

SOLDADO

Written by

TAYLOR SHERIDAN

OPEN ON:

Scrub brush and mesquite cover an arroyo overlooking the mud-colored water of the Rio Grande River.

CAMERA SHIFTS --

AND A BURLAP SACK fills the frame.

WIDEN TO REVEAL --

The burlap sack is duct-taped over a man's head as he kneels in the dirt. His clothes are filthy. FEET bare and bloody.

A BOY NAMED JOSE(15), walks toward him. Dressed like he just got out of school -- t-shirt, jeans, tennis shoes. Nothing in his appearance or demeanor explains why the boy POINTS A PISTOL at the man's head ...

TEENAGE GIRL (V.O.)

I think about the price. The price
of appetite. The cost of forgetting
who we are. Pretending we are ...
Who we will never be ...

The man on his knees doesn't cry, doesn't shake, just sits and waits for it ...

ANGLE ON --

A HALF DOZEN MEN mill about holding pistols. Smoking cigarettes. Shouting at the boy to pull the trigger. Taunting him. Threatening him. Four other boys ranging in age from 14 to 20 stand in a row, watching ...

A collection of pickups and SUVs sit idling in the desert. In the rear of a TAN FORD EXPEDITION is a TEENAGE GIRL. She presses her BURLAP-COVERED FACE against the glass ...

CAMERA PUSHES IN ON THE GIRL. Can't hear her, but can see her body shake with fear ...

TEENAGE GIRL (V.O.)

So easy to pretend we are not to
blame. That a demon enters us. But
the demon is already inside. We
just make potions that release it.

GALLO(35), thick round body and dull, uncaring eyes, walks toward Jose.

*

GALLO

Hacelo.

Jose's hand shakes. Skinny chest heaves with each breath. Tries to find the courage, or menace, or whatever it takes to make a boy a murderer ...

GALLO (CONT'D)

Si tu quieres ser sicario esta es
la manera de empesar.

Jose sucks in a breath. His finger finds the trigger but not the strength to pull it. Looks at Gallo with pleading eyes. *

Gallo sucks a drag from his cigarette, raises his own pistol and shoots Jose in the head. His body drops ... *

Gallo picks up the pistol and walks to the row of boys, hands it to ANOTHER BOY as the girl's muffled screams pound against the Expedition's windows.

THE BOY walks slowly toward the man on his knees. MIGUEL HERNANDEZ(14), has short, neat hair and a kind, almost feminine face. Miguel's giant eyes fall on the masked man.

TEENAGE GIRL (V.O.)

There's no revenge for all they
have taken. No justice. It simply
is ...

GALLO

Hacelo.

Miguel raises the pistol and whispers --

MIGUEL

Lo siento.

The burlap-covered head turns to face him.

TEENAGE GIRL (V.O.)

And still, they must be forced to
look at all they have destroyed. By
having the same done to them. Or
they will forget ...

THROUGH BURLAP --

Can just barely make out the muzzle of the pistol and the wide eyes of the boy.

TEENAGE GIRL (V.O.)

Forget they are human. Believe they
are as different as they feel ...

BACK WITH MIGUEL --

The burlap-covered head turns back toward the river as Miguel pulls the trigger, sending the man face-first to the dirt. *

TEENAGE GIRL (V.O.)
Then they are the lion. And
everything we loved and lost is
simply its meal.

CAMERA STAYS WITH THE BODY as the sound of vehicle doors opening and closing violates the day. The rumble of engines fades until there is nothing on the arroyo but death and silence ...

EXT. US/MEXICO BORDER -- NIGHT. *

FOLLOWING WORDS APPEAR OVER THE SCREEN AS CAMERA STARES DOWN AT A BLACK DESERT:

"THREE WEEKS EARLIER"

The THUMP of HELICOPTER ROTORS attack the night. Getting closer. LOUDER. Until the thump shakes the earth. *

INT. HOMELAND SECURITY MH 60 HELICOPTER -- CONT.

A HELICOPTER PILOT watches the desert floor on a THERMAL IMAGING SCREEN built into the console --

PEOPLE GLOW HOT WHITE ON THE SCREEN as they move across the border in groups of 10 and 15. The sound of the chopper reaches them -- some groups run start running single-file. Some groups huddle together and hide. Some groups -- no order to them at all. *

HELICOPTER PILOT takes it all in --

HELICOPTER PILOT
Jesus, they're really coming over
tonight. Ground, get ready. I'm
going to push them your way. *

EXT. BORDER -- CONT.

The helicopter drops altitude and flares, blasting a torrent of dust and debris up from the ground.

The pilot turns on a SPOTLIGHT, and illuminates a desert that is alive with people running in every direction.

The chopper swings back and forth, herding the scattering migrants ...

HEADLIGHTS AND FLASHLIGHTS pierce the night like swords. Move toward the terrified migrants. BORDER AGENTS yell and scream as the herd compresses. BORDER AGENTS SURROUND THEM. The migrants seem to accept defeat in unison -- they go from running to walking to stopping and sitting on the ground ...

The chopper rises and scans the night for stragglers ...

FINDS ONE -- A LONE MAN runs like hell through the desert.

HELICOPTER PILOT

Runner. 100 meters off your nine o'clock.

Swords of light bounce toward the giant spotlight illuminating the running man who slows to a trot, then a walk, then to his knees as BORDER AGENTS APPROACH, rifles raised ...

*
*

The man's back faces us. He ROCKS BACK AND FORTH ON HIS KNEES, MUMBLING ...

*

BORDER AGENT (IN SPANISH)

LAY ON YOUR STOMACH, ARMS TO YOUR SIDE. FINGERS OUTSTRETCHED.

The rocking man doesn't answer, just keeps rocking.

ANGLE ON --

BORDER PATROL AGENTS HOLD FLASHLIGHTS ON DEFEATED FACES ...

Some are Mexican, some Honduran, no telling where TWO ARE THEM ARE FROM -- THEY LOOK ASIAN ...

BORDER AGENT (CONT'D)

Do you speak English?

They begin pleading their case IN BURMESE. The border agent deflates, speaks into his radio --

BORDER AGENT (CONT'D)

I need a translator who speaks ...

Looks at another agent.

BORDER AGENT (CONT'D)

You know what he's speaking?

Doesn't have a clue.

BORDER AGENT 2
... Chinese maybe?

BACK WITH --

*

The Border Patrol agent creeping toward the rocking man,
rifle raised --

BORDER AGENT
LAY ON YOUR STOMACH.

Man slowly stands. MORE AGENTS APPROACH. RIFLES RAISED. ALL
YELLING --

BORDER AGENTS
DOWN DOWN DOWN!!! ON THE FUCKING
GROUND!!! NOW!!!

The rocking man turns -- wild eyes stare back. He SCREAMS IN
ARABIC and runs right toward them.

ROCKING MAN
ALLAHU AKBAR --

Every agent opens fire. Rounds punch into the rocking man,
standing him upright ...

A round hits him in the stomach and THE MAN EXPLODES,
disappearing in a violent, pink mist.

Border agents rub burning debris from their eyes and place
hands over ruptured eardrums as the hovering chopper holds
them in a circle of light, surrounded by a sea of darkness.

EXT. US/MEXICO BORDER -- NEXT MORNING.

An army of HOMELAND SECURITY AGENTS now surrounds the scene.
YELLOW EVIDENCE MARKERS sit beside every empty shell casing,
every piece of bone and clothing ...

An AGENT walks a GERMAN SHEPHERD through mesquite trees,
freezes when he sees --

A FOOT, still wearing it's shoe, perched in a branch.

K-9 AGENT
Fuck. Me. OVER HERE!!!

Beyond the trees is an arroyo. SOMETHING ON THE OTHER SIDE,
catches the agent's attention. He walks toward it ...

Stops. Looks down. All he can manage to say is --

K-9 AGENT (CONT'D)

Oh, my God ...

We see what he sees --

FOUR PRAYER BLANKETS SIDE-BY-SIDE, FACING WEST ...

EXT. COSTCO -- KANSAS CITY, KANSAS -- DAY.

CAMERA LOOKS ACROSS A PARKING LOT TOWARD A COSTCO. People filter in and out pushing shopping carts -- empty as they enter, overflowing as they depart ...

The parking lot echoes with the rattle of shopping carts, laughing children and car horns -- creating a symphony of suburban living ...

A VAN PULLS UP, PARKS. FOUR MEN GET OUT. They wear long jackets and long pants. Walk in unison toward the giant store.

CAMERA doesn't move. Stays right where it is. Just watches as the men wade through the swarm of shoppers and disappear inside ...

Cars come and go. People filter in and out. Seems there is no end to the stream of people ...

The building seems to suck inward before bursting at its seams and disintegrating into a brown cloud of debris. There is a moment of pure silence before screams and car alarms attack the afternoon ...

EXT. NORTHERN SOMALIA -- NIGHT -- A FEW WEEKS LATER.

A SOMALI MILITIAMAN kneels, AK 47 across his chest, and fills a water bottle from a POT HOLE IN THE ROAD. Behind him is a CINDER BLOCK BUILDING and more men with rifles. Never bothers to look up at the carpet of stars above him. But we do... *

EXT. THE STARS -- CONT.

CAMERA LOOKS DOWN ON THE BLACK DESERT. Tiny bulbs of light make the earth look like its own galaxy ...

A DOZEN DELTA FORCE OPERATORS FREE-FALL THROUGH FRAME TOWARD THE EARTH 40,000 FEET BENEATH THEM.

HELMETS, GOGGLES AND OXYGEN MASKS COVER THEIR FACES.

They careen toward earth like comets ...

EXT. CINDER BLOCK HOUSE -- NIGERIA -- NIGHT.

The militia man has settled against the trunk of a tree, fights boredom. Fights sleep ... *

FAR IN THE DISTANCE --

Black images float toward the ground like phantoms ...

EXT. NORTHERN SOMALIA -- MOMENT LATER.

CAMERA PUSHES THROUGH SAW GRASS THAT STANDS EIGHT FEET TALL. FAST. DELIBERATE ...

ANGLE ON --

THE MILITIA MAN. Seconds from sleep. Hears something. Looks up as a rifle round punches through his face. No sound from the rifle or the man as he falls back ...

