



Trop Proche Chez Nous

(Too Close to Home)

Story by Jim Caswell

Audioplay by Jim Caswell and Doug Zeitlin

Episode Summary

Derrick Geist finally makes his way to Paris to investigate his parents' disappearance, but instead he finds himself on a case that, on the surface, mirrors the one his father and mother were working before vanishing from the face of the earth.

Starring

Lindsey Capparelli

April Sadowski

Ajit Singh

Doug Zeitlin

Derrick Geist

Ryan Gilbert

and Featuring

Maurice Fauré the manager

Zach De Witz

Gui the bellhop

Pete Nottit

Pierre the carhop

Erick Greeva

Geraldine the concierge

Joan Hallaron

Jeanne the security guard

Cinnamon Leigh

Enzo

Justin Bills

Michèle Boucher

Louise Frances

PROLOGUE

SCENE 1 – *ENTER INT.: Geist's Plane – England*

SOUND: Airplane door opens. Footfalls on stairs entering the plane.

LINDSEY

Whoa! This thing is gorgeous.

AJIT (British accent)

You'll have a much more comfortable flight this time, I would imagine.

LINDSEY

The view's much better than the inside of Geist's trunk.

GEIST

Up front is the cockpit....

LINDSEY

That's a good place for it. It has to make it easier to fly from there.

GEIST (perturbed)

This is the passenger compartment. Back there, to the right, is the master bedroom, and the other door leads to the storage bay.

LINDSEY

Cool. I'll stash my stuff in there.

SOUND: Footfalls across carpet.

GEIST

I don't suppose you know how to.... Hey, that's the wrong door. That's the bedroom.

SOUND: Door opens.

LINDSEY

I know.

SOUND: Door shuts.

GEIST (irritated)

Here less than a minute and she's already taking over.

LINDSEY (from behind the door)

Wow!

GEIST (yelling)

And you wouldn't even have stuff to stash if we hadn't been nice enough to get your stuff shipped over from the States!

AJIT

She is a strong-willed woman. But if I know you, Mister Derrick, you were going to allow her to take the living quarters anyway.

GEIST

Still, it's common courtesy to ask before you move in, instead of assuming. <beat> Do you know how to fly, Ajit?

AJIT

I've never taken piloting lessons, if that's what you mean.

GEIST

We'll have to see about that. I love flying, but it would be nice to have someone else who can take over the controls on the long flights.

AJIT (formally)

I understand. I stand ready to learn whatever you need me too, Mister Derrick.

GEIST

No need to be so formal, Ajit. Just call me Derrick, or Geist. I hate formalities.

AJIT

As you wish, sir.

GEIST (mumbled)

Not another one.

SOUND: Specialized cell phone ring tone.

GEIST

Now what?

SOUND: Flip phone opens.

GEIST

Geist.

FAURE

Mr. Geist. Zis is Maurice Fauré, of ze 'ôtel Ritz.

GEIST

Bonjour, Monsieur Fauré. To what do I owe the pleasure? Is everything all right with my reservation?

FAURE

Oui, Monsieur. Ze Windsor Suite is yours for as long as you wish, but zat is not why I am calling. We 'ave 'ad an incident 'ere at ze 'ôtel zat I was 'oping you would be able to 'elp us with.

GEIST

I'm not sure...

FAURE

Oh, please Monsieur Geist. Ze 'ôtel 'as only recently recovered from ze attention of zat dreadful business wit Monsieur Dodi.

GEIST

That was ten years ago!

FAURE

Oui. Pari', she 'as a very long memory.

GEIST

Well, I'm really coming out to look into my parents' disappearance. We're departing from England in about a half hour.

FAURE

I am aware of zat, Monsieur, and zat is why you were ze first to come to mind.

GEIST

Because...?

FAURE

Because zis situation, it is just like ze case zey were investigating before zey disappeared.

GEIST

How can that.... <beat> OK, Fauré. We'll be there in about two hours.

SOUND: Cue Intro music.

ACT I

SCENE 1 – *ENTER EXT.: Hotel Ritz Entrance – Paris*

SOUND: Background traffic. Car engine stops, followed by doors open, then close again.

LINDSEY

So this is the Paris Ritz, huh? I was expecting something
...bigger. After all, we all know how many men have been in the
Paris Hilton.

GEIST

It's larger than you think. What it lacks in height, it makes up for
in length.

LINDSEY

It just doesn't look like a hotel to me.

GEIST

That's because you're used to American hotels. That, and the fact
that it was originally built as a private residence.

LINDSEY (surprised)

This was somebody's home?

GEIST

Back in the nineteenth century. Then it was a financial institution
before being bought by César Ritz in 1898.

AJIT (Hindu accent)

You have obviously done your research, sir.

GEIST

It was the last known residence of my parents, Ajit. I could tell
you the exact dimensions of the laundry room if needed.

