

MAURICE, LEE, AND JFK

A ten part series for television

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Episode seven

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was 'probably' murdered as the result of a conspiracy according to the US House Select Committee on assassinations , ergo this is 'probably' a true story. The characters herein are based on real people. Maurice is a composite of real people.

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INT WHITE HOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK and RFK are meeting with the JOINT CHIEFS

JFK

Gentlemen it seems we have four options to resolve this situation. One, a surgical strike to take out the Soviet missile bases on Cuba. Two, an attack on various facilities on the island. Three, a full scale invasion. Four a blockade of the island.

GENERAL LE MAY

A surgical strike is not practical Mr. President

RFK

Or morally acceptable. Sort of like a Pearl Harbour in reverse.

GENERAL LEMNITZER

Seems to me like an invasion is the most viable option. Mr. President.

JFK

Why does that not surprise me, General.

(beat)

And a blockade?

GENERAL LE MAY

Won't get rid of the missiles already on the island.

JFK

Well I guess none of our options are without drawbacks. So let's adjourn to consider them all. Meanwhile I've asked our Ambassador in Moscow to raise our concerns with premier Khrushchev.

INT KREMLIN DAY

The US Ambassador is meeting with KHRUSHCHEV.

KHRUSHCHEV

Mister Ambassador, I give you my assurance that any and all Soviet assistance to Cuba is for defensive purposes only.

AMBASSADOR

But surely you can see, sir, that such weaponry just ninety miles from the United States can never be acceptable.

KHRUSHCHEV

Ninety miles. And yet we here in the Soviet Union must accept your missiles on our very border with Turkey----on our very border, sir!

INT WHITE HOUSE DAY

Oval Office with JFK and RFK.

JFK

Do you think that's what this is about? Our Jupiter missiles in Turkey.

RFK

I guess Khrushchev does have a point.

JFK

Well whatever his motives it's a damned dangerous course of action, Bobby.

RFK

I agree. Good God do I agree.

JFK

So we must be sure our military don't bounce us into doing something--precipitate.

RFK

They'll never have a better chance.

JFK

Nor will the hawks in the Kremlin.

(beat)

We need to open up a back channel to Khrushchev, Bobby.

RFK

Will he want that?

JFK

I'm guessing since he's seen war at first hand, he won't want another one----especially one we all lose.

RFK

There's a fellow at the Soviet Embassy, Bolshakov, he has some innocent sounding title but he's really KGB. That said I think he could be trusted to be our back-channel. Who's our man to be?

JFK

I need someone I can trust. Who better than my own brother

RFK

(smiles)

I'll put out some feelers.

JFK

Meantime let's think about the blockade idea.

INT GENTLEMEN'S CLUB WASHINGTON DAY

GENERAL'S CURTIS Le MAY and LYMAN LEMNITZER are lunching with MAURICE and THE DIRECTOR.

THE DIRECTOR

Well, gentlemen, in my estimation all the options you've outlined could lead to the war that we all know must come one day.

GENERAL LE MAY

All of them?

THE DIRECTOR

Airstrikes, surgical or otherwise, full scale invasion, blockade? Yes.

LEMNITZER

Blockade?

THE DIRECTOR nods towards MAURICE

MAURICE

You could say it's the most dangerous option of them all as it brings us into direct conflict with the Russians.

THE DIRECTOR

It's just possible, and I stress just possible, that the Reds would not respond to any action taken against Cuba, but if we attack a Russian ship----well.

GENERAL LE MAY

You're for the blockade idea?

THE DIRECTOR

We didn't say that.

MAURICE

The blockade is dangerous---but unlike an airstrike or invasion tomorrow, it buys Kennedy time to do some deal with Khrushchev.

THE DIRECTOR

It would be best if Kennedy could be weaned off the blockade idea.

GENERAL LE MAY

How?

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK and RFK are with the JOINT CHIEFS.

GENERAL LE MAY

Mr. President I think I can speak for all of the joint chiefs when I say this blockade idea should be abandoned.

JFK

May I ask why?

GENERAL LE MAY

As I've already said, it won't get rid of the missiles already on the island for one.

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GENERAL LEMNITZER

Then there's Berlin. If we blockade Cuba, the Reds might blockade West Berlin. They've done it before.

JFK

I agree.

GENERAL LE MAY

(taken aback)

What?

JFK

We've critiqued the blockade option and we think we should call it a quarantine instead, and limit it's scope to preventing offensive weapons reaching the island.

RFK

Since no one's trying to get offensive weapons into West Berlin, the Russians would have no grounds for reciprocal action.

GENERAL LEMNITZER

So your going with the blockade?

JFK

It's my favoured option, yes. But I'm ruling nothing out. I think we should make contingency plans for airstrikes----and a full scale invasion..

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

THE DIRECTOR'S HOUSE. STUDY. He has been on the phone and now hangs up. He turns to MAURICE.

THE DIRECTOR

He's stringing them along with talk of 'contingency plans'.

MAURICE

Well as we said, the blockade has its dangers.

THE DIRECTOR

Oh it's not called that anymore. It's now a quarantine.

MAURICE

Call it what he will, if the
Russians try to break through--it's
war.

