

# THE INFORMANT!

Screenplay by  
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Based on the book by  
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AS PRODUCED

GREEN CORN STALKS STROBE PAST

We hear a happy and informative man's voice. We will come to know this voice as MARK WHITACRE'S.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**  
**You know the orange juice you have every morning? You know what's in that?**

REST ON AN EAR OF CORN IN THE CENTER OF FRAME

Golden kernels peaking out from behind the husks.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**  
**Corn.**

EXTERIOR CORN FIELD - DAY

We are in the middle of an endless cornfield in SOUTHERN ILLINOIS.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**  
**And you know what's in the maple syrup you put on your pancakes? You know what makes it taste so good?**

Huge industrial machines work the ruler straight rows of crops.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**  
**Corn.**

A red PORSCHE 911 speeds past the corn, down US HIGHWAY 36.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**  
**And when you're good and help with the trash, know what makes the big, green bags biodegradable?**

INTERIOR PORSCHE 911 - CONTINUOUS

WHITACRE, 33, drives his young son ALEXANDER, 6, to school. God doesn't make creatures any happier than Whitacre. Alexander sips his half-pint carton of ORANGE JUICE.

**WHITACRE**  
Do you?

Alexander hazards a guess.

**ALEXANDER**  
Uh-huh. Corn.

WHITACRE

Corn starch. But, Daddy's company didn't come up with that one-- DuPont did.

Whitacre thoughts continue in his head.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

Porsche or Porsh-a. I've heard it both ways. Three years in Germany, I should know that. What's the German word for corn? The word in German I really like is "kugelschreiber." That's "pen." All those syllables just for "pen."

EXTERIOR ADM HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

The Porsche pulls up to the security gate at ARCHER DANIELS MIDLAND headquarters in Decatur. A sprawling industrial facility that makes most of what America eats on any given day. And the rest of the world.

Grain elevators, cooling towers, processing plants, loading docks and a six story concrete bunker of an office building.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

Archer Daniels Midland. Most people have never heard of us. But chances are, they've never had a meal we're not part of. Just read the side of the package.

INTERIOR ADM LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre walks through the office.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

That's us. Now ADM is taking the dextrose from the corn and turning it into an amino acid called lysine. It's all very scientific. But if you're a stockholder, all that matters is that corn goes in one end and profit comes out the other.

He waves to everyone he passes. Smile flashing like a casino sign.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

We've got the largest lysine plant in the world here. That's where I come in.

Whitacre spots his pal KIRK SCHMIDT from accounting.

WHITACRE  
Kirk, when are we gonna get out  
there and hit some balls?

They shake hands and Whitacre moves on, his inner monologue continuing over Kirk's response.

WHITACRE (V.O.)  
What do they pay Kirk...What does a  
guy like that get? I bet he gets a  
hundred grand. He's just going to  
sit behind that desk and ride it  
into the future.

Whitacre waves to a coworker as he enters his glass walled office.

WHITACRE  
Gutten morgen.

SUPER: DECATUR OCTOBER 1992

INTERIOR WHITACRE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre's secretary, LIZ TAYLOR, 35, enters. Her earrings are little golden EARS OF CORN.

LIZ TAYLOR  
Morning Mark. They have lysine  
results.

She hands him a folder. He opens it and scans the data. A column of red numbers and negative signs. Whitacre remains positive.

WHITACRE  
Great.

INTERIOR LYSINE PLANT - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Whitacre walks among the giant fermenters -- he's joined by a DISCOURAGED FOREMAN. They check various gauges and dials.

DISCOURAGED FOREMAN  
We adjusted the dextrose again, but  
the virus keeps showing up. Thought  
we had it surrounded this time.  
We're starting a new set of  
cultures.

WHITACRE  
We'll get it. We just have to stay  
after it.

(MORE)

WHITACRE (cont'd)  
The things eat sugar and that's  
what we're giving them -- a warm  
place filled with sugar.

INTERIOR ADM BOARDROOM - LATER

Whitacre sits with MICK ANDREAS, Vice Chairman, 45, and TERRY WILSON, 55, President. An overhead projector displays the desultory performance of Whitacre's division.

ANDREAS  
The fucking thing is supposed to  
produce 113 thousand tons annually.  
We're not gonna get anywhere near  
that. We got 150 million dollars in  
costs over there guys.

WILSON  
Did the Japanese have these kind of  
problems with lysine?

ANDREAS  
(to Whitacre)  
I don't give a shit about the  
Japanese. You just gotta get the  
Goddamn lysine bugs to eat the  
dextrose and shit us out some  
money.

WHITACRE  
We're still having problems with  
this virus.

ANDREAS  
I don't want to hear about the  
virus anymore. Terry, how much are  
we losing a month?

WILSON  
We are down like seven million per.

ANDREAS  
That's not gonna fly much longer.  
You want to go in there next month  
and tell my father we're sucking  
hind tit on this? I sure don't.  
We're number 44 on the Fortune 500  
list, Mark. I don't want this  
turning us into number 45.

He gives Whitacre a we're-done-fucking-around glare.

ANDREAS  
Fix it.

EXTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION - EVENING

Warm light radiates from a large home with tall white columns.

A PORTRAIT OF THE WHITACRE FAMILY

On the mantle. Whitacre, his wife and their three children.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**

**You feed a chicken a diet of corn  
and it gets sick -- like what  
happened to the first settlers.  
Pellagra disease. Niacin  
deficiency -- gave them all sorts  
of problems -- dermatitis, ataxia  
and even dementia.**

INTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION DINING ROOM - EVENING

Whitacre stares at an EAR OF CORN on his dinner plate. His wife GINGER, 33, slices up Alexander's dinner -- a CHICKEN BREAST. Whitacre is lost in thought. His focus shifting from corn to chicken and back again.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**

**But you feed a chicken corn and  
lysine and it goes from egg to  
supermarket fryer to in six months  
instead of eight.**

Ginger stares at Mark. He's miles away in his head.

GINGER

Mark? Where are you?

WHITACRE

You look great.

GINGER

They got the first wall of the stables up today. You see that?

WHITACRE

They're doing a new thing in hydroponics. They're now feeding lysine to jumbo shrimp. Can you imagine that? You're a jumbo shrimp and one day some corn goes floating by. What do you think about that? Weird, right?

Alexander smiles.

WHITACRE

You know, there's an opening down in the plant in Mexico -- they might need me to go down and set some stuff up. What do you think about Mexico?

ALEXANDER

I thought we were getting horses.

EXTERIOR ADM - MORNING

Grey smoke pumps into a grey sky.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

Toro. That's what Spanish bullfighters say. But it's also what the Japanese call the high-end tuna sushi. Toro. Raw fish.

INTERIOR ADM - CONTINUOUS

The trading floor is bustling.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

Who went first on that? The guy without the grill.

Soy and corn futures from around the world are displayed on a tote board. Numbers tick up and down.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

I've been to Tokyo. They sell little girl underwear in the vending machines right on the main drag -- the Ginza, or whatever.

INTERIOR WHITACRE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre frowns as he pours over the lysine results -- more red.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

Guys in suits buying used girl panties. How is that okay? That's not okay.

His secretary buzzes him on the intercom. Whitacre picks up.

WHITACRE

Yeah?

LIZ TAYLOR

(on the intercom)

There's a Mr. Nakawara calling from the Ajinomoto Corporation. He says you know him and he needs to speak with you.

WHITACRE

Put him through.

Whitacre picks up the phone. Gets to work.

INTERIOR MICK ANDREAS' OFFICE ADM - LATER

Mick Andreas sits at his desk. Whitacre paces -- very wound up.

WHITACRE

It's the Japanese. There's this guy, Nakawara. He works at Ajinomoto. He was here a couple weeks ago. You met him. Now I've been talking to him on the phone-- sometimes at work, sometimes at home because of the time difference. Mick, this guy knew everything. Everything. He says to me, "You know the total nightmare you had during May, June, July?" Before I can ask him what he means he goes, "Those months when ADM was losing about seven million dollars a month in the lysine business?"

Whitacre stares at Andreas in shock -- no one outside the company should know that. Andreas is stone faced.

WHITACRE

Mick, I couldn't believe it. He goes on to tell me that one of our highest paid employees is actually an employee of Ajinomoto who is sabotaging the plant. They're injecting a virus into the dextrose and contaminating the whole deal. That's the problem. I'll tell you Mick, it's like Rising Sun, that Crichton novel, it's just like it. So I go, why are you talking to me about this and you know what he says...

ANDREAS

Yeah, I know what he says. How much does he want?

WHITACRE

Ten million dollars. Ten million.  
But that gives you the identity of  
the saboteur, the secret identity,  
and a new lysine bug that is immune  
to the virus. We have the plant up  
and running in three days.

Andreas pauses, takes it all in, and then...

ANDREAS

How well do you know this guy?

WHITACRE

I met him when he was here. We've  
spoken on the phone a half dozen  
times.

ANDREAS

So, not very well.

WHITACRE

Very well? No, I wouldn't say that.

Andreas ponders the situation.

ANDREAS

Okay, if you hear from him again --  
talk him down on the price. I want  
you to find out the least amount of  
money he'd settle for. If we can  
get a bug that's resistant to the  
virus, this might be worth it. But,  
I want you to keep this secret, if  
there is a mole, we don't want him  
to know we're onto him.

WHITACRE

Absolutely.

EXTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION - EVENING

Whitacre stands with a cocktail in the fading light, looking  
at the foundation for the NEW HORSE STABLES being built  
across the road from the main house. On all sides of the  
house -- more cornfields. Not another home in sight.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

This'd be a great place for some  
outlet stores...People would come  
from all over southern Illinois and  
probably Missouri, too. Famous  
name brand labels and appliances at  
savings of up to fifty per cent  
every day. Maybe a food court with  
a Mexican place.

Whitacre looks at a swarm of insects around the lone street light.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**  
**The birds eat the bugs, the cars**  
**eat the birds, the rust eats the**  
**cars and the new construction eats**  
**the rust...**

Ginger interrupts Whitacre's grand plan from across the street...

**GINGER**  
Corky, Alexander says there's a bat  
in his room.

INTERIOR ADM - MICK ANDREAS' OFFICE

Whitacre shakes his head in disbelief. He paces nervously. Stunned by the news.

**WHITACRE**  
The FBI! God, no.

Andreas and MARK CHEVIRON, 38, tell Whitacre of his upcoming FBI interview. Cheviron is a barrel chested, linebacker of a man. A former Decatur cop, who is now ADM's version of a bouncer.

**WHITACRE**  
I thought you wanted me to talk him  
down on the price. That's what you  
told me to do and I was doing it.

**ANDREAS**  
We're not gonna sit back and let  
the Japanese fuck us sideways on  
this.

**WHITACRE**  
(off Cheviron)  
I just don't understand -- we  
weren't going to mention it and now  
he's in on it?

**ANDREAS**  
Of course he's in on it. If it's a  
mole then it's a security issue.

**CHEVIRON**  
I'll be sitting in with the FBI.

**WHITACRE**  
I already told you everything there  
is to tell. What is the point?

Cheviron is annoyed by Whitacre's histrionics.

CHEVIRON

We don't like the idea of talking to the FBI any more than you do. They're just going to tape the guy's calls -- and ask you a few questions. No big deal.

Whitacre shakes his head, even more upset.

WHITACRE

Questions? Jesus.

Whitacre storms out.

ANDREAS

Mark.

INTERIOR WHITACRE KITCHEN - DAY

Ginger talks on the phone, surrounded by full grocery bags. She remains calm and firm -- never a hair out of place.

GINGER

The FBI? Why do you have to talk to the FBI? It's their plant. Just let them talk to the FBI.

INTERIOR WHITACRE'S OFFICE - INTERCUT

Whitacre is on the phone -- pacing like a caged animal.

WHITACRE

I'm really uncomfortable with this. There are some things going on here.

INTERIOR KITCHEN/WHITACRE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ginger looks uneasy. This isn't like him to be so upset.

GINGER

What does that mean, "things?"

WHITACRE (O.S.)

It just means we have to be careful.

GINGER

Whatever you do, Corky, no matter what's going on, just be honest with them and tell the truth. Okay?

INTERIOR ADM CONFERENCE ROOM - EVENING

FBI SPECIAL AGENT BRIAN SHEPARD, 43, sits with Cheviron and a very anxious Mark Whitacre. Shepard wears a rumpled dark suit and tie from the days when Jay Edgar Hoover set the dress code.

Whitacre shifts restlessly in his seat. Cheviron on the other hand is an old hand at this. He watches Whitacre closely -- all poker faced.

WHITACRE

He told me he wanted his payments wired into a numbered account in Switzerland and then also in the Caribbean.

Shepard writes down everything.

SHEPARD

And when did you last have contact with him?

WHITACRE

Two days ago. But I think he's getting suspicious. I've been dragging this thing along. I think if we don't make a move. I mean, he could already have backed down here.

SHEPARD

And these calls, they've been coming in on your home line?

Whitacre looks at Cheviron -- there's clearly a right and a wrong answer here.

WHITACRE

I have an ADM line at my house -- a business line -- they've been coming in on the business line.

WHITACRE'S POV

Drifting from Shepard's face to his ADAM'S APPLE. The knot of his FBI TIE bobs up and down as he speaks.

SHEPARD  
(under)  
Well, we need to start by putting a recording device on your phone. We should make arrangements to do that as soon as possible. We also need a list of everyone in the bioproducts division to see if we can see who's operating on the inside. We'll want phone records, employment histories and any other background checks that ADM may have...

WHITACRE (V.O.)  
(over)  
There's a sale at Bacarach's. They have those Oscar de la Renta ties that nobody buys-- what are they two for one for another week? Diagonal bands of color hanging around your neck. They never put the nice Brioni ties on sale. I should just get all my ties in Paris, wear them once or twice, and shove them in a duty free bag. Nobody gets stopped at customs for ties.

CHEVIRON  
I can help with that.

WHITACRE  
So, that's it then. I can go?

Shepard hands Whitacre his card. They shake hands.

SHEPARD  
I'd like to come out tomorrow and get on that phone.

WHITACRE  
No problem. Thank you for your time.

INTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

Whitacre comes in from a long day at work. Ginger walks in from the kitchen. She gives him a welcome home hug -- but he doesn't let go -- holding on like a man caught in the current.

GINGER  
You told them the truth, Mark.  
That's all you can do.

WHITACRE  
I never even had the chance.

She slips from his arms -- disappointed.

WHITACRE  
They were watching me the whole time. Cheviron was in the room.

Ginger eyes him disdainfully. Off her disappointment, he heads upstairs to bed.

INTERIOR ADM HEADQUARTERS - MORNING

Whitacre walks through the office.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

Mick Andreas gets born with the Vice President of the United States as his Godfather. He goes to Richard Nixon's house for Thanksgiving. It's not like his parents died in a car accident when he was three and he ended up in an orphanage.

His secretary walks over with two message slips.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

Mick's dad wrote a check to the Nixon campaign and it wound up in the bank account of the Watergate burglars. Did he admit it? I don't think so. Besides, ADM probably owns the FBI. They probably wanted me to buy Dwayne's old house when I took this job because they've got it wired like in a Chrichton novel.

INTERIOR WHITACRE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Liz hands him the messages.

LIZ TAYLOR

Marty Allison called and Sid Hulse wants to know if you can have dinner at seven instead of seven thirty.

INTERIOR COUNTRY CLUB OF DECATUR - NIGHT

Whitacre and a very dolled-up Ginger dine with SID HULSE, 35, the used car version of a lysine salesman. Bow-tied wait staff patrol the diners with pitchers of ice water.

Sid and Ginger chit-chat -- Mark is distracted by his shrimp cocktail.

ANGLE ON A SHRIMP COCKTAIL

Jumbo shrimp on shaved ice.

SID HULSE

Great earrings Ginger -- I bet you can see those shining from space.