LINDSEY

I'm just surprised that there aren't more paparazzi around.

GEIST

Are you being tacky, or are you just woefully uninformed?

LINDSEY (questioningly)

What?

GEIST

Do you remember Princess Diana?

LINDSEY

Who doesn't? What about.... Wait a second. Didn't she die somewhere around here?

GEIST

Over at the Pont d'Alma tunnel. This is where they were coming from. Ever since then, the paparazzi have been persona-non-gratis outside the hotel. It doesn't stop them from lurking in the area, though. In fact, if you look casually over your right shoulder, your picture's being taken with a high-powered lens.

LINDSEY

Really?

SOUND: Cart is pushed forward.

GUI

Bienvenu monsieurs, mademoiselle, to ze 'ôtel Ritz. May I park your automobile?

SOUND: Keys flying through the air and caught.

GEIST

Keep it close. We may be leaving again soon.

GUI

Oui monsieur. Pierre! take in ze bags.

PIERRE

OK, Gui.

SOUND: Car door opens. Trunk opens and luggage begins to be unloaded.

LINDSEY

That was a big one. A lot of people still haven't recovered.

AJIT

The Lady Diana was beloved by many around the world. She had the kindest soul I've ever seen.

LINDSEY

Yeah. That too. I meant that it was a pretty big black eye for the media. There's a lot of people who are still resentful.

GEIST

The fact that many of the paparazzi haven't learned from the tragedy doesn't help. Most are still relentless in obtaining the story or the picture. There needs to be a limit to the invasion of people's privacy.

LINDSEY (irritated)

Spoken like a true member of the elite. You rich and famous have no problem being in the spotlight as long as it suits your purposes, but the second you're into something the tiny bit scandalous, you yell and scream about deserving 'privacy.'

SOUND: Trunk closes and engine starts. Car pulls away. Cart is pushed away.

GEIST (irritated)

Spoken like a member of the fourth estate. I find it amazing that private citizens are protected from being spied on by the government, but the so-called press is able to bug homes, set up video surveillance and get involved in high-speed car chases. They act like the KGB at the height of the Soviet Union, while hiding behind an American ideal. And there's a difference between pursuing a legitimate story and creating one from scratch, or going beyond the use of good sense, like stowing away in the trunk of a car for an international flight.

LINDSEY

But it led to a major story, now didn't it? I know you would've just preferred to go about your business without anyone knowing what you're up to, but people have the right to know!

GEIST

Why? What possible good can come from people knowing the details about what goes bump in the night? Does it keep them safer, knowing that ...?

AJIT

Mister Derrick. Miss Lindsey. We should take this inside, perhaps, away from the eyes that see and ears that hear all?

GEIST

After you.

LINDSEY

After you.

AJIT

Go in.

SOUND: Transition music.

SCENE 2 – CUT TO INT.: *Windsor Prestige Suite – Hotel Ritz – Paris*

SOUND: Door unlocked and opened.

GEIST

You can just put the luggage anywhere. We'll sort it out later, thanks.

PIERRE

Oui, Monsieur.

SOUND: Luggage begins being unloaded and stacked.

LINDSEY

You don't do anything half way, do you? This place is amazing. What's it called again?

GEIST

The Windsor Suite. My parents stayed here whenever they came to Paris. They loved it here, probably because of the romantic air of the place. It's said that it was used as a romantic rendezvous for the Duke and Duchess of Windsor before Edward abdicated the throne. I think my grandfather stayed here a few times as well.

AJIT

Indeed he did. Mister Heinrich was made good home here, and complemented the taste of the Duchess.

GEIST

Would you please stop that?

SOUND: Luggage stops getting moved.

AJIT

Stop what?

SOUND: Dollars being unfolded and picked though.

GEIST

That. *<beat>* Thank you very much.

PIERRE

Merci, Monsieur.

SOUND: Door closes.

GEIST

I wish you'd stop playing the foreign servant.

AJIT

Humble Ajit apologizes for his master's discomfort, but you shall gather information with your abilities, and I shall gather them with mine.

LINDSEY

Why shouldn't he play the part? That's what he is to you.

GEIST

I don't....

SOUND: Knock at door.

GEIST

Come in.

SOUND: Door opens.

FAURE

Bonjour, Monsieur Geist! Zank you so much for coming. I 'ope ze suite is to your liking.

GEIST

Very much, Monsieur Fauré.

FAURE

Oh, call me Maurice, S'e vou plét.

GEIST

Only if you call me Derrick.

FAURE

I am so 'appy zat you will be able to 'elp us, Monsieur Derrick. Zis latest disappearance could not come at ze worse of times.

GEIST

I haven't made any promises yet, Maurice. Tell me what's going on.

LINDSEY

I'm just going to go unpack my things.

GEIST

Don't you dare. You're not stealing two bedrooms in one day. The bed's mine and you can just sit your butt down out here and hear the details with the rest of us. <beat> My apologies, Maurice. Please, go on.