EXT WASHINGTON STREET DAY

SUBURBS. A car pulls up outside a house with a FOR SALE sign
in the front yard. RFK carrying a briefcase gets out and
notes the presence of ANOTHER CAR before heading for the
house.

INT EMPTY HOUSE DAY

The house is devoid of furnitures save for a table and two
chairs. RFK and GEORGI BOLSHAKOV sit across the table from
each other. A thermos of coffee and two cups lie on the
table.

BOLSHAKOV

Some coffee.

RFK

No thank you. I rather think we
should get down to business Mr.
Bolshakov.

BOLSHAKOV

Of course.

(beat)

I am authorized by the 'very
highest authority' to assure you
that the weapons on Cuba are for
defensive purposes only.

RFK

Really.

RFK places his briefcase on the table, takes out a batch of
photographs and papers and shoves them in front of BOLSHAKOV.

RFK (CONT'D)

These are photographs of the
'defensive' material you have in
Cuba. They show an SS-5 Intermediate
Range Ballistic Missile site. As
I'm sure you know the SS-5s have a
range of up to two thousand two
hundred nautical miles.

(MORE)

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RFK (CONT'D)

Now our best estimate is that the sites won't be operational till December, but there are also sixteen to thirty two Medium Range Ballistic Missiles that can be operational within a week.

This is all clearly news to BOLSHAKOV and his expression tells RFK this.

RFK (CONT'D)

Mr Bolshakov, our countries are on a path that leads inexorably to the destruction of this fucking planet. We must be one hundred percent honest with each other if we're to find a way of stepping off that path.

BOLSHAKOV

(barely a whisper)

Of course. We must not-----of course.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

OVAL OFFICE. RFK is reporting to JFK

RFK

I'm convinced he didn't know what was on the island.

JFK

Seems to me if that fox Khrushchev was keeping things from his own people, he was maybe hoping to get his hardware onto the island without our knowing about it. Present us with a fait accompli?

INT KREMLIN DAY

NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV is alone reading the report submitted by BOLSHAKOV.

RFK (V.O.)

When he gets Bolshakov's report he'll know he's failed in that endeavour.

Finished reading, a clearly concerned KHRUSHCHEV sits back in his chair.

INT GEORGETOWN HOUSE DAY

THE DIRECTOR'S HOUSE. MAURICE watches as THE DIRECTOR finishes reading a NEWSPAPER ARTICLE.

THE DIRECTOR

This is good. These guys won't reveal their source I take it.

MAURICE

Not if they want more tit-bits like that. Let's see what the American people have to say about rockets on Cuba.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

OVAL OFFICE. RFK enters. JFK waves a NEWSPAPER at him.

JFK

Have you seen this? Soviet missiles on Cuba.

RFK

I've seen it. I've told the Pentagon to deny it and to deny that emergency military measures are being taken.

JFK

Who do you think leaked it?

RFK

We have to control this thing, so, somebody who's trying to loosen our grip on events---and succeeding. I've had calls from The Post, The New York Times, and The Herald Tribune.

JFK

What?

RFK

Take it easy. They've agreed to hold fire in the interests of national security. But we do have to go public sooner rather than later, Jack.

JFK

I know. But first I want to speak to congressional leaders. I've made a list.

JFK hands RFK a sheaf of paper containing the names of the congressional leaders.

INT WHITE HOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK is meeting with 17 CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS. They have each been provided with the speech JFK will make to the nation. When we join them, the last few representatives finish reading the speech.

JFK

I intend delivering that address to the nation at seven PM on the twenty second.

SENATOR RUSSELL (GA)

Mr. President I think we should go straight to it with an airstrike or a full scale invasion.

SENATOR FULLBRIGHT (ARK)

I agree Mr. President. As you know I opposed the Bay Of Pigs fiasco, but this is different.

JFK

Who could not listen to advice from distinguished Senators such as Senator Russell, and Senator Fullbright. But gentlemen, in my view we are in the gravest crisis ever to have faced mankind.

(beat)

That said, if need be I will authorize whatever force is necessary to remove those armaments from Cuba. But in initiating the quarantine as a first step, I have the support of all our major allies in the Americas and across the world.

(beat)

Now, I--- thank you all for your attendance.

INT WHITEHOUSE NIGHT

PRESS ROOM. JFK, surrounded by PRESS,RADIO, TV CAMERA'S delivers is address to the nation informing them of the Soviet offensive weapons on CUBA and his intention to set up a QUARANTINE. The address(extant) lasts seventeen minutes and in it JFK says the USSR has consistently lied about the NATURE and PURPOSE of the weapons on CUBA. It is clear from his demeanor and tone that the situation is indeed grave.

INT DE MOHRENSCHILDT HOUSE DALLAS NIGHT

LEE and MARINA OSWALD are in the well-heeled company of the DALLAS WHITE RUSSIAN COMMUNITY. They are seated around the TV listening to JFK'S address.

DE MOHRENSCHILDT

(in English)

My God--am I hearing this?

WHITE RUSSIAN FEMALE

(in English)

Damn communists! Bomb them and be done with it I say!

MARINA

(in RUSSIAN)

Lee---what is he saying?

