

Deep Cut

Julian Winter

508-904-8319  
PO Box 331  
Framingham, MA 01704  
[www.julianwinter.com](http://www.julianwinter.com)  
[julian@julianwinter.com](mailto:julian@julianwinter.com)

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FADE IN:

To a brilliant diamond, beautiful, exquisite. Peer through a facet, to the mystery therein, its sparkling enigma beckons...

INT. AIRPLANE CARGO HOLD - DAY

A PRIVATE SECURITY TEAM places velvet boxes into a safe. GIL FORD, 59, FBI, observes passively off to the side.

A MAINTENANCE MAN, 60's, bearded, scruffy, walks in oblivious to the security situation. He eyes an overhead pipe.

SECURITY CHIEF

Whoa. This area is secure. You can't enter.

MAINTENANCE MAN

'Til I fix that there toilet the plane sits here. No never mind to me, I'm paid hourly.

The chief eyes him, glances to Gil who shrugs, then directs two staff to frisk him and his beat-up toolbox.

MAINTENANCE MAN

What you shippin', Queen of Sheba's jewels?

SECURITY CHIEF

Just fix the toilet.

The maintenance man ascends his step stool to loosen a bolt, releasing a stench, driving the others out onto the tarmac.

LATER, AT THE CARGO HOLD DOOR

The maintenance man appears, toolbox in hand, smiling.

MAINTENANCE MAN

Fixed.

The chief motions his men to frisk him. The chief enters the hold to close the safe, then secure the cargo door. Gil watches the man amble away, just the hint of a limp.

INT. ONBOARD THE AIRBORNE PLANE, COACH CLASS - DAY

Gil reads a Bible.

IN THE FIRST CLASS CABIN

A GENTLEMAN, 50's, glasses, moustache, looks like he answers to no one, reads a thick book. *Thief* plays on the movie screen.

LILLIAN, late 40's, attractive, sips wine, seated beside him.

LILLIAN  
(to no one in particular)  
Always liked James Caan.

The man glances to the screen then back to his book.

LILLIAN  
Ah, my favorite scene.

The man looks to the screen, James Caan, lighting a cigarette from the oxy-lance after busting the safe.

He glances to Lillian and they lock gaze for a moment.

GENTLEMAN  
An oxy-lance, capable of piercing two hundred forty centimeters of steel.

LILLIAN  
What's that in inches?

GENTLEMAN  
A lot.

She notes his book, Greek history.

LILLIAN  
Serious material.

GENTLEMAN  
The Trojan Horse was ingenious. A beautiful example of misdirection.

LILLIAN  
All's fair in love and war.

He eyes her, now more attentive, taking in her features.

GENTLEMAN  
Shakespeare?

LILLIAN  
Actually John Lyly in 'Euphues'. His study of wit influenced Shakespeare and became known as euphemisms.

He closes his book.

GENTLEMAN  
So if I asked to buy you a drink it'd be a polite, indirect way to indicate I'm attracted to you?

Lillian smiles, Cheshire cat-like.

LILLIAN  
If you were to ask, yes.

GENTLEMAN  
I just did.

Lillian realizes his deft use of euphemism.

LILLIAN  
Touché.  
(noting first class)  
We're in- ... of course.

The ATTENDANT brings each a red wine. Lillian sniffs hers.

GENTLEMAN  
Lovely nose.

Lillian eyes him.

GENTLEMAN  
The wine.

LILLIAN  
Right. How do you know of an oxy-lance?

GENTLEMAN  
*Thief* is one of my favorites, also.  
How do you know of John Lyly?

LILLIAN  
Literature background. I'm a  
language translator.

GENTLEMAN  
Which is your favorite tongue?

She catches an errant wine drop on her glass with her tongue.

LILLIAN  
French, of course.

LATER

The gentleman enters coach. Passing Gil, he spies a bookmark  
in the aisle and hands it to Gil, noting his passage, Matthew  
7 Verse 6

GENTLEMAN  
Neither cast pearls before swine.

