

Outline - 3rd draft

RUN ON ICE

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Prologue: JANE in Paris

- 1: JANE in the Valley has a baby
- 2: ELLIS gets a new assignment
- 3: JANE - convoy wiped out
- 4: JEAN-PIERRE contacts Anatoli
- 5: JANE discovers Jean-Pierre with Anatoli
- 6: ELLIS goes to work
- 7: JANE, stymied, looks north
- 8: JEAN-PIERRE contacts Anatoli again
- 9: JANE fights with Jean-Pierre, who flees
- 10: ELLIS and Masud set an ambush

- 11: JANE and Ellis make love
- 12: ELLIS and Jane see the atrocity
- 13: JANE and Ellis to Shalnaiz
- 14: JEAN-PIERRE reaches kabul and starts a manhunt
- 15: JANE and Ellis reach Lake Mundul
- 16: MOHAMMED diverts the Russians
- 17: JANE and Ellis cross the high pass
- 18: JEAN-PIERRE exposes Mohammed and redirects the searchers
- 19: JANE- climax

Prologue: Jane Lamden is a professional interpreter living in Paris. In 1981 she is 24. She is petite and pretty, and a bundle of energy. She is cheerful, affectionate, sexy, compassionate and impulsive. By nature completely honest, she can sometimes be devastatingly frank.

She is the eldest child of a bourgeois English family. Her father is a dedicated doctor who drinks too much. Her mother is a cultivated, thoughtful, neurotic woman who has converted to Catholicism. When Jane was a child the family moved around the world - Rhodesia, Egypt, Singapore - and was more or less unhappy everywhere.

At 18 Jane went to Pakistan on a VSO (Peace Corps) project, an experience which confirmed her idealistic left-wing views. She then went to London University where she studied Russian and French and graduated first-class. To improve her professional range she is now studying Farsi (Persian).

Her aim in life is to bring to the world the peace and harmony which is missing from her own background. Learning languages is a way to build bridges between nations. She also tends to fall for mixed-up men to whom she can bring peace and harmony. She moves in radical and artistic circles. Most of her friends in Paris are painters or writers or full-time political activists, and they are all left-wing.

She has had two lovers since coming here. The first was Ellis Thaler, 33, a not-much-published American poet who scrapes a living giving English lessons. He is a cynic, rather world-weary, and something of a bum, but he is madly attractive - tall and muscular, with blue eyes and short, curly blond hair and rugged

good looks. He wears outdoorsy clothes and is generally both sensitive and macho, like Kris Kristofferson. Their sex life began routinely but became sensational. They began to tell one another their life stories, secret fears, and like that. Then Jane caught him out in a lie, and she dropped him like a hot brick - a reaction which is wholly characteristic in its combination of impulsiveness and high principle.

Her second and current lover is Jean-Pierre Debout, 25, a French graduate student in Medicine, handsome, dark-bearded, bespectacled, intense, and a skilful (rather than passionate) lover. He is academically outstanding and a scintillating conversationalist. In a certain manic mood he can be side-splittingly funny. He suffers bouts of depression, becoming almost suicidal, until Jane patiently brings him round. He holds views similar to Jane's but is a real zealot, a hard-liner, the kind that ends up planting bombs and kidnapping businessmen.

Jane loves Paris but feels she is wasting her life. She has always planned to change the world and she is still determined so to do. As she says to her left-wing friends: All we ever do is sit around and talk - when are we going to act? She is also vaguely discontented with Jean-Pierre. She loves him, she thinks, but she wonders why he won't make a commitment to her.

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After a particularly tedious day translating insincere speeches about international friendship, she goes to a private view of worthless collages by a fiend of Jean-Pierre's. Ellis is there. They talk. Then the background music switches to Jimi Hendrix, and Ellis leaves abruptly: he always hated Hendrix.