DELTA OPERATORS RUSH TOWARD THE BUILDING and the half-dozen guards who mill about, no clue what is coming for them ... *

SILENCERS EXTEND A FOOT FROM THE BARRELS OF THE OPERATORS' RIFLES. When they fire, the only sound is rifle bolts spitting shell casings as guards die without ever seeing their killers. *

The operators reach the building. Lean against it as the sound of MEN TALKING leaks from open windows.

The operators throw FLASH-BANG GRENADES through the windows, duck as the grenades explode against the cinder block walls sending shotgun blasts of white light through every orifice of the structure. The only sound now is MOANS OF AGONY... *

The operators kick open the door --

Men are doubled over, bleeding from their ears and eyes, or slumped against the wall, vomiting. The operators pound rounds into all of them. ALL BUT ONE --

They rush A MAN who sits in the only chair in the room, zip tie his hands and feet, pull a black bag over his head, and carry him out of the building like luggage. *

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM -- CAMP LEMONNIER -- DJIBOUTI -- DAY

The man sits in a room, black bag over his head. Hands and feet zip-tied to a chair.

A HAND reaches into frame, pulls off the bag, revealing the man's face --

BASHIIR(38) looks around the room, sees a table with a LAPTOP COMPUTER --A DIRTY RAG BESIDE IT and TWO FIVE GALLON JUGS OF WATER on the floor, and --

MATT. Sitting across from him eating a Snickers bar ...

MATT

Thirsty?

Bashiir looks at the water jugs then turns his eyes on Matt.

BASHIIR

You Americans need new tricks.

Matt smiles.

MATT

Think I'm going to waterboard you,
Bashiir?

Matt walks to the computer, flips up the screen, and starts hitting keys.

MATT (CONT'D)

Waterboarding is what we do when we
can't torture. This is Africa...

Matt looks at him, smile gone.

MATT (CONT'D)

I can do whatever I want here. But
I'm not going to torture you,
Bashiir. You're going to answer
every question I ask without me
harming a hair on your head. Wanna
know why?

Bashiir looks at him.

MATT (CONT'D)

'Cuz if you don't, I'll call in an
air strike on your fucking house.

*

He steps back from the computer and SATELLITE FOOTAGE OF
BASHIIR'S COMPOUND IS ON THE SCREEN ...

Bashiir's unblinking eyes stare at the screen ...

MATT (CONT'D)

Nice pool. Whoever said crime
doesn't pay wasn't stealing oil
tankers ...

Matt plays SECURITY FOOTAGE OF THE MEN WALKING INTO COSTCO. *

BASHIIR

Those men are Yemeni. We had
nothing to do with that. Your fight
is with ISIS. Not me. All my fights
are on the water.

MATT

They sure are, Bashiir. And Yemen -- *

Matt points east.

MATT (CONT'D)

Just across the Gulf. What a
coincidence ... *

Bashiir stares at Matt, sweat pluming from him.

MATT (CONT'D)

I got a theory. Let's see what you
think of it. Kind of tricky for a
Yemeni National to book an
international flight these days,
much-less five men on the terrorist
watch list. If they had fake
passports, they'd just fly straight
to Kansas City instead of going to
Mexico and hiring coyotes to truck
them 100 miles through the desert.
So the big question is: how'd they
get to Mexico? Cuz they damn sure
didn't fly. Didn't drive. No ...
They travelled by ship. A ship you
didn't try to steal. And THAT means
someone paid you not to ... So
here's my only questions for you,
Bashiir. Answer them and go home. *

Matt leans forward.

MATT (CONT'D)

Who paid you to let the ship
through and which ship was it?

Bashiir just stares at him and sweats.

MATT (CONT'D)

Silent treatment, huh?

Clicks back to the footage of Bashir's house --

*

CAMERA LOOKS DOWN ON SOMEONE WALKING AROUND THE POOL.

MATT (CONT'D)

Oop, somebody's home. Is that
you're brother? I'd hate to kill
the pool man.

BASHIIR

Every ship smuggles people!! And
they don't need my permission.

MATT

Yes they fucking do. Last chance.

*

Bashir looks at him with defiance.

BASHIIR

This is a bluff. You're American.
You have too many rules.

MATT

No rules today, sport. Just orders.

*

Matt dials a number on a satellite phone.

INT. USS BARRY -- GULF OF ADEN -- CONT.

A COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST answers Matt's call, hands the
comms to the ship's CAPTAIN.

CAPTAIN

We're locked on target.

MATT (V.O.)

You're green.

CAPTAIN

Roger that.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM -- CONT.

Bashir stares at the screen, not fully believing Matt's
threat. Looks at Matt, then back at the screen. Watches his
house and whoever just jumped in the pool EVISCERATED.

*

Bashir screams. Matt walks to the computer, hits a button...

EXT. SKY OVER A HIGHWAY OUTSIDE BERBERA, SOMALIA -- CONT.

A PREDATOR DRONE FLIES 10,000 FEET ABOVE A HIGHWAY leading to a small, seaport town, its CAMERAS FOLLOWING A TOYOTA HIGHLANDER ...

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM -- CONT.

FOOTAGE OF THE HIGHLANDER PLAYS ON THE COMPUTER ... *

MATT

Man, you guys sure love those Toyotas. Ford guy myself ...

Tears spill from Bashiir's eyes. Matt looks right into them, says into his sat phone.

MATT (CONT'D)

We're a 'go' on target two.

Bashiir turns his face away. Matt stands in an instant, twists Bashiir's head back toward the screen.

MATT (CONT'D)

NO. You're going to watch it.

Grainy footage from the nose of the missile moves down on the Toyota, collides with it, then nothing but black smoke. *

Matt sits back down and looks at Bashiir.

MATT (CONT'D)

You've got a big family, Bashiir. Lot of brothers who should have chosen another line of work. I can do this all day ... Sooner or later I'll get to the brother you can't live without. *

PUSH IN ON BASHIIR'S FACE --

Eyes filled with hatred. Panic. Pain. Matt's eyes stare back with no emotion whatsoever. Pulls up FOOTAGE of another vehicle on the computer ... *

BASHIIR

NOOOOO !!!!!

MATT

I think I just found him ...

INT. JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMANDER'S OFFICE -- LATER.

Matt sits across from COLONEL KENNETH WALTER. Looks like they all look: sun-stained skin, short hair, hard eyes. Other MEN IN SUITS AND UNIFORMS sit in various chairs around the room. *

MATT

The money came from Quassim Al-Raymi's camp, which isn't a surprise ... The ship, on the other hand, is the Panamanian freighter LA VICTORIA, registered to the Mexican holding company GRUPO DURO. It docked at Port of Vera Cruz on the 18th. *

A WOMAN'S VOICE COMES FROM A SPEAKER IN THE SHAPE OF A STARFISH ON COLONEL WALTER'S DESK.

VOICE

Carlos Reyez's company ...

MATT

The one and only.

Can hear a HEAVY SIGH come through the speaker.

WALTER

If you need Matt home, I can get him out oh-six hundred tomorrow.

VOICE

We sent a bird. It'll be there in an hour. We'll talk more about this tomorrow, Matt. *

MATT

Yes ma'am.

Green light on the speaker goes out. Matt stands.

COLONEL WALTER

Seems pretty short-sighted to me. Border's gonna tighten like a vice after what they did.

MATT

Know what happened to the price of cocaine after 9/11, Ken? Tight borders are good for business ...

Matt walks out.

EXT. MESS HALL -- LATER.

SEVENTY FIVE METAL PICNIC TABLES SIT IN NEAT ROWS BENEATH A STEEL ROOF -- NO WALLS. Hot air blows off the Gulf of Aden. MILITARY JETS land on the tarmac a quarter mile to the left.

Attached to the ceiling are dozens of flat screen TVs. Soccer plays. The sound of cheers and announcers speaking some indeterminate language, the sound of JETS, WIND, and 100 MEN SPEAKING FOUR DIFFERENT LANGUAGES mixes into a soup of noise that defines the military ...

SPECIAL FORCES SOLDIERS from every country in NATO -- FRENCH FOREIGN LEGION, BRITISH S.A.S., GERMAN KSK operators and factions of US SEAL TEAM SIX, DELTA FORCE, CIA S.A.D. OPERATORS -- who dress in mostly in jeans and random t-shirts, sit at various tables. Some eat, some pore over maps, some check gear -- even with a hundred men under the steel structure, the area appears almost empty. Matt looks out past dirt the color of ash toward the cobalt blue water of the Indian Ocean ...

VOICE

Hard to believe this is the
birthplace of man.

Matt looks up at a SEAL TEAM SIX OPERATOR, built like a diesel engine. Long hair, but clean shaven.

MATT

Ethiopia is the birthplace of man.
This shithole wasn't inhabited
until the third century.

Looks the SEAL over.

MATT (CONT'D)

You guys are shaving now. Guess you
got tired of looking like baristas.

*

The SEAL chuckles.

SEAL TEAM SIX

SOCOM told us to. Guess we ain't
pretending to be their friends
anymore.

The SEAL looks at a large BLACK DUFFLE BAG at Matt's feet.

SEAL TEAM SIX (CONT'D)

You bugging out?

Matt just looks out over the ocean.

SEAL TEAM SIX (CONT'D)

Just when we were starting to have
some fun.

Matt watches as a C130 TRANSPORT PLANE lumbers toward the
runway rumbling like thunder. Wheels touch down and it
screams to a stop. Matt looks at the SEAL.

MATT

You should be ashamed of yourself,
sailor. Not supposed to be fun. *

Matt winks, grabs his duffle and walks into the punishing sun
toward the C130 ...

INT. ABACO LIBROS Y CAFE -- CARTEGENA, COLOMBIA -- NIGHT.

BOOKS LINE THE WALLS. BOOKS ARE STACKED ON THE FLOOR. BOOKS
EVERYWHERE ... Scattered among them are TABLES AND CHAIRS. *

A BAR RUNS THE LENGTH OF ANOTHER WALL. WAITRESSES CARRY TRAYS
OF APPETIZERS AND BEER -- this is how hipsters in Colombia
spend a Friday night ...

TUCKED FAR IN THE CORNER is ALEJANDRO. Across from him is a
man that looks anything but hip -- SANTIAGO(28), head shaved. *

Wears an OAKLAND RAIDERS JERSEY, the LEGS OF SPIDER TATTOO
crawl out beneath his shirt and up his neck. TEAR DROP
TATTOOS run down his face. Santiago gulps a beer as Alejandro
sips an espresso.