Gil nods thanks, then watches him continue toward the rear.

INSIDE THE TOILET

The gentleman urinates into the toilet.

GENTLEMAN

Lest they trample them under their feet.

He zips his pants, then smoothes his moustache in the mirror.

GENTLEMAN

And turn again and rend you.

INT. AIRPLANE CARGO HOLD - DAY

Gil watches the SECURITY TEAM open the safe. They stack several of the velvet boxes on top of each other.

A MAN opens the last one. It's EMPTY. In panic he opens the others, all equally empty. The man clutches his head.

MAN

Search the area.

Gil shakes his head and walks away in the drizzle.

INT. GIL'S HOME, HIS STUDY - NIGHT

Wistful, Gil opens a file and spreads newspaper clippings of heist headlines and bits of random evidence on his desk.

On TV, a magician performs the lady in the box sword trick.

TOM, 30, eyes his father's melancholy. Rain taps overhead.

TOM

Dad, you shouldn't be alone. We want you over for dinner tomorrow.

Gil nods, holding a picture of himself and ELIZABETH.

TOM

I miss Mom, too.

GIL

I'm proud of you, Tom. I'd never trade my years with the FBI, but there's a cachet to the Secret Service.

TOM

(noting the file contents)  
You're always working on this.

GIL  
Just an old side project.

RUTH, 29, eight months pregnant, enters eyeing Tom.

RUTH  
Did you tell him?

TOM  
We settled on a name. Going to name  
him after his grandfather, Gilbert.

Gil looks up, he should be happy, but his smile doesn't come.

GIL  
Sure you want to saddle him with that?  
I like Tom Junior.

RUTH  
We already decided.  
(she eyes Tom again)

TOM  
I'm working a dinner for the President.  
I got Ruth in. Why don't you come? I'm  
sure with your pull you could get in.

Preoccupied, Gil eyes the magician on TV, then Ruth's pearls.

GIL  
It's always been about misdirection.

TOM  
What?

Gil notes the rain beading into drops on the skylight.

GIL  
Neither cast pearls... of course.  
I need to step out.

TOM  
The Presidential dinner?

GIL  
Don't think I'll make it.

INT. AIRPLANE CARGO HOLD - NIGHT

JACK HORN, 52, athletic, extracts diamonds from the overhead  
pipe. Jack was our maintenance man and man in first class.

From the dark rain, Gil enters, gun drawn, peering into the  
darkness. He locates Jack.

GIL  
Neither cast pearls before swine,  
but hide your diamonds in sewage.

Unruffled, Jack notes Gil's entrance.

JACK  
Took long enough.

Jack hands him the pipe wrench, as he extracts another bag.

JACK  
Thought you were slowing down.

GIL  
You went to the well too many times.  
Paris, nine years ago. You hid  
diamonds in the sewer.

Jack pulls out another bag and tosses it to Gil.

JACK  
Actually I was counting on your  
attention to detail. I'm retiring.

Gun pointing, Gil motions for Jack to raise his hands.

GIL  
Permanently, finally.

JACK  
Not that way.

GIL  
Your only future is federal prison.

Jack acknowledges the comment.

JACK  
I owe you more respect than a bullet.

GIL  
Respect. You talk about respect?  
  
She's been dead five years, this week.  
She never got over it.

JACK  
My condolences.

GIL  
The boy is thirty.

JACK

Boy?

GIL

Yeah, boy.

Jack pauses to assimilate the comment, eyes distant.

JACK

Hmm, thirty years. Seems like yesterday.  
(eyes back in focus)

I don't take pleasure in this...

In a flash, too quick for Gil to react, Jack flicks his wrist. A dagger slides into his hand which he tosses into Gils chest, buried to the hilt. Gil slumps onto his back.

Jack walks over to push Gil's gun away. Gil gasps for air. Jack props Gil's head up.

He extracts the knife and cleans it on Gil's shirt. Jack inspects the knife for cleanliness.

