**AIRBORNE** - STORY TREATMENT 3

**Title: Russian Parvenu**

**Logline:** Jacobi (Jack) Reichmann and Ethan Ferris are working in Italy when they receive a call from Elena Gonzales back in LA regarding a potential new client; a Russian Billionaire. It begins a surreal romp from Niece to Monte Carlo to Beverly Hills. Airborne has a new customer but at what price?

**MILANO -**

While in Italy making final pre-delivery inspections on a VIP Helicopter Project, Reichmann & Ferris receive a call from Elena Gonzalez back in LA. She says a Russian named Yovi Pudori is trying to reach him and asks; “Shall I give him your cell? Jack agrees and a short time later, his phone goes. It’s Pudori. Despite a thick Russian accent, his English is intelligible. He explains he is the lieutenant for one Alexander Mirakov – a Russian Billionaire who has just ordered a new Boeing Business Jet. He continues, explaining his boss had seen an editorial piece on JRAD in *Robb Report* *Magazine –* and was interested in speaking with him.

*(the article he was eluding to was a nice bit of editorial on Jack from a few months back – a piece showcasing designers of large Private Jets.)*

Pudori asks if Jack would be available to travel from the states to St Petersburg for a visit with Mirakov. Reichmann explains he and his VP are in Italy at the moment, wrapping up a project – but that if the meeting could be arranged in the next few days, they could simply route themselves thru St Petersburg on the way back to the States.

Yovi agrees and says he will speak to ‘the boss’. He calls back the next morning and asks if Jack and Ethan can fly to Nice instead where he and Mirakov will meet them. Reichmann agrees and pre-paid air tickets are received via e-mail.

Two days later, Reichmann and Ferris fly down and are greeted curbside at the Nice Airport by some smarmy Russian dude, late 20s – leather jacket and chain-smoking Marlboro Reds. As he’s getting their bags into the Jaguar SUV, he catches a glimpse of a shoulder harness holstering a 9 mm sidearm.

Once in, they rocket out of the airport onto the Mon Cornice – headed north up the coast toward Caen. Reichmann’s not sure what the speed limit is – but whatever it is, smarmy Russian dude is exceeding it by 50 kph. He’s swerving in and out of traffic passing cars as if they’re parked, all while trying (in very broken English) to tell Reichmann and Ferris about how he works for a very powerful man and something else about Oprah - which to this day neither has ever made sense of.

As the sun began to sink over the Mediterranean, they flew thru St. Tropez and Caen – the pair still unclear at all where exactly they were headed. Around dusk the Russian driver jerks the wheel and Y’s off up a side boulevard into the very posh seaside enclave of *Cap Ferra.* They finally arrive at a gate - behind which are two more smarmy Russian dudes – each smoking and each no doubt packin’, like the driver.

As they drive past the gate, a flank of towering Cypress trees eventually give way to a modest little 9,000 sq. ft. Villa – replete with a half-acre of perfectly manicured English gardens; and beyond, the flat reflective surface of an infinity pool framing the Mediterranean.

Reichmann and Ferris are shown to one of two smaller guesthouses – and were told they could also visit the main house or explore the grounds if they wanted but that one of the guards would need to accompany them. By the looks of it – the entire property was uninhabited by anyone but the three Russian thugs. No sign of house-staff or anything that looked like a billionaire.

It was seven o’clock by the time the pair settled into their rooms – but with just enough light left to see the grounds Ethan knocked on Jack’s door. He agreed and summoned one the escorts – an easy task given the ubiquitous cigarettes dangling from their mouths.

One of the smarmbags turns up and the three begin walking the grounds. The place was like something outa the movies – incredible on every level, but still no sign of life.

Smarmy Russian guy 2 shows up near the seaward side of the property and asked if they wanted to see the main house. Jack and Ethan nod and the driver stubs his cigarette – sliding the remaining butt in his pocket. The house is equally incredible on the inside but the pair quickly realize the main reason they’ve been invited inside – is so that the Ruskies can visit the kitchen for a glass of vodka and a take a break from the chill. Jack and Ethan join them for a quick pop, look around a bit and then head back to the guest cottage – still under escort. Worn out from the day, both go down hard for some much-needed sleep. Sometime later Jack is awakened by the sound of a knock at the door. He looks at his watch. It’s just after 1:00 am.

The knocker announces himself: “Mr. Reichmann, Hi, it’s Yovi….please come.” Jack pulls himself out of a deep sleep, dons his cloths and exits the room. He knocks on Ethan’s door.