FAURE

Ze Boucher family 'ave been regular visitors to ze Ritz for years and are one of ze old-money families within ze city. Zere youngest daughter, Michèle, 'as been involved with ze son of one of ze members of ze council of Pari'. Ze Ritz 'as been chosen to 'ost zere engagement party in two days, in spite of everyzing zat has happened in ze past. It was to be ze event of ze season.

LINDSEY

What's happened?

GEIST

The Ritz has had its fair share of problems in the past. Not including the deaths of Princess Diana and the owner's son, mainly because they didn't actually happen on the property, the hotel has been the final residence of Frederic Salusbury in 1960, and Ambassador Pamela Churchill Harriman in 1997, just six months before the accident in the tunnel. And that doesn't count the various kidnappings, disappearances, thefts and other assorted crimes.

LINDSEY

Haven't you people ever heard of hotel security?

FAURE (a little insulted)

For a 'ôtel of our fame, we 'ave a rather low number of incidents. Unfortunately, ze renown of our clientele makes zose few globally known.

AJIT

Sincerest apologies for any disparagement, but how many of said incidents have been related to.... otherworldly events?

FAURE

Only a few. Ze majority of ze monsters zat bring us problems are of ze human variety.

GEIST

So something has happened to Mademoiselle Boucher?

FAURE

Oui. Yesterday, she was in her suite when she apparently went for ze walk. Only she did not inform anyone zat she was going. When she failed to return after several hours, ze police were summoned. She 'as disappeared.

GEIST

OK, it sounds like a standard missing persons. What ties it in to the old case?

FAURE

Ze Bouchers', zey are first cousins of ze Pétains.

GEIST

And Marie Pétain was the woman kidnapped fifteen years ago.

FAURE

Correct.

LINDSEY

What happened to her?

GEIST

Same scenario. Went out for a walk and didn't come back. Witnesses were scarce, but my folks were able to link the kidnapping to an underground movement among some of the less fortunate citizens who were tired of working their fingers to the bone and not being able to make ends meet. They were trying to legitimize themselves by referring to themselves as the New Revolution.

LINDSEY

Sounds more like an '80's rock band.

GEIST

My parents tracked them down and found Pétain down in the catacombs.

LINDSEY

So has anyone checked on this old group? I mean, if these nutjobs tried it once, they may try it again.

FAURE

Ze police, zey are already tracking zem down for questioning.

GEIST

And it's not particularly fair to refer to them as nutjobs. In spite of their choice in names and the way they went about it, they had a legitimate problem they were trying to deal with. While the players are different, the economic status – the extreme differences between the wealthy and the poor in Paris – is disconcerting. They don't have things like a government-enforced minimum wage to help make sure people are compensated fairly. And when situations become dire, people get desperate.

FAURE

Monsieur, are you defending zem?

GEIST

Not at all. They were still using violent means to illustrate their message, which can't be allowed. I'm just saying that I understand how desperate situations can lead to desperate actions. *<beat>* Who was the last person to see Michèle here at the hotel?

FAURE

Ze concierge, Geraldine.

GEIST

Let her know that I'll be coming to talk with her shortly.

FAURE

You are going to 'elp us zen? Magnifique!

GEIST

I'll do what I can.

FAURE

Grant merci, Monsieur! I will inform Geraldine immediately. But please, work quickly. Mademoiselle Boucher must be returned before 'er engagement party.

LINDSEY

Why?

FAURE

Ze press, zey will make a disaster of tings.

SOUND: Footfalls exiting followed by door closing.

LINDSEY

Was that supposed to be some sort of crack?

GEIST

No. The truth.

AJIT (British accent)

You plan to start with the concierge and pick up her trail?

GEIST

It's the best plan of action I can come up with.

LINDSEY

That's the track the cops'll be taking. We should just jump to the end and hit the catacombs.

GEIST

The problem with that is that you're assuming that the same people are responsible for both crimes.

LINDSEY

Isn't that what you're counting on, taking the case in order to follow your parents' footsteps to see if you can figure out what happened to them?

GEIST

No. An old family friend has asked for my help in saving another human being. That's motivation enough.

LINDSEY

But if it does prove to be the same people...

GEIST

That would be icing on the cake, yes.

LINDSEY

Then let's cut to the chase and hit the catacombs.

GEIST

Just because I'm hoping it's a similar situation doesn't mean I'm going to exclude the chance that it's not.

LINDSEY

But while you're out jumping through hoops, that girl's trapped down there.

GEIST

And if she's not trapped down there, going on a wild goose chase isn't going to help her, either.

LINDSEY

Well, I'm going down there, and I'll bet I find her before you do.

GEIST (disbelieving)

You want to bet on this girl's life?