Santiago looks around the cafe, can't take one more second
surrounded by normal people. He speaks in English --

SANTIAGO

Everyone who's ever seen him is
dead. You don't look dead. How do
you know what he looks like?

ALEJANDRO

Everyone of you who's seen him is
dead. I'm not one of you ...

Santiago swallows his beer. Tosses a backpack to Alejandro.
Alejandro looks inside -- stuffed with bundles of hundreds.

SANTIAGO

When can you take me to him?

Alejandro finishes his espresso, stands.

ALEJANDRO

We can go right now.

Alejandro walks off, Santiago following behind ...

EXT. STREET -- CONT.

The city is alive with people. Clean. Shiny even. Nothing like the war zone of two decades ago ... Alejandro leads Santiago down the street, up an alley and comes to another street where war zone hasn't quite been washed away.

Another alley and another street and there is no attempt to wash away the war at all ...

Alejandro reaches a door. Above it, a small NEON SIGN THAT READS -- LAS CHICAS. Alejandro swings open the door and walks inside.

INT. LAS CHICAS -- CONT.

IT IS DARK. AMERICAN POP MUSIC plays as a LONE WOMAN walks idly around a BRASS POLE ON A SMALL STAGE. When she notices actual customers, she begins to give rhythm to her walk ...

ALEJANDRO

This is more your speed, I bet.

Alejandro looks back at him.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

Get ready.

*

Santiago pulls a pistol from beneath his shirt, holds it to his side as he follows Alejandro down a long hall.

*

Alejandro pushes through a bathroom door, holds it open for Santiago ...

INT. BATHROOM -- CONT.

Santiago's bald head is covered in a sheen of sweat. Eyes wild with adrenaline. Looks at Alejandro.

*

SANTIAGO

You got a gun?

Alejandro nods. Seems to make Santiago feel a little better. A little ...

SANTIAGO (CONT'D)

How you wanna do this?

ALEJANDRO

I'm not here to do anything but
take you to him. Rest is up to you.

Santiago sucks a deep breath, nods. Alejandro points to the
tear drops.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

How could you kill so many and be
so nervous? *

SANTIAGO

This ain't just anybody. This is
the fucking devil, man ... Fuck it.
Let's do it. Take me to him. *

ALEJANDRO

Okay.

Alejandro guides Santiago by the shoulders, faces him to the
mirror. Santiago stares at Alejandro's reflection, confused.
Then realizes, and says in horror --

SANTIAGO

El Medelli --

Alejandro drives Santiago's face through the sink, sending
both Santiago and chunks of porcelain to the filthy floor.

CAMERA BACKS AWAY as Alejandro kneels over the body ... *

INT. BLACK S.U.V. -- VIRGINIA -- NEXT DAY

The PENTAGON looms through the S.U.V.'s Window. Vehicle turns
left and it's in the rearview mirror ... Matt sits in the
backseat beside CYNTHIA FOARD(50), DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE
CIA. Her graying hair has been chopped into a series of hard
angles that remove any illusion she achieved her position
with her looks. Hers was the voice on the phone speaker ...
Her hawk's eyes look over Matt -- studying what appears to be
a permanent sunburn etched into his skin.

CYNTHIA

You should invest in a little
sunscreen, Matt.

MATT

If you guys would start wars
somewhere cloudy I wouldn't have
to. *

CYNTHIA

Get all that shit out of your system now -- I need you about as entertaining as a loaf of bread. Your audience finds no humor in three hundred people dying in a grocery store.

Matt looks out the window as they pass over the POTOMAC RIVER. They ride in silence. Matt looks at her.

MATT

We have a plan?

She nods.

MATT (CONT'D)

Care to tell me what it is?

CYNTHIA

I don't know what it is.

Matt studies her silence.

*

MATT

Who does?

She just looks at him. The S.U.V. Exits the highway. Makes a left and a right, then turns onto PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE. Matt bores his eyes into her.

MATT (CONT'D)

Who the hell are we going to see?

CYNTHIA

The man with a plan ...

The S.U.V. turns toward a guard gate -- the WHITE HOUSE looming behind it ...

*

INT. WEST WING -- WHITE HOUSE -- DAY.

Matt sits in a chair beside a closed door. Stares at the President's staff fielding calls and pecking at computers like hungry chickens.

A door opens. A MAN looks down at Matt.

MAN

Come on in.

Matt stands and walks through the door.

CAMERA SLINKS CLOSER. WATCHES AS A DOZEN MEN AND WOMEN LOOK UP AT HIM FROM COUCHES. Some wear suits, others uniforms. Matt nods at them, then turns his focus to a group of men slipping out a side door of the Oval Office. Could swear he just saw THE PRESIDENT ... NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR JAMES RIDLEY(55), points to a chair. *

RIDLEY

Have a seat.

Matt sits.

HAMMOND *

What do you think is the most valuable commodity cartels move across our borders? *

Matt thinks about that. *

MATT *

Twenty years ago? Cocaine. Today? I'd have to say people, sir. it's resource they don't have to cultivate or process. And if they don't make it across, they pay to cross again. At three times the price of a kilo. *

RIDLEY

How would you define terrorism, Mr. Graver? *

MATT *

That's your job, sir. *

Ridley likes the answer.

RIDLEY

The current definition is any individual or group that uses violence to achieve a political goal. The Administration believes drug cartels now fit that definition ...

CIA DIRECTOR DALE HAMMOND(62), heavy bags under his eyes from years of no sleep, leans forward. *

HAMMOND *

The president is going to add cartels to the list of terrorist organizations.

RIDLEY

You understand how that will expand our ability to combat them.

MATT

I do.

RIDLEY

Unfortunately, once it's put before Congress it becomes public information and the leaders of these organizations will know what's coming next. Not to mention the reaction from the Mexican government ...

*

*

HAMMOND

Cartel territories are fairly stable at the moment. Nothing like it was in 2010. Striking them is a lot easier when they're already fighting each other.

Every eye is on Matt. He waits for more information. None comes. He knows this game well, takes the plunge.

MATT

Happy to do whatever you need. Just point the way, sir.

*

RIDLEY

What do you think would be the most effective thing to do?

MATT

... Turn the clock back to 2010.

*

Right answer again. Ridley looks at ARNO MCCULLOUGH(55), hard eyes set in a granite face. Nods. The general looks at Matt.

GENERAL MCCULLOUGH

What we're thinking is this -- eliminate a tier one target and make it look like a rival cartel is responsible.

HAMMOND

And continue flaming that fire until those rivals go to war, THEN announce their listing on the terrorist watch list. Mexican government will have no option but to ask us to intervene militarily.

RIDLEY

For that type of escalation things have to get real bad real fast. El Salvador in '81 bad. Think you can do that?

*

MATT

... If we hit the right target.

*

RIDLEY

Carlos Reyes is the target.

MATT

You know where he is??

GENERAL MCCULLOUGH

We're hoping you'd find him for us.

Matt fights a chuckle.

MATT

General, I'm not an investigator. I run operations.

GENERAL MCCULLOUGH

Finding him is your operation.

HAMMOND

You've done things like this in the Middle East. You don't think those tactics could apply here?

MATT

... Do you want them to?

RIDLEY

We think it's time.

Matt tries to digest this.

MATT

Okay, um ... Do we know where his family is?

HAMMOND

Family's under surveillance.

MATT

He in contact with them?

HAMMOND

Not to our knowledge. We assume yes.

MATT

Kids?

HAMMOND

Two. That we know of.

*

MATT

Age of the youngest?

MATT (CONT'D)

Sixteen.

MATT (CONT'D)

What kind of resources do I have?

GENERAL MCCULLOUGH

CIA overflights, NSA satellite link and control, and drone strike capability if you locate our tier one somewhere you can't reach him. Boots on the ground you hire on the outside. Same with your supply train, logistics and air support.

Matt's not sure he heard him right --

MATT

... I get air support, sir?

RIDLEY

If you can hire it. But only along the border only and within reason.

MATT

I can hire it if you're willing to pay for it.

HAMMOND

You've got a blank check, Matt.

Silence.

MATT

To do this right, I've got to ... I just want to be clear -- Does the resolve exist to see this through? Because to achieve this objective I need to get dirty, sir.

*
*
*
*

Ridley leans forward.

RIDLEY

Dirty is exactly why you're here.

*

INT. ENTYSE LOUNGE -- RITZ CARLTON -- FAIRFAX, VA -- NIGHT.

Even a wine bar in Fairfax feels official. Patrons huddle close and discuss things that affect every region of this planet. Cautious glances from one group to the next. Looks like a roomful of people playing poker without cards as they gulp cabernet at 40 bucks a glass. Matt sits across from ANDY WHEELER(45), looks like what he is -- ex-special forces. The three thousand dollar suit makes him look it more-so.

WHEELER

What do you need?

MATT

Everything. Air support with attack capability. I want Hueys with miniguns, you got Apaches, right? I want two of those. I need logistics, communication equipment compatible with a SOCOM J.C.U. (Joint communications unit)... In the first phase I'd like a 12 man teams, 2 snipers. I need a demolition team. I need --

*
*

WHEELER

Are you going to Ukraine? I've got Russians on the payroll, brother. Don't put me in that position.

Shakes his head.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

Where's the coup?

MATT

It's an extraction. For starters.

Thick silence.

WHEELER

How much can I know?

MATT

You don't wanna know.

WHEELER

I don't need specifics, but I have to know where they're going.

Matt leans close.

MATT

Mexico.

WHEELER

You gotta be fucking kidding me --

MATT

Not the government. Cartels.

WHEELER

Treasury cutting the checks?

MATT

... Through a company out of Brazil called Rio Oso.

Wheeler shakes his head.

WHEELER

Great, so I'm the one who goes to prison when this shit hits CNN.

MATT

This is a name your price gig, Andy. This is your grandkids sitting in the backyard of their Nantucket summer home making smores and wondering how grandpa got so fucking rich ...

Wheeler sits back.

WHEELER

I supply weaponry, manpower --

MATT

Everything.

WHEELER

For how long?

MATT

Don't know. A while ...

Wheeler almost falls out of his chair with worry.

WHEELER

If it's constant action I'm 10 mil a month in payroll and supplies. At least.

Matt doesn't disagree.