Still half asleep, the pair follows Yovi across the grounds and Jack notices three other cars that hadn’t been there before. Yovi explains the property is a new acquisition for the boss – a summer place for the family. They had left the Canary Islands at midday and Mirakov wanted to show the villa off to his cronies before traveling on to Moscow in the morning for meetings. On entering the house this time, they hear voices – lots of them. The three arrive to a large open kitchen where Reichmann and Ferris discover at least seven new faces, four men and three women (or *girls* more appropriately). On a large center island are multiple bottles of Vodka, two well-populated ashtrays and a dozen or so shot glasses. The vodka had been extracted from the freezer – and all of them were trading shots – downing it like there was no tomorrow.

Yovi introduces Jack and Ethan to Alexander (Alex) Mirakov – their billionaire host. Alex shakes his hand with a warm smile and waves his arm as if to say “have whatever you like.” Jack’s not sure if he’s talking about the bacon wrapped quail, the vodka, the girls…or all three.

The three girls (none of whom likely had seen their 22nd Birthday) are introduced simply as “flight staff”. Each of them wore matching quasi flight attendant skirts and blouses. One of them came and placed a glass in front of Reichmann and poured. She didn’t leave his side – clearly “assigned” to him. Ethan grimaces as if to say, “where’s mine?” Copious amounts of vodka were consumed and except for Jack and Etan, no one else had much interest in the quail.

There was eventually so much cigarette smoke that the only way you could identify individuals was from the pink glow when they inhaled.

Abruptly at about 2:15 am, people began to move. Something was happening. Yovi says “come, we go for food.” Jack looks for Ferris but can’t find him. On exiting the house, Reichmann finds Ferris having a cigarette with one of the guards – strange since Ferris only smokes ganja. Then everyone else lights up, just for the walk to the cars. It was as if tobacco were being permanently banned the next morning. They all pile into two Jag SUVs and one charcoal Rover.

Again as if there was lava chasing them, the caravan rocketed out and down the darkened boulevard - eventually back onto the Mon Cornice headed in the same direction as before. 15 harrowing minutes later, they had rolled into Monte Carlo and exited the cars in front of the Grande Casino – not unlike a contingent of mafia bosses. As they go to exit the cars, Jack looks at Ethan and finds a pale sweaty face – his hands clutching the headrest in front of him.

Looking over, Jack asks: “What’s wrong with you?” Ethan isn’t able to answer. He manages to get the door open and promptly throws up in one of the planters lining the valet drive. One of the girls offers him her neck scarf. “What’s up with you?” Jack asks. Ethan replies: “I haven’t smoked a cigarette in 23 years. I feel like I just ran a bobsled race hooked up to a carbon monoxide mask! Was it really imperative that we get here in six minutes?? I mean it’s not like Monte Carlo is going to *close* for fuck sake?!

Jack helps Ethan get his legs as the Russians snicker. They follow the rest across the esplanade to the famous Grande Café. A table for ten was prepared on their arrival. There was more waitstaff than a state dinner.

When the food started coming, it didn’t stop and *of course* more vodka, followed by even more vodka. Every once in a while the ‘client to be’ – who essentially spoke not a word of English, would wink at Jack and motion toward the girl – who was still glued to him. Reichmann was now pretty clear on the notion that the three “Flight Attendants” had responsibilities beyond simply serving up borscht at 51,000 ft.

An hour passed – then two.

At one point Alexander asked Yovi to switch places with one of the girls – allowing her next to him. In seconds her head disappeared under the white linen tablecloth. Jack was pretty sure she wasn’t looking for keys.

Ethan looks across the way to a separate table – where the guards are seated. His ‘buddy’ raises his pack of cigarettes in jest, the three of them laughing.

By 4:40 AM, Mirakov’s head was laid back against the banquette, mouth open – out like a light. His adoring flight attendant was also passed out - drooling down his shirt – a lit cigarette still in her fingers.

It all would have been very amusing but in this business, you don’t get a lot of face time with *“the boss”.* Reichmann was getting nervous about *when* – and *how* – he would ever be able to make the personal connection w/ Mirakov and then get Ethan on him to cut the deal before they left for Russia in the morning. Both Reichmann and Ferris are both skilled closers – but in a setting like this it seemed increasingly unlikely - and it was going south by the minute.

Another look at Ferris also told him *he* wasn’t going to be much help.

By now the party was winding down fast. Two of Mirakov’s entourage helped him out of the restaurant while the smarmy Russian drivers fetched the rolling stock. As they go to get in, Alexander motions for Reichmann to come with him in the Rover and before anyone could object, Ferris (green face and all) piles in the opposite side. The trip back was considerably quieter than coming down – but miraculously, the Billionaire seemed to be getting a second wind.