Jean-Pierre takes Jane to dinner with a couple who publish an avant-garde literary magazine. Jean-Pierre rants entertainingly about capitalism and decadence: 'The plays of Moliere and Shakespeare are about murder and greed and heroism and treachery but the novel is about nothing but romance -why? Because the novel is an art form for and about the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie knows only one sin, adultery,' and so on. The other couple gives Jane the creeps. She has this peculiar feeling that she is being inspected, and it crosses her mind that Jean-Pierre might be planning a sexual foursome.

However, after dinner he takes her home and they make love as usual. Then he springs a surprise. He has decided to go to Afghanistan to work as a doctor on the rebel side (as several idealistic young French doctors have done). He asks Jane to marry him and go with him. She is shocked, frightened and thrilled. By morning she has said Yes.

1: A year later, in the summer of 1982, Jane and Jean-Pierre are in Five Tigers Valley, a rebel stronghold in the foothills of the Himalayas, tending the sick and wounded while dodging Russian air raids. There is no sanitation, nor electricity, nor are there roads; but Jane is happy with her worthwhile, dangerous career. Most of the time she acts as Jean-Pierre's assistant, giving injections and changing dressings. However, Afghan women cannot receive medical attention from a man, so Jane treats all of them; and when Jean-Pierre visits outlying villages she stays behind at the cave clinic, dispensing first aid.

Since performing Heimolich's manoeuvre on a dying child

she is adored by the Afghans, with the sole but ominous exception of the mullah, who averts his eyes from her and mutters imprecations against Western whores into his red-dyed beard. Jane is an amateur botanist (the only ladylike pursuit she learned from her mother) and she delights in the flowers of the Hindu Kush.

The marriage is not quite what she expected. She looked forward to ~~an~~ ever-deepening love and intimacy with Jean-Pierre, but somehow he still seems like a boyfriend. She is realising that the closeness she was beginning to achieve with Ellis does not come automatically when two people live together.

She is also seven months pregnant.

She decided to get pregnant because she was lonely, because she hoped the baby would bring her and Jean-Pierre closer together, and because a woman sometimes just wants to have a baby. She did not consult Jean-Pierre. When he found out he was furious and wanted to perform an abortion himself.

Jane and Jean-Pierre are friendly with Mohammed, a handsome 22-year-old guerilla who was a helicopter pilot with the Afghan regular army until the Russian invasion of 1979 when he deserted. Mohammed is one of the confidantes of Ahmed Shah Masud, 28, the brilliant and charismatic rebel leader whose fame has spread throughout Afghanistan from his power base of Five Tigers Valley. Mohammed's main job for Masud is to organise the horse convoys which bring arms and ammunition from Pakistan, and he is frequently in consultation with Jean-Pierre about this, as the convoys also bring medical supplies and sometimes more doctors from Paris.

Jane never ceases to be amazed and moved by the bravery

of Mohammed and his comrades as they go out with their Victorian rifles to do battle with Russian tanks and helicopters. Mohammed is in love with Jane, and she is tempted to seek consolation in his wiry brown arms; but so far she has not, partly because he is a strict Muslim, and partly because she is trying hard to make her marriage a success.

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Jane has a secret place on the mountainside where, in the summer, she can bathe in a stream then dry herself in the sun before oiling her distended tummy (to prevent post-natal stretch marks). She is lying there when she hears an explosion followed by the screams of a child in pain. Grabbing her clothes she runs to the child, a six-year-old who has picked up a Russian anti-personnel mine and blown his hand off. Jane makes a tourniquet with her shirt, puts on her jeans, and picks up the child. Carrying him toward the village she encounters the mullah. Maddened by the sight of her breasts he attacks her with his stick. Remembering her feminist self-defence classes Jane throws him over her shoulder and into a mulberry bush. She saves the child, but makes an enemy.

That afternoon her contractions begin. Jean-Pierre diagnoses backache and refuses to cancel a scheduled visit to outlying villages. That night Jane gives birth with the help of a tribal midwife. It is a girl. Jane names her Chantal.

