

THE RECOMBINANT THEORY

By

By John Yarrow

FADE IN:

EXT - COAST OFF NORTH CAROLINA - MOONLESS FALL NIGHT

OVERLAY "The Year 1990"

A BLACK MOTORCYCLE MOVES down a one-lane, blacktop road that winds through a heavily wooded area. Its headlight is off. The driver, EMILLIO MENDOZA, is clothed in black.

The road in front of us is highlighted by night vision goggles. In the distance a car is parked in the middle of the road. Beyond the vehicle is a large body of water. We have a sensation of the bike quickly decelerating.

The driver guides his bike off the road and into the trees. There is a small trail that runs parallel with the road. The motorcycle is a shadowy ghost as it moves down the path toward the car.

When Mendoza is within fifty yards, he stops behind a clump of trees. Stepping off the bike, he unzips his leather jacket and pulls out a snub-nosed Uzi machine gun.

Past the car, there is a small wooden pier that extends into a bay. A MAN stands on the wharf, smoking a cigarette. Mendoza moves within a few feet of the car, hiding behind a thicket of trees and brush. We hear the sound of a jet boat coming toward them.

CUT TO

EXT - A SPEED BOAT ON THE OCEAN - SAME TIME

The ocean spray from the bow of the jet boat splinters away from the craft. MAJOR MOROZOV of the KGB grips the windshield, maintaining his balance in the passenger's seat as the craft courses over the swells.

Beside him, the Cuban, ROBLES, a Cuban, steers the boat toward shore. The tree line is just a thin shadow painted across the horizon. Morozov scowls at Mendoza.

MOROZOV

Robles, you piece of shit. Slow
down.

ROBLES

I'm late for picking up a package.
You're lucky to be on my boat,
Morozov.

MOROZOV

My mission cannot be compromised.
I order you to slow down.

ROBLES

Don't tell me how to drive my
boat.

Robles steers the jet boat toward a cove that appears to
their right, sending up a shower of water to the left.
Morozov reaches up and absently rubs above his right
pectoral muscle, grimacing in pain.

SLOW DISSOLVE

FLASH BACK - EXT - RUGGED HILLS IN AFGHANISTAN - WINTER

A gunfight between a PATROL OF MUDJAHEDDIN and RUSSIAN
SOLDIERS erupts on a jagged slope. ONE OF THE MUDJAHEDDIN
moves through the rocks to set up a fire zone from a
different angle.

This Mudjaheddin is really a CIA operative, JOHN MATHEWS.
Morozov works his way around to ambush the rebel. He
watches as Mathews slides down a boulder, tripping and
falling further into the ravine. Morozov follows. As he
rounds a corner, the Russian is surprised by the soldier.

John Mathews is standing in front of the Major, his gun
leveled at Morozov. The Russian whips his AK-47 rifle
around to shoot. Mathews fires first, striking Morozov in
the upper-right chest.

CUT TO

EXT - JET BOAT ENTERING A COVE - MOONLESS NIGHT

Morozov lurches forward when the boat decelerates. As the roar of the engine subsides, a new sound can be heard. Although faint at this distance, we immediately identify the whirr of chopper blades slicing through the pitch black night.

Without the moon, it's impossible to locate the bird. The jet-boat slowly approaches the small wooden dock. The silhouette of a man appears out of the gloom. Robles looks around nervously.

ROBLES

Maybe it's just a private helicopter,
Si?

Suddenly, a white search beam cuts through the northern sky, highlighting the shoreline. The ray slowly moves toward the boat.

Leaping like a tiger, Morozov dives toward Robles, striking him in the face with a heavy fist. Robles manages to pull his pistol, but Morozov grabs the Cuban's wrist with one hand and rips the gun away.

MOROZOV

Robles, I warned you not to jeopardize
my mission.

We hear two muffled thuds as the Russian shoots Robles in the chest at point blank range. Leaving the dead man in his chair, Morozov wrenches the boat back toward the open ocean.

The helicopter is almost upon them. He uses the Cuban's belt to tie the steering wheel into place and pushes down on the throttle. The powerful engines roar to life and the boat lunges forward. Morozov dives over the side and swims toward the dock. The helicopter turns to pursue the boat.

