

TROIKA

By

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ACT I

Scene 1

1

Lights up.

Music: 'Lieutenant Kije' by Prokofiev

As the opening overture of 'Lieutenant Kije' starts.

A man in a leather jacket (KIROV) carrying a briefcase walks to his office. Following him is a ratty looking man (NIKOLAEV).

The music reaches a high point.

Nikolaev raises a handgun and fires into the back of Kirov's head.

Blackout

Scene 2

2

Lights up.

Committee Meeting

Five people are sitting around a table. A stenographer is sitting in corner, two guards flank the table.

CHAIRMAN

The assassination of Secretary Kirov was not the work of one man. A widespread conspiracy was responsible for this heinous act of terrorism against the Soviet people. We have only managed to decapitate this treasonous Fifth Column. We now need to focus our attention towards those who we have overlooked.

We must execute a thorough purge of our Party, our Army and our Great Soviet People. If graves must be dug, then I shall happily fire the first shot.

It is now twenty years since the October Revolution. Peace, Land and Bread was the slogan that lead the proletariat to revolution. Once again we must lead the proletariat to a new Soviet revolution. Following the example of our great leader, Comrade Stalin. Who overcame the betrayal by leaders such as Zinoviev, Kamenev and Trotsky. Once more Soldiers and Workers will clear our lands.

United in our triumphant Soviet doctrine.

While some would argue that we must show leniency and reconcile with our enemies. I would disagree. We have

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHAIRMAN (cont'd)

been down that path before, we will no longer allow this to fester under the surface of our nation. Awaiting some day for this treason to spread and destroy all we worked for.

Comrade Kirov's assassination at the hands of fascists should echo as a memory. His ultimate legacy is a reminder of the threat facing our union of workers.

Monarchists and Democrats. Capitalists and Kulaks. Imperialists and Wreckers. Subverting our freedoms, our principals; the very foundations of our Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

This work is not for the faint hearted. For this task is too great for mere sentiment or moral confusion. The strong must triumph and we demonstrate our ideals are the strongest in the world, for we will not tolerate any other.

Our Party through the Five-Year Plans have created the strongest industry in the world. We are untouched by the scourge of the so-called Great Depression. The Capitalist world is failing and our Party has laid the foundation for a world Revolution.

Life has improved, comrades. Life has become more joyous. We have come a long way, through a long cold winter.

Our Trials over the last three years have shown the world that we are not afraid, to punish our enemies no matter who or where they are.

We must continually remember Comrade Kirov and his vision for the Party. Kirov...

VICE-CHAIRMAN

We must all remember Comrade Kirov in our hearts. However we focus on our work for the people.

PROSECUTOR

What is the work at hand?

LABOUR COMMISSAR

Are there anymore of those delicious dumplings?

CHAIRMAN

We are here to discuss and implement, NKVD Special Order No. 00447 on Criminals, Kulaks and Anti-Soviet elements. And there will be more dumplings.

PROSECUTOR

Is this in relation to the Trial of the Seventeen?
(pointing at the NKVD Colonel)

(CONTINUED)

Yagoda was a traitor to us all. Especially with the revelations about his personal life. And the attempted poisoning of Comrade Yezhov.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

(picks up a sheet of paper)

They found in his dacha: 3,904 pornographic photos, 11 pornographic films, 165 pornographic pipes, one dildo and the two bullets that killed Zinoviev and Kamenev. I wonder what he used the bullets for?

CHAIRMAN

We are not here to discuss gossip and past crimes. We must focus on the crimes amongst our own ranks. As other organs of the Soviet Government have been purged we must look to the general population.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

As with our Five Year Plan, quotas have been provided.

PROSECUTOR

Define this special order in relation to the constitution.

NKVD COLONEL

It supersedes the constitution in relation to Article 58.14. NKVD Troika's will function as judge and jury. We report directly to Yezhov.

PROSECUTOR

So what is my role in this operation?

VICE-CHAIRMAN

As laid down in Special Order 00447:

To organize and conduct operations in each sector a task force is formed, headed by an executive official of the NKVD of the republic, territorial or regional Department of the NKVD, which is likely to cope successfully with the foreseeable operational problems. In some cases, the heads of the operational groups can be assigned to the most experienced and capable chiefs of district and municipal offices.

PROSECUTOR

So what is my role in this Troika?

LABOUR COMMISSAR

I'm sure Colonel Zhilov, has everything in hand.

CHAIRMAN

Comrades, I would like to formally establish this NKVD Troika. The Chairman will be Colonel Zhilov of the NKVD. The secondary members shall be Secretary Anna Muradov from the Kalerian ASSR and Prosecutor

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHAIRMAN (cont'd)

Litin. Commissar for Labor Malenkov will be seconded to your Troika to help in whatever way he can. I will be not directly involved in this Troika as it is a matter for State Security. However I am always here if assistance is needed.

NKVD COLONEL

I will follow this order to the letter. We will apply law and order to the Kalerian ASSR. I will send the details, to your offices in the morning.

PROSECUTOR

Lets get this done. I will be double checking this order to make sure we are in accord with the Party doctrine.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

I will inform all local authorities to your new powers. Will you notify the Army?

NKVD COLONEL

I'm sure they have already been notified.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

I look forward to starting this great work for the Soviet people. Once I've finished this meal. I'll be ready to serve post-haste Colonel.

Scene 3

3

A long table is set up with three people sitting facing out. A chair is sitting in front of the table. A stenographer sits to one side of the table. Two guards flank the room.

PROSECUTOR

So we ready for the trial?

VICE-CHAIRMAN

I'm ready.

(she takes out a stop watch.)

Remember the time limit, a maximum of four minutes.

PROSECUTOR

Just watch me I'll do it in 2.

Prisoner is led in and placed on the chair in front of the table. He is holding a folder in his hands. The man who escorted him in is the NKVD Regional Executioner Chuikov. He is smoking and smiling.