But OSWALD says nothing. Wearing a concerned expression, he puts his arm round MARINA and gently pulls her to him.

WHITE RUSSIAN FEMALE

Damn Khrushchev! Damn Castro! They have sewn the wind!

DE MOHRENSCHILDT

(quietly)

But perhaps we shall all reap the whirlwind.

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE NIGHT

MARY watches the JFK address.

MARY

(quietly: in disbelief)

Jesus -----Jesus Christ.

INT GEORGETOWN HOUSE NIGHT

MARICE and THE DIRECTOR watch the address.

THE DIRECTOR
Well, doesn't he talk big.

MAURICE
I'm with the fellow who said talk
is cheap.

THE DIRECTOR
Indeed.

INT JM WAVE BUILDING MIAMI NIGHT

With HARVE and HOWIE. They stand at the rear of a GROUP of ant-Castro CUBAN EXILES who are listening to the address. Suddenly one of the CUBANS gets to his feet.

CUBAN
Why the fuck are we waiting? We
should go in and blow them missiles
to fuck right now.

A roar of approval goes up from the other CUBANS.

HOWIE
(to HARVE)
You heard the guys. They want to go
home.

HARVE
I sure as Hell wouldn't try to stop
them , if say, sixty of them,
wanted to bring this thing to a
head.

HOWIE
Sixty?

HARVE
(pointedly)
Should be enough.

But among the gung-ho CUBANS we see ONE INDIVIDUAL whose expression tells us he is out of step with his comrades (AS WAS THE ACTUAL CASE).

INT KREMLIN DAY

NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV is being briefed by SOVIET GENERAL.

SOVIET GENERAL

Mr. First Secretary, I have to report that the US B-52 bomber force is on a major alert. One eighth of the force will be airborne at any one time. Also one hundred and eighty three B-47 nuclear bombers are being dispersed to civilian and military airfields. We also believe that the US Air Defence Command have dispersed one hundred and sixty one aircraft--and all are armed with nuclear weapons.

KHRUSHCHEV

(somberly)

Is there anything else?

SOVIET GENERAL

Yes.

(pause)

The US Strategic Air Command has gone to Defcon 2. One stage away from war

KHRUSHCHEV

How can you be sure?

SOVIET GENERAL

They are transmitting their messages uncoded. And sometimes----

KHRUSHCHEV

Yes.

SOVIET GENERAL

They fly beyond their traditional turning point. It's as if they are trying to provoke us.

INT WHITE HOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK is meeting with the JOINT CHIEFS.

JFK

Gentlemen I've asked Admiral Anderson to brief us on the operation of the quarantine. Admiral.

ADMIRAL ANDERSON.

Thank you Mr. President. We're setting the quarantine line at five hundred miles from the island. It will come into effect at two o'clock tomorrow afternoon, October twenty four.

GENERAL LEMNITZER

How many Red ships are on their way?

ADMIRAL ANDERSON.

We estimate twenty two----and to arrive at the line tomorrow.

GENERAL LE MAY

How do we deal with them?

ADMIRAL ANDERSON.

We'll give a signal to stop. If it's ignored we'll put a shot across the bow. If that doesn't do it, we'll put a shot into the rudder. We can do that without sinking the ship----bearing in mind that some of these vessels are chartered and are not Soviet-owned.

JFK

Thank you Admiral. I've had a response to my address from premier Khrushchev. I need hardly say that he disapproves of our proposed actions and sees them as having, and I quote, 'catastrophic consequences for world peace'.

GENERAL LE MAY

Well they started it.

JFK

It may be a hopeful sign that the message was devoid of threats and was relatively restrained.

GENERAL LEMNITZER

Trying to put us to sleep maybe. There was some Red General at a Soviet embassy reception, nsisted those ships will defy the quarantine.

JFK

Well, with all due respect to 'some Red General' I'm inclined to wait and see---but---in the event that our Soviet General is right---I'm ordering our Polaris subs to get to sea and make for their prearranged destinations.

At this there is a knock on the door and RFK enters. He whispers into JFK'S ear.

JFK (CONT'D)

(to RFK)

Of course.

RFK sits and scans the group.

RFK

What we know about the weapons in Cuba---all we know about Soviet weapons generally, their capabilities, launch times, destructive powers----is down to the efforts of one man. This man is a senior officer in one of the Soviet Intelligence Services and he has been spying for the US and the British. This man was given two secret signals to use. One if he thought he was about to be arrested. The other----if he thought the Soviet Union was about to attack us. I have to report that he has signaled an immanent attack

GENERAL LE MAY

Then by God I say let's hit the bastards.

GENERAL LEMNITZER

And right away, Mr. President.

JFK

Has this man signaled the British?

RFK

Not that we know of.

JFK

(*rhetorically*)

But if he had we would have heard from them, right?

(MORE)

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JFK (CONT'D)

(beat)

So it's just us he's signaled? Why?

GENERAL LE MAY

Does it matter.

JFK

I think it does.

GENERAL LEMNITZER

Mister president, no one has the right to gamble with this nation's security. No one.

