

PULL-RING

Written by

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INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A brightly lit apartment building, each unit glowing with a different color, resembling small blocks stacked together, slowly flickering. The camera suddenly shakes, as if mounted on a tripod but then picked up by someone. The camera moves, fixing on a window, and then zooms in.

(O.S.)UNKNOWN MALE
(The beeping sound of a
recorder being turned on)
Name.

(O.S.)KONSTANTIN
(In a casual tone,
sounding like a young
man, with metal scraping
sounds in the background)
Konstantin

(O.S.)UNKNOWN MALE
(In a cold, serious tone)
Full name.

(O.S.)KONSTANTIN
Konstantin Antovich Kelanov.

(O.S.)UNKNOWN MALE
Mr. Kelanov, this meeting is our
final one before the execution.

A little girl appears on camera, playfully jumping on the sofa while holding a stuffed bunny. The lighting is warm, and her face has an innocent smile as she gently pulls on the bunny's ears with both hands. The camera shifts to the bunny's eyes, then to the girl's wrist adorned with a bracelet.

(O.S.)UNKNOWN MALE
We have completed all possible
legal procedures. All appeals and
special petitions have been
submitted and received responses.
Now, as part of the process, I need
to ask you a few questions. First,
are you fully aware of the court's
verdict and the scheduled time of
execution?

(O.S.)KONSTANTIN
If nothing has changed, then yes,
I'm aware.

The camera begins to shake, moving to another apartment window. A boy, around fifteen or sixteen, is in his room, cracking open a window and leaning out to take a drag from a cigarette. The camera zooms in on the flickering cigarette and his wary eyes. Suddenly, the camera moves to the door, slowly being pushed open.

(O.S.)UNKNOWN MALE

Do you fully understand the court's final decision? Are there any unclear points or questions?

(O.S.)KONSTANTIN

A person is born; it's no longer a question open to debate, but simply a fact handed down by fate. And when fate hands us this fact, it already ensures its outcome. So death is not something to hasten; it is an inevitable celebration to come.

(O.S.)UNKNOWN MALE

Does that mean 'understand'?

(O.S.)KONSTANTIN

Sure, if that's what you want to call it.

The camera shakes again, dimly lit. A woman in a red dress sets down her glass and begins to dance with a man. The camera zooms in on her twirling skirt, then shifts to a Brown University diploma on a bookshelf. A finance news program plays on the television, but no one pays attention. The man wraps his arm around her waist, and the camera lingers on his sweat-dampened shirt.

(O.S.)UNKNOWN MALE

Would you like to leave any letters, messages, or anything else for your family or friends?

(O.S.)KONSTANTIN

About thirty years ago, my two brothers and I were carrying bags and wheeling a large suitcase, preparing to head north by train. It was the night train, no one spoke, thousands of kilometers of tracks, and then, suddenly, the train stopped halfway, people were clinging to the roof.

(MORE)

(O.S.) KONSTANTIN (CONT'D)

We got off, and my brother said,
'This train is here to take you
home, it just hasn't arrived yet.
It'll be home soon, I promise.'

The camera shakes again, shifting to a dimly lit room. Light filters through sheer curtains, and two figures entwined on the bed. The camera lingers, zooming in on a glass of water on the nightstand before focusing on the woman's bare back as she arches, her long hair cascading down her waist and swaying with each movement. The camera traces the curves of their bodies, zooming in and out.

(O.S.) UNKNOWN MALE

...Is that the message you want to
leave?

(O.S.) KONSTANTIN

Of course not, that's my answer.

(O.S.) UNKNOWN MALE

Answer to what?

The camera shakes again, moving to a man working at a desk. His room is neat and cold-toned, stacks of files scattered across the desk. The man's head is down, fully absorbed in his work. The camera shifts to a family photo on his desk, then to the faint ring mark on his finger.

(O.S.) UNKNOWN MALE

Alright, next question. Do you have
any financial or property
arrangements you would like us to
handle? For example, transferring
assets or distributing inheritance?

(O.S.) KONSTANTIN

I have an apartment, two bank
accounts, oh, and some stocks. But
I don't plan to leave them to
anyone.

(O.S.) UNKNOWN MALE

If you don't designate an heir,
these assets may be auctioned, and
the proceeds will go to the state.

(O.S.) KONSTANTIN

That's fine.

The camera quickly shifts to a middle-aged couple who appear to be arguing about something. Broken glass lies on the floor, and the man's face is twisted in anger, pointing at something, shouting loudly.

The camera follows his finger, pointing to an ordinary, tidy dining table with a vase holding a single rose.

(O.S.)UNKNOWN MALE
Would you like a visit from a religious figure, prayers, or any other form of spiritual support?

(O.S.)KONSTANTIN
I don't follow any faith.

(O.S.)UNKNOWN MALE
So, that's a no?

(O.S.)KONSTANTIN
No, but if possible, perhaps a psychic would be nice.

(O.S.)UNKNOWN MALE
Psychic?

(O.S.)KONSTANTIN
Yeah.

(O.S.)UNKNOWN MALE
Well, it's not a common request, but I'll do my best to arrange it.

The camera moves to a balcony where an elderly person sits on a lounge, gently touching the various plants on the balcony. The camera zooms in on the soft expression on her face, then lingers on a potted plant as water drips from a watering can, sliding down the leaf, soaking into the soil.

(O.S.)UNKNOWN MALE
Now, lastly, any final wishes? Like a particular meal? or a song to play during the execution?

(O.S.)KONSTANTIN
This place is really.....hard to understand. What do most people pick? The national anthem?

(O.S.)UNKNOWN MALE
(Pauses)
Well, the last person chose 'Take Me Home, Country Roads.'

(O.S.)KONSTANTIN
What's that? Never mind. That'll do.

The camera returns to the little girl's home. She's fallen asleep on the sofa, still clutching the stuffed bunny. A woman approaches, gently touches her face, kisses her hair, then rises and turns off the light. Darkness envelops everything, and the camera stops moving.

(O.S.) UNKNOWN MALE

(Sound of fabric rustling
and the recorder beeping
off)

Well then, Mr. Kelanov, that
concludes our meeting. Sleep well.

(O.S.) KONSTANTIN

(Chuckles)

Thanks.