GINGER  
(off her earrings)  
Mark got them abroad. I can't  
remember where.

SID HULSE  
Nigeria?

Whitacre shoots him a look.

WHITACRE  
Not funny, Sid.

SID HULSE  
You're telling me.

Sid laughs. Ginger doesn't get the joke.

WHITACRE  
So, Sid, you're off tomorrow? Where  
to?

ANGLE ON WHITACRE'S HAND UNDER THE TABLE

He covertly slides a business card into Ginger's hand.

GINGER'S POV OF THE CARD

On the back is scribbled, "**The FBI is coming at 10 PM.**"

SID HULSE  
West coast swing -- I gotta get out  
there and kick some Japanese butt.  
So, I'm not gonna see you for a  
couple weeks. Maybe longer if I  
get lost in the Ginza.

She's still digesting what's on the card -- trying to act  
natural.

GINGER  
Have a great trip, Sid.

INTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION - LATER

Alexander is sleeping. He stirs when he hears Ginger and  
Whitacre whispering in the living room.

GINGER (O.S.)  
Just tell them everything. We'll  
leave. I don't like what this  
company is doing to you. This is a  
chance to start somewhere new.  
Remember you said Mexico.

INTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION LIVINGROOM - CONTINUOUS

They sit next to each other in the dark.

WHITACRE  
I may tell them at some point, but  
not now. Now I've got to toe the  
company line.

GINGER  
Mark, if you don't tell them I  
will.

Her face is a mask of determination.

Behind them the drapes are illuminated by headlights in the  
drive. Whitacre is desperate.

WHITACRE  
I can't. Not now.

The doorbell rings. Whitacre opens the door to reveal Agent  
Shepard.

WHITACRE  
Hello. Please come in. Agent  
Shepard, my wife, Ginger.

SHEPARD  
Ma'am. I know it's late. I'll be  
out of your hair in a minute.

WHITACRE  
Great.  
(then, to Ginger)  
Maybe a cup of coffee for Agent  
Shepard?

GINGER  
Okay.

She watches them over her shoulder as she heads to the  
kitchen.

INTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION - MARK'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

SHEPARD  
Just show me where the line in  
question is.

WHITACRE  
It's that one over there.

Shepard gets to work. Whitacre watches.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

There should be a TV show about a guy who calls home one day and he's there -- he answers. He's talking to himself only it's someone else. He's somehow divided into two and the second one of him drives away. And the rest of the show is about him trying to find the guy.

EXTERIOR WHITACRE PORCH - NIGHT

Whitacre walks Shepard to the door where Ginger is waiting.

SHEPARD

I'll give you a call tomorrow. We can test it out.

WHITACRE

Great. Great, thank you for coming by.

SHEPARD

Good night. Good night, Mrs. Whitacre.

Shepard walks toward his car. Ginger and Mark linger.

GINGER

(to her husband)

Are you going to say something or am I?

Ginger pushes past him.

GINGER

Brian?

Shepard stops. Whitacre has no choice.

WHITACRE

You got a minute?

Whitacre walks past his wife toward the car. Ginger squeezes his hand as he passes her on the steps.

WHITACRE

(whispering)

Can I talk to you in the car?

SHEPARD

Sure.

They get in the car.

Satisfied, Ginger closes the front door.

INTERIOR SHEPARD'S CAR - NIGHT

The two men speak in the dome light of Shepard's Dodge Dynasty.

SHEPARD  
We could go back inside if you want.

WHITACRE  
They might have it bugged. We're safer out here.

Shepard is confused.

SHEPARD  
Bugged? What? Who? Us?

Whitacre is ready to spill. He looks at the house -- knows Ginger is watching.

WHITACRE  
There are things I know. If I decide to tell you, could I be prosecuted?

SHEPARD  
I cannot provide you with immunity, but any information you tell me about your involvement in criminal activity would be discussed in a favorable light with the US attorney's office.

Beat.

WHITACRE  
Okay. Everything I told you yesterday about Nakawara was true -- except one thing. He never called me on my business line.

Shepard looks at Whitacre -- he's confused.

SHEPARD  
Why did you tell me that he did?

WHITACRE  
Before I spoke with you yesterday I was coached by the guys at ADM to tell you that he called me on my business line and not my home line.

SHEPARD  
Why?

It's too late to turn back.

WHITACRE

What I'm about to tell you involves something very large. This Nakawara extortion thing is nothing compared to it, nothing at all. This involves price fixing in the lysine business...

Shepard gets out his notebook. Fires up his pen.

WHITACRE

I've been in several meetings with our Japanese and Korean competitors in the past few months where the sole purpose was to fix the prices. ADM made me go to these meetings.

Shepard writes furiously, struggling to see in the dark. Most of it goes over his head.

WHITACRE

That's why they wanted me to lie. Because the Nakawara calls came in on my home line. But, so do the calls from the people we're fixing prices with. They didn't want you to hear those conversations so they instructed me to tell you that the Nakawara calls came in on my ADM line. But, see I realized once you guys started digging around in the records you'd see that I have all these calls to Japan. And that's what scared me. Nobody's got more calls than me. If you ever figured out about the price fixing, I'd be the fall guy.

Shepard considers the explanation.

SHEPARD

Who told you to participate in these price fixing talks?

Whitacre takes a deep breath -- lets the cat out of the bag.

WHITACRE

I'm operating under the direction of Mick and Dwayne Andreas.

EXTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION DRIVEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Whitacre watches from the front door as Shepard turns on his headlights.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

He seems like a real good guy. I hope he doesn't mind me calling him "Brian" instead of "Agent Shepard." I might even try "Bri" out. This must be very different for him. Talking to a guy like me instead of a bank robber or a drug dealer.

Whitacre waves as Shepard drives away.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

I could see us fishing or whatever. What a good listener -- you don't meet one of those every day.

INTERIOR ADM - THE NEXT MORNING

Whitacre tries to look natural as he walks to his office, his first day as a whistle blower. No sooner does he take his seat than Cheviron appears.

CHEVIRON

Morning. What happened last night?

WHITACRE

What do you mean? Nothing. They put a recorder on the phone.

CHEVIRON

That's it?

WHITACRE

Well, yeah. He said when Nakawara calls, I just flip a switch and record the conversation.

Whitacre gets buzzed by his secretary. He answers.

WHITACRE

Put her through.

CHEVIRON

Make sure you do it. They have ways of checking up.

WHITACRE

Sure thing.

Whitacre picks up the call and the big bully goes away.

WHITACRE

Hi, hon.

We hear Ginger very excited on the other end of the phone.

WHITACRE

What?! Slow down honey, slow...  
What?!

Whitacre writes down the name "REGINA" on a slip of paper.

INTERIOR FBI - SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS - MORNING

SUPER: SPRINGFIELD, IL

A small conference room with a view of the Illinois Capital Building. Shepard briefs AGENT DEAN PAISLEY and AGENT KATE MEDFORD. He searches his large pile of notes for the most shocking of last night's revelations. Medford eats her morning yogurt.

SHEPARD

....a pound of bacon, a peanut butter sandwich, some vitamins-- anything that ADM has a hand in -- it's all fixed, that's what he's telling me. Basically, everyone in this country is the victim of corporate crime by the time they finish breakfast.

INTERIOR ADM HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre is headed down the hall with a full head of steam.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

You think the automobile companies can't make a car tomorrow that gets a hundred miles to the gallon? You think the TV networks don't know who's gonna win the World Series before the season starts? Paranoid is what people who are trying to take advantage call you in an effort to get you to drop your guard. I read that the other day in an in-flight magazine.

INTERIOR FBI SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS - CONTINUOUS

SHEPARD

One potential problem I see moving ahead with ADM is this guy Cheviron. He wants to be kept in the loop on everything we're doing.

PAISLEY

I want to meet Mark Whitacre.

INTERIOR ADM - CHEVIRON'S OFFICE - DAY

About a third the size of Whitacre's office with a view of the loading dock. Whitacre BURSTS in -- fuming.

WHITACRE

You told me they were only going to tap one line! One line!

CHEVIRON

They are only monitoring one line.

WHITACRE

That is not true. That is absolutely not true. I just got off the phone with my wife and some woman named Regina from the phone company called her saying that both our lines are tapped. My home phone!

Cheviron is sick of Whitacre's antics. He doesn't believe a word of it. He gets in his face.

CHEVIRON

Come on, Mark, the phone company doesn't call people and say, "Hello. We just wanted to let you know that the FBI is tapping your phone lines."

WHITACRE

Then why would Regina say that?

CHEVIRON

She didn't say it, you're saying it.

WHITACRE

Call my wife. Call Regina.

Cheviron's tone becomes condescending -- like he's talking to a sick person.

CHEVIRON

Fine, Mark. I will.

WHITACRE

Good.

Whitacre storms out.

ANGLE ON WHITACRE

Walking away -- satisfied -- he passes A SECRETARY wearing a WOOL TURTLENECK.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

I don't like wool on skin. Not even that merino wool they have at Marshall Field in Chicago. Ginger likes it, cuz it's form fitting, but she likes avocados and who wants that texture in their mouth? Who would make up someone named Regina? It's the capital of Saskatchewan.

INTERIOR FBI DECATUR - DAY

On the third floor of some mid-70's default architecture in the heart of downtown Decatur, Brian Shepard sits in an office big enough for himself, a small evidence safe, a picture of his family and the flag. Out the window the stacks of ADM send up great white plumes. Shepard is boning up on anti-trust law when the phone rings.

SHEPARD

FBI. Shepard.

CHEVIRON (O.S.)

Hello. Brian, it's Mark Cheviron at ADM.

SHEPARD

Yeah, Mark.

CHEVIRON (O.S.)

I was talking to you guys a couple of days ago about which of the lines at Mark Whitacre's house you were would be monitoring and we had agreed it would only be the business line. So, that's all you did right?

Beat.

SHEPARD

I really can't answer that.

CHEVIRON

Okay. Thank you.

INTERIOR ADM WHITACRE'S OFFICE - LATER

Whitacre stares out through the glass walls drinking a COKE. Mick Andreas and Cheviron march into Whitacre's office on a mission.

ANDREAS

We've decided that we're not going to be cooperating with any further FBI requests.

Whitacre is outraged. He turns on Cheviron.

WHITACRE

I knew it! I knew it! I told you, but you wouldn't listen. You said just the office line, Mark.

Cheviron has to eat shit here in front of Andreas.

CHEVIRON

Evidently, they were lying to us, too.

WHITACRE

Evidently, you can't keep track of what the FBI is doing.

The phone buzzes.

LIZ TAYLOR

(on intercom)

The call you were expecting, Mark.

Whitacre pauses, then...

WHITACRE

(on intercom)

Well, put him through.

(to the others)

It's a Swedish deal I'm working on.

Whitacre picks up the phone. It's not Sweden.

WHITACRE

Mark Whitacre.

SHEPARD (O.S.)

Hey, Mark, it's Brian Shepard.

Andreas and Cheviron continue.

CHEVIRON

I told Shepard we're done working with them as of now.

WHITACRE

(over the phone)

Hi. So, it's good to hear from you.

Whitacre shifts uncomfortably and tries to cover in front of Mick and Cheviron -- he puts on a phony cheerful voice.

SHEPARD (O.S.)

I'd like to bring my Supervisor by to meet you. This weekend be okay?

WHITACRE

Well, great. So, uh, Mr. Andreas is in my office right now. So, uh, I'll talk to you later.

Whitacre hangs up and looks to Mick.

WHITACRE

Now what do I do if this Shepard guy calls?

ANDREAS

You let me know and I'll tell my dad. But, you're done talking to them.

WHITACRE

Absolutely.

EXTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION LAWN - DAY

Ginger walk across the lawn with Alexander and BILLY.

GINGER

Okay. I'm going to go over the rules. No running, no pushing, no horseplay by the pool. When you've fished all the leaves out, go into the garage and get the cover for the pool. And I'm going to go get your dad when he's done. He's gonna come and do an inspection.

ALEXANDER

You already told us this.

GINGER

Well, I'm going over it again.

INTERIOR WHITACRE'S GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre walks through his six car garage. He passes a Range Rover, a Ferrari, a Mercedes Coupe, a BMW, and a Lincoln Town Car.

INTERIOR WHITACRE'S BARN - MOMENTS LATER

A large open room looking more like a theme restaurant than anything that might have once involved agriculture. Ping pong and foosball tables and a console TV.

Across a pool table, Whitacre talks with FBI agents Shepard and Paisley.

WHITACRE

Now, what is the scoop with all my phones being tapped?

PAISLEY

The only listening device was the recorder, Mark.

SHEPARD

We had a trap and trace device on your home line -- but we can't listen in with that.

PAISLEY

However, the phone company calling your wife and telling them about our intel gathering, well, my face is red on that one. Shouldn't happen.

SHEPARD

Did you bring the expense reports we talked about?

Whitacre gives them a folder of paperwork.

WHITACRE

Yeah. This is Mexico City, Paris, Hong Kong, Tokyo. There was a Corn Refiners Association meeting in Florida last week-- Mick and Terry went to that one. They did the regular meeting during the day, and then at night they'd get together with our competitors and work out how to fix the prices. Now you just watch-- in about six months, the price of a liter of soda pop is going to be about five cents more.

SHEPARD

When's the next meeting?

WHITACRE

Uh, January. Somewhere in Asia.

Paisley takes it all in. He sizes up Whitacre.

AGENT PAISLEY

Mark, I gotta ask you, why are you doing this? We know you lied to us about the phone line and you're afraid of that.

(MORE)

AGENT PAISLEY (cont'd)  
But, now you're telling us all this  
other stuff out of the blue. I  
gotta ask you why.

Whitacre weighs the question.

WHITACRE  
Well, cuz things are going on I  
don't approve of. I'm a biochemist.  
I'm a technical guy. They pulled me  
into the business side and suddenly  
I find out all these things are  
going on that are illegal. You  
know, if I want to grow with ADM I  
got to learn the business side.  
And suddenly they're making me lie  
to people. I lie to you.

He gestures toward Shepard.

WHITACRE  
I mean, I feel real bad about that.

SHEPARD  
You look at yourself as wearing a  
white hat and they're wearing black  
hats.

WHITACRE  
Yeah. Absolutely. Something like  
that. You know, when I was a kid my  
folks died in an automobile  
accident. I was maybe six years  
old and a wealthy man from Ohio  
adopted me. The guy owned  
amusement parks and he did very  
well for himself. I got a big break  
there, a real big break. I went to  
a good school and all. Now I  
adopted two kids of my own. I'm  
trying to do the right thing here.

PAISLEY  
Well, Mark, do you think you'd be  
willing to go a few steps further  
in helping us?

WHITACRE  
What does that mean?

Whitacre considers the request -- it's a chance to be a hero,  
but why should he clean up the free market?

SHEPARD  
Would you be willing to wear a  
wire? We don't have any other  
sources at this time. We need your  
help.

PAISLEY

We'll be there with you all the way, but it won't be easy.

He looks around at the good life Whitacre has amassed -- the family, the pool, the house, the cars. A lot to put on the line.

SHEPARD

I'll use my beeper to signal you when it's time to set up a meeting. When you hear this...

Shepard gets out his beeper and hits a button -- "BEEEEP."

SHEPARD

You call me.

Whitacre takes the wire. You're only a White Knight if you'll carry a sword.

INTERIOR FBI, DECATUR - DAY

Shepard sits in the small office with another agent assigned to the case -- BOB HERNDON, 33. If Shepard looks like he stepped out of Dragnet, then Herndon looks like he stepped out of GQ. He's younger, more polished, and hasn't spent his entire career in Decatur.

SHEPARD

He's watched closely at work and there's reason to believe that ADM has bugged his home. He's under a great deal of pressure. You gotta feel for the guy. He tells us the truth one day and wakes up the next with two lives instead of one.