WHEELER (CONT'D)

I want 150 over cost and immunity. If you're done in a week I still want 150.

MATT

I'll do immunity for you but operators are on their own.

WHEELER

Will you be with them?

MATT

Every step.

Offers his hand.

WHEELER

Get me a requisition list. Fund me first.

MATT

Done ... Congratulations, you can afford a hockey team.

Matt stands.

MATT (CONT'D)

I need thumpers, Andy. NO foreigners. Guys from Delta, Dev Group, SF. I need Pipe hitters who are believers and don't ask questions.

Matt turns and walks out.

EXT. SHORELINE -- PACIFIC OCEAN -- COLOMBIA -- MORNING.

A MAN stands waist-deep in the surf with his back to CAMERA. The receding tide rushes over the man's navy slacks to his shirt causing the cotton to wrap his frame like cellophane.

CAMERA FINDS THE MAN'S FACE AS HE RAISES IT TO THE SKY --

THE MAN IS ALEJANDRO. He closes his eyes and bathes his face in sunshine.

The muscles in Alejandro's neck tighten. His lip curls. His eyes open. He looks down ...

We hear SPLASHING and the panicked gasps of a man trying not to drown. Only now do we see -- Alejandro is holding someone under the water.

He lets the drowning man catch his breath. Barely. Pushes him back under. Looks out, lost in thought.

CAMERA WATCHES FROM THE BEACH --

Alejandro stands in the ocean to his belly and returns his face to sun ...

EXT. PORT OF SHAYKH UTHMAN -- YEMEN -- DAY. *

A SEMI DRIVES ACROSS THE BRIDGE TO PORT, HAULING RAIL ROAD CARS ON A 40 FOOT LONG FLAT BED -- pale, blue water sits still as bath water. THE NOON PRAYER ECHOES OVER LOUD SPEAKERS ... *

The semi reaches dry ground and stops at a guard shack. A YEMENI NAVY SOLDIER approaches the driver-side window. *

YEMENIS SOLDIER
As-Salaam-Alaikam. *

TRUCK DRIVER
Wa-Alaikam-Salaam. *

The truck driver hands him paperwork. Soldier looks it over. Looks up and mood grows very serious. *

YEMENI SOLDIER (SUBTITLE)
Which one? *

TRUCK DRIVER (SUBTITLE)
Bottom car in the rear. *

The soldier walks to the rear of the railcar. Looks at the INSPECTION STICKER. Which has been CUT OPEN. He climbs up and peels it off ... *

The driver watches the soldier as returns to his guard shack, then emerges with a NEW SECURITY STICKER, peels it, sticks it to the door and bends it around the opening. *

Nods at the truck driver as he walks to the guard shack. The driver pulls into the loading yard -- thousands of railcars waiting for rides to parts unknown ... *

EXT. BEACH -- SOUTH OF CARTAGENA -- DAY. *

Back with Alejandro, holding a man under water. Face to the sun, somehow able to focus fully on the task at hand while escaping to someplace else. *

He lets the man up. Coughing, heaving up salt water, and sobbing. He looks at Alejandro with the pleading eyes of a man whose will has been broken. *

MAN

Colonel Guteman ... He told them
you are here ...(Begs) Please. I
have children.

ALEJANDRO

Who doesn't.

MAN

I'm the one who warned you!!!

ALEJANDRO

You knew because the Colonel
trusted you. Because you drink from
their well too ...

Alejandro lets the man up and pushes him toward the shore. We
now see the man wears a MILITARY UNIFORM. He walks ahead of
Alejandro, looking back.

The man makes a half-hearted attempt to attack Alejandro, who
pushes and spins him like a defiant child.

They walk a few steps and the man tries it again. Alejandro
appears only half-committed to the sloppy assault. Alejandro
slaps the man across the face, then pushes him forward,
slapping the back of his head as he does.

They reach a stump where Alejandro's linen coat rests.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

Sit down.

MAN

Why?

ALEJANDRO

Can't walk back like this. We need
to dry.

They sit back and bathe in the sun. The man is uncomfortable,
kidnapper and captive lounging on the shore. He considers
running. Considers fighting him again. Settles on resting his
tired back against the stump.

MAN

What will you do with me?

ALEJANDRO

I'm not sure yet.

Beat.

MAN

What will you do with the Colonel?

*
*

ALEJANDRO

Nothing. I just wanted to know ...

*
*

INT. HOUSE -- MCCALLEN, TEXAS -- MORNING.

Miguel sits on his bed tying his shoes in a room that is uniquely American -- J.J. WATT POSTER on one wall, AVENGERS poster on another. A PLAYSTATION is tethered to a small television. Clothes and toys and shoes make up the detritus that covers the floor.

*

Like his room, Miguel has given effort to look just as American -- Nice new jeans. Nikes. BEATS around his neck.

*

Shoes tied, Miguel grabs his book bag and heads for the door.

He walks the hall to a simple kitchen/breakfast room. The place is small and well kept. His mother, BLANDINA(35) crams sandwiches in sacks as a small army of children funnel into the room, Miguel being the oldest.

*
*
*

She hands a sack to Miguel, his 9 year old-brother, and his 7 year-old sister. Blandina kisses the young ones. Looks at Miguel. Speaks in Spanish.

*

BLANDINA

You home by three?

MIGUEL

Have to stay late for science fair.

*

BLANDINA

Want me to pick you up?

MIGUEL

I'll take the bus. Love you.

Kisses him too. Miguel walk out the door, his young siblings following behind like ducklings.

EXT. MCCALLEN, TEXAS NEIGHBORHOOD -- MOMENT LATER.

Neighborhood is working class -- just north of poor. But there is pride in the manner the houses are kept. Miguel walks his siblings down the street to an ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. The siblings dart for the front door, joining dozens more doing the same thing.

Miguel keeps walking to a BUS STOP filled with teenagers on the precipice of adulthood. Miguel falls in with them -- talking. Laughing ... *

SCHOOL BUS pulls up, obscuring the teens from view. Can HEAR them filter on the bus. HEAR THE BUS DOOR CLOSE. Then watch as the school bus coughs a cloud of smoke and drives off, leaving Miguel alone on the bench ... *

A GREEN CAMARO pulls to a stop in front of Miguel. He stands and gets in ... *

INT. CAMARO -- CONT.

HECTOR(30), chubby cheeks. Sunglasses. Dressed more like a gym teacher than what he is sucks on a cigarette as NARCO-CORRIDOS MUSIC PLAYS -- sounds like a mix between hip hop and polka. Angry lyrics shouted in Spanish as the deep thump of bass and an accordion give the music a sound that can only be described as festive violence. *

He offers Miguel a cigarette. Miguel doesn't smoke. He takes it anyway ...

EXT. INTERSTATE 2 -- MCCALLEN, TX -- CONT.

The Camaro heads east, past Wal Marts and PETCOS. Then TRUCK STOPS, then past nothing at all ... *

Continues out into the scrub land, exits the highway to a two-lane road. From the two-lane road to a dirt road. Stops beside an old HONDA. Hector hands Miguel a set of car keys. *

HECTOR

Drive it to the mall. Leave the keys inside. Then go to the bathroom in Starbucks and see what's waiting for you ...

Miguel opens the door and gets out ...

INT. HONDA CIVIC -- LATER.

Back on INTERSTATE 2. Miguel drives east, sitting on his BOOK BAG so he can see over the steering wheel. Exits the highway and pulls to a stop in a SHOPPING CENTER PARKING LOT. Puts the keys under the seat. Walks to a STARBUCKS. Goes inside. *

Sees a young man wearing a SAN FRANCISCO '49ERS HAT. The man stands and walks to the bathroom. Goes inside. *

Miguel waits outside the door until the young man walks out, then walks in the bathroom himself.

He walks to the sink, looks at a BROWN PAPER BAG in it. Opens the bag -- must be a thousand dollars inside. Stuffs the money in his pocket and walks out. Walks to the nearest barista as he orders an UBER on his cellphone. Looks at the BARISTA -- a lanky college kid. *

BARISTA
What can I get you?

MIGUEL
Venti latte with an extra shot.

BARISTA
... Really. Know how much
caffeine's in that?

Miguel pulls out a hundred, crams it in the tip jar.

MIGUEL
Just give me the fucking drink.

The barista does as he's told. Miguel watches him, feeling like a man. Like a gangster ...

EXT. JUNGLE PATH -- COLOMBIA -- DAY. *

Alejandro and the man walk along a two track road through a field of sugar cane.

MAN
If you tell they will kill me ...
And my family.

ALEJANDRO
Don't give me a reason.

Beat.

MAN
How do I avoid that?

ALEJANDRO
By telling me the truth without
having to drown you.

They come around a bend and we see --

A COLOMBIAN MILITARY BASE.

Structures built in rows. Humvees, one after the other, parked neatly in front. Soldiers move about. Colombia may be corrupt, but they are orderly about it. None of the filth and chaos of northern Mexico. They have been at it much longer, with battle lines very clearly drawn.

The man turns to Alejandro --

MAN

So ... That's it, then?

Alejandro nods.

MAN (CONT'D)

I don't understand you.

Alejandro offers him a polite smile.

ALEJANDRO

If you're lucky you never will.

The man walks away, turning back occasionally to see if he is truly free.

Alejandro turns in another direction, spots THREE US MARINE HUMVEES, EIGHT MARINES BESIDE THEM. Matt stands in front. They walk toward each other.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

I can't stay here. They have the colonel. *

MATT

Not to worry. I have somewhere for you to be. *
*

Alejandro looks over the Marines.

ALEJANDRO

Why so many?

MATT

Don't want anything to happen to you on the way to the airport.

ALEJANDRO

Where are we going?

MATT

To keep my promise.

Alejandro's kind, hollow eyes almost show emotion.

ALEJANDRO

What did they do ...

MATT

Doesn't matter. No rules this time.
I'm going to turn you loose.

ALEJANDRO

How loose?

Matt smiles.

MATT

Carlos Reyes. You get to kill the
king. How's that for loose?

Alejandro stands for a moment. Closes his eyes as the tiniest
hint of a smile curls his lips.

ALEJANDRO

Thank you.

EXT. AIRFIELD -- NORTHEAST UTAH -- NIGHT.

*

ASPHALT FILLS THE FRAME. STRETCHES OUT FOR 7500 FEET UNDER A
MOONLESS NIGHT. Surrounding the asphalt -- sagebrush.