2: Ellis, the American poet in Paris, attends a meeting of an extremist group composed of some of Jane and Jean-Pierre's friends. The group has obtained explosives and plans to blow up the Champs Elysees office of a Middle Eastern airline. Present are several

people who have done this sort of thing before.

Suddenly the police burst in and arrest everyone.

Ellis is driven, not to jail, but to the US Embassy where he meets with the CIA head of station and is congratulated on having brought these terrorists to book after a two-year undercover operation.

The eldest son of a construction foreman, Ellis is bright, tough, patriotic and unmanageable. At the age of 19 he was thrown out of college and went to Vietnam, where he served for six years and collected a chestful of medals. Then he joined the CIA - because he wanted to serve his country, because he believed that espionage (like war) was too important to be left to the psychopaths, and because he could not think of another occupation that would not bore him to distraction. Now, at 33, he is no longer energised by subterfuge and danger in alien cities - but what else is there to do?

Now he is told of his next assignment: Afghanistan.

The Afghan rebels are scattered and disunited. In particular, there is rivalry and even fighting between the Pushtuns and the Tajiks. Ellis is to offer increased U.S. aid, especially anti-tank guns and rocket launchers (for shooting down helicopters) on condition the factions unite under the outstanding Tajik leader, Masud of Five Tigers Valley.

Ellis has been chosen partly because he is one of the two or three best undercover men the Agency has, but mainly because he has a ready-made cover: several people from among his circle of political friends in Paris have gone to Afghanistan to help the rebels so it will seem natural for him to go too. His cover

role will be to instruct the rebels in the use of explosives - a skill which, he will say truthfully, he picked up as a conscript in Vietnam. As he has no connection with the existing CIA support team in Peshawar he will be credible. Have spent time in Iran he knows a little Farsi, a language closely related to the Dari which is spoken in Five Tigers Valley. The only disadvantage is that he will have to continue to use the pseudonym Ellis Thaler.

First, however, he gets a holiday.

He returns to the U.S. In Washington he is congratulated by the Director of the CIA who tells him: 'The President wanted to personally announce our participation in this operation, but I talked him out of it.'

Then Ellis visits his ex-wife and his daughter Tammy, 13, who now live with a data-processing executive called Bernie in a ranch-style suburban house in Dallas. Bernie is a little frightened of Ellis. Thinking that Ellis has no money, Bernie offers to waive Tammy's maintenance, but Ellis insists, saying it is a matter of pride. See their lifestyle and hearing of their preoccupations - interest rates, the PTA, dinner-party etiquette - Ellis has no doubt that divorce was the best thing for himself, for his wife, and for Tammy. He could never live like this.

Yet the visit prompts him to ask himself: What do I want?

He would like a wife, but not a housewife; a home, but not in the suburbs; a child, but one who knows more than Spiderman and Culture Club ...

He thought, for a while, that he might have all that with Jane. Two years ago he was in love with her. Yet of course he was spying on her and her friends. At one point he was tempted

to level with her, but he resisted the temptation. There were moments, later on, when he wondered whether that might have been the greatest mistake of his life. One day, when he had a clandestine meeting with his control, he told Jane a casual lie which - by great bad luck - she found out. (He could have told her a cleverer lie, and he suspects that at some level he wanted her to catch him.) After she dropped him, he felt fairly detached about it. When people asked him how he was, he said 'Fine,' and meant it. But every now and again he would feel an inexplicable urge to burst into tears.

However, he is over her now, and anyway she is married to someone else.

3: A couple of months later, Jane is coping well with baby Chantal, and still having problems with the mullah, who accuses her of teaching the village women to be barren (because she has been encouraging them to space out their pregnancies). Jean-Pierre seems warmer to her since Chantal was born, as she hoped. Mohammed still worships her.