JFK

I am the Commander in Chief , and I will not take this country to war on the word of one man who's thousands of miles away in Moscow. And gentlemen that will be the position as long as I remain Commander in Chief.

JFK looks defiantly around the table. But the expressions on the faces of the JOINT CHIEFS are equally as firm.

EXT WASHINGTON STREET DAY

RFK's car pulls up outside the house with the FOR SALE sign in the yard.

INT EMPTY HOUSE DAY

RFK and BOLSHAKOV are seated across the table from each other.

RFK

We have information from a hitherto reliable source that the Soviet Union intends to attack us.

BOLSHAKOV

Rubbish.

RFK

Is it?

(shouts: thumps the table)

From a hitherto reliable source I said!

BOLSHAKOV

May I ask how the information was communicated?

RFK

By telephone. A non-vocal signal was given to our Embassy in Moscow.

This seems to strike a chord with BOLSHAKOV. He pushes the coffee and cups towards RFK.

BOLSHAKOV

I need time. One hour, maybe two.

Bolshakov gets to his feet. RFK begins to pour coffee from the thermos.

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

MARY'S HOUSE. She is framing a painting. The phone rings and she picks up.

MARY

Hello.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK is alone in the room and on the telephone.

JFK

Hi.

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

MARY'S HOUSE. She recognizes the voice and is slightly taken aback.

MARY

Oh.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK is on the phone.

JFK

It's OK. This is a secure line. How are things out in the world?

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

MARY'S HOUSE. She is on the phone.

MARY
People are---scared.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK on the phone.

JFK
Who can blame them.
(beat)
I've never asked, but, do you pray?

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

MARY'S HOUSE. MARY on the phone.

MARY
No. Should I start?

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK on the phone.

JFK
Well, I'm going to need all the
help I can get.

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

MARY'S HOUSE. MARY is on the phone.

MARY
Do you think, I mean, any decision,
will it be yours to make?

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK on the phone.

JFK
(curious)
What makes you ask that?

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

MARY'S HOUSE. She is on the phone.

MARY

I---was at a dinner party. One of your General's was there. I think they call him 'Bombs Away'? Anyway a woman asked him if he thought there would be war with Russia.

FLASHBACK

INT HOUSE WASHINGTON NIGHT

A dinner party is in progress. From MARY'S POV we watch the exchange between THE WOMAN and GENERAL CURTIS Le MAY. (True event)

GENERAL LE MAY

Will there be a war? Absolutely. No doubt about it.

WOMAN

Is there anywhere a person could be safe?

GENERAL LE MAY

Safe? There may be some places out west I guess.

OUT OF FLASHBACK

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

MARY'S HOUSE. She is on the phone.

MARY

It made me wonder--how could he be so certain if the decision wasn't his to make.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK on the phone.

JFK

It's not like that--

At this there is a knock on the door and RFK enters.

JFK (CONT'D)

I--have to go.

JFK hangs up. RFK sits close to him.

RFK

The Soviets are not planning to attack us.

JFK

Then what happened?

RFK

What happened. I feel sick just thinking about it.

(beat)

Oleg Penkovsky the fellow who's been spying for us and the British?

JFK

What about him?

RFK

He's been arrested. They have him in the Lubyanka.

JFK

Then he's a dead man.

RFK

He knows that. So it looks like he decided to take the rest of Russia with him.

RFK picks up the phone.

RFK (CONT'D)

That signal he was to give?

RFK now blows three times into the phone.

RFK (CONT'D)

Three blows meant the Soviets ere about to attack.

(beat)

Jack, he told the guys in the Lubyanka three blows just meant he was in danger. So they staked out a dead drop location he told them about and gave the signal just to see what happened. Our embassy guys had been given the signal for war, Jack.

JFK

Can we verify this?

RFK

Yes. Someone went to the dead drop point to see what the fuck was going on. They guy they sent got picked up by the KGB.

JFK

(incredulous)

Three blows? Into a fucking phone! That was the best they could come up with when a world war might be the outcome! Fuck, Bobby!

(beat)

We have to sit on this. If it gets out everyone will know about our back-channel.

RFK

There's more we'll have to sit on.

JFK

Go on.

RFK

The Russians know that Strategic Air Command has gone to Defcon 2.

JFK

What?

RFK

Their communications are going out clear. Uncoded.

JFK

I didn't authorize that!

RFK

No. Nor did you instruct the planes to fly beyond their usual turning point.

JFK gets to his feet, walks to the window and looks out. It is raining

JFK

Most of them never really see war, do they?

RFK

Who?

JFK

The brass. They see war from a distance. A safe distance usually. They don't live it. Smell it. Taste it. Some fellow in a room comes up with an idea. Let's fill a plane up with explosives, he says. Make a flying bomb that we can direct to it's target. But he's brass. He's not about to fly that plane. Our brother is. And we never see him again.

RFK

No.

But as JFK looks out he fancies that between the sheets of driving rain he does see his brother JOE in flying gear. But when he strains for a clearer look, the image is gone.

EXT WASHINGTON PARK DAY

THE DIRECTOR is seated on a bench reading a newspaper. When MAURICE arrives and sits beside him, THE DIRECTOR lowers the newspaper to watch the newcomer closely.