In the black sky above, the faint lights of an approaching
plane.

RUNWAY LIGHTS BLAST THE WORLD IN A WHITE LIGHT, ILLUMINATING
A RUNWAY THAT COULD ACCOMMODATE A 747.

Plane gets closer. Closer. Jet engines scream toward us. Gets
lower. Closer. Tires screech. Jet rolls right toward CAMERA
until it comes to a stop, front wheels filling the frame ...

ANOTHER ANGLE --

Though nothing exists but sagebrush to the south, to the
north is an almost endless series of AIRPLANE HANGARS AND
WAREHOUSES.

Alejandro and Matt step from the Gulfstream. Alejandro looks
to the sky -- stars look different this far north. He
exhales, and perhaps for the first time in his life -- he can
see his breath.

MATT

Little nippy in the new Zion, huh?

He exhales again and watches the condensation move like smoke
into the night with almost childlike fascination.

ALEJANDRO

I'll need a coat.

MATT

Won't be here that long. Just loading a team and switching planes.

*
*

The runway lights disappear and they are bathed in the dim hue of halogen bulbs. Alejandro sees a BOEING 707 at the far end of the runway. MEN walk around the plane, doing a pre-flight check. WHEELER walks toward them.

*

Hands are shook, then Matt and Alejandro follow him into the hangar.

*

CAMERA FOLLOWS RIGHT BEHIND ALEJANDRO. As he enters the hangar, he sees ROW AFTER ROW OF PICNIC TABLE COVERED IN GEAR. Notices at least fifty men rummaging through it, filling out paperwork, assembling weapons. Before long, they are all looking at him ...

He shifts his focus to the belly of the hangar, where PREDATOR DRONES, HUEY HELICOPTERS, AND APACHE HELICOPTERS SIT IN NEAT ROWS ...

Wheeler stops, turns to Matt and Alejandro.

WHEELER

Cherry pick through the gear -- you paid for it.

MATT

You got a kitchen?

*

Wheeler points to the far wall -- a BUFFET IS SET UP COMPLETE WITH MEN DRESSED IN CHEFS HATS. ONE CHEF STANDS BEHIND A CARVING STATION. FIFTY POUND PRIME RIB BEFORE HIM. Matt heads right for it.

MATT (CONT'D)

I like your style, Andy.

WHEELER

I always send them off with a full belly. Who knows when they'll fill it again.

*

Matt grabs a plate and stands before the carving station.

CHEF

How do you like your steak, sir?

MATT

Just cut off a chunk, whisper
'fire', and toss it on the plate.

Chef plops a bloody mass of meat on Matt's plate.

WHEELER

Give me a location and I'll get the
heavy gear in the air.

MATT

Naval air station in Corpus
Christie.

WHEELER

... I'll need clearance for that.

MATT

Ralph-Niner-Tango-Zero-Zero.

WHEELER

Thought this thing was off the
reservation.

MATT

The whole world's our reservation
now, buddy. Briefing room? *

Wheeler points to a door. As Matt walks toward it, Wheeler
shouts at the contractors. *

WHEELER

Make your way to the briefing room,
gentlemen. *

Contractors file toward the briefing room door. Wheeler heads
for the hangar doors looking for stragglers, see Alejandro
across the runway, looking down at a patch of snow. Walks to
him, looks down and sees --

A RATTLESNAKE FROZEN IN THE SNOW ...

WHEELER (CONT'D)

Been in the 70s for weeks, but
winter had one storm left in her. *

Caught him with his pants down. *

Alejandro just stares. *

WHEELER (CONT'D)

It's a Western Diamondback. Nasty
fuckers.

ALEJANDRO

I'm not looking at the snake.

Alejandro presses his shoe into the snow, pulls it back. Looks at the print. Smiles at Wheeler with an almost child-like wonder, then walks back to the hangar, leaving Wheeler alone on the edge of the runway, frozen serpent at his feet.

EXT. CARGO SHIP -- ATLANTIC OCEAN -- DAY.

THE HULL OF A MASSIVE SHIP SLICES THROUGH THE OPEN OCEAN ...

RAILCAR CONTAINERS are stacked FIFTY-HIGH on the bow. Red, blue, yellow -- they look like GIANT LEGOS snapped into a shapeless mass that stands so tall the ship seems to defy physics by merely staying afloat ...

THE SHIP SAILS RIGHT TOWARD CAMERA ...

CAMERA RISES. SAILS BETWEEN THE RAIL CARS. Stops INCHES from the door of a railcar stacked 300 feet in the air ...

A SOUND leaks from the door. Faint. Rhythmic. Sounds like ARABIC. Sounds like a prayer ...

EXT. EDRON ACADEMY -- MEXICO CITY -- DAY.

A BLUE LION ON A WHITE FLAG whips in the breeze. Looks like the battle crest of Richard the First. Which it is ...

TEENAGERS SCREAM AND CHEER AS CAMERA PANS DOWN FROM THE FLAG TO A FIGHT ON THE PLAYGROUND.

TWO HUNDRED STUDENTS IN PRIVATE SCHOOL UNIFORMS STAND IN A CIRCLE AND CHEER AS TWO GIRLS HOLD EACH OTHER BY THE HAIR AND SLUG EACH OTHER SENSELESS. One is blonde, fair skinned. One has hair the color of night and skin like caramel -- her name is ISABEL REYES (16). While the other girl slaps, Isabel punches. Hard. The blonde girl quickly forgets why she's fighting in the first place and pushes away. Isabel pulls her back with a handful of hair, right into a fist that sends the girl to her knees. Isabel looks down as sobs emit from the blonde girl. *

ISABEL

Call me that again.

Blonde girl just sobs and holds her nose.

ISABEL (CONT'D)

Go ahead. (sends a punch to the top of her head) SAY IT.

TEACHERS PUSH THROUGH THE CROWD, WRAP ISABEL IN A BEAR HUG,
AND PULL HER AWAY ...

INT. HEADMASTER'S OFFICE -- LATER.

Isabel and the Blonde Girl, let's call her MIRANDA(17), sit
across from ALAN DEATS(55), BRITISH. Oxford educated. And all
that entails ...

He looks at Miranda, still half-sobbing. Nose broken. Eye
swollen shut. Looks at Isabel -- scratches run the length of
her face, but no tears. Not a chance. Eyes filled with
indignation.

DEATS

It's been three years since we've
had a fight at this school, and
that was on the football field.
Between boys.

MIRANDA

She started it.

Miranda speaks with the accent of British royalty.

DEATS

Isabel?

Isabel speaks with an accent that hints at her Mexican
heritage.

ISABEL

She called me a spic and slapped me
so I hit her. What would you do? *

DEATS

Walk straight to this office and
report it. (To Miranda) Is that
true? *

MIRANDA

... I didn't meant it to harm, just
offend. *

Deats looks from Isabel's furious eyes to Miranda's battered
face.

DEATS

I'd say you achieved your goal.

Deats sits back, exhales a heavy breath.

DEATS (CONT'D)

Why don't we skip to the part where
you tell me which boy this is over.

MIRANDA

She called me a slave-owning pirate
in debate class.

ISABEL

I called her ancestors pirates.

Deats studies them.

DEATS

So, no boy --

ISABEL

Who would date this skinny bitch?

MIRANDA

You're such a peasant --

Isabel grabs a handful of hair. Deats stands.

DEATS

HEY. STOP IT. (Points to Miranda).
You. Go to the nurse.

Miranda stands and walks out. Isabel stands and walks toward
the door as well.

DEATS (CONT'D)

You're not going anywhere. Sit. *

She plops down in a chair. Crosses her arms.

DEATS (CONT'D)

What am I going to do with you ...

ISABEL

She deserved what she got.

DEATS

It isn't your place to give it.
It's mine.

ISABEL

Fine. You beat the shit out of her. *

Beat.

DEATS

I should expel you.

She looks him dead in the eye --

*

ISABEL

Do it.

He looks at her and does nothing. Isabel shakes her head, stands and walks to the door.

ISABEL (CONT'D)

Thank you Mr. Deats, for informing me of the school's arbitrary allocation of justice policy.

DEATS

Do you really think it's fair to hold someone accountable for the actions of their ancestors? Should we hold you accountable for yours? Maybe they were pirates too ...

ISABEL

My ancestors were slaves. My parents are the pirates.

She turns and walks out ...

EXT. EDRON ACADEMY -- MEXICO CITY -- DAY.

ENORMOUS IRON GATES SLOWLY OPEN. A LONG LINE OF BLACK SUBURBANS, MERCEDES, AND SUVs, SLOWLY FILE IN ...

FROM A SATELLITE'S POV -- VEHICLES pull toward the school's front foyer.

*

*

SATELLITE CAMERA ZOOMS CLOSER. CLOSER. UNTIL IT'S POSSIBLE TO SEE RIBBONS IN GIRLS' HAIR ...

VOICE

Students are coming out.

One by one, students climb in vehicles. The vehicle pulls forward, and another vehicle pulls up ...

*

A BLACK FORD EXPEDITION PULLS PAST THE LOADING POINT, AND ANOTHER IDENTICAL EXPEDITION PULLS TO A STOP.

VOICE (CONT'D)

This could be our prize.

ISABEL'S BLACK HAIR can be seen walking toward the second Expedition. A BLONDE HAIREd MAN exits the passenger vehicle and opens the back door for her.

VOICE (CONT'D)
Alpha, can you confirm target?

INT. PENTHOUSE -- MARQUIS HOTEL -- MEXICO CITY -- CONT.

A SPOTTING SCOPE ON A TRIPOD is just inside the balcony. Alejandro looks through the scope as Isabel climbs in the vehicle.

Matt sits on the sofa, satellite phone to his ear. TWO CONTRACTORS -- JESSIE(40) and TRAE(36) dressed in jeans and t-shirts sit beside him. There is a relaxed focus to both Jessie and Trae's demeanor -- like they've been doing this very thing for years. Which they have ...

ALEJANDRO
That's her.

MATT
(Into phone) Keep eyes on.

VOICE
Roger that. Prize is in the trail vehicle.

Matt hangs up the phone then speaks into a HANDHELD RADIO.

MATT
Bravo, prize is enroute. 45 mikes to your location.