NKVD COLONEL

Comrade Chuikov. You have completed your interrogation?

(CONTINUED)

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

In full. And he filled out all his paperwork.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Time.

(taps her stopwatch)

PROSECUTOR

Prisoner No. 00931. You have been found conspiring against the Soviet People. How do you plead?

PRISONER

Guilty.

NKVD COLONEL

Thank you for cooperation in our efforts to cleanse our Great Society from Anti-Soviet elements.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Hand over your paperwork.

Prisoner hands over his folder to the Vice-Chairman.

One, Arrest Warrant. Three copies of the interrogation report, Three copies of your personal questionnaire, Three copies of your confession & personal belongings. One copy of the death certificate.

PROSECUTOR

You have been found guilty of crimes against the Soviet People. You will be taken from this place and executed forthwith by a representative of Soviet People.

(gestures to Executioner Chuikov)

Executioner Chuikov takes out his pistol, checks the breech of the pistol, releases it. And cocks the hammer. He nods to the NKVD Colonel. The NKVD Colonel waves his hand in a downward motion.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Have a cigarette.

(reaches into his pocket and hands the prisoner a cigarette)

The Prisoner takes the cigarette and is dragged away.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Two minutes. We might be home early today.

NKVD COLONEL

Listen.

A single gun shot is heard.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NKVD COLONEL (cont'd)
Next.

PROSECUTOR

I think Comrade Chuikov might be delayed.

NKVD COLONEL

True. A five minute break then. Cigarette anyone?

Everyone takes it easy and lights up cigarettes.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

We need more men. We have moved men from the border to help round up enemies of the state. Everytime we capture someone, we need to send their families to Azerbaijan! We're losing momentum.

PROSECUTOR

I'm sure our friends outback would disagree. We have been very effecient. We're two weeks in and we have nearly fulfilled our quota. Sadly we'll be done soon. We have had 300 Category 1 removed and nearly 700 Category 2 shipped to the GULAG.

NKVD COLONEL

I've applied for an extension of our operation. We're in Karelia, twenty five miles from the Finnish border. Our border is leaking. We're fighting, Finnish nationalists, Karelian independence movements, escaped GULAG prisoners though very few of those make it through the snow. We need to strengthen the established Soviet presence and exterminate all enemies of the people.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Define extension.

NKVD COLONEL

I've asked for a total quota of 15,000. Category 1: 7,000 and Category 2: 8,000. We will be busy for quite some time.

PROSECUTOR

We cleared out all the criminals. The jails are empty.

NKVD COLONEL

There are always more criminals. We only caught the bad criminals, the good criminals hide in plain sight.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

I worry about the Chairman's willingness to see this through.

(CONTINUED)

PROSECUTOR

This is not appropriate for this committee. This is a party discipline matter. My apologies Colonel.

NKVD COLONEL

I understand.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

I'm sure Comrade Chuikov has finished his cigarette by now. We should resume our work.

PROSECUTOR

There always seems to be 10,000 more enemies today, that someone forgot to shoot yesterday.

Scene 4

4

Same as previous scene.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Could you all pass me the files for signature.
(a pile of paperwork is handed to her)

Remember we all need to sign three copies of the report.

PROSECUTOR

Why do we need to sign all this paper? They're guilty. Its finished.

NKVD COLONEL

We must maintain the proper order of things. Otherwise this would just be mayhem.

Enter Executioner Chuikov, he's wearing a leather apron. Covered in blood.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Now that we're finished for the day, we must discuss the arrangements out back.

PROSECUTOR

What do you need? You have a gun and the crematorium. What's the problem?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

The boys can't lift this many bodies a day. And the blood gets everywhere. If we got a sloped floor the bodies would fall into the crematorium. And it makes it easier to put the excess onto the trucks. We need a cleaning crew as well. It stinks. Also I need more men and ammunition. We need small calibre pistols. I have a Nagav 40. calibre. You know how hard it is clean? I have to wash everyday. We need Walther pistols small calibre 22. would be preferable.

(CONTINUED)

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Walther pistols are Nazi weapons. Are we to believe that you cannot use weapons made in the Soviet factories?! I'm sure they're perfectly serviceable for your needs.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Have you ever fired a gun? Do you have any idea what I do? This is hard labour. I need the appropriate tools to complete my task.

NKVD COLONEL

I will talk to the Labour Commissar tomorrow morning. We'll meet and talk then. Go home.

Exit Executioner

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Speaking of the appropriate tools. We have not yet dealt with the issue of the Chairman.

PROSECUTOR

As I said before that is a matter for the Party Discipline committee. It has been referred to them. Now I must return home, my wife is expecting me.

Exit Prosector

VICE-CHAIRMAN

(to the stenographer)

You can leave. I'm sure your children will appreciate seeing you.

Exit Stenographer

NKVD COLONEL

Stop threatening the staff. They're loyal Party members in good standing. What is it you want?

VICE-CHAIRMAN

I want you to launch an investigation into the Chairman.

NKVD COLONEL

On what basis?

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Corruption. And his obsession with Comrade Kirov.

NKVD COLONEL

What about Comrade Kirov?

VICE-CHAIRMAN

He's becoming unhinged he's privately investigating the assassination. He thinks the security services were involved. He has compiled a list of names. You are one of them.

(CONTINUED)

NKVD COLONEL

I am absolutely certain the security organs of the Soviet people would never be involved in the murder of a Soviet official. Its inconveiable. He must have been unable to handle the stress of his position. We must discuss this further tomorrow morning. My office?

VICE-CHAIRMAN

I will be there.

NKVD COLONEL

Bring any evidence you have with you.

The Vice-Chairman turns to leave.
Take care now.

Scene 5

5

Nov 5. Morning

NKVD Colonel's office. The Vice-Chairman is standing outside in the waiting room of the NKVD Colonel's office. She is reading Pravda. A light piano sonata by Prokofiev is playing. The NKVD Colonel opens the door and greets her.