HERNDON

Well, the good news is he decided to wake up and tell the truth.

INTERIOR BEST WESTERN HOTEL - EVENING

Whitacre stands in the lobby watching GUESTS use the indoor pool.

WHITACRE'S POV OF THE POOL

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**

**There are these butterflies in Central America.**

(MORE)

WHITACRE (V.O.) (cont'd)  
They're blue and orange and yellow  
and have poison in their wings,  
just enough to stop a bird heart.  
But the birds know this somehow, so  
they don't eat them. But there are  
other ones, butterflies, they're  
orange, blue and yellow too but no  
poison wings. They're just flying  
around, looking dangerous, getting  
by on their looks.

Shepard enters wearing a TRENCH COAT.

SHEPARD  
Mark. You ready to make the call?

He walks to a bank of phones adjacent to the pool. Whitacre  
looks around.

WHITACRE  
We're gonna do it here?

SHEPARD  
We can't get a room, Mark. There's  
problems with that.

The door to the pool opens and A GROUP OF DRIPPING WET  
TEENAGERS run for the soft drink machine at the end of the  
hall.

WHITACRE  
I don't know. It just kinda seems,  
you know, awkward.

SHEPARD  
It's the best I can do right now.

Shepard takes a micro-cassette recorder out of his pocket  
with a small microphone that clips onto the phone. He  
demonstrates for Whitacre.

SHEPARD  
Just hold the microphone on the  
receiver. I'll hold the recorder.

Whitacre looks around -- not sure if this is a good idea. He  
holds the microphone to the mouthpiece as he talks.

WHITACRE (INTO PHONE)  
0-0-9-4-5-4-5-8-8-2-2. Mr.  
Yamamoto, please.

SHEPARD  
(whispering)  
No, put it on the receiver.

Whitacre looks confused.

WHITACRE

I have it on the receiver.

SHEPARD

On the receiver. Where you hear.

Finally getting it, Whitacre moves the mic.

WHITACRE

I'm on hold.

Shepard waves him off as he pushes the record button.

WHITACRE

Hello, Mr. Yamamoto. It is Mark Whitacre...Hi, sir. How are you?...No, I'm doing a lot of traveling this week. How are sales?...Certainly we need to, in terms of our big customers, definitely need to be thinking about a good price, yes?

Shepard tries to read the response on Whitacre's face. What does it all mean? Whitacre nods.

EXTERIOR BEST WESTERN PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Whitacre and Shepard are jubilant.

WHITACRE

"It's better to maintain a price of \$2.50 in other countries and \$1.05 in the U.S." Just like that. There it is: price fixing.

SHEPARD

Well, this is great, Mark. This verifies everything you've been saying.

WHITACRE

Yeah.

SHEPARD

Thank you. Thank you so much.

WHITACRE

Absolutely.

They shake hands and go their separate ways. Shepard to his Dodge Dynasty, Whitacre to yet another high end vehicle.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**

**I like an indoor pool. Year round usage.**

(MORE)

WHITACRE (V.O.) (cont'd)  
**I like the steam off it in the  
winter. Very mysterious that  
steam.**

INTERIOR DECATUR CLUB - DAY

Whitacre eats lunch with MARTY ALLISON, 35.

WHITACRE  
Marty, when you started work at  
ADM, how much money did you want?

MARTY ALLISON  
I wanted fifty grand.

WHITACRE  
But, I went and told Terry, we  
can't get this guy for less than  
seventy-five. I got it for you. You  
were the first person I hired.

MARTY ALLISON  
I know, Mark. You've always been  
really generous with me. I  
appreciate it.

WHITACRE  
Here's what I want you to do. I  
want you to write down a name.

Marty takes out a note pad.

MARTY ALLISON  
Okay. What's the name?

WHITACRE  
Nordkron Chemie.

MARTY ALLISON  
What is that, like a Nigerian name  
or something?

Marty writes it down.

EXTERIOR ST. LOUIS STREET - DAY

Whitacre drives through snowy streets, the Gateway Arch in  
the distance.

WHITACRE (V.O.)  
**I like my hands. I think they're  
probably my favorite part of my  
body. I think that can be used to  
my advantage in social situations.**  
(MORE)

WHITACRE (V.O.) (cont'd)  
**If I can get people focused on my  
hands then I can get a good result  
in the meeting. Eye contact is  
real important, too.**

INTERIOR ANHEUSER BUSCH LOBBY - ST. LOUIS - DAY

Whitacre enters with Andreas and Wilson.

WHITACRE  
I'm gonna check messages before we  
get started.

The other men keep walking. Whitacre dials his cell phone.

VOICEMAIL  
You have one message.

Over the phone we hear the next message. Shepard's beeping  
signal. Whitacre deletes it and hangs up.

BY THE RECEPTION DESK

Andreas and Wilson wait for the elevator.

WHITACRE  
Sorry, guys. My phone died. I was  
on with the plant.  
(to the receptionist)  
Is there a pay phone?

RECEPTIONIST  
Across the lobby.

TERRY WILSON  
Come on, Mark. This is important  
bioproduct stuff we're discussing  
over here.

Whitacre rushes off.

INTERIOR ANHEUSER BUSCH PAY PHONES - MOMENTS LATER

Whitacre stands alone at a pay phone.

SHEPARD (O.S.)  
FBI.

WHITACRE  
(into phone)  
Hey, it's Mark. I told you I am out  
of town on business this week.

SHEPARD (O.S.)

The case is getting some attention from the Bureau, Mark. There's another agent working with me now.

WHITACRE

Look, I can't talk right now. I have a meeting. I have people waiting for me. Bye.

Whitacre hangs up abruptly and jogs toward the elevators to join the others.

WHITACRE

OK, we're all set now. Wait for me.

INTERIOR ADM - DAY

Whitacre clips some papers together as he walks across the office.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

Being able to do two things at one is a big part of success. I try to do abdominal exercises, isometrics, even when I'm at a meeting. Tensing. Holding. Then releasing. I'll floss in the shower while the conditioner is in my hair during the part when you just supposed to leave it in. Those things can really add up to a significant time savings.

INTERIOR KIRK SCHMIDT'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre enters.

WHITACRE

Hey, Kirk, I'm gonna be heading off to Europe and I was thinking I could just hand deliver that check for the ABP deal in person.

SCHMIDT

Remind me, ABP deal?

Whitacre hands him some papers.

WHITACRE

It's a threonine microbe, they've made some substantial improvements. We just want to get into the market. That's the invoice.

SCHMIDT  
We'll just overnight it.

WHITACRE  
No, no. I'm gonna see this  
Thorstensson guy so I'll just hand  
it to him.

EXTERIOR SAVOY BAUR EN VILLE, ZURICH - DAY

SUPER: ZURICH

Whitacre emerges from the elegant hotel and heads down the crowded Bahnhofstrasse.

WHITACRE (V.O.)  
The metric system never panned out.  
We all had our rulers with inches  
on one edge and centimeters on the  
other. I pronounced it  
"centimytters" instead of  
"centimeeters" and nobody ever  
corrected me. They just let me  
walk around stupid...

INTERIOR OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre walks across the large lobby.

WHITACRE (V.O.)  
...So I'm not really upset we never  
crossed over, although it's helpful  
to know the conversions when I go  
to Europe. The liter bottle is the  
only thing that ever caught on,  
because it's a nicer word, "liter"  
than "quart." Quart. Quart.

Whitacre enters an office. He shakes hands with a businessman who greets him warmly -- THORSTENSSON. They vanish behind closed doors.

INTERIOR MEXICO CITY AIRPORT/ FBI OFFICE - DECATUR - DAY

Whitacre checks his messages from a PAY PHONE in the Admiral's Club in the International Terminal.

MARTY ALLISON (O.S.)  
Hey, Mark it's Marty calling again  
and...

Mark punches a button.

COMPUTER VOICE  
Message deleted...Next message.

SFX: BEEEEEP.

Whitacre dials the phone angrily. Makes a new call.

The other end rings. Intercut with Agent Shepard in his office.

SHEPARD  
FBI. Agent Shepard.

WHITACRE  
Brian, It's Mark. Look -- it's been hard for me to return a page as I am out of the country at the moment.

SHEPARD  
We need to know if you had any further contact with Nakawara.

WHITACRE  
I told you already that the guy stopped calling.

SHEPARD  
Well, what about the price fixing? Have you been able to make any more tapes?

WHITACRE  
(lowering his voice)  
I think you guys hanging around has everybody scared straight. The word is we're doing everything by the book from now on. Mick said it's over. No more price fixing.

Shepard is confused.

SHEPARD  
What? When did this happen? This conversation.

WHITACRE  
Everything has changed. I got lysine up and running. The virus is gone. Mick brought me into his office, he sat me down, he said, "Whitacre, from now on we're doing things your way."

SHEPARD

Mark, the FBI knows about the crimes -- we're gonna investigate either way.

WHITACRE

Either way? What does "either way" mean?

SHEPARD

We really need to get together.

Both Shepard and Whitacre are losing their patience.

WHITACRE

It's a different approach there now. I'm telling you. Everything's changed. My plane is boarding. I got to go. I got to go!

Whitacre hangs up -- frustrated.

He walks over to a table in the club where a middle aged German man is waiting -- REINHART RICHTER, 40. Papers are spread around the men -- stacks of loss, gain and opportunity.

RICHTER

Everything OK?

WHITACRE

Yeah, fine. Kids. Das kinder.

RICHTER

Die kinder.

WHITACRE

Where were we?

RICHTER

We were discussing bonuses.

WHITACRE

And we should be discussing Ferraris.

Whitacre shifts in his seat, exposing ink on his shirt pocket. His pen has exploded leaving a Rorschach across his chest. Richter gestures toward the stain.

RICHTER

Fullfederhaltertinte.

Whitacre looks confused.

RICHTER

You have fullfederhaltertinte all  
over your shirt.

Over the rest of their conversation...

WHITACRE (V.O.)

One of the Japanese guys told me a  
story. This lysine salesman is in a  
meeting with someone from ConAgra  
or some other company. The client  
leans forward and says, "I have the  
same tie as you, only the pattern  
is reversed." Then he drops dead,  
face down on the table. Alive --  
and then -- dead. Brain aneurysm...

Mark rubs at the ink stain.

INTERIOR ECONO LODGE, DECATUR - EVENING

Shepard and Herndon are waiting in the most generic of hotel  
rooms for Whitacre. They check their watches and peak out  
the drapes at a sparsely populated parking lot. Herndon eats  
a Granola bar and reads the side of the package.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

...Maybe everyone has a sentence  
like that; a little time bomb..."I  
have the same tie as you...only the  
pattern's reversed." Dead. The  
last thing they'll ever say.  
Something like...

HERNDON

"High Fructose Corn Syrup." There  
it is again.

Shepard isn't giving up on Whitacre, yet.

SHEPARD

He said Andreas called him into a  
marketing meeting. He might be  
late.

HERNDON

If he doesn't show, the government  
will charge him for the room.

The ROOM PHONE rings. Shepard sighs.

SHEPARD

And here it comes.

He answers the phone.

SHEPARD

Shepard.

EXTERIOR WHITACRE BMW - INTERCUT

Whitacre sits in his BMW on the CAR PHONE in the Econo Lodge parking lot, staring up at the lights of a room.

WHITACRE

I can't come to the hotel tonight.  
I'm still at work.

SHEPARD

Mark, this is the third time.

WHITACRE

I have to go. I have work to do.

SHEPARD

Mark, You can't keep cancelling.

WHITACRE

I can't live two lives. They just gave me a hundred thousand dollar raise. I'm not gonna lose my job because of you guys. I have a family. I'm building stables across the road.

SHEPARD

But, you told us...

WHITACRE

The price fixing is over. It's over.

Whitacre pretends he is in his office to further his case.

WHITACRE

(pretending)

Hey, Mick. I'm getting off the phone now.

SHEPARD

Mark, listen to me, the only logical thing for you to do is cooperate.

WHITACRE

And what happens if I don't?

SHEPARD

Then somebody else will and you'll end up being a defendant.

WHITACRE

The tapes don't say anything. It's over. Mick said. We have a whole new policy.

SHEPARD

Fine, if that's what he said, then I want to hear the tape. We need tapes, Mark.

A beat -- he finally admits it. The windows of the car are fogging him in.

WHITACRE

Okay, I never made any tapes. I never made any because there's not gonna be anything on the tapes because it's over, and they'd just be stupid tapes.

SHEPARD

Mark. Come on.

WHITACRE

You tell me how I can prove it to you and I will.

INTERIOR ECONO LODGE HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Whitacre sits on the bed with the straps of a polygraph across his torso. Herndon fits him with a blood pressure cuff and puts electrical clips on his fingers.

Herndon takes out a list of questions and watches Whitacre closely.

Shepard watches the needle on the polygraph.

Whitacre watches the POLYGRAPH EXPERT'S face -- looking for clues. He strains to see the needle on the machine. The read out showing a reassuringly straight line across the grid.

INTERIOR ECONO LODGE - HALLWAY

Shepard and Herndon step out of the room. The door closes and the agents look at each other.

INTERIOR ECONO LODGE HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre looks out the hotel room window at the snow. In the parking lot a high school kid drinks a beer while trying to write his name in urine in the snowbank.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

Mick Andreas and his Dad would never lie for me. They say we're in it together. What a joke. Team building off-site meetings at some lake in Wisconsin. I can't protect these guys if they're breaking the law. Hey, I tried. Anybody could see the choices I had. I did my best for ADM. You don't see them here in the chair.

Herndon and Shepard re-enter.

WHITACRE

Hey, how'd I do?

SHEPARD

Mark, we have some problems.

WHITACRE

Wait a minute, I was looking at the thing. The needle didn't even move.

SHEPARD

Mark, you don't know how to read a polygraph.

WHITACRE

Well first of all, they're not one hundred percent accurate. I've read that.

Herndon plays the bad cop.

HERNDON

Mark, you splattered the walls with ink. Come on now, extortionists don't just leave their name and number then go away.

Whitacre feels things closing in around him.

SHEPARD

I know it's tough keeping it all bottled up inside, keeping it a secret. But, there's only one good choice for you here. That's all there's ever been. There's something you're hiding, something you're not telling us. But, the only way to protect yourself is to be completely honest.

Nowhere to turn -- Herndon and Shepard have him cornered.

WHITACRE

Okay.

Shepard gets a fresh notebook from his briefcase.

SHEPARD

You realize this can all be used against you in a court of law. I'll have to write it all up and you'll have to sign it.

Whitacre nods grimly.

HERNDON

We're going to find out what's going on, Mark. You're not leaving this room until you tell us what's going on.

SHEPARD

So, before you answer any more questions, I want you to think about Ginger and your family and your career.

A beat.

HERNDON

What happened with Nakawara? Is there a mole?

WHITACRE

Well, I think there has definitely been a mole, before, at ADM.

Herndon stares at him in disbelief.

WHITACRE

I made it up.

HERNDON

Jesus, Mark!

WHITACRE

I had to.

Shepard and Herndon cringe on his behalf. Shepard transcribes the confession.

WHITACRE

...We've had problems at the plant with viruses, we're way behind our projections. Dwayne was thinking about shutting us down and everyone was looking at me to fix it. Let's just blame it all on Whitacre. That's how it is there.

(MORE)

WHITACRE (cont'd)  
We're talking about my job here. I came all the way over from Europe, relocated my family. They made me VP.

HERNDON  
And what about the price fixing? It isn't over is it? There's no "new attitude," right?

WHITACRE  
(defeated)  
There's been meetings all along -- in the past three weeks even. Nothing's changed. It's been going on as recently as three weeks ago. And it's not just lysine. It's citric, it's gluconate. There was a guy who left the company because he wouldn't do it, he was forced out. The gluconate guy. He's out of a job. I mean I met with the guys from Ajinomoto just last month. The whole point was to set volume levels. You set the volume levels, you determine what the market is and then you figure out workable prices. We got another meeting next month.