JACK

I can't retire looking over my  
shoulder. You're too tenacious.

Gil coughs blood. Jack squats beside him, serious.

JACK

Ironic isn't it...?

Gill looks at him. Jack packs some of the diamonds.

JACK

... Life. You lie here breathing your  
last and I hold a bag of diamonds.

You wanted a family, I had no interest,  
yet I'm the one that fathers a son.

Your wife dies, leaving you alone.  
Alone is my preferred state.

You won't understand, but I respect  
you. A man should have a mission in  
life and you accepted yours.

Jack holds up one of the diamonds.

JACK

The value of a diamond is all in the  
cut. Too shallow, it lacks brilliance.

JACK (CONT)

Too deep, darkens the luster. All potential lost, it's nothing more than a black diamond.

Elusive is the ideal cut, resulting in unparalleled brilliance.

You're that, an ideal cut. A man of integrity.

Jack packs the rest as Gil fights for his last few breaths.

JACK

Would you like me to stay with you?

GIL

I'd rather die alone.

Jack pauses at the door, buttoning his coat against the rain.

JACK

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for You are with me.

Gil's breathing comes in labored gulps. Jack turns to leave.

GIL

I have one question.

Jack glances back. Gil coughs blood. It appears he may die before his question.

GIL

Does the Leister actually exist?

Jack considers the question. A good question. He nods slowly.

JACK

I've held it.

Acknowledging his answer Gil relaxes, resigned to his fate.

JACK

Is your son a good man?

GIL

(coughing blood)  
Go to hell.

Jack notes the remark. He turns to the night and the sad rain.

INT. FANCY HOTEL BAR - (SAME) NIGHT

Jack, sans moustache, enters and spies a woman at the bar.

AT THE BAR

The waitress brings a wine to the woman, Lillian, then motions to where Jack stood, but he's gone. The waitress leaves. Jack sidles up beside Lillian. He lifts her wine to the light.

JACK

Great legs.

Lillian draws his eyes to hers.

LILLIAN

And the body?

Jack catches his breath, then closes his eyes to take a sip.

JACK

Full. Rich, intense, fragrant.

Lillian slips the glass from his hand to take her own sip...

LILLIAN

A seductive aftertaste, no? A sense of-

JACK

Honeysuckle-

LILLIAN

-in heat.

INT. LILLIAN'S CONDO, THE KITCHEN - (SAME)NIGHT

Jack stands ready with tongs beside a pot of boiling water. Lillian deftly cuts salad. The way she wields a knife draws his attention. She motions to the pot.

LILLIAN

They're ready.

Jack extracts two lobsters. In short order she carves them up, then slams the knife into the butcher block.

JACK

You're good with a knife.

LILLIAN

Lots of practice.

JACK

In the kitchen?

LILLIAN

Where else?

She discards the livers.

JACK

I thought tomalley was a delicacy.

LILLIAN

When it's not poisonous. All of the  
Maine lobster this year is contaminated  
with the red tide. The meat is fine  
but the liver concentrates the toxin.

Paralytic Shellfish Poison may not kill  
you, but it would ruin your evening.

Loss of judgement, hallucinations,  
paranoia, blurred vision.

INT. LILLIAN'S CONDO, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Jack and Lillian dine on lobster. Candlelight draws romantic  
shadows on their faces. Rain peeks in outside the window.

Lillian cuts a piece of her tail and extends it to him.

LILLIAN

What do you do?

He leans in for the bite, she pulls it back subtly.

JACK

Retired.

She places the lobster on his lips.

LILLIAN

Before that.

JACK

I re-sold diamonds.

She cocks her head, thinking.

LILLIAN

How do you obtain them?

JACK

Here and there.

LILLIAN

Ever robbed?

Jack eyes her a moment, looking for more in her eyes.

JACK  
As subject or object?  
(pause)  
Tell me more about your work.

LILLIAN  
A reseller like you, only language.

JACK  
Do you meet interesting people?

