

Crosswired - Episode 16

Written by  
Steven Cardinal

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First Draft

[steven.cardinal@straighttalkwithsteve.net](mailto:steven.cardinal@straighttalkwithsteve.net)

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**SCENE 1:**

Newscaster delivers the latest headline.

NEWSCASTER

Anti-globalization protesters set dozens of cars on fire and tried to block national delegations from entering the grounds of the upcoming Group of 20 summit in the nation's capital today.

This is the second day of protests as leaders of the world's top economies meet for the annual summit. District of Columbia police had 2,000 officers on hand to patrol the city's streets and have already requested reinforcements from the surrounding area.

Protests center on both anti-capitalist views as well as the environmental impact of the dissolution of the World Climate Agreement, in the wake of recent devastating natural disasters, which have left many poorer nations reeling.

Officials are telling visitors to avoid the downtown area for the next 3 days while they try to quell the violence.

We'll have more on this story at 6.

**SCENE 2:**

Dr Hadoop enters a donut shop.

WAITRESS

Can I help you? The crullers are on sale.

HADOOP

No. (softly) Is Margery here?

WAITRESS

Hang on. (calls out) Marge! Visitor. Next!

Margery comes to the front counter from the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

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MARGERY Yes, can I... Alex? What are you--

HADOOP Is there somewhere we can talk?

MARGERY Sure, come on back in the kitchen. You want a donut? Just made a fresh batch.

HADOOP No, thank you.

They go back into the kitchen, through a swinging door.

MARGERY Alex Hadoop. It's been a long time.

HADOOP Yes, and I hate to bother you...

MARGERY You know you've never been a bother. Except that time you told me you got engaged.

HADOOP Yes, I know, I just--

MARGERY Water under the bridge Alex. Time heals all, isn't that what they say?

HADOOP Yes. I suppose. Look, Margery, I'm in a bit of a rush.

MARGERY Yeah? So shoot. What brings you by?

HADOOP I need your help. I know you have some... connections. Some people you probably shouldn't know...

MARGERY Hang on.

She goes to check the door between the kitchen and storefront.

MARGERY (cont'd) You working for the cops?

HADOOP What? No! Of course not!

MARGERY I had to ask.

HADOOP Actually, I'm in trouble with the law. Or I'm about to be. I think you know people who can help me.

MARGERY You need to get out of the country?

HADOOP No, no, nothing like that. I need to find someone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARGERY                    These... friends of mine, they're not exactly people finders.

HADOOP                    I think they know where this one is.

MARGERY                    Why's that?

HADOOP                    Because I think they've been looking for him already.

MARGERY                    And you think they've found him.

HADOOP                    I'm hoping. I need to find him, too. He's in danger. Your friends... they're in danger, too, I think.

MARGERY                    They're always in danger.

HADOOP                    This is different.

MARGERY                    So what do you need?

HADOOP                    I just need a contact. Someone who can help me find... the man I'm looking for. And I need this quickly. Today. By morning the government will be looking for me.

MARGERY                    Look, Alex... I haven't been in contact with them in... well, a long time.

HADOOP                    But surely you must know someone?

MARGERY                    I'll see what I can do. Why don't you have a Bavarian Cream while you wait. That was always your favorite.

HADOOP                    You know, I'd have been 300 pounds if I had married you.

MARGERY                    And you wouldn't have cared one bit. Hang tight, I'll be right back.

**SCENE 3:**

Abrahms is driving while Boyle tends to Marius' wounds.

BOYLE                    There. That should help until we get you real medical attention.

The car swerves.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOYLE (cont'd)                   Keep it steady, will ya?

ABRAHMS                           I'm trying, Mr Boyle. This car handles a bit different than my usual ride.

BOYLE                             (to Marius)

                                  Whatever you do, don't ask.

MARIUS                            What's your usual ride?

ABRAHMS                          KTM 350 XC-W.

BOYLE                             I warned you.

MARIUS                            What's that?

ABRAHMS                          250 cc's of sweet, sweet power. Only one of the hottest dirt bikes of 2013. Way better than this boring govvie car.

BOYLE                             It's reliable.

ABRAHMS                          Boring.

BOYLE                             Still. Keep it on the road. A boring, safe ride with our guest is all I ask.

ABRAHMS                          I can handle it.

BOYLE                             Name's Marius, isn't it?

MARIUS                            That works.

BOYLE                             My name's Boyle. This here is Abrahms. Mirriam Abrahms.

MARIUS                            Rebellious one, huh?

BOYLE                             You don't know the half of it.

ABRAHMS                          You can call me Abby.