Today Mohammed brings news that a convoy of ammunition from Pakistan has been ambushed by the Russians and wiped out. He and Jean-Pierre immediately discuss another convoy.

4: After this discussion, Jean-Pierre sneaks off and uses a battery-powered radio transmitter to send a coded message to the Russians.

Jean-Pierre's father, a lifelong Communist, was a French resistance leader whose first wife died heroically during World War Two. After the war old Debout was jailed for subversive

activities. In the fifties he married again, and Jean-Pierre is the only child of his second marriage. Debout at 40 was a bitter, disappointed and betrayed man, and he brought Jean-Pierre up to be ruthless, dogmatic, single-minded and deceitful, with maxims such as Never tell the truth and The only sure friends are dead friends. The old man is long gone but his influence is only too lively.

Jean-Pierre sincerely believes the world will be a better place when it is all run along Soviet lines: authoritarianism appeals to him. So when he was approached in Paris and asked to go to Afghanistan to spy for Moscow he saw his chance to 1) work for world socialism, 2) be a hero like Papa, and 3) practise the unscrupulous guile which, his father told him, is the only way to achieve anything in this rotten world.

However, he is genuinely in love with Jane. Indeed he vaguely realises that she is the only truly good thing that has ever happened to him. Nevertheless he has always betrayed his friends - from schoolmates, through teenage girlfriends, to political co-conspirators and friends who let him know of their adulteries - and he will betray Jane.

His coded message to the Russians simply requests a meeting with his contact. The message is coded, not because the rebels might be listening in - they have no radios - but because the Afghan army might, and somehow the rebels get to hear everything the Afghan army knows. And Jean-Pierre meets his contact, rather than talking with him in code over the radio, because the kind of radio (and battery back) required for prolonged conversation at such a distance would be too bulky to conceal.

Now Jean-Pierre's contact, Col. Anatoli Yevtushenko - a decent Russian who believes the rebels are CIA-financed bandits - will walk from behind Russian lines, dressed as a native, and will meet Jean-Pierre at a lonely spot on Jean-Pierre's route to an outlying village.

5: Soon after Jean-Pierre leaves on this visit, a wounded man is brought to Jane and she realises she has no anti-gangrene drugs. She sets off in pursuit of Jean-Pierre. (She could send a messenger but there is no one reliable to hand.) Fortunately Jean-Pierre has stopped a few miles away, at a stone hut where two valleys meet. (This district of Afghanistan is dotted with such little huts for travellers.) Jane enters and is surprised to see Jean-Pierre and another man looking at a map. The other man speaks French with a Russian accent.

Jane gets the drug and leaves. She has maintained her composure but she is distraught. Evidently Jean-Pierre is a spy. She recalls that for a long time he used to argue that the Russian invasion of Afghanistan was justified; then it seemed she had persuaded him otherwise. The change must have been faked. Was his love for her faked? She thinks not. What has gone wrong is that he has been deceiving her. If he will stop spying their marriage can be saved.

But what is she to do about the next convoy, which has clearly been betrayed? She needs to warn the guerillas - but if she tells them about Jean-Pierre they will kill him. Her solution is to persuade Mohammed to make a last-minute change of plan and ask no questions.

When Jean-Pierre returns, Jane announces that she wants him to take her and Chantal back to Paris, saying simply that she cannot raise Chantal here. She thinks that back at home Jean-Pierre can get out of the clutches of the Russians and revert to his normal self; then the two of them can renew their marriage and get back to their work of making the world a better place by gradual and legitimate means. Jane's fantasy has herself as head of Unesco and Jean-Pierre leading the World Health Organisation.

But Jean-Pierre refuses, and now Jane sees in his eyes a new hardness that frightens her.

The convoy arrives safely, with Ellis Thaler. The presence of another white man in the village emboldens Jane, and she tells Jean-Pierre that she knows he is a spy and she will expose him unless he takes her home. He now agrees. Indeed, he pleads with her to forgive him and not to stop loving him. He begs her to promise not to leave him when they reach Paris. Surprised and touched, she promises. But she destroys his radio.