SHEPARD  
If there's anything else you want to add, now's the time.

WHITACRE  
What else is there?

EXTERIOR ADM - DAY

Whitacre walks toward the building. He is actually speaking out loud -- NOT IN VOICE OVER. To nobody...

WHITACRE  
Seven thirty A.M., Wednesday, March seventeenth, 1993. I have parked the car. I am approaching the entrance to the office.

INTERIOR ADM LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre opens the door and walks in.

WHITACRE  
Entrance breached.

Terry Wilson walks across the lobby.

WHITACRE

Terrance Wilson, President of our corn businesses. Did our friend from Japan call last night?

TERRY WILSON

No. He wasn't in.

INTERIOR ADM HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

The two men walk together across the open office area.

WHITACRE

Well, I spoke with Mimoto and he is pissed. He says that there won't be peace in lysine until we bring production down to the levels we promised.

TERRY WILSON

In '92 we did exactly what we told them we would do in terms of volume. Exactly. Now, no promise.

WHITACRE

He said he wants to talk to you.

TERRY WILSON

I'll be right there lookin' at him sayin', "listen here you little mousy motherfucker."

Wilson peels off into his office. Whitacre continues on. He speaks under his breath to nobody -- smiling at the world.

WHITACRE

That was Terry Wilson talking about setting volume and price levels with our Japanese competitor -- Ajinomoto Corporation. By the way, there was no discussion with Mimoto last night. That was all for illustration purposes only. I repeat -- no discussion with Mimoto.

Mark approaches his own office.

LIZ TAYLOR

Morning, Mark.

WHITACRE

Good morning, Liz Taylor, secretary.

EXTERIOR TOKYO - DAY

Establish shot of the Tokyo skyline.

INTERIOR IMPERIAL PALACE HOTEL (JAPAN)

Whitacre and Terry Wilson follow a Japanese businessman into a conference room.

SUPER: TOKYO

Whitacre bows and shakes hands with a group of ASIAN LYSINE EXECUTIVES.

INTERIOR HOTEL CONFERENCE ROOM (JAPAN) - MOMENTS LATER

Terry Wilson speaks with authority to the Asian executives.

TERRY WILSON

Before we even deal with Latin America, we have to agree that we are going to swap numbers. That's the only way this is going to work. Keep everyone on target. It's possible to do -- but we've got to be very careful. We need to check your phones.

Whitacre gets up.

WHITACRE

Excuse me. I need a comfort break.

He heads for the door.

INTERIOR HOTEL BATHROOM (JAPAN) - MOMENTS LATER

Whitacre checks under the stall doors to make sure he is alone.

He takes the recorder from his suit jacket and talks into it.

WHITACRE

Side two, tape one. Side two, tape one.

INTERIOR TOWN CAR (PARIS) - DAY

Whitacre smiles as he looks out the window at Paris.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**  
I've got well over two million  
frequent flier miles. I'm pretty  
much platinum across the board...

EXTERIOR AMERICAN EMBASSY (PARIS) - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre gets out of the car and walks calmly into the embassy.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**  
...I get a letter from the CEO  
every year thanking me. It's a  
form letter but it looks like he's  
really signing it. They probably  
walk in and he signs like a hundred  
while he's on the phone.

INTERIOR AMERICAN EMBASSY (PARIS) - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: PARIS OCTOBER 1993

Shepard meets him and ushers him through the lobby.

INTERIOR AMERICAN EMBASSY PHONE ROOM (PARIS) - MOMENTS LATER

Whitacre talks on the phone to Mick Andreas at ADM -- the consummate corporate spy. Agent Shepard stands next to him, taking notes.

**WHITACRE**  
(into phone)  
It went great. I think we'll be  
able to keep it at a buck and a  
quarter.

Agent Shepard sneezes loudly. Whitacre watches Shepard's hands go from Kleenex, to coffee cup, to pen, to a tug on his ear.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**  
Now what happens? Something you  
breathe in on an airplane, some  
bacteria, now it's in his hands,  
the cup, the phone. Probably got it  
from his kids and now I'll spend  
the weekend with it in bed...

INTERIOR O'HARE AIRPORT - DAY

Whitacre walks down the concourse carrying a BLACK FOLDER with ADM emblazoned on it. He turns into the bathroom.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**  
**...I'll miss a few days or**  
**Alexander will run a fever and who**  
**pays for that? Where does the FBI**  
**weigh in on that, as a cooperating**  
**witness? What does it say about**  
**exposure to airborne contaminants?**

In a stall, Whitacre sits on the toilet, fully clothed. He flips the tape and talks into the recorder.

**WHITACRE**  
Tape seven, side two. Chicago  
O'Hare. Once again, Terry Wilson  
representing ADM. Representing  
Eurolysine, Alain Crouy and  
Philippe Rollier. That's a French  
company.

He puts the recorder back in the ADM folder and looks down at his feet. A piece of CANDY lays on the floor swarmed by ANTS.

WHITACRE'S POV

The candy is being carted away by ants, inches from his wing tips.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**  
**That's a big break, right there.**  
**Absolutely. There's no choices to**  
**be made. No debate. You're an**  
**ant. You just eat it.**

INTERIOR GASLIGHT LOUNGE, O'HARE AIRPORT - MOMENTS LATER

Wilson sits at a table with two FRENCH EXECUTIVES -- ROLLIER and CROUY. The lounge did well in the 70's and has decided to stay there -- most everything is covered in red velvet, except for the waitresses -- they're covered in sequined body suits and fishnets.

**WILSON**  
We cannot have one section of the  
world where it works and the rest  
of the world where it doesn't. It  
will not last...

Whitacre returns from the bathroom. He puts the TAPE RECORDER/FOLDER on the table. Wilson rests his cocktail ON IT.

**WHITACRE**  
Terry, Alain, Philippe. Bonjour.

ROLLIER

We would obviously play the game.  
But, the Koreans and the  
Japanese...

CROUY

...They'll cheat.

TERRY WILSON

Then it won't work.

WHITACRE

Well, you make it work in the other  
divisions. Tell them.

TERRY WILSON (CONT'D)

Look, everyone has to *share*  
numbers. It's so goddamn  
simple. How the hell else  
would you do it?  
It's what we do in the citric  
acid business and look at the  
price of vitamins.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

**Terry doesn't like me very  
much...He's got blotchy  
skin...What causes that  
blotchiness?? It must mean  
something medical...He'll  
have a stroke and someone  
will say -- "He was  
blotchy...it happens."**

CROUY

Let's not forget that if prices  
went up in Europe it's because we  
talked in Mexico first.

TERRY WILSON

That's right, you *made* it happen.

ROLLIER

It was our pleasure.

INTERIOR HAMPTON INN DECATUR - EVENING

Shepard has headphones on -- he's excited by what he hears.  
Whitacre excitedly diagrams the world's lysine market on a  
dry erase board for Herndon, illustrating the relationships.  
A primer in corporate greed.

SHEPARD

(loud because of the  
headphones)

Mark, these are just the kind of  
tapes we need.

WHITACRE

And we're getting our marching  
orders from Andreas. See? It goes  
right to the top.

SHEPARD  
(loud because of the  
headphones)  
We need to improve the quality of  
the recordings.

EXTERIOR WHITACRE DRIVEWAY - MORNING

RUSTY THE GARDNER blows leaves off the driveway. Whitacre pulls out of the six car garage in a Lincoln Town Car. He yells at Rusty over the leaf blower.

WHITACRE  
Hey, Rusty, check this out.

Whitacre gestures to his briefcase lying in the passenger seat.

WHITACRE  
What do you think?

RUSTY THE GARDENER  
It's a nice briefcase.

WHITACRE  
But, wait. There's more.

Whitacre opens the briefcase and pulls a secret panel to reveal a TAPE RECORDER. He couldn't be more proud.

WHITACRE  
That is a Nagra SN. Had the bureau  
custom make it for me -- Mark  
Whitacre secret agent double O  
fourteen.

RUSTY THE GARDENER  
Why double O fourteen?

WHITACRE  
Cuz I'm twice as smart as double O  
seven.

INTERIOR ADM CORPORATE JET - DAY

Whitacre sits with Andreas and some ADM SUITS on the COMPANY PLANE. Andreas chats with one CO-WORKER and then turns to Whitacre.

ANDREAS  
Whatever happened to that girl who  
was working for us -- didn't she  
move to California? What's her  
name, Tina?

WHITACRE  
She's getting married.

ANDREAS  
My Tina is getting married?

WHITACRE  
Two or three weekends from now.

ANDREAS  
That won't last for very long.  
She's a bit of a do-do head. She'll  
be back. I just hope she doesn't  
get pregnant. Fuck up her body. Oh,  
she had a nice body.

Whitacre doesn't respond. He's wearing a wire.

ANDREAS  
It'd ruin her tits. She's got the  
greatest tits in the world...

Whitacre looks out the window at white billowing clouds.

WHITACRE (V.O.)  
When polar bears hunt, they crouch  
down by a hole in the ice and wait  
for a seal to pop up. They keep  
one paw over their nose so that  
they blend in. Cuz they've got  
those black noses. They'd blend in  
perfectly if not for the nose.

EXTERIOR JOHN WAYNE AIRPORT, ORANGE COUNTY - DAY

Whitacre walks across the tarmac with Andreas and some other  
SUITS.

WHITACRE (V.O.)  
So the question is. How do they  
know their noses are black? From  
looking at other polar bears? Do  
they see their reflections in the  
water? And think, "I'd be invisible  
if not for that." That seems like  
a lot of thinking for a bear.

EXTERIOR MARRIOTT HOTEL (IRVINE, CA) - LATER

Whitacre, Andreas, and Terry Wilson get out of a limo.

SUPER: IRVINE, CA

ANDREAS

Now remember to pat them down for wires before the meeting.

WHITACRE

What?

ANDREAS

Yeah. It's a new policy. Whenever we meet with the Japanese.

The men enter the lobby.

INTERIOR MARRIOTT HOTEL LOBBY (IRVINE, CA) - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre's looks back and forth between the two men-- trying to conceal his terror.

WHITACRE

You're kidding, right? I didn't get a memo. Mick, I didn't get any kind of memo.

TERRY WILSON

He's kidding. Relax, Mark.

ANDREAS

They don't have the balls to mess with ADM.

The men make their way across the lobby.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

When it's over, the board of directors at ADM is gonna understand. They're gonna see the position I was in and that I acted in everyone's best interest, I think that's the only conclusion they can reach. I mean, I'm the youngest division President they've ever had and I speak a number of languages fluently.

VIDEO IMAGE OF CONFERENCE ROOM

The four executives enter a conference room and move toward the table.

INTERIOR SURVEILLANCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Shepard and Herndon huddle around the video monitor and take notes.

INTERIOR CONFERENCE ROOM - MARRIOTT HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre stares at a LAMP in the corner. He walks right toward it -- curious. The LAMP is the CAMERA.

INTERIOR SURVEILLANCE ROOM - CONTINUED

Whitacre's face fills the monitor screen. He is staring directly into the camera.

SHEPARD  
No. No. Mark. No.

HERNDON  
(regretfully)  
I told him the camera was in the  
lamp.

INTERIOR CONFERENCE ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

The EXECs sit around the table eating the BAKED GOODS and discussing business.

YAMADA  
We already spent more than one year  
to get better market situation in  
lysine.

WHITACRE  
We talked a little bit about it in  
Paris, but we need to come to an  
understanding on volume.

INTERIOR SURVEILLANCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Shepard and Herndon watch video footage of Andreas.

Shepard struggles with the joystick that controls the lipstick camera in the lamp -- his framing is way off.

HERNDON  
We need a shot of these guys  
working together.

Shepard tries to re-frame the group.

INTERIOR CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ikeda goes over to the easel and makes a PIE CHART as a visual aid for Andreas' proposal.

ANDREAS

...Now the question is, if the market grows, who gets it? If Kyowa Hakko, Miwon and Cheil Corporation each get two thousand tons, we can divide up the rest. If we're going to have any stability at all...

Whitacre is distracted by a CLICKING SOUND. He shifts uncomfortably. Andreas notices the sound and pauses.

IKEDA

We need some specific number.

ANDREAS

What would you be willing to accept? Isn't that the question?

YAMADA

ADM has already eaten all the growth.

More CLICKING. Whitacre realizes his briefcase seems to be the source of the clicking. He opens it. The CLICKING is coming from inside.

INTERIOR SURVEILLANCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Shepard and Herndon watch the monitor nervously as Whitacre opens the briefcase with the hidden tape recorder.

INTERIOR CONFERENCE ROOM - MARRIOTT HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre removes the panel concealing the tape recorder, fiddles with a piece of the lining caught in the apparatus.

ANDREAS

You gotta remember we have a lot more capacity than we're using. We could be growing twenty thousand tons, isn't that right, Mark?

Whitacre is still fiddling with the case.

ANDREAS

Mark? What're you doing?

INTERIOR SURVEILLANCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Shepard and Herndon watch the monitor. Whitacre is about to be compromised. Herndon gets up.

HERNDON (O.S.)  
I'm going in. We gotta shut this  
down.

SHEPARD (O.S.)  
Wait. Hold on. I think he's got it.

ON THE MONITOR

Andreas reaches over and without looking inside it, shuts the  
case.

ANDREAS  
I need your input here.

The meeting continues. Herndon sighs, relieved.

INTERIOR DEPT. OF JUSTICE CONFERENCE ROOM - CHICAGO

Herndon and Shepard present their prized tape to ROBIN MANN  
ESQ, early 40's -- humorless and contrary.

As the video tape plays, Shepard explains what is going on.

SHEPARD  
They're talking about Paris.

ROBIN MANN  
I can't understand him.

SHEPARD  
They have a board of directors and  
shareholders. They are all  
suffering together.

ROBIN MANN  
Where's the agreement? This is just  
a discussion.

HERNDON  
If this isn't an agreement, then  
what are they all doing there?

SHEPARD  
You're getting bogged down with the  
words. Just look at the actions.  
Look what happens right here.

On the video, Ikeda draws the pie chart.

ROBIN MANN  
I've looked. I see a chart with a  
bunch of words. I don't even see  
any numbers on that. I can't  
pinpoint any agreement per se.

HERNDON

What more do you want? The guy is standing there dividing up the market plain as day.

ROBIN MANN

It could just be a proposal. All the other companies weren't there. Nobody used the word "agreement." I'm just telling you -- from the perspective of the Justice Department -- it is not enough.

Herndon and Shepard are discouraged.

INTERIOR HAMPTON INN - AFTERNOON

Whitacre hands another small stack of tapes to Shepard and Herndon. Whitacre has good news.

WHITACRE

We're having another meeting to work out some issues in lysine. We've got to divide up the volume and set prices for some of the markets.

SHEPARD

Europe again?

WHITACRE

Europe is out. There's a price fixing investigation in the cement manufacturing business there. It's got everybody spooked so we're not going there.

HERNDON

We can't video tape in Japan -- that's not gonna help us.

WHITACRE

Hawaii.

SHEPARD

Hawaii?

WHITACRE

Hawaii.

A GOLF BALL BEING PLACED ON A TEE

EXTERIOR SHERATON MAKAHA GOLF COURSE - OAHU

Mimoto, Ikeda, Whitacre, Wilson and ANOTHER FOURSOME OF ASIAN LYSINE EXECS play golf and laugh.

A GOLF CART NEARBY

Herndon and Shepard, dressed as golfers, patrol the course snapping photographs with a very long lens. They train microphones on the group from sand traps and linger in tee boxes hoping to hear fragments of price fixing.

INTERIOR SURVEILLANCE ROOM - DAY

Shepard watches on a video monitor as Whitacre and other lysine executives enter a hotel room. Another lamp with another hidden camera.