MARIUS                            I'm sure you'll tell me soon enough, but--

BOYLE                             We need your help finding Simon. The cyborg you created.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARIUS I don't know what you're talking about.

BOYLE Is that so? Is that your final answer?

ABRAHMS Final answer. I love that.

MARIUS You gonna torture me?

BOYLE Not exactly my style.

ABRAHMS Not anymore. Ever since that Iraqi woman he tore apart with a rusty meat hook. Right, Mr Boyle?

BOYLE Uh, yeah, well... Time's short so I'm going to lay some of my cards on the table. A little tit for tat.

MARIUS You have nothing I need. What's your leverage? The men you just rescued me from discovered themselves similarly... disadvantaged.

BOYLE (to Abrahms)  
You still got that website up on your laptop?

ABRAHMS Yeah. Here.

The car swerves again as she takes her eyes off the road.

BOYLE Keep a hand on the wheel!

ABRAHMS Sorry, Mr Boyle.

MARIUS What's this.

BOYLE These are social media accounts. You recognize the young woman in these photos?

MARIUS ...

BOYLE I'll take that as a yes. Look, I don't want to see anything happen to her, either. I'm one of the good guys.

MARIUS Not to me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BOYLE                    You may be surprised. Listen, we need to find the cyborg. Those men who had you... They're the real enemy. We both want to keep Simon out of their hands. It seems to me he's nothing but a liability to you and your... organization.

MARIUS                    I don't know what you're talking about.

BOYLE                    To us, he's a chance to identify and purge some undesirables from the agency to which I've devoted my entire life.

MARIUS                    Not my problem.

ABRAHMS                    That's your daughter, isn't it? In those pictures?

MARIUS                    ...

BOYLE                    Do you recognize the people she's with?

MARIUS                    No.

BOYLE                    They're called Boko Haram.

MARIUS                    Oh god.

BOYLE                    We've been tracking them for some time now. Our team just needs to be given the word and they'll... initiate a rescue.

MARIUS                    You know where they are and you haven't rescued them? And you call yourselves the good guys.

BOYLE                    It's dangerous. (pause) Risky.

MARIUS                    For who?

BOYLE                    As I said, I really don't want to see any harm come to her.

MARIUS                    You bastard.

BOYLE                    I'm offering you an amazing deal. You help us find Simon and I recommend to

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)  
BOYLE (cont'd)

my superiors that they execute the operation.

MARIUS

Recommend?

BOYLE

I'm not promising more than I can give. Face it Marius, lots of countries know what's going on. We're the only ones even willing to take that risk. Maybe you don't know what it means to be one of the good guys. It means your actions must be measured. You gotta weigh a million choices. If saving the life of a child leads to a war that kills hundreds of thousands, do you do it? Being a good guy means being cautious.

MARIUS

At the expense of--

ABRAHMS

Listen, meat bag. We're offering to save your daughter and take the cyborg off your plate. Your cover is blown. These guys know you've been spying on them and they know how. They will come after you with more firepower than Morgoth in the Dagor Bragollach. They will destroy every last one of you. As long as you have Simon. But if he's in our hands, you may have just enough time to flee like rats from a sinking ship. So either you help us now, and have a chance at seeing your daughter again, safe and sound, or you go curl up in a corner and wait for the full force of the U.S. Military to grind you into sludge. Make up your mind.

MARIUS

(pause)

Let me make a call.

ABRAHMS

Smart move. I can set something up on the laptop. Mr Boyle, I suggest you take the wheel.

BOYLE

Why?

ABRAHMS

Well, to be honest, I don't actually have a drivers license.



**SCENE 4:**

Simon and Gretchen walk through a field. She stops.

GRETCHEN                    This has to be the sorriest corn field I've ever seen.

SIMON                        I guess the drought's been pretty bad out here.

GRETCHEN                    I'm sure the people on the coast would like to switch places for a day. We should have stopped to get water.

SIMON                        Feast or famine.

GRETCHEN                    (thinking)

If this is what death looks like, I'll pass.

SIMON                        Pretty sure you don't get to choose, Gretch.

GRETCHEN                    What?

SIMON                        I don't think you can choose whether to die or not.

GRETCHEN                    What are you talking about?

SIMON                        You just said if death looks like this, you'll pass.

GRETCHEN                    No, I... I didn't say that.

SIMON                        You did. I heard you.

GRETCHEN                    (thinking)

Simon, can you hear this?

SIMON                        Yes, I... You only thought it.

GRETCHEN                    So you can do it.

SIMON                        I guess so. You feel... I dunno, weak I guess. Maybe that's why.

GRETCHEN                    I'm spent. I'm hot, dehydrated... I...

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CONTINUED:

SIMON                   We're gonna be ok. Once we find your friends--

GRETCHEN               How? How do we fight that? How do we stop that?