6: Ellis meets with Masud, explains his mission, and persuades Masud to call a conference of rebel leaders from all over Afghanistan.

He also gives dynamite lessons. He is impressed by the careless bravery of the guerillas. The lessons are a hit, despite one accident in which he is wounded by a flying rock: Jean-Pierre dresses the wound.

Ellis sees Jane and Jean-Pierre apparently contented, thrilled with Chantal, and absorbed in planning their journey home. Paradoxically he falls in love with her all over again. Once more he is bewitched by her grace, warmth and vitality. He mistrusts

Jean-Pierre instinctively and wants to protect Jane from him. But most of all he remembers sex with Jane. He has made love to plenty of women and has been in love with two or three but never has he known sex to be such an intense emotional experience as it was with Jane. He now knows that she is the woman for him. But he is too late.

7: Jane likes Ellis all the more now that he has dropped the cafe-society affectations that were part of his Paris persona; and he looks even more dishy with a blond curly beard; but she is on her way home, and she has no more intention of fooling with him than with Mohammed.

The Russians launch a major offensive, blocking the route to the Khyber Pass and Pakistan. Jane cannot go home. The first conference delegate arrives and Jane and Jean-Pierre learn what Ellis and Masud plan. Jane now fears Jean-Pierre will find a way to betray the conference, enabling the Russians to wipe out the entire rebel leadership at a stroke.

There is, in summer only, another way out of the country: northward, through the remote and bleak province of Nuristan and along the 'Butter Trail' used by the nomadic herdsmen of Nuristan to take their dairy produce to market at Chitral in north-west Pakistan. The journey is arduous but Jane insists they do it.

8: Jean-Pierre has a backup link with Anatoli. A reclusive and half-mad shepherd who regularly takes sheep to market in Kabul will carry a message to Anatoli (who rewards the man with marijuana). Jean-Pierre now uses this conduit to tell Anatoli about the conference

and about Ellis, of whom he gives a full description, including the scars and birthmarks which were revealed when Jean-Pierre treated Ellis's wound.

A few days later, to Jean-Pierre's astonishment, Anatoli shows up at the cave clinic, disguised as a leper. He has fed Ellis's description into the KGB computer and rung all the alarm bells. He must see Ellis for himself. Jean-Pierre arranges for Anatoli to walk past where Ellis is.

9: But Jane sees Anatoli and realises that the conference must have been betrayed. She decides to warn Mohammed, but persuade him not to tell Masud until the last minute, so that Jean-Pierre and she will be far away before Jean-Pierre is exposed.

But before she can see Mohammed, Jean-Pierre - who guesses she has recognised Anatoli - announces that they are leaving now. She refuses. He tries to force her. They fight. By chance Mohammed arrives - but as a good Muslim he refuses to interfere with a man legitimately beating his wife. This so enrages Jane that she knocks Jean-Pierre out. She runs to Ellis for help. When they return, Jean-Pierre has gone, taking the horse and the supplies.

Jane now tells Ellis everything.

10: Ellis has Masud evacuate the village where the rebel leaders are gathering and set an ambush. When the Russians strike, the guerillas wipe them out. This stroke by Masud and Ellis seals the success of the conference.

11: Ellis tells Jane why he lied to her in Paris. He explains that he believes an institution such as the CIA can only be good if good people work for it; and that his counter-terrorist obsession is in expiation for things he did in Vietnam. He also tells her that lying to her was the worst mistake he made in his whole life.

She expresses doubts as to whether he can redeem all the killing he did in Asia by doing some more killing in Afghanistan, and confesses that she sees the Russians and the guerillas as two kinds of terrorist, both of whose victims consist mainly of women and children who will have no power and no rights regardless of which side wins this war. It seems to her a mistake - and a characteristically masculine one - to fight for either side. And even while she is arguing with him, she falls in love with him again.