NKVD COLONEL

Good morning. Welcome.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Good morning.

(She drops a folder on the desk)

NKVD COLONEL

Is this everything?

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Everything I have witnessed over the past four years.

NKVD COLONEL

I'll have to consult the Prosecutor about this. He has extensive experience from the Show Trials. You konw he was once the second prosecutor for the Moscow region?

VICE-CHAIRMAN

No, I didn't. How did he end up here?

NKVD COLONEL

He had too many friends. He has a lot less now.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

So you'll look into this matter? Officially?

(CONTINUED)

NKVD COLONEL

I give you my word. I'm sorry but I have another meeting.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Of course. Thank you Comrade Colonel.

Exit Vice Chairman, in the waiting room now is the Labour Commissar and Executioner Chuikov

NKVD COLONEL

Comrades! Come in please.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

I've never been to this office before. Was it her first time being here as well?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Where are my guns?

LABOUR COMMISSAR

What?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Comrade Colonel said you had my guns, where are my guns?

NKVD COLONEL

Executioner Chuikov, I said I would discuss the issues you brought to my attention yesterday. Comrade Commissar has not been informed yet.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Apologies Colonel.

NKVD COLONEL

Comrade Commissar, the NKVD execution task force need more supplies as well as certain structures in order to facilitate their vital duties for the people.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

I need sloped floors and steel walls with a lot of padding.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

When do you need this? What angle of slope do you need for your... cargo?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

We need a 45 degree angle slope. It helps cause the boys have to lift the bodies. You ever lift a dead body?

LABOUR COMMISSAR

...

(CONTINUED)

NKVD COLONEL

Alright so its settled. Comrade Commissar you will build these structure for Comrade Chuikov. Your men will be rewarded for their swift and discrete work. Thank you for stopping by Comrade Commissar.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

I'm always happy to serve the Soviet people. I'm sure my men will be happy to serve as well.

Exit Labour Commissar

NKVD COLONEL

Chuikov, a lot of these labourers will be Finnish and have certain sympathies. Would you kindly keep an eye on them?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Of course Comrade Colonel. I'm sure I'll hear exactly what we need.

Scene 6

6

Troika committee room. The Chairman is pacing impatiently. The Vice-Chairman enters. They are alone in the room.

CHAIRMAN

What has kept our reunion so long? I've been calling you, leaving little notes. Are we still friends?

VICE-CHAIRMAN

We were never friends.

CHAIRMAN

I think your probably right. You've seriously neglected your duties to the ASSR. I have been covering for you in Moscow. And I have not received a single report on the Troika since it started! What have you been doing?

VICE-CHAIRMAN

We have been serving the Soviet People. We are cleansing our Republic of Anti-Soviet elements. Also we have discovered a number of Finnish nationalist plots. Steps have been taken...

CHAIRMAN

I don't care. We had a plan, we were slowly destroying their culture. In another generation they would have been fully Soviet.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Your plans take too long. And now the Karelian nationalista have joined with the Finnish nationalists. This is a great threat to our national security.

(CONTINUED)

CHAIRMAN

Your Troika is too expensive, it's tying up every resource. We're a very small Autonomous Republic. The BBK-GULAG population is more than our entire Republic.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Your differences with the BBK-GULAG are entirely separate to the NKVD Troika. Your paranoia is getting the best of you. Maybe you should retire to a position less taxing on your mind.

CHAIRMAN

I assume you've already talked to the Colonel? I have friends too.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

I was worried about Party discipline. So I did my duty. The NKVD has started a formal investigation into your activities.

CHAIRMAN

I remember serving in the Army. Ah it was terrible. No food, no shoes, rifles that were more likely to kill you. But you made good friends in the Army. Ties that bind. Nikolai Yezhov was a good friend. I've already called him, telephones are wonderful. Instant communication. Do you have any good friends, Vice-Chairman?

Exit Chairman.

Scene 7

7

NKVD Colonel's Office. NKVD Colonel is there reading a telegram. Enter Chuikov.

NKVD COLONEL

I was just on the phone to Moscow. Your men are all to receive extra rations, cigarettes, vodka. However there is a small problem.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Gun or car?

NKVD COLONEL

I don't want to know. Yezhov just wants us to clean house. No details please.

(hands over the telegram)

Do what you do best.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

I took this job for the relaxed pace. This is like old times. I like to talk to my wife about my work. No secrets, the sign of a happy marriage.

(CONTINUED)

NKVD COLONEL

I'm sure its the highlight of her day, to hear about your day. I'll see you in the morning.

Scene 8

8

NKVD Troika Committee Room.

Everyone is assembled except the Vice-Chairman. Who is conspicuously missing and the Chairman.

PROSECUTOR

I hear there was a car accident last night. Terrible loss to the region. She was so young. And full of promise. I must write a note for the eulogy.

NKVD COLONEL

We're investigating the accident. Our preliminary findings are its an accident at this stage. But we'll have to wait for the final report. I have declared a recess of our work for today. I will appoint a new member of the Troika tomorrow. After consultation with Moscow.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

Do you mind if we have a buffet lunch here today? My men need to eat.

NKVD COLONEL

This room is at your disposal. Chuikov, your men have a day off. I'm sure you have things to do, people to see. I'll be in contact.

Chuikov exits.

PROSECUTOR

When I was coming into work today. I saw a record you might like.

(hands over a LP)

It's Prokofiev's Peter & The Wolf. A delightful piece, my children adore it.

NKVD COLONEL

Thank you. We will start our work tomorrow morning. Until then enjoy your day off. Comrades.

Exit NKVD Colonel

Scene 9

9

NKVD Committee Room later that day.

Labour Commissar is there with a number of labourers. He's eating the most food while the others eat sparingly.

(CONTINUED)

Enter NKVD Colonel.

NKVD COLONEL

Comrades I have terrible news. There has been a terrorist attack, the Chairman has been assassinated. I have ordered that all units on alert. And we have taken extra precautions for all senior officials.