CUT TO

EXT - WOODED SHORE LINE NEXT TO THE DOCK - SAME TIME

Concealed in the brush, Emillio Mendoza watches the events unfold. The boat accelerates away with the helicopter in hot pursuit. We watch Morozov pull himself out of the water with the help of the stranger on the dock.

STRANGER

Welcome to America, Comrade. Robles seems to be in a hurry.

MOROZOV

It's a direct trip to hell.

STRANGER

Hrhmmph. Let me get you a blanket.

They walk to the car and the stranger opens the trunk. He takes out a blanket and hands it to Morozov, who wraps himself in it. Once they get in the car, Mendoza slides out of the brush to the back of the automobile. Kneeling, he attaches a small electronic device underneath the bumper.

After the car takes off, Mendoza jogs over to his motorcycle and hops on. Pressing a button, a keypad slides out with a LCD screen. A blip is on the screen, and it is moving away from him.

Mendoza presses the starter. We barely hear the engine turn over. Mendoza guides the bike back onto the road and zooms after his quarry, disappearing like a ghost.

SLOW DISSOLVE

INT - NORMAL BEDROOM FOR A MARRIED COUPLE - MORNING

A thin sliver of sunlight forces its way between the narrow recesses of the bedroom curtains. The warm glowing, dusty beam crosses over a sleeping couple. Our PROTAGONIST, JASON HOFFMAN, has his arm folded over his WIFE.

He turns onto his back as a small trickle of blood emerges from his nose. Jason grimaces in annoyance, his hand coming

to his face. His wife, ANDREA HOFFMAN, rolls over. Jason gropes for a tissue on the night stand.

ANDREA HOFFMAN

Are you okay?

JASON HOFFMAN

Yeah, what's that terrible smell?

ANDREA HOFFMAN

I don't smell anything.

JASON HOFFMAN

(sitting up)

You left the milk out again.

ANDREA HOFFMAN

How do you know?

JASON HOFFMAN

Can't you smell it?

ANDREA HOFFMAN

(irritated)

The kitchen's clear across the house,
Jason. Get real.

JASON HOFFMAN

(breathing through his nose)

What is that awful smell?

Jason gets up, sniffing as he follows the scent into his son's room. He walks up to a small cage and peers through the top. We see a dead hamster stretched out on its side. Jason pushes on the small animal, but it doesn't move.

JASON HOFFMAN

(to himself)

That explains what smells. Wonder how
long Gwenny's been dead?

Jason walks into the family room. We can see his ten-year-old son, MICHAEL HOFFMAN, in a prone position as he watches the Saturday morning cartoon, "The Road Runner," on TV.

JASON HOFFMAN

Michael, move back from the TV.

MICHAEL HOFFMAN

(looking back, smiling)

Dad's not wearing any pajamas!

Jason, standing there in his underwear, smiles at his son.

JASON HOFFMAN

Never mind that, now get back from
the screen.

Jason turns to go back down the hallway. He stops when he hears growling coming from behind. DUKE, their large Akita, has its hackles bristling. The dog slowly backs away on stiff legs, a snarl on its black muzzle.

Michael comes up from behind and admonishes the family pet, raising a hand to spank the animal.

MICHAEL HOFFMAN

Bad boy, Duke!

JASON HOFFMAN

Don't! It's okay, son. He must smell something from the lab that doesn't agree with him.

The dog looks strangely at Jason, but hearing his master's voice seems to calm the Akita. Michael pets his dog. Duke whines and looks up to lick the boy's chin.

JASON HOFFMAN

Why don't you take Duke down to the park so he can work off some energy?

MICHAEL HOFFMAN

By myself?

JASON HOFFMAN

This is just a trial.

MICHAEL HOFFMAN

Thanks, dad! Come on, Duke! Let's go.

The boy and dog disappear around the corner, and we hear the door open and slam shut. Jason walks back toward Michael's room.

JASON HOFFMAN

(to himself)

Better get rid of Gwenny before he gets back.

As he reaches the door, Andrea emerges from their bedroom, robe flying behind her.

ANDREA HOFFMAN

(angry)

Did you just let Michael go to the park?

Jason stares at his wife. Her robe is slightly undone, exposing her cleavage. He takes in a deep breath through his nose.

JASON HOFFMAN

It seemed like the right thing to do at the time.

ANDREA HOFFMAN

We agreed he couldn't go to the park by himself until he's ten.