BRAVO (VOICE)
We go on your call. *

MATT
(Into radio) Take her when you see them. We're right behind. *

Another contractor, JIMMY(35), LATIN AMERICAN, built like an NFL safety, starts breaking down the spotting scope and packing it away.

JIMMY
It would be a lot easier doing this at the house. Could get real sloppy on the road.

ALEJANDRO
Sloppy is why they'll think a cartel did it.

Alejandro stands and the men move toward the door.

EXT. HIGHWAY SOUTH OF MEXICO CITY -- LATER.

TWO BLACK EXPEDITIONS race down the highway ...

INT. ISABEL'S EXPEDITION -- CONT.

Isabel sits in the back seat, fiddling on an IPAD. Riding shotgun is CARSON(38), curly, reddish-blond hair that is cropped close. His eyes scan every inch of terrain out the window --

Though they have left the city behind, commerce is still everywhere -- each intersection has someone sitting under a cheap umbrella selling fruit. Selling vegetables. Selling something ...

A VEHICLE passes them on the right. Carson barks into his radio in pretty decent Spanish.

CARSON (SUBTITLE)
You guys on break up there? Let's go. No one passes us.

The lead vehicle accelerates. They crest a rise and below them is a giant lake. They come to an exit and take it. As they go right, all traffic keeps left. All but another SUV.

FROM ABOVE --

The SUVs wind down an empty road. Mountains invade the horizon. Looks more like Colorado than anyone's idea of Mexico ...

Carson sees the SUV behind them. Looks at the driver.

CARSON (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)
Vehicle behind us.

DRIVER (SUBTITLE)
It's just one and it isn't hiding.

CARSON (SUBTITLE)
Where's it going?! There's nothing up this road but us ...

Speaks into a hand-held radio.

CARSON (CONT'D)
Any appointments or deliveries scheduled for this afternoon?

VOICE
Nada, señor.

The road climbs in elevation, then levels off and the mountains of southern Mexico come fully into view. Carson looks back at the vehicle following them, then at Isabel, who is immersed in her IPAD. Carlos forces a smile. *

CARLOS

About ten minutes, okay?

She looks up, smiles.

ISABEL

I know. I just lost my connection.

Carson looks at his cellphone -- no service here. Carson studies everything -- every instinct warning him something is coming. Carson barks into his RADIO. *

CARLOS

Faster.

The Expeditions rush forward, leaving the SUV behind ... *

Carson looks ahead and sees the carcass of A DEAD GOAT on the side of the road. Screams into his two-way radio -- *

CARSON

ON THE RIGHT!!!!

As the lead vehicle passes the goat's carcass, IT EXPLODES, blasting the vehicle onto its side.

The driver locks the brakes. Almost slams into the burning hull of the lead vehicle.

CARSON (CONT'D)

BACK BACK BACK!!!

Driver slams it in reverse, jams the accelerator and sends the Expedition screaming and bouncing its way backward ... *

The SUV following them rushes forward and slams into the rear of the vehicle. Isabel is thrust to the floorboard. Carson's face is hammered into the deployed AIRBAG AS IS THE DRIVER.

Carson shakes it off and thrusts open his door, then yanks open the rear door and pulls Isabel out by her arm.

EXT. ROAD TO ISABEL'S HOUSE -- CONT.

MEN WEARING MASKS AND CARRYING ASSAULT RIFLES APPEAR FROM THE FOREST, FROM THE SUV THAT SLAMMED INTO THEM, FROM EVERYWHERE. *

THE MAN IN THE OVERTURNED VEHICLE STANDS THROUGH HIS SMASHED SIDE WINDOW, RAISES A WEAPON TOWARD THE ONCOMING MEN. *

A RIFLE ROUND pierces his forehead and he disappears back into the overturned vehicle in an instant.

Both vehicles are surrounded. Carson shields Isabel with his body, swinging a PISTOL from one assailant to the next ...

One masked man walks close. Speaks. We recognize the voice -- *

MATT

Tranquillo, jefe. Tira la pistola.

Carson doesn't answer, just keeps swinging his pistol from one target to the next ...

The driver of Carson's SUV slowly gets out, face battered by the air bag, hands held high -- takes one look at the rifles pointed at him and lays face-down on the pavement.

One of the 'soldiers' pulls the driver's arms behind his body and ZIP-TIES them tight.

A CONTRACTOR looks in the overturned vehicle -- sees the crumpled body of the man he just shot, and that vehicle's driver, dead from the crash.

CONTRACTOR

Vehicle one is clear.

Carson's eyes dart to the masked man who just SPOKE IN PERFECT ENGLISH.

CARSON

Are you fucking Americans?!

One of the contractors stares at Carson then walks to Matt, whispers in his ear.

CONTRACTOR

I know him. Carson Wright. Was a Marine sniper. Works for Haliburton now. *

Matt pulls off his mask, smiles.

MATT

I guess Haliburton stopped vetting clients.

CARSON

Don't know about that. All I know is this is where they sent me.

(MORE)

CARSON (CONT'D)

You don't like it you can take it
up with my boss DICK FUCKING
CHENEY!!!

MATT

Look buddy, we're on a clock. We
gotta get her on the road.

CARSON

Oh, okay. How about: YOU GOT A
FUCKING WARRANT?! I DON'T KNOW YOU.

Another mask is pulled off -- it's Jimmy.

JIMMY

We gotta take her, man.

Carson looks into a face he's known for years.

MATT

You've got to be fucking kidding
me, Jimmy. What is this?!

Alejandro -- still in full mask -- slips around the side of
the vehicle. Carson feels it and tries to swing around, but
Alejandro has a rifle to his temple before he can turn
around.

ALEJANDRO

She's not yours to keep.

Men descend on him, take his pistol, zip-tie his hands, and
guide him to his knees then on his belly.

TRAE

Easy, bud. Let us do what we do.

Isabel is hurried toward TWO SUBURBANS that pull onto the
road from the forest.

Contractors back their way toward the Suburbans, climb in.
Matt looks at Alejandro and points toward Carson and the
other security guards.

MATT

They'll say it was us.

Alejandro walks to them.

ALEJANDRO

If you say it was Federal police
who took her, he might let you
live.

(MORE)

*

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

If you say it was us, he'll think you're lying. You know what happens next.

Alejandro walks to one of the Suburbans, climbs in the front passenger seat. Matt follows ... *

CARSON

You're gonna fucking leave me here?! You know what they're going to do??!!

MATT

It's a dangerous job. That's why it pays so well.

Matt looks back at Carson.

MATT (CONT'D)

Doesn't look like you put up much of a fight though. Might want to do something about that ...

Matt climbs in the backseat of the Suburban beside a terrified Isabel. *

MATT (CONT'D)

(to the driver) Let's go. *

The Suburban accelerates. Matt looks at Isabel, smiles.

MATT (CONT'D)

You're safe. You aren't being kidnapped. This is an extraction. We're here to protect you.

Matt digs in a gear bag and pulls out a water bottle. Offers it to her.

The offer seems to calm her a little -- she takes the bottle. *
Alejandro turns and looks back at her.

ALEJANDRO

He's lying. It's a kidnapping.

Alejandro takes the water from her, drinks it himself.

EXT. ROAD TO ISABEL'S HOUSE -- CONT.

Carson and the driver lay face down on the road. The driver looks at Carson with panic.

DRIVER

What do we do?

Carson was thinking the same thing. Draws his head back and slams himself face-first into the asphalt, shattering his nose and splitting his lip. Unsure that will convince his boss he put up a good enough fight, he does it again.

The driver watches him, then pounds his face into the pavement as well ...

EXT. AIRFIELD -- CUERNA VACA, MEXICO -- LATER.

The trio of SUVs pull toward the guard gate OF AN AIRFIELD. *

Two MEN IN SUITS step out of a LINCOLN. The SUVs stop as the men approach the driver-side window of the lead vehicle. ALBERTO(35), MEXICAN-AMERICAN, wears a suit and holds up his DEA BADGE as they reach the window. Window rolls down. *

ALBERTO

Who's Matt?

MATT

Right here. What's waiting for us in the guard shack?

ALBERTO

Private security. Not an issue. (He looks in the back seat) Where's the prize?

Peers in and sees Isabel staring at him. Shakes his head.

ALBERTO (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ. I can't believe they approved this.

Matt smiles.

ALBERTO (CONT'D)

Anyone sees her face and this house of cards falls down. You have gear?

MATT

Dumped it.

ALBERTO

We're going straight to the plane. Don't worry about the vehicles. We'll take care of them.

Alberto walks back to his car. Climbs in. Alberto's Lincoln pulls out. The SUVs follow. Past the guard gate and right onto the runway toward a waiting GULFSTREAM. *

Matt, Alejandro, Isabel and two dozen contractors pile out of vehicles and walk to the waiting plane, its engines already screaming to get the hell out of here ... *

EXT. NAVAL AIR STATION -- CORPUS CHRISTIE, TX -- LATER.

GULFSTREAM skids to a stop on the runway. WATCH FROM A DISTANCE as Matt, Alejandro and the rest of the team walk off the plane and are met by THE COMPANY COMMANDER. *

COMPANY COMMANDER

That bird's for you.

Company Commander points toward a waiting US NAVY SH-60 SEAHAWK HELICOPTER.

MATT

Where am I going?

COMPANY COMMANDER

JSOC wants you on the New York. Lot of civilians on this base -- too hard to keep secrets. *

MATT

How long's the flight?

COMPANY COMMANDER

14 kilometers. You'll be on deck in five minutes.

Alejandro looks at Isabel.

ALEJANDRO

Look at all the trouble we must go through for you.

She has absolutely no idea what he is talking about. Matt ushers his team toward the helicopter. They climb on and the chopper rises ... *

EXT. SKY ABOVE HELICOPTER -- CONT.

CAMERA looks down on the helicopter as it flies over a small taste of the US military's might -- row after row of FIGHTER JETS give way to row after row of HELICOPTERS, then a shopping mall-sized parking lot of HUMVEES, ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS, AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT VEHICLES ...

INT. SEAHAWK HELICOPTER -- CONT.

Isabel looks down over this array of weaponry.

MATT

You're doing really good. Once we land we'll get you something to eat, how's that sound?

*

Her eyes shift from Matt to Alejandro.

ISABEL

You told me the truth -- this is a kidnapping.

EXT. SKY ABOVE HELICOPTER -- CONT.