THE DIRECTOR

I can always tell when you have news to impart.

MAURICE

Harve's planning to bring things to a head. Go in and get the missiles.

THE DIRECTOR

You don't say?

MAURICE

Sixty men. All Cubans.

THE DIRECTOR

Sixty.

(thinks)

And all can be trusted?

MAURICE

If Harve has any doubts about that he never mentioned them to me.

INT JM/WAVE FLORIDA DAY

HARVE steps into a spartan office and turns to close the door behind him. As he does so we see the pistol he always carries tucked into the waistband of his trousers. Now he turns to look at RFK who is seated behind a desk. There is an empty seat at the desk.

HARVE

Mr. Kennedy. What brings you way down here?

RFK

You can address me as Mister Attorney General.

HARVE

Oh, sure. Mister Attorney General.

RFK

Sit down please.

HARVE sits opposite RFK. He removes his pistol and places it on the desk, facing RFK.

RFK (CONT'D)

Apart from the fact that I run this operation, I've come 'way down here' because news reaches me that some idiot is planing a raid on the missiles in Cuba. Would you know anything about that? I mean, are you the idiot in question?

HARVE

(choking back rage)

The Cubans we have here are very brave men. They want to do things that people with--less courage--- seem unwilling to do. Like they did at the Bay of Pigs. Why, if my Cubans hadn't been abandoned on that beach we wouldn't be in this fix. We'd be in fucking Havana--- Mister Attorney General.

RFK

You listen to me you dumb sonofabitch. If there's to be an attack on Cuba it'll be ordered by the President of the United States, not by some trigger-happy cowboy. Now do you have a desk around here?

HARVE

Sure I have a desk.

RFK

Then I suggest you start clearing
it.

HARVE gets slowly to his feet. Puts his hands on the table
and leans into RFK.

HARVE

Me, and people like me, we're
permanent fixtures. Politicians,
they're just passing through.
What's the limit on them now? Two
terms if they're lucky?

HARVE straightens, picks up his pistol and looks along the
barrel

HARVE (CONT'D)

Hell, if they're unlucky they might
not get to finish one term.

RFK

You get to fuck out of here mister.

HARVE

Fuck you.

RFK watches as HARVE turns and walks to the door.

THE DIRECTOR (V.O.)

He fired Harve!

INT PHONE BOOTH DAY

MAURICE is on the phone.

MAURICE

Told him to clear his things.

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

THE DIRECTOR'S HOUSE. THE DIRECTOR is on the phone.

THE DIRECTOR

Those Kennedy's. Who do they think
they are. Tell Harve not to worry.
He may have to be shunted aside for
a while, but that's all.

INT PHONE BOOTH DAY

With MAURICE on the phone.

MAURICE

I'll tell him. Thank you sir.

EXT WASHINGTON STREET DAY

MAURICE exits the phone booth, walks to a newspaper stand and buys a newspaper. The headline reads. 'QUARANTINE DAY'

INT OSWALD HOUSE DALLAS TEXAS DAY

On TV we see an edited version of UNIVERSAL-INTERNATIONAL NEWS 'THE CUBAN CRISIS' with VO by ED HERLIHY showing: footage of the planes that have taken photographs of the MISSILE SITES: The WARSHIPS arriving to impose the QUARANTINE: The MILITARY BUILDUP on CUBA. (Available on HISTORY FLIX. NB the original VO is in the past tense and would need to be modified). The TV is switched off by MARINA OSWALD who hugs her baby to her and looks fearful.

OSWALD

(in RUSSIAN)

I wanted to watch that Marina. It's important to know what's going on.

MARINA

(in RUSSIAN)

Is it? To know we are all going to die.

OSWALD gets off the seat he is seated in and goes to comfort his wife.

OSWALD

(in ENGLISH)

We don't know that Marina. I have faith in our President.

MARINA

(in ENGLISH)

But why must it be so, Lee?

OSWALD

(in ENGLISH)

This Castro is a bad man, Marina. Unless we get rid of those weapons today he'll use them against us in the future. We can't allow that. We can't.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

OVAL OFFICE. JFK is at his desk perusing some papers. RFK enters.

RFK
Anything new happening?

JFK
Intelligence says there are a lot of coded messages being sent to the Soviet ships. Unfortunately they're just that--coded.

RFK
I guess--they must be near the quarantine line by now?

JFK
Very close.
(beat)
I think they're going to run the blockade, Bobby.

RFK
You sound--pretty sure.

JFK
Soviet submarines have entered the Caribbean.

RFK
(quietly)
Jeez.

JFK
Yes.
(checks watch)
I have the Joint Chiefs. Would you mind staying here in case anything comes in.

RFK
Sure

JFK gathers up his papers and exits. When he is gone RFK sits in the presidential chair and , sadly, imagines what might have been for himself at some , now doubtful, future date.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK is with the JOINT CHIEFS.

JFK

Gentlemen, it looks like the Soviet ships show no sign of stopping with the vessels Gagarin (?) and Komiles just a few miles from the quarantine line.

ADMIRAL ANDERSON.

Mr. President, Naval Intelligence has reported a Soviet sub moving into position between the two ships. I---would recommend the use of small explosives to deter the sub from interfering with the quarantine.