JASON HOFFMAN

But that's only a couple of months away.

ANDREA HOFFMAN

Don't you think I know what's going on?

JASON HOFFMAN

What are you talking about?

ANDREA HOFFMAN

I get it. He has Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. Michael won't be able to go anywhere by himself soon. But that doesn't make it okay. If you weren't working seventy hours a week, you wouldn't feel so guilty and give him special privileges like that. Do you know how difficult that makes it for me?

JASON HOFFMAN

I'm sorry. You're right. I'll go get him.

ANDREA HOFFMAN

(Sighing)

It's too late for that.

Jason steps closer to her, putting his hands on her waist.

JASON HOFFMAN

Am I forgiven?

ANDREA HOFFMAN

(smiling wanly)

Yes, but let's make these kind of decisions together, okay?

Jason pulls her robe apart and moves closer still.

JASON HOFFMAN

Sure. You smell very sexy.

ANDREA HOFFMAN

Get serious, Jason. I haven't had a shower in two days.

JASON HOFFMAN

(kissing her neck)

You smell great to me. Plus, we have some time to ourselves now.

He starts pushing her gently toward the bed. Andrea playfully resists.

ANDREA HOFFMAN

Really, Jason, I stink.

Jason scoops her up by the buttocks, her legs instinctively wrap around his waist.

JASON HOFFMAN

Not to me.

ANDREA HOFFMAN

What's gotten into you? You haven't been this frisky in a while.

Andrea gives in as Jason stops at the bed long enough to lay her down. He's careful not to crush her as they kiss passionately.

SLOW DISSOLVE

EXT - HIGHWAY 95 LEADING INTO WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT

The car carrying Major Morozov and his KGB driver passes Loop 495, heading North. Well behind him, we can see the black Ninja motorcycle still tailing its quarry.

EXT - A STREET IN WASHINGTON D.C. - EARLY MORNING

Morozov's car drives into a secure parking garage. Mendoza pulls his motorcycle up and stops just out of sight of the garage. He opens the keypad. Dialing a telephone number, we can hear the phone ring inside his helmet.

COLONEL GARCIA (VOS)

Si, what is it?

MENDOZA

The jaguar hunts only at night.

COLONEL GARCIA
Emillio, it's five in the morning.
This better be an emergency.

MENDOZA
Colonel, I have a black star situation.

COLONEL GARCIA
Where the hell are you? Where is
Robles?

MENDOZA
Robles is dead. Why was Major Morozov
on his boat?

COLONEL GARCIA
It was a last minute inclusion. KGB top
priority. We didn't have time to warn
you. What happened to Robles?

MENDOZA
That Russian bastard shot him.

COLONEL GARCIA
He had no reason to do that.

MENDOZA
I saw it with my own eyes.

COLONEL GARCIA
Shit. Where are you now?

MENDOZA
In Washington D.C.

COLONEL GARCIA
Don't do anything foolish, Emillio. I
know Robles was your friend. Be smart.
You must wait for further instructions.

MENDOZA
Understood.

Mendoza presses a button on the keypad, ending the connection. He puts the bike into gear and rides off.

EXT - GARAGE OF THE RUSSIAN EMBASSY - DAY

A sedan with heavily tinted windows pulls up to the entrance. Major Morozov steps out of the car rear door. He strides quickly inside, stopping at the checkpoint.

INT - AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE ON THE TENTH FLOOR - SAME TIME

The Ambassador's door is opened by his SECRETARY. Major Morozov enters. GENERAL GROMEKO STALLIDUS sits at his desk. The office is a breath of Russia in every respect of its decor. Stallidus is sitting at the desk looks up through his trifocals.

MOROZOV

Major Sergio Morozov reporting for duty, Comrade General Stallidus.

STALLIDUS

At ease, Major. Could you pour us both a drink?

MOROZOV

Certainly, Comrade.

Morozov quickly steps over to the bar. There is only one bottle of vodka. He pours two drinks and returns to the desk, handing one to the General. Morozov takes a big swig from his glass.

STALLIDUS

Killing is thirsty work, heh comrade?

MOROZOV

Serving the Rodina is thirsty but rewarding work.

STALLIDUS

Was the Rodina served when you killed our Cuban contact, Robles?

MOROZOV

He compromised my arrival. We were about to be apprehended by the Americans.