The Seahawk helicopter soars over AN ENDLESS EXPANSE OF CIRCULAR OIL TANKS THE SIZE OF BASEBALL STADIUMS. From this point of view it looks like God dropped thousands of giant, rusted coins from the heavens ...

The Chopper soars over CORPUS CHRISTIE BAY over BATTLESHIPS and DESTROYERS and OIL TANKER AFTER OIL TANKER ...

IN THE DISTANCE -- an empty ocean where only ONE SHIP FLOATS. *

THE USS NEW YORK is a SAN ANTONIO CLASS WARSHIP. Used for launching air assaults and landing troops. It is almost 700 feet long and looks much more like a sleek, floating city than an instrument of war ...

The chopper approaches and lands in a large red circle. Chopper doors open ...

EXT. FLIGHT DECK -- USS NEW YORK -- CONT.

As Isabel steps from the chopper, she takes in the swirling activity everywhere -- MARINES JOG BY IN PLATOONS IN FULL BATTLE GEAR, SAILORS MOVE TO AND FRO EVERYWHERE, all staring at her. She feels alarmingly exposed in the navy skirt and white blouse of her school uniform.

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER WILLET(35) walks to them. Looks like he was starched into his uniform. Piercing eyes bore into Matt.

WILLET

Who's Graver?

MATT

You're talking to him, buddy.

Willet's eyes move over Isabel. Notices the welt under her cheek, a torn button on her blouse, and splatters of blood around the collar.

WILLET
What happened to her?

Matt actually looks at Isabel for the first time.

MATT
Don't know. Like that when we
picked her up.

Willet isn't buying it.

ISABEL
Got in a fight at school.

WILLET
A fight ... At school.

Beat.

ISABEL
You should see the other girl.

Willet's eyes shift back to Matt.

WILLET
Chow's done at 1900. If your team
hurries they can grub. (Looks at
the contractors) Ladderwell down
two decks then aft. Follow your
nose from there.

The contractors walk off. Willet shifts eyes back to Matt.

WILLET (CONT'D)
A JCU unit has comms and eyes up
for you three decks down. Room 220.
Rooms 216 to 226 are yours. Leave
them like you found them.

MATT
Pleasure doing business with you.
Have someone bring food down.

WILLET
I just told you where chow is. Get
it yourself.

Willet steps close.

WILLET (CONT'D)

This ain't no outpost in Peshwar,
this is the goddam USS New York.
You will follow our rules to the
letter. And if she gets in another
'schoolfight' I'll toss your whole
team in the drink. You read me?

*

MATT

Let me educate you on the chain of
command, sailor. I'm the top of it.
Bring food down.

Matt looks over the bow of the ship.

MATT (CONT'D)

Must be nice watching us fight wars
from this yacht.

Isabel looks back at Willet as Alejandro guides her toward
the door that leads to the bowels of this vessel, Matt
following behind ...

INT. J.C.U. COMMAND CENTER -- USS NEW YORK -- LATER.

Matt stares at a LARGE TV MONITOR hooked to a SERIES OF
COMPUTERS as he eats his dinner from a 'to go box'.

MATT

Walk me through what I'm watching.

A J.C.U. (Joint Communications Unit) SPECIALIST(24), looks
like the baby that he is, turns his attention from the
COMPUTER MONITORS in front of him.

JCU SPECIALIST

This is a map of Mexico in 100 mile
grids. You took the subject here.

Points to a YELLOW DOT ON THE MAP, forty miles south of
Mexico City.

JCU SPECIALIST (CONT'D)

This area here near Puerto Vallarta
is the last known location of
Carlos Reyes.

STEVE FORSING reclines in a chair, leans forward toward Matt.

*

FORSING

Speculation is Reyes has a
residence somewhere in the vicinity
of Monterrey.

*

JCU SPECIALIST

What we're hoping for is a call from the residence outside Mexico City to start a trail.

MATT

Mexican police respond yet?

JCU SPECIALIST

They're all over it. State and Federal police are there now. But the only number NSA has is the land line. Need a call out from the residence to start tracking.

FORSING

(To JCU) No one's going to call from the home phone, satellite can't pick up cell chatter?

*
*
*

JCU SPECIALIST

(Shakes his head) We can lock coordinates to the cell and snag the phone number, but we can't hear the call ... But once we have initial contact, we can track all calls in and out. Those calls will lead to the principal. Then all calls will revolve around that number. We'll pin them on the map. They'll swirl around the center. And the center is your target.

*

MATT

Give me the house in Mexico City.

The JCU punches a button and SATELLITE FOOTAGE OF THE MANSION WEST OF MEXICO CITY FILLS THE FRAME ... POLICE VEHICLES FILL THE DRIVEWAY. OFFICERS MILL ABOUT EVERYWHERE ...

Matt looks at Jeff.

MATT (CONT'D)

Any family at the house?

FORSING

Just staff we think. We have eyes on the mother in LA, she's having dinner at La Scala with the oldest brother. We should pick up that piece of shit at some point ...

*

*

MATT

Not fishing for minnows, I'm after
the whale ...

*

Matt studies the grainy satellite footage -- lots of black
and blue uniforms standing around six women in white.

MATT (CONT'D)

Can you show me the incident site?

Hits another button and FOOTAGE OF EVEN MORE POLICE VEHICLES
AND MEN SURROUND THE ABANDONED AND DEMOLISHED VEHICLES. A
GROUP OF AMBULANCES SIT IN A ROW.

FOUR BODIES ARE LAID IN A ROW, COVERED WITH BLACK SHEETS ...

FORSING

You popped them all?

*

MATT

We only engaged one. One died in
the crash. Other two we tied and
left.

FORSING

Why'd you do that?

*

MATT

To see what they'd do. (To the JCU
Specialist) Punch in.

*

CAMERA ZOOMS.

MATT (CONT'D)

I see Feds, I see State ...

JCU SPECIALIST

What are you looking for, sir?

MATT

First man on the scene.

JCU SPECIALIST

How do we know what he looks like?

*

MATT

He's the one everyone else is
talking to.

*

CAMERA KEEPS MOVING OVER THE SCENE -- COMES TO A STATE POLICE
OFFICER SURROUNDED BY MEN IN SUITS AND THE BLACK UNIFORMS OF
FEDERAL POLICE.

MATT (CONT'D)

Call's not coming from the house.
It's coming from that fucker right
there.

Men walk to and from the State Police officer, then he walks
back toward a STATE POLICE VEHICLE and pulls out a cellphone. *

MATT (CONT'D)

PHONE! Lock in on it.

INT. HOLDING ROOM -- USS NEW YORK -- NIGHT.

Alejandro sits across from Isabel at an interrogation table.
He stares at her as though he's been doing it for hours. *

ISABEL *

What do you want me to do ... Quit
my family in protest and live on
the street?? I'M SIXTEEN. THIS IS
THE LIFE GOD GAVE ME. In two years
it's mine, and I'll do with it what
I want.

Alejandro flips open a file on the table. *

ISABEL (CONT'D)

Is that about me?

Doesn't answer, just keeps reading. Reads something that
surprises him slightly, looks up.

ALEJANDRO

Early acceptance to Berkeley ...
Good school ... To study what?

ISABEL

Journalism.

ALEJANDRO

Going to tell the world the truth
about Mexico, eh? *

ISABEL

About everything. You included.

She looks at him with defiance.

ALEJANDRO

How can you tell the truth when
you've never seen it? The life you
live isn't real. You live the
fantasy.

Matt sticks his head in the door.

MATT

Got him.

Alejandro stands.

ALEJANDRO

And now the fantasy's over.

Alejandro walks out the door.

INT. J.C.U. COMMAND CENTER -- USS NEW YORK -- MOMENT LATER.

Alejandro walks in, sits beside Matt. Matt points at the
screen -- A YELLOW DOT BLINKS ALONG THE ROADWAY. A PINK LIGHT
FLASHES IN THE CENTER OF MEXICO CITY ...

ALEJANDRO

This the first call?

MATT

Placed to Federal Police
headquarters in Mexico City.

*

JCU Specialist shakes his head in disbelief.

JCU SPECIALIST

There's twenty Federal officers
standing around him and he calls
their headquarters ...

ALEJANDRO

Those are the wrong police.

Everyone stares at the screen like they're watching the last
two minutes of a football game. Both lights stop blinking,
but still glow.

JCU SPECIALIST

Call ended. Both numbers are
locked. Any calls in and out we can
locate and lock as well.

A call from the Mexico City number creates a purple throb
west of Monterrey, Mexico. Everyone leans forward in their
seats.

MATT

There's our target.

FORSING

First call's never to target.

ALEJANDRO

Not in Iraq, maybe. But here, bad news goes to the top first ...

The throbbing lights glow solid.

JCU SPECIALIST

I'm painting the Monterrey call purple.

And like that, the call location in Monterrey glows purple. Then starts blinking as a call to the center of Monterrey glows pink.

JCU SPECIALIST (CONT'D)

I'm painting this call green.

Starts flashing green. Beside each color is the PHONE NUMBER AND GPS COORDINATES IN A DIZZYING SERIES OF NUMBERS.

The colors stop throbbing. Then the green light starts throbbing again to a phone farther north on the map -- in the town of BUSTAMANTE.

JCU SPECIALIST (CONT'D)

Painting it blue.

The new location throbs blue then stops throbbing, then throbs again.

JCU SPECIALIST (CONT'D)

Another call going out.

Then the green dot throbs as well.

JCU SPECIALIST (CONT'D)

Another call.

FORSING

You're running out of colors.

Each call placed generates another call from the receiver, then another call. Then another. Calls spider-web their way toward the border, then begin working their way back toward the first call in Monterey. Then multiple throbs come from the location in Monterrey with multiple throbs surrounding it.

*

*

*

FORSING (CONT'D)

Jesus. He just raised an army. *

Matt walks toward the screen, which is throbbing with more and more lights as more and more calls come in and out. Matt points to the purple light all the other lights surround.

MATT

I need eyes on this house and everything around it. Build me a visual brief -- I need to know every road in and out.

ALEJANDRO

Do your drones have thermal?

JCU SPECIALIST

Yes sir.

ALEJANDRO

Switch to it. Snakes like the bushes.

Alejandro walks out as the JCU talks into his mic.

JCU SPECIALIST

Predator one, go thermal on location.

