

# Cover Story

by

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FADE IN:

INT. NEWSROOM - MORNING

A large room with rows of desks paralleled to one another. A group of people stand together as LOGAN (40's) stands alone facing them.

LOGAN

You wasted so much time Jimmy,  
so much time. You knew we could  
have beat them to the punch!

JIMMY

I made every effort -

LOGAN

You sat on that lead one afternoon  
too long. You should have called  
him -

JIMMY

I called and called and waited  
and waited -

LOGAN

We aren't in the business of  
waiting!

JIMMY

I couldn't leave my post-if he  
had called, I would have missed -

LOGAN

You should have went directly to  
the source -

JIMMY

Fly to Boston?

LOGAN

Fly, drive, walk, I don't give a  
damn. Get IN and get OUT!

(pause.)

JIMMY

...I'm sorry.

LOGAN

Sorry doesn't get us the cover  
story, does it?

Jimmy puts his head down.

To staff:

LOGAN (CONT'D)

This isn't a Jimmy problem, folks. This is an OUR problem. Each and every one of you refuse to dig deeper inside yourselves. Where's the extra step? Where's the risk? Where's the JOURNALISM?! We talk quality, facts, you name it, I get that but where's the hunger, the drive to show the truth? Where's the courage? Yeah, well, I'm the one leveling this ship and I'll be damned if I allow us to go under. We cannot settle for less than what we are, less than what we believe in. If we have an opportunity we take it. We cannot stand idle and play it safe. (Like a rhyme) "If we see the opportunity..."

THE STAFF

"We take it."

LOGAN

That's right. Back to work.  
(His eyes connect with Paul.) PAUL,  
I need a word.

Logan leads Paul into his office.

INT. LOGAN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Logan's office looks as though a bomb went off inside of it. There are lamps toppled over, stacks of paper on chairs, empty bottles of liquor on top of the desk.

Paul observes the office - eyes open wide.

PAUL

Jeez...

LOGAN

Shut the door!

Paul quickly closes door.

Logan tosses items off his desk chair and sits. He sighs and rotates his sore neck.

You get that cover story for me?

Paul digs into his laptop case. He pulls out a folder and reaches over Logan's desk to hand it to him.

PAUL

I was able to take these photos.

LOGAN

Get the blinds.

Paul closes the blinds.

Logan turns on a lamp, even though it's still resting on its side. He examines the photos closely. Logan holds a photo of a woman and a man kissing.

PAUL

That was taken at the Carlton yesterday - two o'clock.

LOGAN

Two o'clock.

PAUL

Mark Rutherford is his name. He's a big shot over at Mart and Stewarts.

LOGAN

Rutherford...

PAUL

Yes, sir. (Cautiously.) I was able to overhear part of their conversation in the cocktail lounge.

Logan puts photo down on his desk.

They were talking about going away together, somewhere sunny, your wife - um - she mentioned Hawaii and he -

LOGAN

You're certain?

PAUL

Yes, sir, I'm afraid so.

Logan goes over to his closet where there is a safe. He types in the digits and pulls out an envelope.

Logan hands the envelope to Paul.

LOGAN  
It's all there. Count it.

Paul opens up envelope and grazes the cash inside with his thumb.

PAUL  
I know you're good for it.

LOGAN  
Remember our contract.

Paul places envelope inside his inner jacket pocket.

PAUL  
Of course.

LOGAN  
You can go now.

Paul gets up from chair and walks to the door.

Paul exits, closing the door.

Logan leans back in his chair and picks up the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. CARLTON HOTEL - DINING AREA

Logan and his wife ETTA sit across from one another. There's a bottle of wine between them and they each have a glass of it in front of them.

LOGAN  
After all these years, you are  
still so shockingly beautiful.

ETTA  
Thank you.

LOGAN  
Your smile hasn't changed since  
the day we met. You glow.

ETTA  
What's gotten into you tonight?

LOGAN

Can't a man compliment his wife?

ETTA

Of course.

LOGAN

It's been a while since we've  
come here...when was the last time?

ETTA

Since we've been here?

LOGAN

Yes.

ETTA

Must be ages.

LOGAN

Five years? Ten?

ETTA

Something like that. Why?

LOGAN

Place hasn't changed, really.

ETTA

No.

LOGAN

Amazing how that happens.

ETTA

What?