TERRY WILSON (ON MONITOR)

Damn it Mark. Look at the size of this. It's bullshit. Can you call down and get us a bigger room?

INTERIOR SHERATON MAKAHA - MEETING SUITE - CONTINUOUS

A medium-sized room overlooking the grounds. Iced tea and fruit trays for the execs and an easel in the corner.

Wilson is right. The room does seem cramped for the number of men assembling -- Whitacre, Mimoto, Ikeda and a number of others from Asia and Europe. The men sit uncomfortably close to each other. It's all awkward.

WHITACRE

(to Terry, whispering)

There are a bunch of conferences.

TERRY WILSON

Will you call them, please?

WHITACRE

I will. Make yourselves at home please.

CU ON THE PHONE BASE

Whitacre's finger holds down the receiver switch. He's faking the call.

WHITACRE (INTO PHONE)

Do you have a suite that's maybe a bit more roomy for us?...The Macua Room? Yes.

(MORE)

WHITACRE (INTO PHONE) (cont'd)  
Is that your biggest room? It  
sounds big...But it is. I see. I  
see. And for the whole day? Okay.  
So this is it? We're here. We're  
stuck. Okay. Then we'll make do.  
Thank you.

He hangs up. Shrugs to Wilson.

INTERIOR SURVEILLANCE ROOM - CONTINUED

Shepard watches the monitor.

WHITACRE (ON MONITOR)  
Looks like we are here to stay.

On the monitor, the back of someone's head fills the entire  
frame. Someone is sitting directly in front of the  
LAMP/CAMERA. Shepard panics.

SHEPARD  
Oh no.

They're screwed.

INTERIOR MEETING SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre sees that the camera is blocked by Mimoto. He acts  
fast.

WHITACRE  
Indulge me for a second here. You  
might be more comfortable if I move  
the chair.

He moves the chair to another part of the room. Mimoto  
follows.

INTERIOR SURVEILLANCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Shepard is relieved. Whitacre to the rescue.

SHEPARD  
Thatta boy, Mark.

INTERIOR MEETING SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Terry Wilson starts the meeting.

TERRY WILSON  
We have an old saying at ADM and I  
think it applies here.  
(MORE)

TERRY WILSON (cont'd)  
It's better to have the elephants  
inside the tent pissin' out, than  
outside the tent pissin' in.

MIMOTO  
Outside piss?

Language problem.

TERRY WILSON  
It's better to be part of the  
group.

Whitacre chimes in.

WHITACRE  
What he's saying is that the  
customers are our enemy. The  
competitors are our friend. Which  
is why it's important we have all  
the lysine producers involved,  
including the Cheil Corporation.

JM SUH of Cheil Corporation responds.

SUH  
I want to know why we have been  
excluded from association in the  
past. We need to be part of this.  
How can we know ADM will stay at  
agreed-upon levels?

Wilson steps in.

TERRY WILSON  
Well, it would be our preference  
that we simply trust each other.  
And if we find out someone's been  
lying, we'll just hire some Mafia  
figure to rub you out.

Quiet laughter.

TERRY WILSON  
That's just a little bit of levity,  
of course. But the point is that  
if we can't trust each other, it  
ain't gonna work.

MIMOTO  
(to Suh)  
You are okay with that?

SUH  
Yes. I am all right.

WHITACRE  
So what are we saying?

Wilson looks at Whitacre like he's an idiot.

TERRY WILSON  
What, do you have a language  
problem, Mark?

WHITACRE  
Then we are all...

They just said so. It's like Whitacre is playing Password.  
He searching for something -- a word.

MIMOTO  
Agreed.

WHITACRE  
Yes!

INTERIOR DEPT OF JUSTICE CONFERENCE ROOM - CHICAGO

Shepard and Herndon have been playing the new tape for Robin  
Mann and US ANTITRUST ATTORNEY JAMES MUTCHNIK. Shepard and  
Herndon beam with pride.

SHEPARD  
Agreement. You heard it.

He hits rewind and plays it again.

ROBIN MANN  
Congratulations.

MUTCHNIK  
A jury's gonna love that.

ROBIN MANN  
Well done. You did it.

MUTCHNIK  
Christ, how about this guy  
Whitacre? What's his story?

SHEPARD  
What do you mean?

MUTCHNIK  
What's his agenda? The guy's making  
350 grand a year, he's moving up  
the ladder and he turns informer.  
When does that happen? Is the  
money going up his nose?

(MORE)

MUTCHNIK (cont'd)  
Some woman somewhere with a kid  
that he's seeing on one of these  
business trips? What's his story?

Shepard and Herndon are offended on behalf of Mark. Herndon reaches into his briefcase and pulls out a HOLIDAY CARD.

HERNDON  
We wanted to show you this. That's  
a picture of Mark Whitacre and his  
family.

The group passes it around.

HERNDON  
We carry this with us all the time  
as a constant reminder that he is a  
real person with a real family  
depending on him.

SHEPARD  
The only reason we have any of  
these tapes is because of this man.

HERNDON  
We want to know, when the time  
comes, if he loses his job, will  
the government stand behind him?

INTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Whitacre looks in the mirror as he puts on a tie. He sees good things on the horizon. He buzzes with positivity. His master plan is coming to fruition.

But Ginger sees it differently.

GINGER  
Mark, are you an idiot?

WHITACRE  
Ginger, I'll be the only one left.  
Mick will be gone. Terry will be  
gone. Dwayne will be gone. I am a  
scientist and I understand the  
business side. I am the only one  
qualified to run ADM.

GINGER  
Mark, that's completely illogical.  
How can you possibly stay there  
when you've just taken down the  
company?

WHITACRE

Because they need me to run the company. First of all, I'm extremely valuable to the company. And secondly, I did the right thing. OK? The board is going to see that. The board's gonna respect that.

GINGER

It's the FBI, right? They're brainwashing you. It's Brian Shepard putting these ideas in your head to keep you working for him.

Whitacre puts on his suit jacket.

WHITACRE

I'm telling you, they will make me the next president of ADM.

INTERIOR HAMPTON INN - EVENING

A row of RIFLES are lined up under the window. Walkie-talkies are checked and rechecked by a squadron of FBI agents. Warrants are passed out.

SUPER: JUNE 27, 1995

The cheap hotel room has been transformed into a COMMAND CENTER. There's a MAP OF DECATUR on the wall with push-pins at various locations and a CHART of which agent will contact which ADM executive. Go time.

Shepard, Herndon, Mann and Mutchnik surround Whitacre preparing him for what's to come. He looks like a man about to be shot into space.

SHEPARD

How's your family doing?

WHITACRE

They're good. They'll be at an amusement park when you guys make your move.

ROBIN MANN

Whatever happens tomorrow, I think it's in your best interest to get an attorney who represents your interests alone.

Whitacre is confused.

WHITACRE

You want me to get an attorney now?

HERNDON

No, not now.

MUTCHNIK

The first thing that's going to happen is the company lawyers are going to come to all the executives with a list of attorneys for you to pick from. You gotta understand, these attorneys are paid by ADM. They don't represent you. Do not pick one of these attorneys. That's when you tell them that you have your own attorney.

SHEPARD

You need to tell them that you're cooperating with the government.

MUTCHNIK

It's perfectly reasonable for you to cooperate. It happens all the time.

WHITACRE

I think I know a lawyer in Decatur.

SHEPARD

No, Mark. The town's too small.

MUTCHNIK

I'm sure you've met lawyers in your business dealings who can handle this.

WHITACRE

Definitely.

He searches his mind for who that might be.

SHEPARD

Now, Mark, once this starts it is going to be intense. They're going to know that somebody was on the inside working with us. They're going to do almost anything to find out who it is.

WHITACRE

You guys still think I'm going to be okay at the company? Right? You guys are gonna take down the bad guys, but I'll be okay.

He searches Shepard for reassurance. They've been in this the longest.

SHEPARD

I think it's important to remember what we talked about before, and what we're talking about right now. Tell them you're cooperating with the government.

WHITACRE

Yeah. I know. But I'm just asking if you guys think I'll be okay at the company.

ROBIN MANN

Well, I think the corporate culture's gonna change a little bit for you.

WHITACRE

I should say so.

HERNDON

We should just focus on the raid.

ROBIN MANN

Yes.

EXTERIOR ADM PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Five identical FBI cruisers pull into an empty parking lot. Red lights spin.

A row of AGENTS marches up to the front door of ADM, warrants in hand.

INTERIOR ADM - CONTINUOUS

The agents work their way through the unoccupied office, seizing files and large computer components.

INTERIOR DECATUR CLUB DINING ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Whitacre and Wilson dine with a VISITING CLIENT, 35. They're a couple of cocktails into the swagger of American Business.

TERRY WILSON

Come on Mark, you're making that up.

WHITACRE

No, it's true. Archer, The "A" in ADM, choked to death on a chicken bone in 1947. Fact. Fact.

TERRY WILSON

There you have it from Mark Whitacre, Ph.D. You know what the Ph.D. is for? Piled Higher and Deeper.

VISITING CLIENT

And let me guess, Daniels was killed by a pig and the cows got Midland?

Booze-soaked laughter all around.

ANGLE ON HERNDON AND SHEPARD

At the hostess stand whispering -- the hostess drops her menus.

TERRY WILSON

So, a chicken got Archer, but fifty years later our deals with Tyson Farms, Foster Farms -- what's the body count?

More laughter. The agents walk up to the table.

HERNDON

Mr. Wilson, Mr. Whitacre. I'm Bob Herndon and I'm an FBI agent. This is Special Agent Shepard.

WHITACRE

What the heck is going on here?

TERRY WILSON

What's this about?

SHEPARD

Mr. Whitacre will you please come with me?

Wilson is baffled. Whitacre feigns surprise -- they both look to their client.

TERRY WILSON

I have no idea what this is about.

Wilson gets up from the table. Whitacre does his best to act shaken.

TERRY WILSON

Do I need a lawyer?

WHITACRE

A lawyer? Terry!

The men move away from the table leaving the Visiting Client baffled and all alone.

INTERIOR DECATUR CLUB HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Shepard and Whitacre make their way out of the club and head for the FBI cruiser.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

I saved a guy once at a restaurant in Hong Kong. He was choking on a bone and I got him to throw himself over the back of his chair. He sends me cards on holidays just to say thanks. Tells me what his kids are studying. He remembers me. You can take basic first aid courses from your local fire department.

INTERIOR DECATUR CLUB VESTIBULE - SIMULTANEOUS

Herndon and Wilson.

TERRY WILSON

You have a reason for embarrassing my colleague and I in front of a business prospect?

HERNDON

This is a serious matter. It involves an international investigation into price fixing. We have seen you and your boss, Mick Andreas, conspire with your competitors to fix prices. We have seen you tell others to do it. There will be indictments. Search warrants have been issued and some people, people you know and work with will be going to jail.

Wilson stands motionless cradling his High Ball.

INTERIOR SHEPARD'S CAR - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Whitacre and Shepard watch Herndon and Wilson in the foyer of the club Whitacre is in the middle of an adrenaline rush two-and-a-half years in the making. It's all coming off as planned.

WHITACRE

Look at that, look at Bob and Terry. Man, I'd love to be a fly on that wall. I was good wasn't I?

(MORE)

WHITACRE (cont'd)  
Didn't I seem really scared? I  
actually felt scared.

Shepard tries to calm him down, get him to focus. Whitacre  
is talking a million miles an hour.

SHEPARD  
Remember what we told you, all  
right? Tell them that you're  
cooperating first thing and  
whatever you do, do not take one of  
their lawyers.

WHITACRE  
Right. No.

INTERIOR WHITACRE'S MERCEDES BENZ COUPE - NIGHT

Whitacre and Wilson. Whitacre is in a feigned panic.

WHITACRE  
What did you say to your guy?

TERRY WILSON  
Nothing. I told him nothing. Slow  
down.

WHITACRE  
Me, too.

TERRY WILSON  
He said he had tapes -- that he'd  
heard price fixing tapes...What the  
fuck is that?

The car skids into a turn up a very long drive toward the  
kind of stone mansion that comes from generations of price  
fixing.

WHITACRE  
I bet they have the phones tapped.  
I always said that about them. It's  
the phones.

TERRY WILSON  
I can't believe they would pull  
this shit on Dwayne Andreas.

WHITACRE  
Look, I get phone calls from time  
to time, Terry.

TERRY WILSON  
I know, I know.

MICK appears in the headlights ready for a fight -- shirt untucked, holding a drink. He's an Andreas and not to be fucked with.

EXTERIOR ANDREAS MANSION DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Gnats swarm around the yard lights -- crickets chirp out the temperature.

ANDREAS

We're going to the lawyers -- I don't want to use the phones.

WHITACRE

See, the phones.

ANDREAS

They hit everybody -- my dad, Schmidt, Randall...

WILSON

Fuck me.

ANDREAS

They played me a tape -- of me -- some meeting with the fucking Japanese. I called the lawyers. We're gonna go there.

TERRY WILSON

They played a tape? How the fuck did they get a tape?

ANDREAS

I really don't think they have that much and when you factor in everything we've ever done for them -- it'll be a ten year thing for the lawyers, then a deal, maybe a fine. That's all this is ever gonna be. Trust me.

Whitacre stands with his co-workers. A tape recorder even now spinning in his jacket.

INTERIOR FBI OFFICE, DECATUR - LATER

The small room is abuzz with agents reporting in. They shake hands and congratulate each other on the successful raid.

An agent answers the phone.

PHONE AGENT

I got Agent Temples for Attorney Mutchnik.

Mutchnik -- sharing in the joy of the success takes the phone.

MUTCHNIK  
This is James Mutchnik.

EXTERIOR KIRK SCHMIDT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

AGENT TEMPLES sits in his car outside the house on his car phone.

AGENT TEMPLES  
I just interviewed an ADM employee,  
Kirk Schmidt.

MUTCHNIK (O.S.)  
Yeah?

AGENT TEMPLES  
Schmidt knew we were coming. Says  
he knew about the raid days ago. He  
says Whitacre told him.

INTERIOR FBI OFFICE, DECATUR - CONTINUOUS

Mutchnik hangs up the phone. One unhappy guy in the midst of a lot of law enforcement back-patting. He stomps off in the direction of Shepard and Herndon.

MUTCHNIK  
Bob. Brian. Can I talk to you guys  
for a second?

EXTERIOR HOLIDAY INN PARKING LOT - LATER

Whitacre waits in his Mercedes drinking a Coke -- humming happily. Herndon and Shepard's sedan pulls up next to him. The three men get out and stand in the parking lot.

WHITACRE  
That was amazing. You guys should  
have seen it. Terry was so scared  
and Mick and the lawyers, they were  
pissed!

SHEPARD  
(sarcastic)  
That's super, Mark.

But, Whitacre misses his tone. He continues on his rant.

WHITACRE

The best part is, they think you gave me the once over. They're like, "Whitacre, you alright?"

HERNDON

Did you make a tape?

Whitacre again reaches into his pocket and pulls out a small tape recorder.

WHITACRE

Yeah, I made a tape. A great one. Really good.

He hands the agents the tape.

WHITACRE

So, it's over then.

Whitacre nods -- a moment to savor, *until...*

SHEPARD

Mark, who did you tell?

WHITACRE

What?

SHEPARD

Who else did you tell about the raid?

Shepard is furious, he glares at Whitacre.

WHITACRE

Well, I had to tell my secretary. Guys, I'm the head of the bioproducts division. She has to know how to get in touch with me. I told her months ago. All I said was, "Liz, I'm doing some work with the FBI. I might be out of touch for a while." That's it. She had no idea about our case.

Shepard still glares.

WHITACRE

I'm pretty sure I've mentioned the name Kathy Dougherty a time or two, in my division. Kathy is a friend. She is a trusted ally. I didn't want her to be scared.

SHEPARD

Why did you do that, Mark? Why would you tell Dougherty?