JFK

Isn't there some way we can avoid our first exchange with a Soviet submarine? Almost anything but that.

ADMIRAL ANDERSON.

I'm afraid not, Mr. President. The sub represents great danger to our ships.

At this there is a knock on the door and RFK enters.

RFK

I----have some news.

JFK

Go on.

RFK

A preliminary Intelligence report states that some of the Soviet ships have altered course. Some others have set a return course to the Soviet union----and some have stopped dead in the water.

This news clearly pleases JFK , although the JOINT CHIEFS seem indifferent.

RFK (CONT'D)

Those ships continuing towards the quarantine line are definitively not carrying military equipment.

JFK

Then they must not be impeded.

RFK

We've been eyeball to eyeball. Is it possible the other guy just blinked?

GENERAL LE MAY

That maybe so. But how is his 'blinking' going to get those missiles out of Cuba---which is what this has always been about?

LEMNITZER

I agree. While we wait around the armaments on Cuba are being prepped and ready for use. How is this standoff going to prevent that?

And we see the both JFK and RFK have to accept this point.

LEMNITZER (CONT'D)

I've been saying it all along and I'll say it again. We have to invade.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

OVAL OFFICE. JFK is with RFK.

JFK

They were right all along Bobby. This isn't going to get the missiles out.

RFK

You were buying time. Time in which Khrushchev might have come to his senses.

JFK

Well he hasn't, has he. It looks like I'll have to give the Joint Chiefs their invasion, Bobby
(pauses: thinks)
Although--maybe we could adopt a two track approach.

EXT WASHINGTON PARK DAY

MAURICE joins THE DIRECTOR on a park bench.

MAURICE

I have news. Kennedy's going to invade. D-day is Tuesday, October twenty nine.

THE DIRECTOR

Is that so? I wonder. Have you seen this piece by Walt Lippman?

THE DIRECTOR hands MAURICE a newspaper.

THE DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

(as MAURICE reads)

Mr. Lippman is proposing a face-saving deal. We take our Jupiter missiles out of Turkey, the Reds take theirs out of Cuba. The question is---did Mr. Lippman come up with this proposal himself----or was he fed it?

MAURICE

Kennedy's misleading the Joint Chiefs? You think he'd dare?

INT KREMLIN DAY

KHRUSHCHEV is in discussions with the SOVIET GENERAL.

SOVIET GENERAL

This journalist, Lippman. He has -- influence in imperialist circles.

KHRUSHCHEV

If this reflects Kennedy's position why doesn't he just say it? As this Lippman says, no one loses face.

SOVIET GENERAL

The missiles in Turkey are symbolic of the American commitment to NATO.

KHRUSHCHEV seems to grasp this.

EXT CUBAN MISSILE SITE DAY

A hive of activity as HEAVY VEHICLES carrying MISSILES arrive on the site. Some LAUNCH PADS already hold missiles. We witness these scenes through a series of RAPIDLY TAKEN PHOTOGRAPHS.

EXT CUBA DAY

From a hidden vantage point we see that the secret photographer is one of the infiltrated anti-CASTRO CUBANS.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

OVAL OFFICE. JFK has been on the phone. He slowly replaces the receiver.

JFK

Intelligence. They think some of the missiles are operational.

We see he has been talking to RFK.

RFK

They can't be---certain about that can they?

JFK

If we have to invade, what if they can get some off before we can destroy them.

(worried)

When I think about this, really think about it, I wonder if I haven't mishandled it Bobby.

RFK

No!

JFK

Yes!

(beat)

Soviet missiles in this hemisphere? Maybe I should have said 'so what'? Does it really alter the strategic balance of power? Does it really? Does it matter if our cities get destroyed by missiles launched from Cuba or launched from---I don't know---Siberia, the Ukraine? Maybe I should have said---this is no big deal.

RFK

You would have been impeached---or worse. Do you really think our military people would have stood for that?

JFK

I could be about to kill your children, Bobby. My own children. Everybody's children. What am I supposed to think? They'd be better dead than Red?

RFK

Maybe it won't come to that. There's still time for Khrushchev to come to his senses.

EXT US AIRBASE DAY

A U2 SPY PLANE TAKES OFF

EXT SAM MISSILE SITE CUBA DAY

A SOVIET RADAR OPERATOR picks up the U2 on his screen. He picks up a telephone.

EXT SAM MISSILE SITE CUBA DAY

Elsewhere on the site Lt. GENERAL STEPAN GRECHKO and GENERAL LEONID GARBUZ are hurriedly approached by a MESSENGER.

EXT SAM MISSILE SITE CUBA DAY

The TWO OFFICERS stand over the RADAR OPERATOR and watch the U2 on the screen. They turn away from THE OPERATOR and converse privately. Now Lt. GENERAL GRECHKO turns to the OPERATOR and gives the order.

GRECHKO

Fire.

THE OPERATOR hesitantly picks up the telephone.

INT U2 SPY PLANE DAY

The pilot, MAJOR RUDOLF ANDERSON, is operating the sophisticated photographic equipment and so only sees the approaching SAM at the last minute.