LOGAN

How only some things tend to remain the  
same...not everything, of course,  
but some. There always seems to  
be a time period for on things to  
exist, like it was meant to be there,  
until it's gone. Makes it  
all kind of special. Like us, we've  
been together..in our time...you and  
me, in this century, this place..to  
co-exist, until one day things shift.  
This hotel will eventually be  
gone, we will expire, this time,  
this time that we have will be, no  
more. Sad, in a way, don't you think?

LOGAN

I guess, even though we all may be insignificant, a blip in the timeline of life, we can't ignore the fact that we should cherish the time we know we do have, while we have it. Perhaps, that's all any of us can do, I'm afraid...experience and cherish the moments we are consciously alive because eventually it all fades away.

ETTA

That's sad Logan...

LOGAN

Is it?

Etta places her hand on top of Logan's.

ETTA

Are you sure you're alright?

LOGAN

There's been this memory in my mind of my father. One of the few times we ever got to spend quality time together, he took me to the lower east side, and we walked for hours up and down the streets where he used to play as a kid - stick ball, basketball, skelzy - not a lot of people know that game, but he'd share all these memories with me, point out the brownstones where my family lived, the corner deli my great uncle used to own. I watched as the pride in his face changed to how sad he was that it had all gone by, that the neighborhood was completely unrecognizable. Then we stumbled into a cafe where the old timers used to sit and play cards, and that's when he lit up again. His whole face beamed as he looked down at the tiles on the floor and said to me, "Right here, these tiles Logan, these tiles are exactly where I used to play as a little boy." It was like he found what he was looking for, you know? A piece, just a small piece that still remained, that said he lived.

ETTA  
I miss your father.

LOGAN  
...I know that maybe  
my time has expired, Etta.

ETTA  
Expired?

LOGAN  
Yeah.

ETTA  
What -

LOGAN  
You and me.

ETTA  
How?

LOGAN  
Etta, I know you don't love me,  
anymore.

ETTA  
Of course I love you.

LOGAN  
Not like before.

ETTA  
Don't say that.

LOGAN  
It's true.

ETTA  
I do love you, Logan.

Jimmy comes to the table.

JIMMY  
Mr. Wheatfield.

LOGAN  
Ah, Jimmy, yes, how are you?

JIMMY  
Good, good.



LOGAN  
This is my wife, Etta.

Jimmy shakes Etta's hand gently.

JIMMY  
Nice to meet you.

LOGAN  
What brings you here?

JIMMY  
I was given an anonymous tip.

LOGAN  
Oh?

JIMMY  
I don't mean to interrupt, but I was hoping to have a quick word, sir.

LOGAN  
Pardon me for a moment, Etta.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - SAME TIME

LOGAN  
What's all this about Jimmy?

JIMMY  
It's not safe here, sir.

LOGAN  
Safe? What's not safe?

JIMMY  
I received a phone call from someone saying that tonight they planned on shooting their wife to death inside the dining area of the Carlton. They did not say a time, but they said tonight. When I saw you I thought you should know for obvious reasons.

LOGAN  
Are you sure they said, TONIGHT?

JIMMY  
Tonight.

LOGAN  
What do you suggest I do?

JIMMY  
Leave immediately.

LOGAN  
But what about the rest of the diners?

JIMMY  
I haven't thought -

LOGAN  
Surely, we can't allow innocent  
people to get possibly injured or  
worse.

JIMMY  
Should I alert the maitre'd?

LOGAN  
What do you think?

JIMMY  
I think it's the right thing to do.  
Not sure what I was thinking.

LOGAN  
Jimmy.

JIMMY  
Yes.

LOGAN  
Go home.

JIMMY  
What?

LOGAN  
I said, go home.

JIMMY  
But there might be a shooting.

LOGAN  
There won't be.

JIMMY  
What?

LOGAN  
There will not be a shooting.

Logan reveals his holstered gun to Jimmy.

JIMMY

WHAT?! It was you?! You called me?

LOGAN

Don't make a scene.

JIMMY

What the hell is going on?

LOGAN

I was going to do the brutal act.

JIMMY

You what?!

LOGAN

But I've decided against it.

JIMMY

How do you know for sure?

LOGAN

I've decided to shoot myself instead.

JIMMY

Why?

LOGAN

If you want the cover story...stick around.

Logan walks off.

Jimmy remains perplexed.

FADE OUT.

Roll credits.