STALLIDUS

Robles was our best Cuban operative!

MOROZOV

I couldn't risk it. In Afghanistan, you do not take chances.

STALLIDUS

Exactly my point, Major, you are in America, now. The "old policies" no longer apply. You will have to get rid of your Third World attitude.

MOROZOV

I see, Comrade General.

STALLIDUS

No, I don't think you do. The Cubans want you delivered into their custody, and I am inclined to do so.

MOROZOV

(pausing)

Except you have orders to the contrary?

Stallidus jumps forward, his hands slamming on top of the desk as he spits in anger.

STALLIDUS

You arrogant son-of-a-bitch! I have a good mind to send you, regardless!

ANOTHER VOICE enters the conversation from OS.

REYKJAVIK

That would be most unwise, comrade.

Both men turn around to see ALEKSEY REYKJAVIK.

STALLIDUS

First Directorate, Reykjavik! You are a long way from Moscow.

REYKJAVIK

Calm your temper, General Stallidus. I realize Sergio has put you in an awkward situation with the Cubans, but there is a greater menace we must deal with first. And I need the Major.

MOROZOV

I am at your service, comrade.

REYKJAVIK

I have not forgotten when you took a bullet for me, but this wipes the slate clean for us, Sergio. If you foul up on this next mission, it will be your last.

MOROZOV

I understand, Comrade.

STALLIDUS

First Directorate? Perhaps I could find an agent more in-tuned with the American, ah, life style? You are putting a bull in a china shop.

REYKJAVIK

A bull that has never failed me.

The First Directorate hands Morozov a folder. The Major opens it and begins to study the contents as he listens to his leader.

REYKJAVIK

The CIA has developed a new hacking program that will allow them to break into our computer system. With this information, they could neutralize our strategic capabilities.

MOROZOV

The Americans can do this?

REYKJAVIK

You must break into their computer system first. It is a race against time. You must end this deadly game of computer tag before it destroys our network.

MOROZOV

You can count on me, Comrades.

REYKJAVIK

I know, Sergio. Both our lives depend on you coming in first. See that you do not fail us.

EXT - NULAB RESEARCH FACILITY - PLANO TEXAS - DAY

From an overview of a large technology complex, we see Jason sitting at his computer terminal. On the screen is a highly detailed, three-dimensional picture of a DNA molecule. JERROD WILLIAMS, Jason's partner, enters the office and shuts the door.

JERROD WILLIAMS

We need to talk. I created a new security algorithm, which exposed your secret directories. I had to remove the hidden attributes to move it to the new subdirectory.

JASON HOFFMAN

(Becoming alarmed)

And....

JERROD WILLIAMS

I know you're the genetic expert, and I'm the programming genius; and that we've been working very closely for the last three years. So it's obvious that we've both picked up some knowledge

MORE

JERROD WILLIAMS (cont)
about each other's line of work. The
test files are labeled with a wolf's
DNA code sequence.

JASON HOFFMAN
And you want to know if I've become a
werewolf?

JERROD WILLIAMS
Funny. With our genetic mapping
program, we've been able to identify
the DNA sequence and our genetic
markers in the human body. I also know
a lot of these sequences are constant
throughout the mammal world. So while
it seems farfetched, I know you have
the ability to line these DNA codes up
and splice them together.

JASON HOFFMAN
And you think I'm working on that? Are
you serious?

JERROD WILLIAMS
Look, Jason, I know you want to push to
prove your theory but we have to be
careful.

JASON HOFFMAN
You mean wait years while we prove to
the FDA that it's safe.

JERROD WILLIAMS
I get that, really. But without that
super Cray mainframe, you wouldn't
be able to do shit. I don't want you
blowing the biggest breakthrough in
modern medicine on some harebrained
experiment.

JASON HOFFMAN
Well, I was just playing "what if" with
your precious program, really.

JERROD WILLIAMS

This Recombinant Theory of yours is supposed to cure mankind of all genetic disease. I just as bad for your son as you do, but we have to do it right.

JASON HOFFMAN

Don't worry, Jerrod, everything is under control. We're right on schedule. In two weeks you and I are going to blow the doors off the medical world's hinges. Now relax.

CUT TO

INT - CIA HEADQUARTERS - LANGLEY - DAY

We are in Colonel John Mathews' small office. Mathews is closing a folder as his assistant, BILL FARREL, knocks on the door and enters the room. Mathews has his left arm in a sling.