LINDSEY

Sure. If I find her down in the catacombs, I get to have the bedroom all to myself while we're in Paris. And you serve me breakfast there every morning until we leave. Not Ajit, but you personally.

GEIST

Fine, but if I find her before you do, we hang a hammock in the cargo hold for you to sleep in and you leave my bedroom on the jet alone.

LINDSEY

Deal.

SOUND: Footfalls across room. Door opens, then shuts again.

GEIST

Ajit.

AJIT

Yes sir?

GEIST

Follow her. Make sure she doesn't get herself into trouble or bite off more than she can chew.

AJIT

Yes, sir.

SOUND: Footfalls start to cross room.

GEIST

Ajit?

AJIT

Yes, sir?

GEIST

What she said earlier, before Maurice arrived. Do I treat you and Jeremy like foreign servants?

AJIT

Sometimes, sir, but that's just your way – the way your culture has developed to deal with those that take care of you.

GEIST

I don't see either of you that way though.

AJIT

We know the nature of your heart. That's what matters most.

SOUND: Door opens, then closes again.

GEIST

I hate it when she's right. I hope she doesn't make a habit of it.

SOUND: Transition music.

ACT II

SCENE 1 – ENTER INT.: Front Lobby – Hôtel Ritz

SOUND: People mulling in background. Luggage wheeled around.

GERALDINE

Bonjour, Monsieur. ‘Ow may I ‘elp you?

GEIST

You were the concierge on duty when Mademoiselle Boucher went missing?

GERALDINE

You are Monsieur Geist?

GEIST

Yes.

GERALDINE

Monsieur Fauré ‘as told me to cooperate wiz you fully.

GEIST

Then please answer the question.

GERALDINE (sheepish)

As I told ze police, I was on duty, but I did not see anything.

GEIST

I see. That’s your official statement?

GERALDINE

Oui.

GEIST

OK, but what’s the truth? What really happened?

GERALDINE

Monsieur?

GEIST

Let’s cut to the chase.

GERALDINE

Cut to zee chase? What does that nean?

GEIST

You were on duty and saw the Boucher girl sneaking out. She caught you catching her and did something – blackmailed you or bribed you, one or the other – to ‘not see her.’ Now that she’s missing, you’re afraid. If you talk to me, I’ll do my best to keep your name out of thingsmake sure this ‘indiscretion’ doesn’t become public knowledge.

GERALDINE (forced laughter)

Zat is quite a story, Monsieur. You should consider writing ze novella.

GEIST

OK. I’ll see how funny the constables find my theories.

SOUND: Footfalls for three steps.

GERALDINE (nervous)

Monsieur!

GEIST

Yes?

GERALDINE

S'e vou plét, no. Please don't.

GEIST

If you didn't see her, then you have nothing to fear. Am I right, Madame?

GERALDINE

Please. Come back. Let us speak in private.

SOUND: A pause, then footsteps return.

GERALDINE

Back 'ere, S'e vou plét.

GEIST

If you wish.

SOUND: More footsteps. A door opens, then closes. Background noise is cut off.

GERALDINE

You do not understand, Monsieur. My reputation, it is my livelihood.

GEIST

I understand better than you do, Geraldine.

GERALDINE

Madame Geraldine.

GEIST

As the concierge, you are privy to all of the deepest and darkest secrets of the hotel. Whatever people want, whenever people want, they know you can provide. But we aren't talking a simple dalliance here, Geraldine. We are potentially talking of a girl's very life.

GERALDINE

I do not want to see anything happen to Mademoiselle.

GEIST (impassioned)

Then help me! You know where she went. Tell me so I can find her and bring her home to her family.

GERALDINE

Ze underground. She asked for directions to ze underground.

GEIST (disbelieving)

The subway? The best you can give me is the subway?

GERALDINE

It is true, Monsieur. She came down, in ze middle of ze night, asking where to find ze underground. She was acting mysterious, and gave me three hundred euros to have never seen her. What was I to do?

GEIST

Tell the truth. Be a woman of integrity.

GERALDINE

I am sorry, Monsieur.

GEIST

Have you told me everything?

GERALDINE

Everyzing zat I know, Monsieur.

GEIST

Then don't apologize to me, hope you get the chance to apologize to her. And next time, do the right thing the first time around.

SOUND: Transition music.

SCENE 2 – CUT TO EXT.: *Hôtel Ritz Entrance*

SOUND: Background traffic. A car pulls away. Doors slide open.

PIERRE

Ah, Monsieur. Are you ready for your car?

GEIST

I changed my mind. Not tonight.

PIERRE

I saw your lady-friend leave earlier. I 'ope all is well for you.

GEIST

Its just friends. *<beat>* You don't miss much, do you? Were you working the other night?

PIERRE

Oui.

GEIST

Did the police speak with you about Mademoiselle Boucher's disappearance?

PIERRE

No. The management, zey prefer us to be, how do you say ...inconspicuous.