They leave Chantal with Fara, Jane's help, and climb the mountainside with a down sleeping bag to Jane's secret place. Jane cries because she is wearing thermal underwear, dark blue to show the lice. It is the first time she has made love since Chantal was born. But Ellis is gentle. She cries again.

12: The sound of helicopters wakes them at dawn. From their vantage-point they can see the village even though they are a rocky thirty-minute climb away. A flight of helicopters lands in the village. Ellis prevents Jane running down the mountainside for Chantal. The villagers are rounded up. Fara is led out of Jane's house - without Chantal. People are questioned. A villager points to the house where Ellis has been staying. The people

who live there are questioned, then beaten, then shot.

Clearly the Russians are looking for Ellis, and he must give himself up before anyone else is shot. But he is too late. An order is shouted, and the soldiers raise their weapons. Jane screams and shuts her eyes. Ellis watches as the villagers are massacred, recalling an exactly similar scene in Vietnam which he watched while the music of Jimi Hendrix screamed from a soldier's portable cassette-player, realising that he is to blame for this atrocity, too, for the Russians are here only because he is.

13: The helicopters leave. Jane and Ellis rush to the village. Chantal is in her crib, asleep. Ellis and Jane find a few wounded people still alive, and help them.

Then they find a horse, load up with supplies, and leave, heading north.

At the next village, Shalnaiz, they run into Mohammed. He tells Jane that she must speak to the whole world of this atrocity. He offers to guide them on the first leg of their journey.

14: Jean-Pierre reaches Kabul and tells Anatoli that Ellis and Jane are probably heading north to Nuristan. Anatoli must capture Ellis to prove to the world that the Afghan freedom fighters are really U.S. surrogates. He launches a massive manhunt: helicopters will land at every village in the Five Tigers Valley at dawn.

15: Ellis, Jane, Chantal and Mohammed leave Shalnaiz before dawn and, instead of heading directly north, they take a side valley and go east over the mountains, using trails which are not mapped

nor are they visible from the air.

During the manhunt our old friend the mullah tells a Russian that Jane witnessed the massacre. Now Anatoli must get Jane, too.

At the end of a long day Jane and the others reach Achagaur. Mohammed finds them a guide for the next leg then bids them an emotional farewell and sets off to walk back to Five Tigers overnight.

In the middle of the night he returns. He has stumbled over a troop of Russians camped at the pass: clearly Anatoli is chasing them the only way he can, by following their trail on foot. They must leave immediately. Mohammed will stay with them another day.

At the end of the following day they reach Lake Mundul.

16: Mohammed finds a new guide and sets them off on the Butter Trail. Then he offers his services as a guide to the following Russians, and takes them the wrong way, south.

17: Another day takes Jane and Ellis to Pushal. Next day they go on to the highest pass. This part of the journey is a nightmare. The mountain track is steep, stony and treacherous with ice. Ellis carries the supplies, Jane carries Chantal, and the guide leads the horse, which can only be used on rare level stretches. Their caution is vindicated when the horse slips and falls over a ledge to its death. But they make it over the pass.

18: Jean-Pierre joins the search party, recognises Mohammed,

has him arrested, and redirects the searchers to the Butter Trail, the route he and Jane planned to use.

Mohammed escapes, stealing a helicopter.

19: Ellis and Jane are walking along a dried-up river bed when they see horses some distance behind them.

Their guide disappears. Ellis climbs the mountainside, trailing cable, and lays a charge. The horsemen come nearer. Ellis runs, yelling at Jane to detonate the dynamite. She sees Jean-Pierre with the horsemen, hesitates, then presses the button. The pursuers are buried in a landslide.

Jane and Ellis walk on. A Russian helicopter hovers over them and descends. Run! yells Ellis. I can't, I'm too tired, says Jane. Ellis comes back and stands with her.

Mohammed gets out of the helicopter.

He flies them to Pakistan.