BILL FARREL

I hear the arm's going to be okay?

JOHN MATHEWS

Yeah, if you hadn't put the shoulder back into place right then, it could have been a lot worse.

BILL FARREL

You're welcome, Colonel.

JOHN MATHEWS

I was just going over your part of the report. Got a minute?

BILL FARREL

Nope. The Big Guy wants to see you, ASAP. Told Wendy I'd bring you the good news.

CUT TO

INT - CIA DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

John Mathews and Bill Farrel walk into the Director's office on the sixth floor. DR. TODD SIMMS is staring out of the wall-to-wall window. It's raining on the forest below. The trees have lost most of their leaves.

Mathews and Farrel glance at each other, not sure whether they should disturb their boss.

DR. SIMMS

Days like this make me wish I was at my cabin in Missouri. Nothing like a fire in the fireplace and a good William Diehl book to make the world go away.

Dr. Simms turns around, smiling. He walks over to his desk and sits down, signaling for them to follow.

DR. SIMMS

Is that the German report?

Farrel places the folders on the desk.

JOHN MATHEWS

Yes, sir.

Dr. Simms opens the first folder.

DR. SIMMS

Colonel Mathews, please have a seat.
Mr. Farrel, that'll be all.

Bill Farrel nods and leaves the room. After the door shuts behind Farrel, Dr. Simms looks up from his reading. He taps the folder.

DR. SIMMS

Colonel, your analysis is right on target. Hard to believe the Germans were selling arms to the Russians, but that can wait until later.

JOHN MATHEWS

Yes, sir.

DR. SIMMS

Project Ferret has been extremely successful.

JOHN MATHEWS

Thank you, sir.

DR. SIMMS

Technology is accelerating faster than we ever dreamed possible. We just can't keep up with it. Your computer programmer is a good example of that. My God, to think she can actually break into mainframe computers without being caught. That's frightening.

JOHN MATHEWS

I'm glad she's on our side.

DR. SIMMS

In any case, it's not just the computer industry we have to worry about. With these new super computers, the scientific community is developing things that are making science fiction become reality. Some breakthroughs are good; others are potentially dangerous.

JOHN MATHEWS

You want to use the Ferret project to infiltrate these super computers?

DR. SIMMS

Exactly.

JOHN MATHEWS

This sounds domestic. Wouldn't the FBI be better suited to handle this?

DR. SIMMS

No. The President doesn't want anyone to know we're snooping around. He wants deniability, which is why we're moving Ferret outside the complex. I've arranged for your team to have access to a mainframe at George Mason University.

JOHN MATHEWS

Do you expect us to get caught?

DR. SIMMS

No. However, we can't afford to be linked to this mission. The President feels this particular case warrants these extreme measures.

JOHN MATHEWS

How so?

DR. SIMMS

I know you've seen chemical warfare in Afghanistan.

JOHN MATHEWS

It's not a pretty sight.

DR. SIMMS

Indeed... What if I told you there was the potential to create a weapon a thousand times more powerful than current chemical weapons, except these devices only kill people and nothing else.

JOHN MATHEWS

We can do that?

Dr. Simms opens a desk drawer and pulls out a dossier.

DR. SIMMS

Not yet. Here, read this.

Colonel Mathews scans the contents.

JOHN MATHEWS

Genetic research? I thought that was just for cloning.

DR. SIMMS

Genetics goes much further than that. A lot of the food you eat now is genetically engineered. But this is the scary part. There is now the potential for releasing a genetic virus that could wipe man from the face of the Earth.

JOHN MATHEWS

The commies would love to get their hands on that.

DR. SIMM

Exactly. We could even create super soldiers?

JOHN MATHEWS

That's hard to believe.

DR. SIMMS

But true, none the less. DNA research is out of control and nobody is watching the store.

JOHN MATHEWS

And the President wants us to break into their computers and check out just how far this DNA thing has advanced?

DR. SIMMS

Correct. The first lab we want you to look at is based near Dallas. It's called Nulab Research Facility. The CEO was overheard at a cocktail party bragging about some kind of major breakthrough, but he was pretty vague about the whole thing.

JOHN MATHEWS

The Ferret will get you the proof you
need if it's there, sir.

CUT TO