GEIST

At least until the bags need to be carried.

PIERRE

You are correct, Monsieur.

GEIST

So they didn't come to you. Did you go to them?

PIERRE

With what, Monsieur? I did not see anything.

GEIST

So the Boucher girl managed to walk out these front doors and you didn't see her?

PIERRE

I would not call her a girl, Monsieur. She is 'wenty, able to make decisions of her own.

GEIST

That would be fine if not coming back was her own idea, but I seriously doubt being kidnapped was on her agenda for the evening. Did you talk to her?

PIERRE

Oui. She asked for directions.

GEIST (sarcastic)

Really. That's strange, that she'd forget how to get to the underground between the front desk and the door.

PIERRE

Where she was going, she did not need ze underground. I told her how to walk zere.

GEIST (disbelieving)

You sent a twenty-year-old woman for a midnight stroll by herself? Where was she going?

PIERRE

She wanted to visit ze Stade de France.

GEIST (disbelieving)

She wanted to visit the sports arena? Was there a game that night?

PIERRE

I do not follow football, Monsieur.

GEIST

Yet you know where the stadium's at.

PIERRE

Ze Stade is a national landmark, Monsieur, ever since ze Olympics. Everyone knows where it is.

GEIST

Except Michèle, apparently.

PIERRE

Except Mademoiselle Boucher, apparently.

GEIST

So, in the middle of the night, she decides to do some sightseeing.

PIERRE

I am told zat ze Stade is beautiful, even when not being used.

GEIST

Must be. I guess I'll go and see for myself.

SOUND: Transition music.

SCENE 3 – CUT TO EXT.: *Stade de France*

SOUND: Footfalls climbing stone steps.

GEIST

Thank you for doing this, Jeanne.

JEANNE

It is my pleasure, Monsieur Geist.

GEIST

Are you sure you won't get into any trouble for doing this? I mean, after all, it's the job of a security guard to keep the place secure, not give walking tours to visitors.

JEANNE

You are not the typical visitor, Monsieur. Ze boss said to consider you a dignitary, which warrants a tour.

GEIST

I'm rich. That doesn't make me royalty.

JEANNE

I don't zink money 'ad anyzing to do wit it. E zed 'e owed your family a favor.

GEIST

Given my family, that wouldn't surprise me any. And you're positive that you've never laid eyes on the girl?

JEANNE

Oui, Monsieur. I was ze guard on duty zat night, and I saw nozing.

GEIST

And there wasn't anything happening at the stadium that night?

JEANNE

No. We were closed up as tight as ze catacombs.

GEIST

That's about what I expected. I appreciate the tour, but would you mind if I had a few moments to myself? I'd like to gather my thoughts and put all the facts together in my head.

JEANNE

It ez not a problem, Monsieur. Do you know ze way out?

GEIST

I think I can find my way.

JEANNE

Very good. I will be at ze front gate if you need me.

GEIST

Thanks, Jeanne. I'll let you know when I leave.

JEANNE

Oui. Take your time.

SOUND: Footfalls move away. Silence for 5 count.

GEIST

OK. You can come out now.

ENZO

You knew I was here?

GEIST

I heard the extra footfalls about three minutes ago. I'm not sure how long you've actually been trailing us.

ENZO

Not long. Are you armed?

GEIST

No.

ENZO

Too badfor you.

SOUND: Gun drawn and cocked.

GEIST

Are you part of New Revolution?

ENZO

What is zat? I mean, I will be ze one asking ze questions.

GEIST

OK. The gun gives you that right. Ask away.

SOUND: Silence – 3 count.

GEIST

Well?

ENZO

I do not have any questions. I was just told to tell you to leave ze city.

GEIST

Told by whom?

ENZO

Never mind. You must leave, today.

GEIST

I'll consider it if you answer me one yes or no question.

ENZO

OK. Ask.

GEIST

Do you know Sevate?

ENZO

No.

GEIST

Too badfor you.

SOUND: Kick to hand. Gun drops and goes off.

ENZO

You booted me in ze hand!

GEIST

For starters.

SOUND: Kick to the head. Body falls.

ENZO (dazed)

You booted me in ze head!

SOUND: Quick footsteps. Gun is picked up.

GEIST

Stay down and don't move. It's my turn to ask the questions.
What's your name?

ENZO

Enzo.

GEIST

Who sent you?

ENZO

I can't say.

GEIST

You will say!

ENZO

I can't.

GEIST

You're more afraid of them than you are of me?

ENZO

No, Monsieur. I owe 'im too much.

GEIST

All things considered, I don't think you owe him much of anything anymore.

ENZO

He gave me a chance to turn my life around.

GEIST

Yeah, and that turned out so well for you. OK, so you make me guess. How is Pierre involved in the kidnapping of Boucher?

ENZO (surprised)

What? 'ow.... 'ow did you know?