ANDERSON

God----

ANDERSON'S utterance is cut short by the impact of the SAM and the blinding flash that follows.

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

THE DIRECTOR'S HOUSE. STUDY. He is perusing some papers when the phone rings. He picks up.

THE DIRECTOR

Yes.

INT PHONE BOOTH DAY

MAURICE is on the phone.

MAURICE

They've shot down a U2 over Cuba.

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

THE DIRECTOR'S HOUSE. STUDY. He is on the phone.

THE DIRECTOR

And the pilot?

INT PHONE BOOTH DAY

MAURICE is on the phone.

MAURICE

A Major Rudlof Anderson. He's dead.

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

THE DIRECTOR'S HOUSE. STUDY. He is on the phone.

THE DIRECTOR

Let's hope he is soon avenged.

THE DIRECTOR slowly replaces the receiver.

INT KREMLIN DAY

KHRUSHCHEV has been given the news of the U2 shoot down by the SOVIET GENERAL.

KHRUSHCHEV

Those mad men! Those damned madmen!

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK and RFK are with the JOINT CHIEFS

GENERAL LE MAY

We have to hit those SAM sites and
we have to hit them now.

GENERAL LEMNITZER

The General's right, Mr. President.
How is going to look if we sit on
our hands? That we're all talk ,
but soft touches deep down.

RFK

*(refers to a sheet of
paper in front of him)*
Gentlemen , you estimate that we
will suffer eighteen thousand
casualties if we invade--

GENERAL LE MAY

(corrects him)
When we invade.

JFK

Right. When we invade. But think
about it. The military on that
island will be expecting us to
retaliate. They'll be prepared for
it. But if we hold off, they might
begin to breathe easy. They might
begin to think we are--soft
touches. And when the time comes
that complacency might just save
American lives.

JFK looks at all the JOINT CHIEFS.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

OVAL OFFICE. JFK and RFK are alone.

RFK

Do you think they bought that?

JFK

My rationale for doing nothing?
Goddamit Bobby I want to avenge
that pilot. But I have to think
beyond knee-jerk reactions.

I mean Goddamit Bobby I want to avenge that pilot. But I have to think beyond knee-jerk reactions.

RFK

But will the Joint Chiefs

JFK

I don't know.

EXT WASHINGTON STREET DAY

We are outside the house with the FOR SALE sign in the yard. We see two cars parked outside

INT EMPTY HOUSE DAY

RFK and BOLSHAKOV sit across the table from each other.

BOLSHAKOV

The officers who gave the order to shoot down your plane have been reprimanded.

RFK

Reprimanded? We have a dead pilot. How is a fucking reprimand going to help him.

BOLSHAKOV

No more planes will be brought down. That assurance comes from the highest authority.

RFK

Listen to me. This incident has enraged our military. Fucking enraged them. The president has so far been able to keep them in check. But he wants you to know, wants your superiors to know, that they may yet take matters into their own hands. Do you understand what I'm saying?

BOLSHAKOV

But----this is America---such a thing could never happen.

But RFK'S look tells him he is wrong in his assumption.

RFK

You have to get those missiles off that island. You have to get them off. Now can you get that message to 'the highest authority'?

BOLSHAKOV

Of course.

INT KREMLIN DAY

KHRUSHCHEV is reading a cable from BOLSHAKOV. He is clearly concerned by its contents. He lifts his telephone.

KHRUSHCHEV

Get me the American Ambassador.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. The JOINT CHIEFS watch JFK enter, take his seat, and smiles.

JFK

We've had a message from Khrushchev. He'll take the missiles out of Cuba, if we give a pledge not to invade.

GENERAL LE MAY

Not to invade--ever?

JFK

Yes.

JFK's affirmative is met with a stony silence.

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

THE DIRECTOR'S HIOUSE. STUDY. The phone rings and he picks up.

THE DIRECTOR

Yes.

INT PHONE BOOTH DAY

MAURICE is on the phone.

MAURICE

If we pledge not to invade, the
need for the missiles disappears.

INT GEORGETOWN TOWN HOUSE DAY

THE DIRECTOR'S HOUSE. STUDY.

THE DIRECTOR

That's all they're asking for? What
about our missiles in Turkey?

CUT TO:

INT EMPTY HOUSE DAY

An incandescent RFK glares across the table at BOLSHAKOV.

RFK

You never said anything about our
missiles in Turkey. We pledge not
to invade, that was the deal. Are
you saying that deal is off?

FLASHBACK

INT KREMLIN DAY

KHRUSHCHEV is confronted by the SOVIET GENERAL.

BOLSHAKOV (V.O.)

I'm saying that we also have our
military to consider.

OUT OF FLASHBACK

INT EMPTY HOUSE DAY

With RFK and BOLSHAKOV.

BOLSHAKOV

You asked me to understand the
president's predicament. Now you
must understand the First
Secretary's.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK is with the JOINT CHIEFS.

GENERAL LEMNITZER

We can't remove those missiles.
They're our guarantee to our NATO
allies that we are committed to
their defence.

JFK

At this point I'm simply informing
you of my position in principal. To
go to war with the Soviet Union
instead of accepting a trade would
be an insupportable position.