WHITACRE

Because I didn't want her to be scared! I trust her! Guys, we can trust Kathy!

Shepard glares in harder, his voice cracking. He knows there's more.

SHEPARD

Who else?! Don't jack us around, Mark.

WHITACRE

Mmm...Kirk Schmidt. Schmidty. Look, I was afraid that he wouldn't say anything to you guys, that he would clam up and not talk on account of he's loyal to me.

Shepard explodes.

SHEPARD

You could have ruined this entire operation. Two and a half years...

WHITACRE

Has anything gone wrong? Has anything gone wrong tonight?

Whitacre and Shepard are about to square off.

HERNDON

Time out. Mark, you know what you did was wrong in our eyes. It was supposed to be a secret.

Whitacre contemplates more excuses -- but before he can get them out...

SHEPARD

Look, we can get past this. But is there anything else we need to know?

WHITACRE

No. No. Not that I can think of.

SHEPARD

Remember to tell them that you're getting your own lawyer.

Whitacre loses it.

WHITACRE

I know about the lawyers, Brian!

The success of the evening has been lost in the anger. The men retreat to their cars -- Whitacre the successful mole in his Mercedes. The agents in their non-descript Dodge.

INTERIOR ADM - THE NEXT MORNING

Whitacre strolls through the trading area amazed at the mayhem he's created. Documents are being carted away by the arm load. Secretaries make frantic phone calls to lawyers.

Whitacre takes his secret to his office and sits at his desk.

INTERIOR WHITACRE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Through the glass wall the GREAT AND POWERFUL DWAYNE ANDREAS, 70, crosses the chaotic room, followed by Mick, Terry Wilson, and two starched and suited men of deliberate bearing who can only be LAWYERS -- AUBREY DANIEL and JOHN DOWD.

Whitacre's eyes widen. Do they know? Dwayne enters -- cold and formidable.

DWAYNE ANDREAS

Mark Whitacre, this is Aubrey Daniel.

AUBREY DANIEL

Pleasure meeting you. I'm representing ADM in this matter. And this is John Dowd, a colleague of mine. Dwayne has filled us in on your responsibilities here.

They shake hands.

DWAYNE ANDREAS

Aubrey prosecuted Lt. Calley after the My Lai massacre in Vietnam. So this ought to be a cake walk for him.

AUBREY DANIEL

We were hoping you'd have some time to sit down and talk to John here.

MICK ANDREAS

ADM's behind you on this, Mark. Dad and I want the key people to know that we'll be paying for all your legal fees.

Whitacre relaxes.

WHITACRE

Great, that's great. Thank you.

DWAYNE ANDREAS  
Then we'll let you fellas get  
acquainted.

WHITACRE  
Okay.

Everyone leaves except for Dowd and Whitacre. Dowd gives Whitacre a warm, knowing look.

JOHN DOWD  
How you holding up, Mark?

WHITACRE  
Good. Please sit down.

Whitacre closes the door.

WHITACRE  
John, can I ask you something?

JOHN DOWD  
Sure. Anything.

WHITACRE  
If I say something to you are you  
allowed to say something to Mick  
and Dwayne?

ANGLE ON WHITACRE'S OFFICE

From the trading floor. Whitacre closes the vertical blinds one by one as he continues talking to Dowd. Whatever he's saying to Dowd seems to be taking more time than the script the FBI laid out for him.

EXTERIOR ADM - LATER

Twilight. From the parking lot you can see two men still talking in the fluorescent light of Whitacre's office. Dowd nods along with Whitacre's tale.

INTERIOR ADM TRADING FLOOR - LATER

Mick, Terry, and Aubrey Daniel sit among boxes of pizza and beer. The end of a day they would all like to forget. The blinds finally open in Whitacre's office. Dowd and Whitacre emerge.

Dowd looks stunned. Hours and hours with Whitacre can do that. Whitacre is solemn.

Wilson, Daniel, Mick stop what they're doing and look up.

WHITACRE

I need to tell you that I'm going to be cooperating with the FBI. They have hundreds of tapes. They know all about lysine. John here agrees with me -- I should be getting another lawyer.

JOHN DOWD

No question about it.

Dowd and Daniel share a knowing look. An uncomfortable silence follows.

WHITACRE

I'm sorry for what's happened.

Whitacre shakes Mick Andreas' hand and walks away like a little boy who broke the neighbor's window.

ANDREAS

Sorry? What's that?

INTERIOR MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

Whitacre sits alone fully engrossed by the movie.

ON THE MOVIE SCREEN

The Firm. TOM CRUISE, as Mitch McDeere, talks with FBI agent Wayne Tarrance, played by ED HARRIS at a DOG TRACK. McDeere is wearing a wire -- he's taping Tarrance, turning the tables.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

It feels good to talk, to clear the air -- you get to be like a balloon after a while. A balloon looking for a pin to bump into and relieve the pressure. You could get sick from keeping it inside and get a tumor or something... I didn't ask for that.

EXTERIOR RURAL HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Whitacre drives through the darkness.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

I have a friend from school who has a law practice and he's always telling me how they can't talk about their cases...

INTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION - MASTER BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Whitacre lies in bed fully dressed. Ginger sleeps next to him.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

...Like in The Firm. You can tell them anything and they have to keep it to themselves or they get in a lot of trouble... They're boxed. That's what they say, 'boxed.'

INTERIOR LAW OFFICES OF EPSTEIN, ZAIDEMAN, CHICAGO - DAY

JIM EPSTEIN, 43, and BOB ZAIDEMAN, 50, sit with Mark Whitacre in their offices in the Loop. Whitacre recounts his life as a mole in a rambling fashion -- leaping tangent to tangent. To the uninitiated, his story challenges logic and belief.

EPSTEIN

So, there wasn't a saboteur in the beginning at all? You made that up?

WHITACRE

Maybe there was, there could've been. ADM steals technology from the Japanese -- so I wouldn't put it past the Japanese to do the same thing to us. But once I told the FBI that I'd made that part up they said I had very little choice but to be a cooperating witness.

ZAIDEMAN

And you began making tapes. How many tapes did you make?

Whitacre moves his lips and mind in different directions. The interior monologue takes precedence -- it's taking over now. The on-camera story we've heard before.

WHITACRE

There are over 200 tapes. I carried a tape recorder almost every day to work once I signed a cooperating witness agreement, and then they gave me a special briefcase that I took to meetings that had a hidden recorder in it -- they even sewed a small one they just developed into my suit and I'd ride around on the plane and tape Mick and the guys talking about price fixing or stealing technology and illegal campaign contributions, just whatever we'd talk about.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

There are so many really nice people in the world. People who want to help out. Good neighbors. Good listeners. Like when they have these floods out on the Mississippi and people lose everything and are sleeping in a school gym, someone always shows up with a warm coat for the old people and a homemade pot roast. That's why Ginger and I bought that girl in town a special computer after she had the spine injury. That kind of thing really makes a difference. Jim here strikes me as that kind of guy, you can tell he's the one-in-a-hundred guy who when you come into the emergency room, you thank your lucky stars that it's his watch.

WHITACRE

Then I'd come back. Two nights a week, Brian and Bob and I would get together and we'd work it. We'd build the investigation. Get what we needed, gather all the information. Then we went to DOJ, briefed those lawyers and soon we were hitting ADM, raiding the place, taking it down.

Epstein can't believe it.

EPSTEIN

And for how long did you do this? Work as an informant?

WHITACRE

Uh, two and a half years. Two and a half years.

A moment of reflection and then...

WHITACRE

I always thought there'd still be a place for me at ADM when this whole thing was over. I still have a lot of friends there. A lot of friends.

The lawyers look at each other. Who could be that stupid? They stifle their laughter.

EPSTEIN

Mark, it's very important to your case that you not discuss this with anyone else. Okay? These people you work with, your friends, they could end up being witnesses. So Bob and I are the only people I want you to talk to about this from now on and I want you to know you can tell us anything.

WHITACRE

Okay.

INTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION - MORNING

Whitacre eats a bowl of cereal and talks on the phone. He's fully caffeinated and ready to go. He's the most famous white collar informant in the history of America.

WHITACRE

They kept coming to the house and they only had ADM's side of the story.

SHEPARD (O.S.)

Did you talk to the Wall Street Journal, Mark? What did you say? It's real important that you not talk to the press.

WHITACRE

Me? I told him I had no comment. But, it didn't matter. They had the story anyway. They already had it.

On the counter is a NEWSPAPER.

ANGLE ON WSJ

Headline: SEEDS OF DOUBT: AN EXECUTIVE BECOMES INFORMANT FOR THE FBI, STUNNING GIANT ADM.

WHITACRE

Did you see my stipple portrait? It's pretty good.

INTERIOR CTA COMMUTER TRAIN - MORNING

Jim Epstein reads the Wall Street Journal in horror. But, it gets worse.

He looks up to see that it is in the hands of almost EVERY OTHER EXECUTIVE on the train.

EPSTEIN

Oh shit.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

...Is Brian Shepard gonna lose his job for that? His standard of living? I've gone to the local junior high school on career day and talked to kids about biochemistry and the kind of career opportunities available...

EXTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION - MORNING

A crowd of reporters and ENG CREWS have sprouted up among the corn fields. They press in on the gates and surround the house. America has questions for Mark Whitacre.

The door opens and Whitacre steps into the bright light of public scrutiny.

Whitacre heads across the lawn like a celebrity. Reporters shout questions at him.

REPORTER 1

What comment can you make on the allegations on TV?

WHITACRE

I came out to tell you that I'm not allowed to talk to the press at this time.

But, it's not the warm reception he had been counting on.

REPORTER 2

Any comment on the effects of your actions on ADM's declining stock prices?

REPORTER 3

What's been the reaction of your friends and coworkers being taped without their knowledge?

WHITACRE

I'm a person of interest in an ongoing investigation, so... Sorry.

REPORTER 3

Do you believe you and your family can safely stay in Decatur?

REPORTER 2

Has the government arranged to move you?

Whitacre retreats toward the house. His public face cracking at the edges. Ginger and Alexander wait for him on the steps. They close the door and pull the drapes.

INTERIOR WHITACRE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ginger with Shepard and Herndon.

GINGER

We're still getting the threatening phone calls and I know for a fact that Dwayne and Terry have been telling people he wasn't a good worker. That he can't be trusted.

SHEPARD

We told Mark, we told him, that he had to expect the unexpected -- that he might be attacked -- that he wasn't going to win any popularity contests for this.

GINGER

He just mopes around here all day, watching the news looking for a glimpse of himself. Or, he calls someone from ADM trying to get the latest gossip.

SHEPARD

Maybe you guys should get out of town until the hearings start.

HERNDON

He has to stop talking to people.

EXTERIOR ROADSIDE MOTEL - DAY

Whitacre gets out of the car with a briefcase and heads into the motel.

INTERIOR ROADSIDE MOTEL ROOM - BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS - DAY

Whitacre sits on the bed and talks as a reporter takes notes.

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**

**I don't owe Brian Shepard the truth. I mean, I gave Brian Shepard two and a half years of my life and now I have legal bills to show for it. And I'm the good guy in all this -- the guy who took on ADM. Is Brian Shepard gonna lose his job for that?**

(MORE)

WHITACRE (V.O.) (cont'd)  
His standard of living? I've gone to the local junior high school on career day and talked to kids about biochemistry and the kind of career opportunities available. Can Brian Shepard and Bob Herndon say that? I'm the white hat. I did enough for Brian Shepard. Who's gonna take care of me?

A PHOTOGRAPHER prepares to take a picture. Whitacre poses. Everything but the white hat.

WHITACRE (V.O.)  
...Who's gonna pick the kids up from swimming lessons? Who has a plaque in the high school for the Mark Whitacre Environmental Award? Where are your friends when it's dump on Whitacre? Where's the pot roast and warm coat?

The camera FLASHES.

INTERIOR ADM BOOKEEPING DEPT

SUPER: AUGUST 1995

SCOTT ROBERTS, an ADM attorney, thumbs through records. He's examining a file entitled: ABP INTERNATIONAL.

ANGLE ON THE PAPERWORK

Contracts citing various sums of money and photocopies of checks.

ROBERTS HOLDS TWO PAGES UP TO THE LIGHT. He lines up the signatures.

AND THEN RUNS DOWN THE HALL WITH THE PAGES.

INTERIOR ADM - MICK ANDREAS' OFFICE - EVENING

Mick, Dwayne, and Aubrey Daniel stand before the window. Roberts holds the pages up against the window.

ANGLE ON THE PAGES

The two signatures eclipse each other perfectly.

ROBERTS  
You can see where he pasted it.

MICK ANDREAS  
He's a fucking forger!

INTERIOR WHITACRE'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Whitacre races the Range Rover down a two-lane road in the middle of the farm fields of South Central Illinois.

The car phone rings. He answers cheerfully.

WHITACRE  
Mark Whitacre.

AUBREY DANIEL (O.S.)  
Hello, Mark? It's Aubrey Daniel.  
I'm here in Mick Andreas' office  
and we were wondering, does the  
name Lennart Thorstensson mean  
anything to you?

Whitacre says nothing.

INTERIOR ADM - MICK ANDREAS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The ADM executives listen closely.

AUBREY DANIEL (ON PHONE)  
What about Nordkron Chemie? Does  
that ring a bell?

After a beat...

WHITACRE  
Well, I'll have someone get back to  
you on that.

AUBREY DANIEL  
You do that.

He hangs up.

AUBREY DANIEL  
(laughing)  
He's going to call us back.

Mick and the others laugh.

EXTERIOR CHINESE RESTAURANT, TAYLORVILLE - DAY

Whitacre gets out of an FBI cruiser with Herndon and Shepard.  
They walk toward a restaurant in rural Illinois.

INTERIOR CHINESE RESTAURANT, TAYLORVILLE - CONTINUOUS

The three men sit in a booth. Whitacre has something to get  
off his chest.

WHITACRE

My lawyer's telling me not to talk to you guys, but there's something I've been wanting to talk about for a while.

HERNDON

Don't tell us anything. You have a lawyer now. It's not like it was before.

SHEPARD

We are not asking you.

Whitacre keeps going.

WHITACRE

What if I just throw out some "hypotheticals?" I'll talk about certain financial situations and you tell me if they're wrong or how serious they might be. Okay? For instance, what if a company gave an executive a car, you know, a corporate car. But instead of driving it to work he drove his personal car and gave the company car to his daughter. Would that be a problem?

HERNDON

That's it? That's the hypothetical?

The agents try not to laugh. After what Whitacre has given the government -- a little undeclared perk is nothing.

SHEPARD

That shouldn't be a problem.

WHITACRE

What if it was a corporate plane and the executive was using that for personal use?

HERNDON

Basically, the same thing.

SHEPARD

There may be some IRS issues but...

WHITACRE

What if it was standard practice at ADM for executives to regularly accept kickbacks in cash?

Shepard drops his fork. Herndon is stunned.

SHEPARD

How much money are we talking about, Mark?

Whitacre pauses, clears his throat.

WHITACRE

Well, Brian, hypothetically...five hundred thousand dollars?

HERNDON

How much???

Whitacre tries to justify his actions.

WHITACRE

It's the way things were done there. I'm not the only one who was doing it. Everybody's doing it.

SHEPARD

When did this start, Mark?

WHITACRE

December, 1991.

Shepard runs down the implications in his mind. For Whitacre. For himself.

SHEPARD

You, you... How were you paid?

WHITACRE

Paid by check, checks deposited in various accounts. And always under the amount of ten thousand dollars.

SHEPARD

And did any of these checks come in after we met?

Whitacre pauses.

WHITACRE

Maybe.

Shepard and Herndon know what that means.

EXTERIOR DEPT OF JUSTICE, WASHINGTON, DC - DAY

Aubrey Daniel and a PHALANX OF LAWYERS ascend the steps of the Department of Justice.