(to Labor Commissar)

You will receive an NKVD bodyguard.

(to all assembled)

We have uncovered a conspiracy aimed at destroying the foundations of our Soviet Republic. Karelian Nationalist, Finnish Nationalists, wreckers, Nazi Infiltrators and White forces.

(pause)

This is the same enemy we have faced since 1917, but we will remain steadfast and resolute in our ideals. For we know that our way is right.

The enemy has struck first, and our losses have been great. But we will fire back. We will continue to be a buttress against those that have attempted to destroy our beloved Soviet Dream. A land of workers, a people united.

(to the Labour Commissar)

Will you join me on the Troika? And help us complete this task set by the People? The decision is yours.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

We are in this together. I live to serve the Soviet State.

NKVD COLONEL

Obviously our efforts over the past four months have failed. We must expand the scope of our Troika. We are surrounded by subversives. We must strike back quickly and without mercy.

(Colonel opens the LP and plays the opening bars of Peter & The Wolf)

It will be beautiful.

(He beckons over the workers and starts handing out flags, propaganda posters etc)

This is to remind those who serve, and our prisoners what they stand for and who they've betrayed.

The Workers re-decorate the NKVD Committee Room. Peter & the Wolf plays mournfully over the room.

ACT 2Scene 1

10

Setting: A large room, containing a large table at the back and a single chair in the center, a Prisoner is sitting bound to it.

His head is slumped into his chest and the a noticeable dripping of blood can be seen on the ground.

A ticking of a clock can be heard.

ENTER CHUIKOV

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Comrade! Are you asleep? It is a fine day.

PRISONER

(...)

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

I'm most distressed by your silence. And you have not yet filled out your paperwork. This is not acceptable Comrade. We must serve the peoples' justice.

PRISONER

This is not justice.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

I agree, this is progress!

PRISONER

Do what you will. I am not some animal you can parade in front of the peoples' court. I will not give you the satisfaction.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Come now Comrade. I'm not here to parade you. It will be a private trial. And very quick. But I need you to sign these documents. We must uphold the letter of the law. After all this is State Security.

PRISONER

What of my family?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

They have been taken care of. We are moving them to a new region. Let me check your file.

Chuikov checks the paperwork in on the desk.
Ah yes! We have moved them to the Caucasus. Nice warm summers they have there. Much better than this Finnish winter! They will thank you in time.

(CONTINUED)

PRISONER

They will curse me for my sins.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Well its your God after all. You choose your own sins. We punish all. You won't sign the paperwork?

PRISONER

No.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

We will proceed to trial.

Chuikov walks over to the table and picks up a telephone. He dials a number.

Comrade Colonel, the prisoner will not sign the paperwork... Yes. I explained that to him... He won't cooperate... No we haven't used any assitive technology... You wish to hold it here? No problem Comrade Colonel.

Chuikov hangs up the phone. And turns to the Prisoner smiling.

You have balls Comrade. They are going to hold the Trial here. Cigarette?

PRISONER

(laughing)

For a dying man?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

For a dead man.

Chuikov sticks a cigarette into the Prisoner's mouth and lights it, then he lights one himself and puffs away happily.

It won't be long now.

(checks his watch)

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.

ENTER NKVD COLONEL

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV (cont'd)

Good morning Comrade Colonel.

NKVD COLONEL

Chuikov. Are we prepared?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Yes Comrade. The execution chamber is next door. Much more efficient. And with the sloped floor we can now process over 100 prisoners a day. Now that is progress!

(CONTINUED)

NKVD COLONEL

Glad you approve. Although you may have over 200 a day in some cases. Also I think we should hold all Trials here from now on. I will have the Labor Commissar make the surroundings more official.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Where is our Esteemed Comrade? The kitchens?

NKVD COLONEL

Now now Chuikov. Everyone has appetites.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

He's probably caused a few minor famines.

ENTER PROSECUTOR

PROSECUTOR

What is this place?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

My kingdom!

PROSECUTOR

Why are we meeting here? We have the Trial room upstairs!

NKVD COLONEL

This is simpler. The execution chamber is next door. We don't need to waste time on charades. The official Trial Room is for serious crimes. This will be the main processing center for all prisoners unless exempted by me. Understand?

PROSECUTOR

Perfectly. Where the prisoners paperwork?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Here.

(hands over paperwork)

He refused to sign it.

PROSECUTOR

(to Chuikov)

Why didn't you make him?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

We all have rules.

(jerks his thumb at the NKVD Colonel)

NKVD COLONEL

I decided that we would avoid over using the assistive technology option.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

For now at least.

(CONTINUED)

PROSECUTOR

Ah so what is the procedure for this occurrence?

NKVD COLONEL

Instant trial. Followed by execution. And we send the unsigned paperwork along. With a note explaining the situation. Where is that damn Commissar?

ENTER LABOUR COMMISSAR

LABOUR COMMISSAR

Apologies Comrade Colonel. I was unavoidably delayed.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Was the kitchen closed this morning?

NKVD COLONEL

Enough! Lets get to work. We have hundreds waiting for processing.

The Members of the TROIKA take their seats at the head of the table. Unnoticed 2 guards and a stenographer have already set up at the back of the room.

The Prosecutor takes out a stop-watch.

NKVD COLONEL (cont'd)

Remember Prosecutor. As quick as possible.

Prosecutor hits the stop watch a loud ticking is heard. It mixes with the other clock ticking creating an odd effect.

PROSECUTOR

Prisoner number: 04246. I would like to first apologize for the avoidable delay in holding your trial. I assure you this is not a common feature of the Peoples'

Justice. Now as you have refused to sign the paperwork you are not recognized as a Soviet Citizen and have been stripped of all rights therein.

Therefore this special Tribunal finds you guilty and sentences you to Category 2 punishment. Your family have been relocated to the Southern Regions.

The case is hereby closed and you will be sentenced immediately.

