- and they both FALL --

DOWN TO THE YACHT

CRASHING through the GLASS SKYLIGHT over the main cabin, LANDING ON --

**THE MASTERBED**

in a shower of glass. Nathalie struggles to get up, but Grabowski YANKS her down by the hair! He GRASPS her neck and PRESSES her into the mattress, while --

UP ABOVE

longshoremen peer over the skylight cheering on "the show" --

DOWN BELOW

as Grabowski fumbles at the belt and zipper on Nathalie's pants. Nathalie is choking from his grip...

NATHALIE  
(gurgled)  
Kiss me...

GRABOWSKI  
What'd you say?

NATHALIE  
If you're gonna do me, kiss me.

That prompts a chorus of -- "Kiss her!" -- from up above! Grabowski, feeding off their frenzy, lets go of Nathalie's neck -- lowering his lips until --

NATHALIE'S LEFT HAND

CLAMPS ONTO his nuts -- and her right hand slips a bottle of champagne out of the bedside ice bucket and CHRISTENS his face with it -- LAUNCHING Grabowski off the bed!

WHISTLES and CHEERS rain down from above as --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Nathalie straightens her clothes and brushes her hair. She steps over the unconscious lump that is Grabowski and HEADS UP the stairs to --

**THE MAIN DECK**

and INTO the sunlight as longshoremen slap her on the back...

BUBBA  
Lady, you're pretty good.

NATHALIE  
Good? I'm the best, pal.

Nathalie strides through the parting mass of men...

**MADISON AVENUE**

where a sea of people converge on the buildings. Nathalie is swept along with the flow INTO one of the monoliths.

**THE LOBBY OF DELACORTE, REDFIELD & NANNING**

Hockneys, Lichtensteins and Turners brace the walls of this brash new advertising firm.

**THE ELEVATOR DOORS**

OPEN and Nathalie moves to the reception desk.

NATHALIE  
Nathalie Seeger to see Megan Hollister. She's expecting me.

The RECEPTIONIST checks a list...

RECEPTIONIST  
Yes, I have you right here, Ms. Seeger. Do you know the way?

NATHALIE  
Yes, I do.

Nathalie heads down an inner corridor, spilling INTO --

**AN OFFICE BULLPEN**

where the graphic artists of DRN work out of open cubicles subdividing an entire wing like a maze. Nathalie follows the twists and turns of the cubicle maze, finally stepping INTO --

**MEGAN'S CUBICLE**

where MEGAN HOLLISTER props her feet on her desk. She's hip, playful and filled with an artist's insecurity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MEGAN

La Jeunesse. A man will tear your clothes to get to... La Jeunesse.  
(tosses perfume)  
Have a sample.

NATHALIE

You can fry brain cells with that.  
(looks around)  
I'm running late.

MEGAN

There's the dress.

A life-sized cardboard cutout of Donald Trump wears a cocktail dress. Nathalie PEELS OUT of her clothes down to bra and panties -- and shredded panty-hose, which Megan SEES...

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Good look.

NATHALIE

Things didn't quite go as planned.

Nathalie SLIPS OUT of her panty-hose just as GRADY sticks his head IN the cubicle with a color one-sheet...

GRADY

Megan, here's the...  
(sees Nathalie)  
Sorry... You know your bra's on page twenty of "Victoria's Secret."

Unperturbed, Nathalie keeps right on dressing -- new panty-hose -- the dress -- heels. Megan takes the one-sheet.

MEGAN

Forget it, Grady, she's not your type. She's human.

GRADY

Yeah, well... maybe later.

Grady's sucked back into the maze...

NATHALIE

I gotta guard some jewels -- big display at the Waldorf. You wanna come see what you can't afford?

MEGAN

I can always lower my self-esteem another notch.

**MADISON AVENUE**

Nathalie and Megan try to hail an "Off Duty" cab. No go.

(CONTINUED)