INTERIOR DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, WASHINGTON DC - DAY

An overhead projector displays the forged contracts on a screen. Aubrey Daniel puts on a show for Mann, Mutchnik and U.S. ASST. ATTORNEY GENERAL GARY SPRATLING.

AUBREY DANIEL

Two point five million dollars.  
Deposited in a bank in Switzerland  
while Mark Whitacre was there on  
ADM business. We have sworn  
testimony from Mr. Lennart  
Thorstensson of the ABP Corporation  
that he has never seen this  
contract and that his signature is  
forged. Neither he nor his company  
ever received this check...

As Daniel continues, one of the younger lawyers passes out a folder of affidavits and other documents.

AUBREY DANIEL

It is clear to us that Mark  
Whitacre, driven by his own  
boundless ambition to take over  
ADM, has attempted to frame his  
superiors in a price fixing  
conspiracy of his own invention...

Mann and Mutchnik can't believe what they're seeing in the black folders.

AUBREY DANIEL

...His cooperation with the  
government is merely a smokescreen  
to hide his lying and cheating and  
stealing. We have additional  
information that we are prepared to  
share with Attorney General Reno  
that the money has since been moved  
to Grand Cayman with the full  
knowledge and complicity of  
Whitacre's FBI partners...

And under...

The DOJ lawyers stare at the table -- searching for the rest of their careers.

INTERIOR FBI SPRINGFIELD - DAY

Shepard and Herndon appear before their bosses -- Paisley and Medford. Shepard can't believe what he's hearing.

SHEPARD

What are they accusing me of? I want the specifics. Are they saying I'm in cahoots with the guy?

Medford and Paisley don't want to answer this.

MEDFORD

Paragraph eight in our agreement with Whitacre states that his actions are directly attributable to the FBI and the United States government.

PAISLEY

They're saying he stole **two and half million** dollars while we were running him.

SHEPARD

But, how could we know what he was doing? He came to us.

PAISLEY

The question they're asking isn't "how could we know?" It's "why didn't we know?"

HERNDON

No. The question is "were they price fixing?"

Medford and Paisley share a look.

MEDFORD

The investigation has shifted from ADM to Whitacre.

SHEPARD

Of course, ADM decides Whitacre's a thief as soon as they find out he's working for us.

HERNDON

Who's counting the money over there -- they can just lose two and half million dollars for a few years and then find it in a few hours?

SHEPARD

We gotta call Mark.

PAISLEY

I don't want you to do that.

Shepard and Herndon are confused.

MEDFORD

We're taking you off.

SHEPARD

That's it? We're done? I thought the FBI never hung a witness out to dry.

MEDFORD

He's not a witness anymore -- he's a target.

INTERIOR LAW OFFICES OF EPSTEIN, ZAIDEMAN - DAY

A Sunday afternoon. Epstein and Zaideman try and get a handle on the scope of Whitacre's fraud. Whitacre has shoe boxes of receipts and bank statements. Accounts all over the place.

WHITACRE

I only kept a million and a half -- and Mick knew about it. He knew these things went on. Who do you think taught me how to do it?

Zaideman and Epstein shake their heads.

EPSTEIN

You can't bullshit these people tomorrow. Who knows what they know? If we're going in there we got to go in with the whole story. Because the way it gets bad for you is if you tell them you're confessing and you don't. Then you are sorely screwed.

Whitacre points to the shoe boxes of papers.

WHITACRE

This is it -- what you have in front of you. That is it. I found every bank statement, every record. Why would I hide anything from you guys? This is it.

EXTERIOR DEPT. OF JUSTICE - CHICAGO

Whitacre, Epstein, and Zaideman cross the plaza and enter the building.

INTERIOR DEPT. OF JUSTICE LOBBY - CHICAGO

The elevator arrives and Whitacre breaks his silence.

WHITACRE

Listen, I haven't been telling you guys the whole truth. But I'm gonna clear that up in there today.

ZAIDEMAN

What?

OH, SHIT. Whitacre gets on. Epstein and Zaideman rush in after him, trying to hold the doors open.

EPSTEIN

We got to get you out of here.

WHITACRE

No. I want to tell them.

The doors close.

INTERIOR DEPT. OF JUSTICE CONFERENCE ROOM - CHICAGO

Whitacre sits surrounded Epstein and Zaideman who are petrified by what their client might say next. Across from them sit DOJ lawyers for as far as the eye can see.

Robin Mann wants a pound of flesh from Whitacre.

ROBIN MANN

Mr. Whitacre's conduct constitutes a breach of his agreement with the US government. He is no longer a cooperating witness.

EPSTEIN

This is outrageous. My client has given you years of his life. Clearly he made mistakes, but he made your case.

ROBIN MANN

We are not here to discuss the case against ADM.

ED HERBST, early 50's, and MARY SPEARING, 40's, close in on Whitacre, armed with documents and dollar amounts. They take no prisoners.

HERBST

Mr. Whitacre, my name is Ed Herbst and I'm with the FBI Economic Crimes Unit. This is Mary Spearing and Don Mackay from the Department of Justice Fraud Division. We were wondering if you could tell us when your criminal conduct at ADM began.

WHITACRE

In early 1992. I was taught how things were done there by Mick Andreas who showed me how to use embezzlement and kickbacks in order to make money tax free.

Epstein tries to do some damage control.

EPSTEIN

My client is voluntarily coming to you...

WHITACRE

I am aware that the fraud I perpetrated was wrong, and I accept responsibility.

HERBST

How did you receive the money?

WHITACRE

By check. They would deposit the check to my account in Decatur.

This seems unlikely. Spearing gets angry.

MARY SPEARING

They paid kickbacks in checks? What company would pay kickbacks in checks? Come on.

No one from the government has ever been aggressive toward Whitacre before -- he's thrown. The White Hat has been knocked off his head and is blowing away across Chicago.

WHITACRE

I don't really remember the name of the company..something like AgriConsulting and Trading, something like that...

MARY SPEARING

You don't remember the name of the company that paid you checks?

WHITACRE

It's hard to remember for me right now. I have some things going on in my life. In case you haven't been reading the papers.

EPSTEIN

Hey, we're coming to you guys. We're cooperating here. We're going to get the money back.

Epstein looks at Whitacre -- this last part might be hard. The money is now in the shape of earrings and automobiles and the stables across the street.

HERBST

This might help your memory.

He slides the forged ABP documents toward Whitacre.

WHITACRE

Now where did we get those?

HERBST

These are ADM documents showing the forging of signatures.

Whitacre smiles and claps loudly. He sees the conspiracy plainly. How come the rest of the world can't? He is somewhere south of Decatur -- lost in the corn.

WHITACRE

See, that's how they keep people in the fold -- they tell you to take the money and then they use it against you if you talk. It's how they control us. You gotta realize who these people are...

WHITACRE (V.O.)

**Didn't these people see The Firm -- or read the book. It's all there. Everything they did to me they did to Tom Cruise...I'm not the one they should be mad at...**

INTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Shepard, Herndon, Ginger and Whitacre. Mark looks used up -- his hair seems to be graying around the edges.

In front of him are a pile of newspapers -- Washington Post, WSJ, Chicago Tribune, etc. Each with a banner announcement of his predicament.

HERNDON

We can't see you anymore and if you call us and start to talk about the case we'll have to hang up...

SHEPARD

You can talk to us about your feelings, but that's it.

Whitacre nods -- he can't play with his friends any more.

SHEPARD

Mark, please understand. It's not what we want. We've got no choice here.

WHITACRE

The thing of it is, all of my anger, all of my frustration, stems from my work with you guys. And all this crap in the paper, my kids are seeing this. And it's all just dump on Mark Whitacre.

ANGLE ON WSJ

7/13/95 headline reads: YOU DIRTY RAT, SAYS DECATUR, ILLINOIS -- PEOPLE THINK MARK WHITACRE BETRAYED THEM AND ASK WHY HE TURNED TO THE FBI.

SHEPARD

Remember, Mark, we told you it was impossible to predict what would happen when the case went public.

HERNDON

And you never told us about the **five million** dollars you took...

WHITACRE

I don't see what that has to do with the price fixing?

Ginger has heard this before and she can't hear it again.

GINGER

He worked for you for two and a half years. He risked his career, his home...And now you turn your back on him and leave us out here.

WHITACRE

Ginger...

But the dam has burst. She sobs.

SHEPARD

The reason we came today is because we're concerned about your and Mark's well being.

HERNDON

It's important that you tell the people in Washington everything tomorrow -- one hundred percent.

Whitacre nods. Ginger seethes.

GINGER

You'd have nothing without him and you know it.

(MORE)

GINGER (cont'd)  
He's just been used by the  
government and then thrown away cuz  
it's a lot easier to go after Mark  
Whitacre than anyone named Andreas.

Whitacre stares at the newspapers.

INTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION - MASTER BEDROOM - DAWN

Whitacre is sitting on the bed up and dressed when the alarm  
goes off.

WHITACRE (V.O.)  
We took the kids one year to the  
Renaissance Festival in Indiana.  
You get to be the White Knight. The  
kids get to ride a horse and joust  
against the forces of darkness with  
a helmet on. And the White Knight  
always wins, the forces of darkness  
fall onto an old mattress...

He stares at a PICTURE OF HIS FAMILY. His mind races in a  
hundred directions. There's nowhere to turn.

WHITACRE (V.O.)  
...Someone plays a lute and a song  
from medieval times. The day we  
went it was maybe ninety degrees  
out and the heat and humidity index  
-- I can't even remember what the  
radio said.

INTERIOR CAT SCAN FACILITY

Whitacre -- in his hospital gown -- vanishes slowly, head  
first into the MRI tube.

WHITACRE (V.O.)  
...We were next in line and the  
mare collapsed -- went down in a  
heap. Ginger was eating ye olde  
drumstick and she dropped it in the  
dirt. The kids were crying and I  
remember this farmer saying he had  
a gun in his truck. Just like  
that. From the White Knight to a  
gun in the truck. They had  
everyone turn their backs before  
they put the animal down. But even  
if you couldn't see you could still  
hear. How do you get that back?  
How does that get to be fair?

INTERIOR HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - DAY

Ginger has a cup of coffee with a psychiatrist, DOCTOR MILLER, 60s, as they wait for Whitacre's test results.

GINGER

He just kept buying things. We had eight cars -- three of them we never even used.

MILLER

And how else has he changed?

GINGER

I was always the one with the temper and Corky was the happy one. But that's changed too. Since he said he'd cooperate with the FBI -- he's become so intolerant of everyone...

MILLER

Why do you call him Corky?

GINGER

He's had that name since high school. He was like a champagne cork always flying off somewhere.

INTERIOR PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE (CHICAGO) - LATER

Whitacre sits on the couch talking to Doctor Miller. This is not internal, it's therapy.

WHITACRE

There's one in Hong Kong. And then there's the bank accounts in Switzerland and Grand Cayman...Other things...There's a lawyer in New York who's got a million dollars of mine.

MILLER

And have you told your attorney the truth about all of these accounts?

WHITACRE

No, but I don't need to tell.

Whitacre sighs.

MILLER

You need to tell your attorney about these accounts.

WHITACRE

The assets were obtained legally. I don't know if I can trust him.

MILLER

Mark, has anybody in your family ever been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, you know, manic-depressive?

Whitacre nods and leans in.

WHITACRE

I had an aunt who they used to say that about. In terms of my parents, I can't be sure. My parents died in an automobile accident when I was six. I was adopted by a wealthy man in Ohio. He owned amusement parks. I caught a big break there, big break.

INTERIOR CONFERENCE ROOM - EPSTEIN, ZAIDEMAN - DAY

Whitacre appears again with Epstein before another herd of LAWYERS and agents.

EPSTEIN

My client is here to cooperate fully, so Agent D'Angelo, if you have any questions.

AGENT TONY D'ANGELO, 35, relaxed -- he gives Whitacre another chance to come clean.

D'ANGELO

This is your chance to put everything on the table. This is the chance to redeem yourself, but if you're not going to be completely honest just stop talking now.

WHITACRE

I understand that. And I want to tell you I feel bad. The last time we spoke I was under a great deal of stress and I said some things that weren't true. I want to clear that up.

Whitacre is more earnest than ever before.

WHITACRE

The first kickback was in 1992, Mick knew all about it, he told me there'd be plenty of opportunities to take kick backs on some of the contracts coming out of Asia and Europe. ADM contracts.

D'ANGELO

Was anyone else involved?

INTERIOR AMERICAN EMBASSY - MEXICO CITY - DAY

RICHTER, the guy from the Admiral's Club in Mexico City, is questioned by FBI AGENT BASSET. Richter's entire financial history is spread out on the table in front of them.

AGENT BASSET

So, Mr. Richter, we have money leaving your account here and here and here and it's going to Whitacre's account, his wife Ginger's account. This one is going to Whitacre's parents' account.

RICHTER

Like I said, those are loans.

Agent Basset isn't buying it.

INTERIOR US ATTORNEY'S OFFICE CHICAGO - DAY

MARTY ALLISON, 40 and his lawyer, MICHAEL MONICO, appear before a host of FBI AGENTS and LAWYERS.

MARTY ALLISON

He had me set up a company, Nordkron Chemie and just issue these fake invoices to ADM. There was a bank account in Hamburg and so I would get a check for like two hundred grand and most of it would go back to Mark.

INTERIOR AMERICAN EMBASSY - MEXICO CITY - DAY

Agent Basset continues questioning Richter.

AGENT BASSET

Look, we know you're looking out for your friend Mark, but your story doesn't seem true.

Richter folds.

RICHTER  
You're right. It's not true. All  
the money went to Mark.

AGENT BASSET  
When did it start?

RICHTER  
Mark told me about this Nigerian  
thing he got in the mail.

INTERIOR DOJ (WASHINGTON) - CONFERENCE ROOM

SID HULSE testifies with his lawyer, SHELDON ZENNER and FBI  
AGENT GRANT and a bunch of DOJ lawyers.

ZENNER  
You know about these schemes with  
the Nigerian letters?

AGENT GRANT  
The 419 Fraud? We see it every  
day. You get a letter from some  
official in Nigeria or somewhere  
asking for a few grand to help them  
move millions -- and they promise  
you a percentage of the money.

ZENNER  
Exactly. You ever wonder who was  
dumb enough to fall for something  
like that?

Hulse is flushed.

HULSE  
This is really embarrassing...

INTERIOR EPSTEIN, ZAIDEMAN CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Whitacre has laid out an amazing litany of theft and  
deception.

D'ANGELO  
How much money would you say you  
made from all your illegal  
activities?

Whitacre takes a moment -- does the math in his head,  
mouthing to himself the various sources of his massive fraud.

WHITACRE

**Seven point seven** million dollars. But, like I said, Mick knew all about that. He endorsed that kind of behavior.

D'ANGELO

Not five then, but seven point seven.

WHITACRE

Seven point seven.

INTERIOR DOJ CHAMBERS - DAY

Epstein stands before the standard assortment of lawyers -- Herbst, Mann, Mutchnik, Spearing, Spratling, etc. It's time to clean up the mess that is Mark Whitacre.

HERBST

Jim, we all understand special consideration, but we've got your guy. And these are cases we know we can convict. Forty-five counts of wire fraud, money laundering and tax evasion. Explain to us, where is the wiggle room?

EPSTEIN

I'm not stupid. Mark committed a crime. He stole **nine** million dollars. That's pretty indefensible. But these guys at ADM, they stole hundreds of millions of dollars from innocent people all around the world. Mark showed you that four white guys in suits getting together in the middle of the day, that's not a business meeting -- it's a crime scene. And not only did he tell you about it, he got the evidence to prove it. When agents go under cover for the FBI, they get trained for the stresses of living a secret life. We hear all the time how easy it is for a trained agent to crack. Here's Mark, a civilian with no training. But you guys just shove him in there. You tell him 'go for it,' without any training to make sure he doesn't crack under pressure.