Jack is talking to Yovi but is interrupted by Ethan:

“Lava lampa vashi desyat' dollarov” *(the lava lamp is yours for ten dollars)*

Everyone (including the driver) turns to look at him – completely perplexed. Ferris says…”I had a Russian roommate in college. It’s the only thing I know how to say.” There’s a long pause – then the entire car erupts in laughter.

Mirakov replies saying “maybe we put Lava Lamp in BBJ!” More laughter. Ethan knows he’s broken the mood and goes in for the kill.

“So are we going to design a kick-ass BBJ for you Mr. Mirakov?”

Using Yovi as his translator, Mirakov began relaying his requirements for the new BBJ and eventually they begin discussing fee. Mirakov shook his head ‘no’ so many times he looked like a bobble head. Yovi tells Jack, “he’ll never pay that – you have to be more reasonable”. Jack explains it’s an 18-month project and that he cannot do it for less.

On arriving back to the estate, still no deal had been reached - but Mirakov didn’t seem interested in going to bed either. He spies the pool with steam rising off the surface – and heads straight for it! The smarmy guards are in double time hoping to avoid seeing their employer go face down on the concrete. Mirakov peeled all his clothes off and went straight in. A minute two of the girls were also in the pool, sans clothes, and eventually Yovi. The rest of the entourage (including Jack and his assigned hooker) took a seat, lit up - and stared at their drunken Billionaire boss and his pals like Koi in a Koi pond.

By the time the sun started to crack, Mirakov pulls himself from the pool and standing with his cock in Jack’s face – offers his hand saying: “You have deal.”

He lights a cigarette and then hands one to Ethan – everyone again enjoying a good laugh.

NEXT MORNING

Reichmann awakes with the hooker next to him – both still in their clothes. There is a knock on the door. Its Ethan. “Come in”

“I like it Reichmann…that’s a new one for us! We somehow managed to negotiate a design contract with a drunk, wet billionaire. I don’t remember doing that before, do you?”

“Can’t say that I do Ferris…nope, pretty sure we never did that before”

FIVE WEEKS LATER - Beverly Hills

For those who don’t know L.A. that well, *Beverly Park West* is an enclave of the nouveau super riche’ that even George Clooney couldn’t afford to live in. Jack, Ethan and Elena show up at around 2:30 in the afternoon at what can only be described as an overbuilt monument to wealth. The Mirakov home is a 23,000 square foot Mediterranean-style palace perched above Laurel Canyon.

The three are greeted at the door by Enid Unitan, Mrs. Mirakov’s pleasant albeit frazzled assistant. Elena had spoken with her several times by phone in coordinating the meeting. She escorts them down a long hall to the main dining room. As they follow her they can see that’s she’s wearing one of those ear piece wire things – obviously an electronic tether to her employer. They are invited to lay out their plans and materials out on a massive dining table.

This is JRAD’s initial Preliminary Design Review and as such, they will also be met by two representatives from Boeing in supporting the technical aspects of the new BBJ.

The doorbell rings a few moments later. Bill Hubert and Laura Fisher – both only familiar by phone thus far, join the party. Cards are exchanged etc.

After fifteen or twenty minutes, the staccato sound of high heels on marble lets the team know they’re on. Mrs. Mirakov enters the room. She’s tall, very attractive – maybe 40 and dressed to the nines. In one hand is a cell phone – and the other a small Corgi sporting a ruby studded collar. Her phone goes and she answers it while shaking each person’s hands. Another eight to ten minutes pass with Madam still on the phone. Just as she’s giving the team the ‘wrap up’ gesture, their son Mikael (maybe 7) enters the room on a skateboard - unbothered that there’s a meeting underway or that his mother is engaged. He proceeds to yammer on about the battery in his drone being dead.

At this point, Mrs. Mirakov releases the Corgi onto the table while she tries to sort her son out – still on the phone. After a minute or so of staring at us with his flat fidgety face – the dog begins freely cavorting across our plans and color boards, as if it were a playground. After sniffing and licking a few finger cookies – he turns and clips a cup and tea, which spills and runs under our schematics.

Mrs. Mirakov (*still* on the phone) appears completely oblivious as Unid apologizes and attempts to clean up the mess. The kid is now raising his considerable voice in trying to get his Mom’s attention while the dog continues to free-roam the table as if it were a dog-run.