The Prisoner is picked up from the chair by Chuikov and taken away through a doorway into an execution chamber.

(CONTINUED)

The Troika members sit in silence and wait. Chuikov removes a pistol from his holster and fires a shot into the back of the Prisoners head. He falls to the ground and falls down the sloped floor into darkness.

NKVD COLONEL

Make a note, have his family committed to Category 2 punishment as well. As the Prosecutor said once he refused to sign the papers, he is no longer a Soviet Citizen. We can't be wasting the resources of the People on non-citizens.

PROSECUTOR

A slightly extreme response? If take that note as a precedent we will execute far more than we are supposed to.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

I for one, am in favour of more Category 1 punishment for GULAG purposes. We have a shortage at the moment Colonel.

NKVD COLONEL

I am aware of that Commissar, I too get telegrams from Moscow. I understand your point about the precedent however in this regard I am overruling your note counsel. I expect you to follow my rules regardless.

PROSECUTOR

Of course.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

Excellent. Could we have a snack brought in before the next prisoner?

NKVD COLONEL

Wait until we have processed at least twenty. See if your appetite remains.

Scene 2

11

Setting: NKVD Colonel's Office

Long table in the center of the room.

(NKVD Colonel walks over and starts to the play the LP of 'Peter & The Wolf'.)

ENTER ALEXEI VAVILOV

NKVD COLONEL

Yes?

(CONTINUED)

ALEXEI VAVILOV

My name is Alexei Vavilov. I'm here about my brother, Sergei Vavilov the physicist.

NKVD COLONEL

Never heard of him.

ALEXEI VAVILOV

He went missing from his research laboratory three days ago. Do you have any knowledge of his whereabouts?

NKVD COLONEL

I don't anything about him, but I'll check. Let me just make a call.

(picks up phone and calls Chuikov.
Light comes up on Chuikov in his execution chamber, Chuikov is in the middle of an execution, he pauses and answers the phone)

Hello is this archives?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

No. Colonel is that you?

NKVD COLONEL

This is Colonel Zhilov of the NKVD in the Karelia ASSR. I'm enquiring about a 'Sergei Vavilov' a physicist. His brother is in my office, very concerned about his welfare.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Colonel? This is Chuikov.

NKVD COLONEL

Oh, you sent him to the Experimental Design Bureau? For his safety. Of course I completely understand. Thank you Comrade. Have a good day.

(hangs up phone, turns to Vavilov)

Your brother has been placed in protection and has been given a new laboratory. Unfortunately all communication has been suspended until further notice, for reasons of state security. His work, from what I can understand is very important to the Soviet People.

ANDREI VAVILOV

I'm sure. Can I write? Can he receive letters?

NKVD COLONEL

Send to me, I'll make sure he receives all the proper correspondence. See my secretary and leave your details. Have a good day, Comrade.

(CONTINUED)

ANDREI VAVILOV
Thank you, Comrade.

EXIT ANDREI VAVIOV
(plays more Peter & the Wolf)

Scene 3 12

Slides - Progression of TIME

Scene 4 13

NKVD Colonel's Office

ENTER PROSECUTOR

NKVD COLONEL
Prosecutor?

PROSECUTOR
I just received your new quotas.
(waves sheet of paper)
We can't do this. We can't shoot everyone.

NKVD COLONEL
What can I do? I get these orders straight from Moscow. From Yezhov no less. I have already requested reduction however it will be month before I get new orders. What can we do? We must follow our orders.

PROSECUTOR
They would never know if you didn't follow them. We can't afford to keep operating at this level. We don't have enough resources. We have eliminated over 30% of the population. Who are we trying to protect?

NKVD COLONEL
The Soviet People.

PROSECUTOR
The GULAG population is over three times that of the entire Karelian Peninsula! We have already missed 80% of our economic targets set out during the Five Year Plan. We must slow down at least temporarily. The only sector to have shown growth is gravedigging.

NKVD COLONEL
I agree with you. Its a travesty. But I am bound by my oath to the Soviet People. I have faith in Comrade Yezhov and the Politiburo, they will find a solution to our problems. We must not despair. If you feel overwhelmed, we can arrange a leave of absense for you.

PROSECUTOR
I must continue my work for the Soviet People. Besides special order no. 00447 says I need to be, therefore I will continue to be here.

(CONTINUED)

EXIT PROSECUTOR

NKVD COLONEL
Very good.

Scene 5

14

*Execution Sequence**Part 1. - New time limit - 60 seconds**New Trial Room - NKVD COLONEL & Prosecutor &
Labour Commissar + guards & stenographer*

NKVD COLONEL
Are you prepared for the new time-limit?

PROSECUTOR
Yes. I have adjusted accordingly.

LABOUR COMMISSAR
It was a never problem.

NKVD COLONEL
Bring in the prisoner.

ENTER EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV & PRISONER

*The prisoner is placed on a chair in front of
the table. His paperwork is handed to the
Prosecutor. The NKVD Colonel nods to the
Labour Commissar who starts his stopwatch. A
loud ticking is heard.*

PROSECUTOR
Prisoner No. 52931. This special Troika has found now
found you guilty and sentences you to Category 1
punishment. Thank you co-operating for this
commission and for filing out all your paperwork.
(nods to Chuikov, who starts to lead
the Prisoner away)

NKVD COLONEL
I heard this great story a few days ago. A friend of
mine is in charge of the Astrology Department. So one
night this call comes from Stalin wanting to know
about a certain star.

LABOUR COMMISSAR
Is this a long story?

NKVD COLONEL
No wait it gets better, it seems Kaganovich and
Molotov got into an argument about a certain star,
they saw one night and Stalin needed to intervene. He

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NKVD COLONEL (cont'd)

calls the Astrology Dept. but no-one is there, so a car is sent around to the Number One astrologer in all of the USSR but he thought they were coming to arrest him so he jumps out the window. So the car goes to Number Two astrologer but again he thinks he's going to get arrested so he shoots himself. Finally they get get to the Number Three astrologer who is by now the Number One astrologer and he tells them the star's name. But by the time they call Stalin, he's already gone to bed.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

(thinking slowly)

I'd believe it.