GEIST

Pierre was the only one who knew I was coming here, and you obviously came after me specifically. Therefore, he had to have sent you.

ENZO

I know nozing of any kidnapping. Pierre, 'e 'elped me get ze job at ze Ritz. I do laundry, but it is ze best I can hope for right now. Money is tight and many won't hire a, how do you say, convict?

GEIST

So, knowing that you're desperate and willing to do anything, he sent you out here to kill me.

ENZO

No, no, Monsieur. Not kill. I was just to scare you. Convince you zat Pari', she is not safe.

GEIST

Well, the only thing that you've convinced me of is that you must have really loved prison, to be stupid enough to threaten someone with a gun. Get yourself up and let's get moving. I'm going to hand you over to Jeanne, and then go ask Pierre where I can find Michèle.

SOUND: Transition music.

ACT III

SCENE 1 – ENTER INT.: *Windsor Prestige Suite – Hotel Ritz*

SOUND: Door unlocks and opens. Footsteps start, followed by door slamming shut. Footfalls continue across the room.

GEIST

Did you two enjoy your tour of the tombs?

LINDSEY

Shut up.

GEIST

But I *<disgusted>* Oh my. What an interesting smell you've discovered.

LINDSEY

I said, shut up!

SOUND: Footfalls stop. Door opens, and then slams shut.

GEIST

Thanks for calling last night. I was getting worried about the two of you.

AJIT (British accent)

I had hoped you would.

SOUND: Shower starts in other room.

GEIST

How did things go?

AJIT

As expected, the government had the catacombs secured. When she made her attempt to sneak through, I assisted as best as I could.

GEIST

Obviously, you didn't provide a physical distraction.

AJIT (Indian accent)

Profiling would have put humble Ajit in prison.

GEIST

Exactly.

AJIT (British accent)

Once inside, she insisted we search all the tunnels.

GEIST

Which explains why it took all night.

AJIT

How did your search go last night?

GEIST

I stumbled across a few leads. I think the bellhop, Pierre, is involved, but after I got back last night from the ambush he arranged for me, he was gone. I spent the rest of the evening trying to track him down. The home address he gave the hotel turned up nothing.

AJIT

Ambush? Were you in danger?

GEIST

Nothing I couldn't handle.

AJIT

The difference between what can and cannot be handled is a life's breathe apart. And what would be the point in having me here to assist you if you do not allow me to assist?

GEIST

You helped plenty last night.

AJIT

I am not debating that point.

SOUND: Shower shuts off.

AJIT

You are a great man, skilled beyond your station or breeding, but you cannot do all. Even you will need help from time to time. Remember that, and the fact that we, Lindsey and myself, are here to provide that service.

GEIST

I know you are.

AJIT

Not just I. Whether you wish to believe it or not, Ms. Capparelli joining us was not by accident. I believe that the fates have much in store for that woman, and that they intend for the two of you to encounter them together.

GEIST

Us? Together? I don't think so.

AJIT

I refer to companionship, not romanticism.

GEIST

Oh.

SOUND: Door opens.

LINDSEY

What are you two talking about?

GEIST

Nothing. AJIT (softly)
 Though I wouldn't rule it out.

GEIST

That was quick.

LINDSEY

Comes with the business. Sometimes you need to get cleaned up in a hurry in order to get the next story.

GEIST

If you say so.

LINDSEY

So where do we go from here?

GEIST

I have a suspect and a lead, albeit a weak one. I was planning on going down to the subway hub, as it was Michèle's last known location. I'm not sure if there's anything to find, but it's better than nothing.

LINDSEY

It can't be any worse than last night. Give me a chance to finish drying my hair and get a new pair of boots on and we'll go.

SOUND: Door shuts.

GEIST

So glad we received your permission.

AJIT (mumbling)

Me thinks thou dost protest too much.

SOUND: Transition music.

SCENE 2 – CUT TO INT.: *Paris Underground Platform*

SOUND: Subway train passes. Crowd noise in background.

LINDSEY

So, what are we looking for?

GEIST

I'm not sure. I'm working more off a hunch at the moment than anything substantial.

LINDSEY

When I did that, I believe you called it a 'wild goose chase.'

GEIST

No, you made an assumption. There's a difference.

LINDSEY

If you say so.

GEIST

Ajit. Do you see anything suspicious?

AJIT

Not yet, sir.

LINDSEY

Why are we down here again?

GEIST

The concierge said that Boucher had asked for directions to the underground, which means that this is now her last known location.

LINDSEY

This is the same concierge that lied to the police?

GEIST

Yes.

LINDSEY

Wild goo.... Wait a second. Isn't that the bellhop from the hotel?

SOUND: Subway train pulls in to a stop.

AJIT

We should follow him. His presence is too much of a coincidence.

SOUND: Subway train doors open.

LINDSEY

He's moving toward the train. If we want to tail him, we better hurry.