She teases lobster from her fork, eyes intent upon him.

LILLIAN  
Occasionally.

He smiles at her sly wit.

LATER

The candles burn low. The rain taps against the panes, seeking attention. The two linger over wine, exchanging glances.

She sips his wine, teasing with her eyes, leaving him a last sip and lipstick on the rim.

He slips his glass from her hand to swirl the wine. He notes the proximity of her lipstick on the rim, inches from his lips.

She eyes him, waiting.

LILLIAN  
Well?

He glances to her over the rim, questioning.

LILLIAN  
Are you going to finish it?

Eyes to hers he finds her lipstick on the rim and drinks.

She smiles and leans in close, shadows soft upon her face.

LILLIAN  
Tell me more about this oxy-lance.

JACK  
It can pierce the most the resistant barriers, to penetrate deep within.

Excellent way to crack a safe.

Lillian slides a bit closer.

LILLIAN  
And steal the jewels therein?

JACK  
Do they want to be stolen?

LILLIAN  
Perhaps. Perhaps just coveted.

He notes her necklace, the diamond lovely against her skin.

JACK  
Every diamond has a story inside.

LILLIAN  
What do see in my diamond?

He holds the diamond in his palm, brushing her collar bone. She catches her breath, only candlelight separating their lips.

It steps aside to let them kiss. He unclasps her necklace. They lean back to eye each other, panting panthers.

JACK  
(noting the necklace)  
Any sentimental value?

LILLIAN  
(eyes still unfocused)  
What?

JACK  
Any attachment?

LILLIAN  
None.

He holds it before the candlelight, eyeing the brilliance.

JACK  
I'm a bit old-fashioned.

Lillian cocks an eyebrow in question. He twirls the diamond

JACK  
First date, a kiss is lucky.  
Any more is...

LILLIAN  
Are you turning me down?

He closes his fist around the necklace, the diamond hangs free.

JACK  
Could I work on this?

LILLIAN  
I won't ask again.

JACK  
You won't need to.

INT. LILLIAN'S CONDO, INSIDE HER FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Lillian leans back against the door, contemplative. Her fingers trace her neck where the necklace had been.

LILLIAN  
Every diamond has a story...

INT. GIL'S HOME, HIS STUDY - DAY

Sad, Tom sits at his father's desk reviewing the heist file. Ruth escorts in RAY, late 50's, then exits.

RAY  
Sorry about your father. Anything?

TOM  
Nothing. No prints, no physical evidence. Knives don't reveal much.

No idea why he was even there.

Ray walks around to pat his shoulders. Tom notes the file.

TOM  
It's got to be related to this. He was studying this and mumbled something before he left.

RAY  
You can pass on the President's dinner.

TOM  
Ruth is looking forward to it. I'll still work it.

Tom reads some notes. Ray bends closer.

TOM  
He mentioned this before. A mystery diamond. Thousands of years old. Never photographed, never catalogued. What was he working on?

RAY

He was chasing a ghost. Over the last thirty years there's been a variety of jewel heists, some making news, others not.

He felt there was a common thread  
The problem was no consistent MO.

Often the jewels were replaced with fakes that weren't discovered for months leaving the trail cold.

He worked alone and when he used cohorts he typically killed them after the job, eliminating leaks.

Never caught on tape, never left prints. We wouldn't know if we were sitting beside him on an airplane.

TOM

Why dad's obsession?

RAY

Never did say.

Ray exits. Tom picks up one clipping from thirty years ago.

INSERT CLIPPING

"Rape During Bank Heist

Elizabeth Ford, 27, was raped during a bank heist.  
The robber escaped leaving no clues."

Tom lowers the clipping to look to the picture of his parents.

INT. LILLIAN'S CONDO - DAY

Lillian sits at last night's dinner table, on the phone.

LILLIAN

Could you check around on something?

VOICE (VO)

Sure.

She lifts Jack's goblet in the v between two fingers, eyeing several finger prints.

LILLIAN

I'll send you something with prints.