EXTERIOR ROADSIDE - DAY

Whitacre sits in his parked car. He pulls violently at his jacket sleeve, tearing it. He adjusts his hairpiece in the mirror. But instead of straightening it, he sets it askew.

EXTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Whitacre comes flying up the driveway in his Town Car. He jumps out and starts limping toward the house in a frenzy. He's a mess.

WHITACRE

Ginger!

INTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ginger rushes through the house to the aid of her husband. Whitacre is frantic. He barges through the door and crashes across furniture rushing toward his wife.

WHITACRE

They kidnapped me! They put in the car. They drove me around for twenty minutes. They wouldn't let me out!

GINGER

Oh my gosh...

WHITACRE

Ow! My leg!

Whitacre collapses in Ginger's arms, his last true follower. She looks at his jacket, his bent glasses -- examines his leg.

GINGER

Who did this? Who took you?

WHITACRE

It's obvious! I mean, look at my jacket. These people mean business!

INTERIOR WAND-TV STUDIOS, DECATUR - DAY

Whitacre and Ginger are interviewed by the LOCAL NEWS ANCHOR against the "WAND" backdrop. Whitacre is calm -- convincing.

WHITACRE

I was abducted. I was thrown into the back of a light brown Dodge Dynasty by two thugs and driven around in a twenty-minute joy ride. Basically I was told forget everything that isn't on tape and you can forget bringing it up in a courtroom or for the media.

LOCAL NEWS ANCHOR

Did the men identify themselves?

Whitacre smiles.

WHITACRE

I think we know who sent them.

GINGER

And they sawed the locks off the door like Mafia thugs.

WHITACRE

Yeah. On each side, so I was trapped.

LOCAL NEWS ANCHOR

Trapped. You couldn't roll down the window.

WHITACRE

No.

LOCAL NEWS ANCHOR

And where was the FBI in all this?

INTERIOR BLUE BIRD DINER - SIMULTANEOUS

Shepard watches the interview on a TV in the corner of the diner.

GINGER (ON TV)

What people have to realize is -- the FBI did the same thing. They locked my husband in an investigation and drove our family around for three years.

Shepard is stung by her words.

INTERIOR LAW OFFICES EPSTEIN, ZAIDEMAN - DAY

Epstein brings a deal to Mark and Ginger. He believes he has saved his client, but the Whitacres feel differently.

WHITACRE  
Three to five years?

EPSTEIN  
Yes.

WHITACRE  
In jail?! But, ADM's the bad guys.

GINGER  
Everywhere we go, it's the same thing. It's just dump on Mark Whitacre.

EPSTEIN  
You've got to focus here. You stole nine million dollars. And then you lied about it. Maybe in your head you're one of the good guys but to them you're a guy who stole a lot of money and lied about it.

WHITACRE  
Ginger and I have been talking and we'd like to file a lawsuit against Brian Shepard and the United States government.

Epstein throws up his hands.

EPSTEIN  
Oh my God! For what, Mark?

WHITACRE  
He hit me with a briefcase.

This is news to Ginger, but she believes it. Epstein doesn't.

EPSTEIN  
Mark, come on.

WHITACRE  
And he told me to destroy tapes that didn't help the case. Now why would Brian Shepard do that? Maybe the question you should be asking yourself is "What is Brian Shepard hiding?"

EPSTEIN  
I'm telling you. Take the plea.

WHITACRE  
Thanks, Jim. But we're going to go a different way.

Whitacre takes Ginger's hand and leads her off toward the land of crazy. She will follow willingly. There's no place else for them to go.

EXTERIOR WHITACRE'S PARENTS' HOUSE (OHIO) - DAY

MRS. EVELYN WHITACRE (60s) gardens outside in the yard. MR. MARION WHITACRE (60s) -- a balding man with a moustache and large glasses -- calls out to her from the house.

SUPER: RAVENNA, OH

MR. WHITACRE

Evelyn, there's a reporter on the phone from the *Washington Post* -- has some questions about Corky.

EVELYN

A reporter?

She goes inside.

INTERIOR WHITACRE'S PARENTS' HOUSE (OHIO) - CONTINUOUS

Evelyn picks up the extension in the kitchen of the middle-class home.

EVELYN

This is Evelyn Whitacre. What do you mean, adopted?

Beat.

EVELYN

Well, as his mother I can assure you that my husband and I were not killed in a car accident and Mark was not adopted by wealthy people.

She hangs up.

EVELYN

Mark's been telling people that you and I were killed in a car accident and that he was adopted by rich people. What do you make of that?

MR. WHITACRE

That's kind of weird.

He adjusts his glasses the way Mark always does. The resemblance is obvious.

INTERIOR WHITACRE MANSION - DAY

Mark sits in his office staring at a letter from Doctor Miller.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

I read this study in Time magazine when I was at Cornell -- which is an Ivy League school -- and there were a lot of people who never believed, including my mother, that I would make it to an Ivy League school, maybe just Ginger who I met in Marching Band in the 8th grade...

ANGLE ON THE LETTER

Fragments of the contents -- "This is to inform you of your lithium levels"... "Exacerbated by stress"... "A strict drug regimen..."

WHITACRE (V.O.)

...And the study said that people had nice, sympathetic feelings about people who were adopted and treated them better. So I made up this adoption story -- and people did treat me better -- and when I got a job one of my professors told the people at Ralston Purina that I was this amazing guy that had accomplished all of this in spite of being adopted --

Whitacre takes out a pair of SCISSORS and goes to work on the letter. Cutting and taping. He lays it out on his desk like a puzzle.

WHITACRE (V.O.)

...And so it was really other people who spread the story, not me -- although I admit it was wrong to start it and everything, it was other people who kept it going. Even the people at ADM. My new lawyer sees that.

INTERIOR CHAMBERS DOJ - DAY

BILL WALKER, 50, is Whitacre's new lawyer. He sits in a golf shirt and tennis shoes and lays out a new thesis for a squad of amazed DOJ PROSECUTORS.

WALKER

This all goes back many years, before most of us were born. It's bigger than any of us, and it's ongoing. I know you're skeptical, but I've seen it. My client Mark Whitacre has shown it to me. Maybe I am just a personal injury lawyer from Taylorville-nowhereville-Illinois, but I tell you -- I know the identity of the master puppeteer.

The DOJ lawyers try not to laugh.

MARY SPEARING

The who?

WALKER

Master puppeteer, and it's not who you're thinking. Mark has tapes -- tapes the government doesn't want us to hear. Tapes that outline the actions of Brian Shepard, who hit Mark Whitacre with a briefcase when Mark was cooperating with the government.

Walker is in full rant. He pulls out a letter.

WALKER

My client has a letter from his psychiatrist outlining and confirming the cruelty perpetrated on him by Agent Shepard. A letter from his psychiatrist, clearly exonerating my client from all wrongdoing.

Walker slides the letter across the table to Spearing. The lawyers examine it.

INTERIOR WHITACRE LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Outside the window there's gray snow on endless fields of dirt and broken corn stalks extend to the horizon. An empty swimming pool and a FOR SALE sign are in the yard. The stables across the road are empty.

Shepard sits with Whitacre and Ginger. Whitacre reads from the letter.

WHITACRE

"It is obvious that the FBI made some grand mistakes in how they handled and treated you."

He looks up.

WHITACRE

There's a phrase of great interest, "grand mistakes," coming from a doctor.

He continues reading.

WHITACRE

"When one discusses suicide, this is a red flag. When one discusses how they will do it, then it is very, very serious...

SHAPARD

Mark...

WHITACRE

..."I also feel that the FBI requiring you to do unethical conduct against ADM was another blunder that forced you into a bipolar situation. They should have known better and noted a medical problem exists. From a medical point of view, this is attempted murder that the FBI did to you. From a legal point of view, your lawyer needs to decide what to do and what the terminology is. I'll support you in whatever you need. You and your family have been through too much turmoil working with the government. They should know better."

(looking up)

That's Doctor Miller!

SHEPARD

I read the letter, Mark. The problem with the letter is it's a lie.

Ginger looks at her husband.

WHITACRE

What are you talking about, Brian? It's on his letterhead. It's his signature. What are you talking about?

SHEPARD

The area code, Mark. In the letterhead? The area code 847. This letter was written in November 1995. That area code didn't exist then.

WHITACRE

Okay, but they announced that the change was coming. I even remember that. People order their stationery early.

SHEPARD

I thought about that. So I asked the phone company. This is the press release announcing the 847 area code...

He puts the release on the table.

SHEPARD

It's dated six days after your letter was written -- Miller could not have known about it.

Whitacre stares at it -- then looks up.

THE MACHINE IN HIS HEAD THAT RECONSTITUTES REALITY GRINDS AND SEIZES. THE LIES START TO DOUBLE BACK ON EACH OTHER AND FALL APART IN HIS MOUTH.

THE INTERIOR MONOLOGUE AND DIALOGUE STUMBLE OVER EACH OTHER AND CONVERGE.

WHITACRE

Ron Henkoff from Fortune called Doctor Miller and Miller confirmed the letter...

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**

**Ron Henkoff from Fortune called Doctor Miller and Miller confirmed the letter...**

SHEPARD

I talked to Doctor Miller, Mark.

Ginger picks up the letter. She's running out of things to believe in.

WHITACRE

He can't talk to you...That's a violation of doctor patient confidentiality...

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**

**He can't talk to you...That's a violation of doctor patient confidentiality...**

SHEPARD

Doctor patient confidentiality doesn't apply to forgeries.

Ginger starts to sob. Whitacre tries again. But, he's the only one still listening.

WHITACRE

Then why did Fortune Magazine run the story...

**WHITACRE (V.O.)**

**Then why did Fortune Magazine run the story...**

Ginger has had it, she breaks down.

GINGER  
Stop it, Mark.

WHITACRE  
If you talk to Henkoff...

GINGER  
Stop it, Mark. You have to stop  
doing this to yourself.

SHEPARD  
Why do you keep lying?

Whitacre stops. He can't answer that.

WHITACRE  
I don't know. I think maybe I  
should go back to the hospital.

INTERIOR FEDERAL COURT, URBANA, ILLINOIS

Whitacre looks like shit. He sits with Walker in JUDGE  
HAROLD BAKER'S courtroom.

SUPER: OCTOBER 1997

CLERK  
Case 97-2001 United States of  
America versus Mark Whitacre.

JUDGE BAKER  
You have the right to make a  
statement if you wish?

Whitacre nods and stands.

WHITACRE  
Thank you. I really appreciate the  
opportunity to get up here and say  
a few words. Wow. What a ride.  
It's been a long five years. A lot  
of memories. I want to apologize  
to a lot of people in this room...

ANGLE ON SHEPARD AND HERNDON

They sit together in the back row.

WHITACRE  
...And to a lot of them who aren't  
in this room for my actions. I'm on  
medication now, so I'm seeing  
things a lot more clearly. I  
realize I hurt a lot of people and  
I want to say I'm so so sorry.

(MORE)

WHITACRE (cont'd)

I greatly apologize and I accept responsibility for my actions. That's it. Thank you.

JUDGE BAKER

To observe that Mr. Whitacre is not the usual felon is a gross understatement. He is well educated, has a loving wife and family, is well respected in the community. It is not inconceivable that in due course he could have been CEO of Archer Daniels Midland...

ANGLE ON WHITACRE

He smiles. But the judge isn't done with him.

JUDGE BAKER

...However, the court can find no clear connection between Mr. Whitacre's bipolar disorder and the 45 counts of criminal misconduct he has been charged with -- just garden variety greed. It is very difficult to tell when Mr. Whitacre is telling the truth...

INTERIOR FEDERAL CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION, SC - DAY

Whitacre is in his green prison jumpsuit -- BALD -- his toupee, another deception, also gone. He sits in front of a video camera in the beam of ONE LIGHT. A CAMERAMAN records his PARDON APPEAL.

SUPER: OCTOBER 2002

WHITACRE

I don't think what happened is fair when you look at me compared to Mick and Terry. I mean, if you go and hold up your local grocery store you get maybe five years in prison. Mick and Terry held up every grocery store in the world and they got three. So you tell me how it makes sense that I get nine. I think that's something you should consider, Mr. President, when reviewing this request for pardon. I'd also like to take this opportunity to apologize -- on behalf of myself and my wife Ginger -- to Special Agent Brian Shepard. He never hit me with a briefcase or told me to destroy tapes.

(MORE)

WHITACRE (cont'd)

The idea to sue him came from someone inside at ADM. I shouldn't have listened. I don't even remember who it was. When I was at ADM, I lived so many lives, I wasn't sure who I was. Today, I know more who I am and what I really want out of life. I've completed three post-graduate degrees while in detention. A J.D., which is, of course, a law degree and another advanced degree in the psychology of jury selection. I sleep better in prison than I have in years. My wife has forgiven me and believes that the ordeal with ADM has brought us closer together in a marriage of over twenty years. I hope you will allow me to leave here, so that I can rejoin that life with my family and three kids, two of whom are adopted. Especially when you consider that thanks in large part to my testimony the United States government has been able to collect over a billion dollars in price fixing fines from big business. That's it. Thanks.

He smiles. The light goes out. The Cameraman starts packing up the equipment. Out of the shadows steps Bob Herndon.

HERNDON

Good luck with the pardon, Mark.

WHITACRE

Thanks for helping me remember everything Bob. I sure appreciate it. I wish Brian could've come.

HERNDON

He's still pretty angry.

WHITACRE

You tell him I'm real sorry. Can you do that?

HERNDON

Sure, Mark.

WHITACRE

The funny part is if I'd never gone undercover I would have never stolen the **eleven and a half** million. It was my way out. My severance. What else could I do? I had to write my own severance.

Before Herndon can respond a CORRECTIONAL OFFICER approaches.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER  
Work detail.

WHITACRE  
See you, Bob.

Herndon does some math.

HERNDON  
Eleven and a half million?

WHITACRE  
What?

HERNDON  
I thought it was nine and a half.

WHITACRE  
What did I say?

HERNDON  
You said eleven and a half. You do know the people at ADM think you were the mole, that you planted the virus that made it go away.

WHITACRE  
The eleven and a half is with the interest.

HERNDON  
Mark, is it nine and half or eleven and a half?

WHITACRE  
I don't know Bob, you tell me.

He smiles and turns his back on the agent and walks down the hall toward work detail.

SUPER: AN INVESTIGATION BY THE FBI, THE IRS, AND ADM DETERMINED THAT ALL DISPUTED FUNDS WERE ACCOUNTED FOR.

SUPER: WHITACRE ULTIMATELY ADMITTED THAT THE EMBEZZLEMENT IDEA WAS HIS ALONE.

EXTERIOR ADM - DAY

Whitacre stares at the ADM plant through a chain link fence.

SUPER: ADM PAID OVER \$500 MILLION IN CIVIL SETTLEMENTS AND GOVERNMENT PENALTIES. THEY ARE CURRENTLY UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT.

INTERIOR COURTROOM - DAY

Mick Andreas and Terry Wilson await their sentence.

SUPER: MICK ANDREAS AND TERRY WILSON SERVED THREE YEARS IN PRISON. THEY WERE RELEASED IN 2002.

EXTERIOR EDGEFIELD PRISON (SOUTH CAROLINA) - DAY

Ginger waits for her husband.

SUPER: EDGEFIELD, SC, DECEMBER 2006

Whitacre emerges in street clothes. He no longer wears a toupee.

They embrace.

INTERIOR WHITACRE'S NEW OFFICE, PENSACOLA, FLORIDA - DAY

Whitacre stands behind the desk in his new office.

SUPER: MARK WHITACRE IS CURRENTLY COO AND PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS OF CYPRESS SYSTEMS, INC.

HE HAS NOT BEEN GRANTED A PRESIDENTIAL PARDON.

THE END