PROSECUTOR

This is a courtroom not a market. We have work to do. Next prisoner!

ENTER EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV & PRISONER

Part 2. - Prosecutor protests, - Chuikov shoots anyway

A second Prisoner is brought into the chamber. Chuikov places him down on the chair. He hands over the paperwork to the Prosecutor.

He examines the paperwork carefully.

PROSECUTOR (cont'd)

(to the Prisoner)

What's your name?

PRISONER

Ivan Malenkov.

PROSECUTOR

(looks at the paperwork, then looks at Chuikov)

This arrest warrant is for a Sergei Abronov. This is the wrong man. Chuikov how literate are you?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

He is Prisoner No. 52932.

PROSECUTOR

Your going to have to release him. This is not Sergei Abronov. Even the description is wrong.

NKVD COLONEL

We are proceeding as scheduled. There will no delays.

(CONTINUED)

PROSECUTOR

This is not a fault of the Troika, this is the fault of your men! We can't just start killing everyone, we are far beyond the remit of our mandate.

NKVD COLONEL

I have changed our mandate. If you are unable to discharge your duties, I can take over.

PROSECUTOR

I refuse to take part in this. My objection has been noted in the record. And I will making a formal complaint regarding your methods.

(Gets up and leaves)

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Shall I continue?

NKVD COLONEL

Yes.

(turns to Labour Commissar)

I propose we skip the formailities and have a simple yea or nay vote.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

I completely agree. And for this case, Yes.

NKVD COLONEL

You have been tried fairly and accurately within our capabilities. Comrade Chuikov.

(Chuikov nods and leads the Prisoner away)

Part 3. - Vavilov

Vavilov is led into the room by Chuikov. He is put onto a chair.

ALEXEI VAVILOV

I don't recognize the legimacy of this Troika. You're missing a representative. There are only two of you to judge me.

NKVD COLONEL

Its called a Dvoika. We are an extra-judicial entity. We can still process criminals of the Soviet State.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

I would like to apologize for the Prosecutor's absense. He's not feeling well at the moment. We hope to fix this by the end of today.

NKVD COLONEL

It's not usual for Prisoners to address the Troika. This is not a precedent I wish to continue.

(to stenographer)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NKVD COLONEL (cont'd)

Your ideas are on trial here. They will not be permitted to save you.

ALEXEI VAVILOV

What is permitted to save me? Is it my studies into Bees? Is this a threat to Soviet Security. Are bee's terrorists? I'm a geneticist, what have I done? All I did was ask after my brother.

NKVD COLONEL

And we responded to your request. You are not here because of bees. You were responsible for setting up the Karelia State University. We have found a alarming number of educated Finnish radical students.

ALEXEI VAVILOV

I've noticed that you have talked to a large numbers of criminals in the Soviet State. Before you judge me, you should judge your own actions. Maybe you have been compromised over the last few years. As the father punishes the son, he punishes himself.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

They also say, honour thy father.

NKVD COLONEL

I would to remind everyone here, that biblical references are a crime. We have destroyed the poisonous influence of the church, and I will not allow it re-emerge here.

(pause)

Alexei Alexandrovich Vavilov, your exchanges here, have proven that your mind is threat to the wellbeing of any honest, loyal Soviet Citizen. We are no longer a nation of individuals.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

Comrade Colonel, I think we should commit this prisoner to Category 2 punishment. Although his mind is perverted. We need men like this in our Soviet State. Especially as he is a scientist.

NKVD COLONEL

Commissar, he is not a tractor. How do you control a man's thoughts? The NKVD has undertaken a number of studies into this area, and tragically we have found there is small percentage of intellectuals that will refuse and will revert to their anti-Soviet behavior. I strongly feel that Alexei Alexandrovich Vavilov is in this small percentage. And I submit that we must impose a Category 1 sentence.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

This is indeed a tragedy. But if you feel this is necessary. Who am I to argue with the NKVD?

(CONTINUED)

ALEXEI VAVILOV

Age quod agis.

*There is a pause, while everyone looks confused.
The NKVD Colonel is furious.*

NKVD COLONEL

(to Stenographer)

Translate it!

STENOGRAPHER

Do what you do best.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

We always do.

NKVD COLONEL

Give him time to reflect upon all his crimes against the Soviet People. I almost pity you.

ALEXEI VAVILOV

Almost, and that is the pity.

Chuikov starts to lead Vavilov away.

(to the Labour Commissar)

Do you think he will kick and scream when they take him away?

Chuikov leads Vavilov away, the NKVD Colonel is standing. As he is led away. He sits contentedly.

Scene 6

15

NKVD Colonel's Office

The Prosecutor is already in his office. One of the filing cabinets is open and files are strewn about. The Prosecutor has been searching for files linking the NKVD Colonel to the deaths of the Vice-Chairman & Chairman. He is standing at the filing cabinet facing away from the door.

ENTER NKVD COLONEL

He stops and stares at him in silence.

PROSECUTOR

You have a lot of interesting files Colonel, but we both know there not really accurate.

The NKVD Colonel walks over and turns of the record, the sound of Peter & the Wolf drifts around the room

(CONTINUED)

NKVD COLONEL

You know Prosecutor, something once written is always true.

PROSECUTOR

There's no News in the Truth and there's Truth in the News.

NKVD COLONEL

So you understand.

(pause)

So what are you looking for? I'm here to help.

PROSECUTOR

Can I have that in writing?

(pause)

That accident the Chairman had, it was very fortunate for you. Then with the Vice-Chairman's execution, you became the de facto leader. The head of our Troika. Did you know that you are the highest ranking official in the Region? Except the GULAG of course. But that's not our jurisdiction. Your escalation of the Troika allowed you to eliminate all your opposition, your plan is working Colonel.