SIMON                   We just fight. With everything we have.

GRETCHEN               I don't want to die.

SIMON                   Gretch...

GRETCHEN               Simon! I don't! I don't want to fight anymore! I'm tired.

SIMON                   I know! This is big, though, okay? Who knows how many of them there are? It doesn't really matter, though. Not to us, at least. We just have to find out who's in charge.

GRETCHEN               What do you mean?

SIMON                   Someone has to be in charge. Orchestrating things. And it wouldn't be someone inside the NSA. It has to be someone bigger. And we have to find whoever it is and take them out.

GRETCHEN               Cut off the head and the body will die?

SIMON                   Don't I know it.

GRETCHEN               But, how do we--?

SIMON                   Ssh. Someone's out there.

GRETCHEN               Shit. It's them. We need to give them a chance to identify us.

SIMON                   How will we know?

GRETCHEN               A distinct lack of bullets shooting at us. Just give it a minute. Can you tell how many are out there?

SIMON                   (pause)

                          Yeah. 3, no, 4 of them. They're anxious.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GRETCHEN                   Keep your hands visible. No sudden moves.

SIMON                       If they shoot I may not be able to save you.

GRETCHEN                   I'm not expecting you to.

They wait a moment.

SIMON                       Let's go.

GRETCHEN                   No. Wait.

SIMON                       No. They've identified us. I can tell. The tension just dropped like 10 degrees.

GRETCHEN                   You better be right.

They begin walking forward. Rustling in the field signifies the approach of people.

JADA                        That's far enough. Stop right there. Identify yourself.

GRETCHEN                   Gretchen Williams. I'm with 3 Charlie India.

SIMON                       ...

JADA                        And who's your friend?

GRETCHEN                   This is--

SIMON                       Frankenstein's Monster.

GRETCHEN                   Simon... This is the operative Marius said he'd be bringing. Name's Simon.

JADA                        And where is Marius?

GRETCHEN                   He... fell behind. (pause) He's dead.

JADA                        What happened?

GRETCHEN                   The enemy was onto us. Tracked us through the hurricane. Attacked us.

JADA                        Yet you two escaped?

GRETCHEN                   Yes. Simon...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SIMON I killed them. All of them. I'm more dangerous than I look.

JADA I hope so.

SIMON Hey, fuck you--

GRETCHEN Simon! And who are you?

JADA Davis. Jada Davis. Commander of 2 Yankee Lima. These 3 are all that's left.

GRETCHEN What happened?

JADA Come on. Let's get undercover first.

SIMON We're in the middle of a friggin corn field. There's no one around for miles.

JADA You were with the NSA, weren't you?

SIMON Yeah. (pause) Shit. Satellites.

JADA Yeah. If the programming hasn't changed we've got another 20 minutes before we're in their sweep.

SIMON (snarky)  
So let's get undercover.

JADA Did you give Marius this much trouble?

SIMON Trouble? This is me being charming.

GRETCHEN Can we just get moving.

JADA Move out!

The conversation continues as they walk.

GRETCHEN Do you guys have food where we're going? We haven't eaten in a while.

JADA Simple rations but, yeah, we'll get you something. When Marius radioed he said he had recovered one of our spies.

SIMON That would be me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JADA                    You don't look like much.

SIMON                   Lady--

GRETCHEN               Stop! Listen Jada, I don't know how much I'm supposed to tell you. This was Marius' plan, not mine. But I'm pretty sure he'd expect some respect out of you. (softly) And, between you and me, I wouldn't want to get this guy pissed. You read me?

JADA                    Him?

GRETCHEN               He has 12 kills in the last 24 hours. You don't want to be number 13.

JADA                    (pause)

                         Very well. When we get to the farmhouse, we'll go around the back and into the root cellar. That should shield us well enough from the sweeps. We'll decide what to do from there.

GRETCHEN               We're going to need a comm channel to leadership.

JADA                    What? Why?

GRETCHEN               Why did you join KANTO?

JADA                    I... Because the people in charge have destroyed all semblance of humanity and compassion. They've set us up to fight for scraps while they sit on their thrones, safe in the belief that there's nothing we can do to stop them from... enslaving us. Meanwhile, they suck every last resource from the planet for their own gain.

GRETCHEN               And who are *they*, Jada?

JADA                    Who? They're the ones in power.

GRETCHEN               That's rather vague. Can you be specific?

JADA                    Well... No. Not at this time. That's the question, isn't it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

GRETCHEN

Not for much longer. Like I said, I'm gonna need a comm channel to leadership. There's something they need to know. After that...

JADA

What?

SIMON

The real fight begins.