GENERAL LE MAY

In principal? You said in
principal?

JFK

By which I mean our approach to
this matter must be--finessed.

INT EMPTY HOUSE DAY

RFK is MEETING with BOLSHAKOV.

RFK

You must tell 'the highest
authority' that there can be no
quid pro quo concerning our
missiles in Turkey

BOLSHAKOV looks crestfallen.

RFK (CONT'D)

However, the President has been
thinking of removing those missiles
for some time as he considers them
obsolete.

BOLSHAKOV

I don't understand.

RFK

It's simple, we will remove the
missiles in six months time. But
that cannot be seen as part of this
deal. If your 'highest authority'
publicly declares it to be part of
the deal, we will deny it, and we
will keep the missiles in place.

BOLSHAKOV

(relieved)

I shall pass that message on.

INT WHITEHOUSE DAY

CABINET ROOM. JFK enters to address the JOINT CHIEFS.

JFK

The following comes from Premier Khrushchev. The Soviet Government has issued an order to dismantle the weapons on Cuba and return them to the Soviet Union. I have issued the following response. This decision is an important and constructive contribution to peace. I've also written to Premier Khrushchev saying that the undertakings of our governments should be promptly carried out.

There is no response from the JOINT CHIEFS.

JFK (CONT'D)

I think it would be prudent and wise to refrain from gloating or making any gung-ho statements.

GENERAL LEMNITZER

Why should we do that? We've been had. We've lost Cuba and we're committed to removing our missiles from Turkey. What have the Reds lost? Nothing of note that I can see. They never had a base on Cuba to begin with.

GENERAL LE MAY

If it was up to me I'd invade anyway.

JFK sits back in his seat and looks utterly perplexed.

EXT OSWALD HOUSE DALLAS DAY

BEDROOM. MARINA and her child JUNE are asleep in bed. OSWALD enters and gently wakens her.

OSWALD

Honey, what did I tell you.
President Kennedy won through.

(MORE)

OSWALD (CONT'D)
Old Mr. Khrushchev's pulling out of
Cuba. Isn't that wonderful?

EXT WASHINGTON PARK DAY

THE DIRECTOR is seated on a bench reading the front page of the NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE. The HEADLINE reads "KHRUSHCHEV OFFERS TO SCRAP CUBA BASES" "KENNEDY CALLS IT 'STATESMANLIKE DECISION' 'AID TO PEACE'". THE DIRECTOR is joined by MAURICE.

THE DIRECTOR
Have you read this hogwash?

MAURICE
Yes. A lot of people are calling it
worse things than hogwash.

THE DIRECTOR
You don't say.
*(looking again at
newspaper)*
Cuba's gone. Especially if Kennedy
gets a second term.

MAURICE
He's sure to. We have to take
missiles out of Turkey and we've
handed Cuba to the Reds and he's
sold it to the American people as a
victory. He's a hero.

THE DIRECTOR
Well, even hero's come and go.

MAURICE tries to fathom this remark, but THE DIRECTOR'S
expression is inscrutable, and he moves on.

THE DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
I've been asked to do a favor for
some friends, and I think you might
be able to help.

MAURICE
Of course.

EXT DALLAS STREET DAY

LEE HARVEY OSWALD is walking along when he hears a car horn
sound. He turns to see MAURICE pulling his vehicle into the
sidewalk. There is a MAN in the rear seat.

INT CAR DAY

MAURICE has parked the car in a quiet spot. OSWALD glances towards the man in the rear seat.

MAURICE

So, how are things?

OSWALD

Oh, so-so. Though very happy with the Cuban outcome. I was sure we'd be looking at bright flashes and mushroom clouds.

MAURICE

Yes, how about that.

OSWALD

Say, that U2 they shot down, that had nothing to do with---you know.

MAURICE

No. No the Reds managed that all on their own.

(pause)

So. So-so. Doesn't sound too exciting. Maybe I can change that.

OSWALD

Oh?

MAURICE

Some people in Washington are concerned about guns being bought through the mail and falling into the hands of---worrisome types.

OSWALD

Worrisome?

MAURICE

Criminals. Maybe even Communists. Fellows who defect to the USSR.

OSWALD

Oh?

MAURICE

Would you be prepared to help these people in Washington, Lee?

OSWALD

Well sure. What are patriots for if not to help the government.

MAURICE

This gentleman will be your contact. He's a Senate Investigator.

OSWALD

Oh. And his name is?

MAURICE

You can call him---Mr. Smith.

OSWALD

Mr Smith. Sure.

SMITH

How's your memory Lee?

OSWALD

Memory? Oh, pretty good.

SMITH hands OSWALD a card.

SMITH

You need anything or get any problems you call that number. After you've got it good and fixed in your head you burn that card.

OSWALD

No problem. Now what?

SMITH

*(hands OSWALD some DOLLAR
BILLS)*

I want you to buy some magazines. The types that advertise guns for sale.

OSWALD

I'll get to it.

MAURICE

How does it feel to be back in action Lee?

OSWALD

It feels good. No, it feels great. Really Great

END OF EPISODE SEVEN

maurice,lee,jfk ep 7 41.