NKVD Colonel quickly and without warning shoots the Prosecutor in the stomach. He walks slowly over to the body.

NKVD COLONEL

What plan? I had a plan? I didn't get the memo. I'm going to be honest with you, since you don't have left to live, I'm not worried about you telling other people.

(checks the Prosecutor's pulse)

Just checking. You still here, you have about 10 minutes. You see I learned that mistake with Kirov. Shoot him too early, he was moaning and bleeding for fifteen minutes! It was a mess. Then I had to kill the electrician. I've learned a lot since then. Back to your question, yes the Chairman & Vice-Chairman were killed. As for my plan, I'm following orders just like you... were.

PROSECUTOR

Inter Arma Senim Leges.

NKVD COLONEL

Those are your final words? I don't even know what you're saying! Its latin that's about all I know. Vavilov used latin too! I hate latin. Its a degenerate Romanic language by intellectuals and nobles so they can show off that they can read! We've already killed the nobles and we are managing the intellectuals.

(pause)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NKVD COLONEL (cont'd)

Sorry about that. I under a lot of stress, as I'm sure you... were too.

(checks pulse, sighs)

We're nearly finished. This isn't personal. Its a process, when I was in the Army, it was follow orders, trasferred to the NKVD, still following orders. Its all part of the process. Without process you have anarchy. I'm not sure if I have thoughts anymore. All I do, is follow orders and I like that. Life has become simple... and it is good.

PROSECUTOR

I forgive you.

NKVD Colonel looks at the Prosecutor confused. He leans down and checks the pulse, and realizes he's dead.

NKVD COLONEL

Forgive me for what?

NKVD Colonel walks over and switches the record to the next track. He walks over to his desk. He reaches into the drawer in his desk and pulls out another identical gun. He swaps the gun with the one is his hand. He walks over to door and opens it. Hearing someone walk by.

NKVD COLONEL (cont'd)

Comrade? Could you come in for a moment?

ENTER STENOGRAPHER

The Stenographer walks through the threshold and then the NKVD Colonel shoots the Stenographer point blank in the chest. He drops his gun onto the corpse and walks over to his desk. He sits down and fills his pipe, strikes a match and puffs away contentedly. He then reaches for his phone and dials a number.

Lights come up on Executioner Chuikov. He is sitting in his execution room eating a sandwhich. He reaches up and answers the phone.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Comrade?

NKVD COLONEL

Chuikov. Could you come to my office? There's been a murder.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

I'll be right over.

Chuikov walks over from his room to the NKVD Colonel's office.

(CONTINUED)

ENTER EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV (cont'd)
(sniffs the air)
Smells like home!
(pause)
What happened?

NKVD COLONEL
The Stenographer was working for the Finns. The Prosecutor and I were discussing our progress over the past few months. And this terrorist just walked in and shot her! I just had enough time to shoot her. It was Kirov all over again.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV
What?

NKVD COLONEL
Do what you do best.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV
Can I use your phone? Need to call the crematorium. The Prosecutor deserves better.

NKVD COLONEL
We all deserve better.

He walks over and switches to another track of 'Peter and The Wolf'.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV
(on the phone)
Comrade? Its Chuikov. There's been a terrorist attack, we have two. Can you send someone? The Colonel's office. Fifteen minutes? Thank you Comrade.
(to NKVD Colonel)
What's with the music? You've been playing it constantly. You have it playing everywhere. I can hear it in the execution room. Its caused a few problems.

NKVD COLONEL
I don't understand it. I kept playing it over and over. Hoping to understand it. But that did nothing. So I though if I played it everywhere, someone would come and explain it to me. Maybe I should have explained that.

Scene 7

16

Chuikov has been talking to his executees all day about the NKVD Colonel's recent behaviour.

Chuikov to Vavilov.

(CONTINUED)

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Alexei Alexandrovich, I'm having a problem. You're a intellectual. Maybe you can help with this problem.

ALEXEI VAVILOV

...Uh... What exactly do you need help with Comrade?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Call me Chuikov. Everyone's equal here. Well its about the Colonel. I've talked to everyone here today about him. I know I'm a little slow, so I was hoping you could help me out.

ALEXEI VAVILOV

Everyone?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Its a lonely job, I only have the prisoners for company. Now Prisoner No. 52932, he had some great ideas. You konw I meet a lot of clever people in my work. He thought the Colonel was insane. But I'm not sure, I've known him for years.

ALEXEI VAVILOV

You want me to explain his actions?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

No no! I understand he's following orders. We all have a boss. I'm worried that he has stopped following orders.

ALEXEI VAVILOV

What difference does that make? He's still killing people.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

He doesn't kill people. I kill people. Usually. But yesterday we had some problems. According to the Colonel there was a terrorist attack, in his office. And the Prosecutor was assassinated by the Troika Stenographer. She was a nice girl, always helped with me with my letters. I don't read so good. I don't like asking my wife, that's too embarrassing.

(pause)

I know killers, and I'm telling you, that Stenographer couldn't have killed anybody. She was scared of spiders! So if she didn't kill the Prosecutor, who did? You see my problem?

ALEXEI VAVILOV

Maybe it was the Colonel?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

I think you might be right. There were four security checks between the entrance and his office. I couldn't see any terrorist getting to his office. Also they search you at these checkpoints. I mean

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV (cont'd)
after Kirov, everyone a little paranoid. But the
Colonel, he was in the Army. Crack shot.

ALEXEI VAVILOV
You're worried the Colonel is trying to take over?
Remove all his rivals?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV
He had no rivals. He's the highest ranking NKVD
officer in the region. I'm worried that he could just
kill anyone. What happens if he asks me into his
office and BANG! What'll happen to my wife? I like my
wife. And my children.

ALEXEI VAVILOV
I like my wife too. Sadly we had no children.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV
She liked you too! We had force her onto the train.
(Vavilov looks at him upset.)
She was relocated! Don't worry we didn't shoot your
wife!