GEIST

Let's go.

SOUND: Footsteps run across platform and board train. Doors close. Train pulls away, segueing into transition music.

SCENE 3 – CUT TO INT.: Apartment Hallway - Paris

SOUND: Footsteps marked by creaking wood.

LINDSEY

Are you sure it was this floor?

GEIST

It was hard to tell, with there only being stairs, but it looked like it was this one.

AJIT

It was this floor.

LINDSEY

All these rooms, and we don't know which one is his.

GEIST

The place is, for the most part, abandoned. Chances are, it's the room that has people in it.

AJIT

Up ahead.

SOUND: French pop music fades in as footsteps approach.

AJIT

How should we handle this?

GEIST

I was thinking about something like this.

SOUND: Door kicked down.

LINDSEY

Subtle.

SOUND: Bodies rush forward. A punch connects with face. MICHELE screams.

GEIST

That's for setting me up.

SOUND: Furniture is knocked over. Radio crashes to floor, breaking and stopping music.

MICHELE

Pierre!

SOUND: Another punch connects.

GEIST

And that's for kidnapping.

MICHELE

Monsieur! I was not kidnapped! Please, stop!

SOUND: A kick connects.

LINDSEY

Is your first reaction to everything a punch, kick or bullet?

GEIST

It's called a quick resolution.

LINDSEY

Sometimes quick isn't always best.

AJIT (Indian accent)

I believe that there is more going on here than we have been led to believe.

PIERRE (whimpering)

Please, Monsieur, let me explain.

MICHELE

Oh, Pierre. Are you hurt?

LINDSEY

I think the blood on the side of his face would make that a yes.

GEIST

Talk fast and make it good.

MICHELE

It is my entire fault. Pierre told me zat zis would not work, but I insisted zat we 'ad to be togezer now, before it was 'oo late.

PIERRE

We met last year, when Michèle and 'er family visited ze 'ôtel for ze summer. We fell in love, but her family, ze would not 'ave it. Zat is why she is engaged now.

MICHELE

I do not love 'im. I love Pierre.

GEIST

So what were you going to do? Live in this hovel together until the cops finally tracked you down? You know, being on the run doesn't help your case any.

MICHELE

Pierre, 'e was kicked out of 'is apartment. I zink my parents made it 'appen. 'e's been living 'ere ever since, trying to save up enough money for us to leave together.

LINDSEY

Where were you going to go?

PIERRE

I 'ave friends who live in Nice, working at ze Riviera 'ôtels. Zey said zat, if we could get there, zey could get me a job.

GEIST

And what about you? I don't think they have very many openings along the French Riviera for a debutante. Not exactly a short supply there.

MICHELE

I'll find work there somewhere. I don't need money, as long as I 'ave Pierre.

GEIST (mumbled)

Yeah, right.

AJIT

The teenage heart does not know any better.

PIERRE

We're not 'eenagers! We are both twenty, and in love!

GEIST

I should punch you again, just for being so naïve.

SOUND: PIERRE whimpers again.

LINDSEY

Again with the hitting. Listen, the two of you can't possibly think that this is actually going to work. The Boucher's are having the city searched, and it was only a matter of time before someone found you. You're probably lucky it was us.

PIERRE (mouth beginning to swell)

You call this lucky?

LINDSEY

We're actually willing to listen, rather than just hauling you off in handcuffs.

MICHELE

Tell zat to Monsieur Cowboy Punchy-Punchy 'ere.

LINDSEY

You two need to go back, talk to your parents, and explain to them what's going on. They may not be happy, but at least they'll know the truth.

MICHELE

Zey will not understand. Zey will forbid it.

LINDSEY

They deserve to know that you're safe and that you've made a decision about your own life. If they can't respect that, then the two of you can leave with a clear conscience and there won't be police looking for a missing person. Or they may surprise you. Either way, you're an adult willing to make adult decisions.

GEIST

That could be debated.

LINDSEY

You know, it's not exactly fair to assume that they're a certain way, just because they're rich or poor.

SOUND: Silence – 3 count.

GEIST

Get your things together. We'll take you home.

SOUND: Transition music.

EPILOGUE

SCENE 1 – ENTER INT.: *Windsor Prestige Suite – Hotel Ritz – Paris*

SOUND: Door opens and slams shut.

AJIT (surprised – British accent)

Mister Derrick. What is the matter?

LINDSEY

Couldn't dig up enough info from the case on your parents?

GEIST (irritated)

No, there was plenty of information. I spent the past four days going over everything – studying their notes, re-examining evidence, re-questioning people who had interacted with them. They did a very thorough job. I don't think I could've done better myself.

LINDSEY

So what's the problem?

GEIST

There weren't any loopholes. I was hoping they had missed something ...something I could have followed up on.

AJIT (sympathetic)

I'm sorry, sir.