One of the Boeing guys makes a gesture like he’s pulling a handgun from his coat and shooting the dog – who’s now at the edge of the table standing on one of their material boards engaged in high pitched barking frenzy at the kids skateboard which he has launched into the wall in protest to his Mom.

Another three or four minutes pass – and she finally ends the call, clapping her hands and ‘baby-calling’ the Corgi back across the presentation materials to the safety of her arms.

She hands the phone to Enid, straightens her dress and smiling asks…….

“Would anyone like Tea or Cookies?

Some time passes as Mrs. Mirakov and the team finally makes progress in working over the plans and discussing the aircraft’s requirements.

Elena Gonzales excuses herself to the powder room and on returning – sees a large shadow race across the hall floor followed by a swoosh sound. She goes to the window and finds the kid (Mikael) sitting on top of a Henry Moore sculpture working a remote control. A few seconds later, she spies a five-foot diameter military style drone hovering above the pool. She then sees a housekeeper frantically running across the lawn. The kid responds by quickly moving the drone in her path and chasing her in the other direction.

Elena, in disbelief over what she’s witnessing – temporarily forgets about the meeting in favor of watching the ridiculous scene play out. Also, certain no one will ever believe her – she retrieves her phone and starts videoing scene.

Again and again the young housekeeper tries to escape to the house – but is stopped by the drone – an ominous flat black craft with four high-pitched propellers.

After three or four minutes, the girl tries to make a run around the end of the pool – but is strafed again by the drone – this time causing her to fall in the pool.

On seeing the woman safely pull herself from the water, Elena stops recording and rejoins the meeting.

As the meeting is wrapping up, everyone is startled by a loud door slam – followed by the sound of wet shoes squishing down the hall. The housekeeper enters the room, sopping wet and yelling in Spanish – her hands flailing. Mrs. Mirakov looks at her PA as if she should know what’s going on. Enid rushes over to the housekeeper and tries to diffuse the scene.

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NEXT AFTERNOON – JRAD offices

The entire staff is gathered in the conference room looking at the monitor. Simon Belzer has taken the video captured with Elena’s phone and edited it so it has the look of a cold war Russian propaganda film. Its replete with Russian subtitles and stills of Reichmann and Ferris in Russian military garb.

The group is hysterical with laughter.

EARLY EVENING – Veranda

Jack and Elena are seen enjoying their customary McCallum 12 while Ethan pulls on his vape pen.

“So, what’s this book you can’t put down?” Asks Ethan

Elena holds up the cover. It read, *Fireball: Carole Lombard and the Mystery of Flight 3*

Carole Lombard? Asked Jack

“So, check it out. The author, this guy *Matzen*, says that somewhere in between her eight marriages, our own Ms. Lana Turner managed to have multiple affairs, not the least among them, one Clark Gable.

HmmAh but wait, there’s more! According to this guy, *her neighbors* at the time – probably from that house right there if I had to guess....” (She points up the hill), “...reportedly saw her and Gable engaged in a little synchronized nude swimming on several occasions.”

“Wait...are you saying Gable swam in our pool?” Jack asked.

“It appears so.”

“So, what does that have to do with Lombard?” asked Ethan.

“Because Lombard was married to Gable at the time.”

“So did she ever know about it?”

“Oh yea, she knew. According to this guy and apparently Gable himself. They fought about it the night before she died.”

“Ahh, I remember, Lombard died in a plane crash, right?”

“She did. So the story goes, she took a smaller, less safe plane in order to hurry back to her husband and try to patch things up – hence the title, *Flight 3.* Soooo... that probably means that this houses previous owner, Ms. Lana Turner, somewhere between her eight marriages, and maybe that very night, was fucking Clark Gable, right there in that pool.”

“Yea, how’s that?”

“She once told Clark Gable off camera: *”A successful man is one who makes more money than his wife can spend. A successful woman on the other hand, is one who can find such a man.”* I’d certainly have to say the Mirakov’s live up Miss Turner’s definition of success, wouldn’t you?”

“I’ll tell ya what I think Reichmann…I think we need to get a drone. In fact I think it’s ridiculous we don’t have one already”

“Ferris, what the *hell* do drones have to do with Lana Turner?”

“Cause she was cool right!? I mean no question Lana Turner would’ve had a drone. She definitely would’ve had a drone…and if she would’ve had one, JRAD needs one ”

“Well fuck all Ferris, once again your circuitous correlations have shown me *the path to righteousness!”*

The two toast…

“drones!”

**END**

*Authored by: Rick Roseman © All Rights Reserved*