ALEXEI VAVILOV
Wish I was so lucky. Where did you send her?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV
(checks his notes)
The Urals.
(pause)
Back to my question. So what should I do?

ALEXEI VAVILOV
Well I'm sure this has happened before. You have
procedures? I'm sure you're worried about your wife
and children.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV
You're right. In cases like these, we're supposed to
report any excesses. You think I should call? I think
I should call. Before its too late.

ALEXEI VAVILOV
Well.. I've helped you with your problem. Could you
help me with my problem?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV
(laughs)
I don't have to shoot you. They would never know. Its
just me here. As far as the Troika is concerned
you're just a number.
(takes a moment and thinks)
But you reminded me of my duty. To follow orders
always. If I don't shoot you, I'm just as bad as the
Colonel. We don't choose in this life.
(takes out his gun and checks the
breech, and cocks the pistol)

(CONTINUED)

Thank you Alexei. I'll remember you.

ALEXEI VAVILOV

Will it hurt?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

No. You won't feel a thing.

ALEXEI VAVILOV

Chuikov, could you send a letter to my wife? Tell her I'm in a camp. So she can move on.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

I'll try my best.

Chuikov gently pushes Vavilov onto his knees and expertly fires a shot into the back of his head.

Scene 8

17

NKVD Colonel's Office

His appearance has become nearly totally ragged. He looks like he hasn't slept in weeks.

The Office is a shambles, paperwork strewn everywhere and he is furiously scribbling on scraps of paper.

ENTER LABOUR COMMISSAR

LABOUR COMMISSAR

You wanted to see me?

NKVD COLONEL

Yes. Where is the paper gone? I'm writing on scraps. We need more paper!

LABOUR COMMISSAR

I understand. But the paper mills are understaffed. We've already cut through our forestry. We're trying to fix it. But with all the arrests. Its become a logistical nightmare. Its chaos.

NKVD COLONEL

Fix it! Get more more. Use the GULAG workers. We need the paper. Moscow needs the paper.

LABOUR COMMISSAR

We have! They're too far away. There is no transport up there. And the roads are too dangerous.

NKVD COLONEL

Are you trying to sabotage the Five Year Plan? You know the punishment for that.

(CONTINUED)

LABOUR COMMISSAR

You have caused this! Paper needs men to cut down trees. Who then need to bring it to the paper mill. And there they make paper! But we can't do that! Because you killed all the foreman in the paper mill for being fascists. Someone found a swastika in the paper. So the entire unit was executed.

(pause)

I can't fix my problems with arrests and executions. I need time to fix this. Time which you won't give me. And now we have run out of skilled labourers. I can't even advertise for more workers! Cause there's no paper!

NKVD COLONEL

Get out. Now.

Labour Commissar quickly leaves. The NKVD Colonel sits and stares at the space where he was standing. Then he reaches for a fresh scrap of paper. And starts to write down the Labour Commissar's name.

Boris Mikavon, Commissar of Labour. ASSR. Category 1.

Scene 9

18

NKVD Colonel's Office

He is sitting at his desk. Staring into space. Peter and the Wolf playing softly beside him.

ENTER SOLDIERS

Two soldiers and stand either side of the door. Pulling out their pistols. The NKVD Colonel ignores them.

ENTER NEW TROIKA

Three officials enter the room. They look around the mess of the room. One of them walks over to the NKVD Colonel.

CHAIRWOMAN

Comrade? I'm Alexandra Krilova, the 1st Secretary of the ASSR. I've just arrived from Moscow. I have a warrant for your execution.

NKVD COLONEL

You're late.

The NKVD Colonel reaches for a piece of paper. Captain of State Security, Nikolai Zhilov. ASSR.

(looks at the 1st Secretary and smiles)

Category 1.

(CONTINUED)

The 1st Secretary makes a hand signal to the soldiers. They quickly walk over and drag the NKVD Colonel away.
You'll never meet your quotas...

Scene 10

19

Execution Chamber.

Chuikov is smiling and standing beside the NKVD Colonel.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

pulls a bullet from his pocket
I have a bullet, just for you. And someone might want to frame it, just like you did Colonel.

NKVD COLONEL
(...)

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Things have changed. Beria replaced Yezhov. And he's repealed the Troikas. You're finished, you can rest now.

NKVD COLONEL
(...)

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

We always liked you. You were the best boss we ever had. So if you need anything. Just tell me. We'll try and get it for you. Cigarette?

NKVD COLONEL
Please.

Chuikov hands the NKVD Colonel a cigarette and lights it for him.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Nikolai. That's a good strong name. You know we never knew your name. We thought it was must have been religious or something.

NKVD COLONEL

I'd like a firing squad. Is that possible?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Anything is possible. I thought you would want one. I had plenty of volunteers. Its not personal! Its just traditional. And its the Army way.

(pause)

You ready now?

(CONTINUED)

NKVD COLONEL

I don't want to be a burden on the state. I served the people to the best of my ability.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

And we want to serve you too.

Whistles loudly.

ENTER SOLDIERS

They line up and load their rifles. Chuikov leads the Colonel to the wall of the chamber. Blindfold?

NKVD COLONEL

I want to see it coming.

turns to Chuikov

You were the best friend, I ever had.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Sorry we don't have your record. But the boys broke it. You played it too much.

NKVD COLONEL

Did you ever find out what it meant?

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

I asked my wife, she says its a preamable. Sorry, a parable to life. A metaphor? My children understand it. I think its for children, Colonel.

(pause)

Last words?

NKVD COLONEL

There is a God, afterall.

EXECUTIONER CHUIKOV

Sure there is.

Turns and walks to firing squad. He stands to the left of the firing squad. He raises his hand, then drops it suddently. The soldiers fire and the NKVD Colonel falls to the ground. Chuikov then walks over and checks his pulse. Once he's sure that the NKVD Colonel is dead, he reaches over and takes the cigarette and starts to smoke it.

THE END