LINDSEY

I'm still not sure why you were expecting anything different. After all, you threw money hand over fist for the best. You should've expected them to be

GEIST

If they didn't make any mistakes, then that means that they'rethey really are gone.

SOUND: Silence – 3 count.

GEIST

How are things with Michèle and Pierre?

LINDSEY

The parents aren't happy, but considering the alternative of losing their daughter, they're coping with the situation. Those two are going to have a tough time of it no matter what. Michèle's mom acts as though Pierre is just after the family money.

GEIST

That's probably because he is.

LINDSEY

How can you say that?

GEIST

Years of experience building up a wall of distrust. You get burned multiple times, you tend to get a bit wary of 'love at first sight.'

LINDSEY

That's a bit sad, and a bit stereotyping. You really should work on that. *<beat>* What'cha got there?

GEIST

Oh, this.

SOUND: A tabloid newspaper flops through the air.

GEIST

It's one of the local rags.

LINDSEY

Oh, cool.

SOUND: Tabloid picked up and unfolded.

LINDSEY

It's nice to see some real *<irritated>* What's this?

GEIST (humored)

I thought you might find that interesting.

LINDSEY

It's a picture of us. What's it doing on the front page? It's in French. What's it say?

AJIT

Roughly translated, the headline reads 'American Playboy Takes Companion To Ritz.'

GEIST

Actually, Ajit is being nice. Specifically, it says ‘American Playboy Takes Consort to Ritz Love Nest.’

LINDSEY

But there’sit’sthat’s not right!

GEIST

Since when do tabloids need to worry about what’s right?

AJIT

You know, sir, you probably shouldn’t be taking so much joy from this.

LINDSEY

How dare they!

SOUND: Table gets knocked over, breaking.

GEIST

Whoa! Go easy on the furniture. Some of this stuff is irreplaceable.

LINDSEY

But they don’t have the right. Where’s my right to ...

GEIST

Privacy? Are you starting to get the idea now?

LINDSEY

But if anyone back home sees this ...

GEIST

Not if. When. The pictures have already been sold in America.

LINDSEY (mortified)

I’ll be ruined.

GEIST (sympathetic)

I’m sorry, Lindsey. I *did* call Walter when I found the paper, but he said that the Enquirer had already scooped the photographs up. They were bragging to him that they were going to run them in their next issue.

LINDSEY

Let me guess. They weren't going to use as nice of a term as 'consort.'

GEIST

Probably not.

LINDSEY

II don't know what ...

GEIST

They were going to run themuntil Walter threatened them with a lawsuit. They still have the photos, and will probably run them eventually, but they can't run the same type of story they were planning.

LINDSEY (hopeful)

You mean...

GEIST

Your reputation is safe, for the moment, in America. Obviously, Paris has run the story, and apparently one of the English tabloids got a hold of it and ran it before anything could be done...

LINDSEY

I'll take it. How can I ...

GEIST

It's OK. Just keep this in mind for future reference.

LINDSEY (argumentative)

Oh, please. There's a big difference between someone who's in the public limelight and a private citizen.

GEIST (irritated)

Don't you get it? Everyone has a right to be a private citizen.

LINDSEY

There's a difference between private citizen and privacy.

GEIST

In case it hadn't dawned on you yet, you're not a 'private citizen' anymore, not since you got put on this assign.... Ajit. What are you doing? You don't need to clean up the broken table right now.

AJIT

I'm not cleaning, sir. I'm studying.

GEIST

Studying what? I don't see anything.

AJIT

Lindsey, do you have a UV lens for your camera?

LINDSEY

A night scope? Sure. Why?

AJIT

Would you get it please?

LINDSEY

OK.

SOUND: Movement, followed by a bag being searched through.

GEIST

What is it?

AJIT

There is something written – drawn – on the bottom of this table.

GEIST

One of these days you're going to need to explain to me how you're always able to see the things that aren't there and hide the things that are.

AJIT (Indian accent)

Many humble apologies from your faithful manservant.

GEIST

Don't do that. *<beat>* I still don't see anything.

AJIT (British English)

It is drawn in.... well, let us just call it invisible ink. A very rare invisible ink.

LINDSEY

I didn't think there was such a thing.

AJIT

There usually isn't, in this plain of existence. Your father, however, always kept a vial of it with him, in case of emergency.

SOUND: Lens gets snapped into place.

GEIST

And you think he used it?

LINDSEY

Here.

AJIT

Thank you. Let's find out.

SOUND: Silence – 2 count.

GEIST

Well?

AJIT

Have a look for yourself.

LINDSEY

What is it?

GEIST

It's a hieroglyph of some sort.

AJIT

Sanskrit, to be specific.

LINDSEY

Sanskrit written in your Dad's special ink? I think that would fall under the category of an undiscovered clue.

GEIST

What does it say?

AJIT

'Wrath on Man.'

CUT: Ending music and credits.

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