ANGLE ON --

The monitor, which changes from a topographical map with roads highlighted in dull green to a black world -- lights from the house glow hot white, as do the men lurking in the bushes around it. Matt looks at Alejandro, then hands him a cellphone ...

MATT

Call our friend.

EXT. MAIN DECK -- USS NEW YORK -- NIGHT.

Alejandro leans over the railing at the ship's bow as he dials the cellphone. Looks down and watches DOLPHINS dive in and out of the ship's wake. *

VOICE (O.S.)

They sure like to surf, don't they? *

Alejandro looks back at A U.S. MARINE, TIM(19), baby faced and corn-fed. Right off a farm in Nebraska. Now he walks his post, M-16 across his chest.

ALEJANDRO

The ship runs over schools of bait fish and spits them out in the wake. They aren't surfing ... They're eating.

TIM

That a fact? I guess we can add feeding the hungry to the New York's achievements.

ALEJANDRO

The dolphins are feeding themselves. All you did was kill some fish.

Alejandro turns from the young man and finishes dialing.

INT. CLASSROOM -- MCCALLEN MIDDLE SCHOOL -- NEXT MORNING.

A MAN stands before a class of junior high students in a suit. He is latino, maybe 40. His name is JAVIER GUTIERREZ. He smiles at the students, then a very different smile for a girl in the front row. For her -- proud smile of a father. *

GUTIERREZ

My name is Dr. Gutierrez. I am a cardiologist, which means I treat ailments of the heart. Sometimes, the arteries, which are like highways to the heart, get plugged up with plaque, and one of my jobs to remove it.

A student raises his hand.

STUDENT

Like on your teeth?

GUTIERREZ

Sort of. The fat from what we eat can stick to our arteries and block them. It's more like a storm drain filled with leaves keeping water from going down the gutter. Remember that the next time you're asked to rake the yard. *

Children laugh. Miguel stares at the man with something between awe and envy. Looks at his own father -- work boots and worn jeans -- and wishes he was father to someone else. *

TEACHER

Thank you, Dr. Gutierrez. *

He smiles and walks off as students clap.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Next we have Miguel's father, Mr. Hernandez.

He waves him up. He grips his son's knee with an affectionate squeeze, then walks to the podium. He looks out over the class -- all of them American. None of them white.

ARTURO

My name is Arturo Hernandez, and I am a framer. A framer builds a house's skeleton. Before you build walls or a roof, you must give a house it's spine. That's what I do. When your teacher says all that geometry will be useful someday, she's talking about my job.

Laughter from the teacher and some students, but not Miguel. His face is full of anger. Full of shame. His POCKET VIBRATES. Sneaks his phone out of his pocket, glances at a text message. Sits up a little straighter. No more shame ...

EXT. LA PLAZA MALL -- MCCALLEN, TEXAS -- DAY.

RAFAEL walks past BANANA REPUBLIC, past THE LIMITED, past every retail testament to the American Dream. Comes to a FOOD COURT in the center of the mall. It's easy for him to spot the CONTRACTORS sitting casually at one table and leaning over the railing ... *

Sees Alejandro sitting alone. Sits across from him. Soon as Rafael sits, MATT TURNS AROUND FROM THE TABLE BESIDE IT. *

RAFAEL

How'd you find her? *

MATT

Just lucky, I guess.

Rafael shakes his head.

RAFAEL

We thought Reynosa cartel took her.

MATT

That's what you were supposed to think.

RAFAEL
What's the plan?

*
*

ALEJANDRO
Give her back.

RAFAEL
She has family in California. Take her there. Nowhere in Mexico is safe for her now. Things have been quiet here, and this is the kind of thing that could set us back years.

*
*

ALEJANDRO
It's quiet because our government surrendered.

Rafael sighs.

RAFAEL
What do you want from me?

MATT
Say we found her in a raid on one of Reynosa's way-stations in Brownsville. We'll arrange to deliver her to the Air station in Monterrey, where her father lives.

RAFAEL
We don't know where he lives.

*

Matt smiles. Rafael shakes his head.

RAFAEL (CONT'D)
If I arrange this through proper channels, word will leak.

MATT
Counting on it. Give us a stout escort. We want to get hit, just not too hard.

Rafael studies Matt's face, then Alejandro's.

RAFAEL
You're trying to start a war.

ALEJANDRO
Tell me we don't need it.

*

RAFAEL
You really think a grocery store in Kansas is worth this?
(MORE)

*
*

RAFAEL (CONT'D)

They could've flown to Vancouver
and drove across the border. What's
the difference?

*
*
*

MATT

The difference is they didn't.
People are the new drugs, Rafael.
That's where we draw the line.

*
*
*

Rafael's eyes burn into Matt.

RAFAEL

If you'd drawn a line three decades
ago, people could cross the border
on ferries.

*
*
*

MATT

I don't draw lines, buddy. I'm a
soldier. I just hold them ... And
if we don't, some fucking
politician's going to build a wall
from sea to shining sea, my friend.
And no one wants that.

*
*
*
*
*
*

RAFAEL

No ...

*
*

MATT

We bring her across tomorrow.

*
*

RAFAEL

Go through Mccallen. Matamoros is
theirs. You don't want an ambush in
the city. Let them hit you in the
desert where there's room to fight
back.

*

MATT

Sounds like a plan.

Matt walks off. Rafael looks at Alejandro.

RAFAEL

You're picking a big fight. I hope
they keep their word once it's
started.

ALEJANDRO

Just help me start it. That's all I
ask, old friend.

Alejandro stands.

RAFAEL

The Americans could've stopped this whenever they wanted. In an afternoon they could make it all go away ...

*
*
*

ALEJANDRO

How do you fight desire ...

RAFAEL

I don't know. All I know is Mexico doesn't need another war.

*
*

ALEJANDRO

No. She needs an exorcism.

*

Alejandro turns and disappears into a sea of shoppers.

EXT. LA PLAZA MALL -- MCCALLEN, TEXAS -- MOMENT LATER.

Alejandro walks to a parked SUV that sits idling. Climbs in. Jimmy, behind the wheel. He pulls out, driving down an endless row of minivans and pickup trucks.

*
*

A BOY walks out between two vehicles in front of them. Jimmy jams the brakes so hard he almost puts Alejandro through the windshield.

*
*
*

MIGUEL stutter-steps back, looks at the SUV, eyes wide.

*

JIMMY

JESUS FUCK ...

*

Miguel stares at the men staring at him through the windshield. Jimmy rolls his window down.

*
*

JIMMY (CONT'D)

You alright?

*
*

Miguel looks from Jimmy to Alejandro, nods.

*

JIMMY (CONT'D)

You mind getting out of the road?

*
*

Don't have to tell him twice. He walks toward the Starbucks at the end of the parking lot.

*
*

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Fucking gangbangers. Should've done the world a favor and sped up ...

*
*
*

Alejandro watches Miguel walk into the Starbucks, then looks out over the parking lot -- everywhere is a brand new store selling something. And every parking space in front of every store is filled.

ALEJANDRO
He's just a symptom.

Alejandro looks over the shopping center.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)
That's the problem.

Jimmy looks around as though he's looking for an assailant.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)
It's the only thing on this planet
that still surprises me.

He looks at Jimmy, who has no idea what he's talking about.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)
The appetite of this place.

JIMMY
Yeah, well ... Welcome to America.

The SUV drives through the parking lot and onto the street.

INT. HECTOR'S CAMARO -- LATER.

Miguel sits beside Hector as he drives. Turns left toward the border. Miguel's body tightens as he sees the sign announcing: LAST EXIT BEFORE THE BORDER.

Hector looks at him as he sucks his cigarette. Smiles.

HECTOR
You've worked hard. Now you get
promoted.

Miguel nods without agreeing as they approach the border ...

INT. HECTOR'S CAMARO -- FEW MINUTES LATER.

Miguel looks out the window at the town of REYNOSA, MEXICO. The streets are alive with people. Young men and women with BACKPACKS loiter on every corner.

HECTOR

Yesterday you were a taxi driver.
Today, a Pollero. Tomorrow? That
depends on you ...

Miguel studies DOZENS OF MEN AND WOMEN ALL standing before an *
old school bus. A BOY no older than him waving them on ...

MIGUEL

I need to be home by seven or my
father will be worried.

HECTOR

You have a new father.

Hector stabs his cigarette stub against a new cigarette.
Lights the new one, tosses the old one to the gutter.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

And when you meet him, you better
act like a fucking man ... You
ready to be a man?

Miguel forces himself to nod.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Guess we'll see ...

Hector turns left and heads for the edge of town, then
continues on as cinder-block buildings give way to mesquite
trees and cactus the size of Toyotas ...

EXT. MEXICO HIGHWAY 2 -- CONT.

The Camaro drives an empty road. No traffic in either *
direction, as if it was reserved for Hector ... *

CAMERA RISES --

In the distance, BUSES CAN BE SEEN MOVING DOWN A DIRT ROAD *
WHERE DOZENS OF MEN CAN BE SEEN WAITING ...

INT. HECTOR'S CAMARO -- CONT.

Hector turns on a GARMIN GPS, hands it to Miguel.

HECTOR

The flashing light is you. The red
line is your path.

The Camaro pulls up beside the buses. PICKUP TRUCKS sit parked facing them, their headlights on -- cutting through the deep grey of dusk.

As the Camaro stops, Miguel watches as one hundred tired, terrified men and women file off the buses. Hector parks, shuts off the vehicle.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Stay here until I come get you.

Hector climbs out of the vehicle. Miguel stares, horrified, at the men walking around the migrants. They divide them into groups. Force some groups to heft 50 POUND BALES OF MARIJUANA on their backs. Miguel pulls his cellphone from his pocket, ponders dialing his father, dialing 911, dialing anyone who can get him out of this when --

A FIST POUNDS ON THE CAMARO WINDOW.

Miguel looks at Hector who motions for him to get out ... *

Hector walks Miguel to a group of 8 MEN AND WOMEN. Hector grabs Miguel by the back of his neck and jerks him to a stop. *

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Can you fucking swim?

Miguel manages a nod. Hector points at the GPS.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Don't let that get wet. Come meet your new daddy.

He guides Miguel toward Gallo. His emotionless eyes look Miguel up and down ... *

GALLO *

At my house, I have a big pond with Koi fish. Know what those are?

Miguel doesn't.

GALLO (CONT'D)

Like big goldfish. With spots.

MIGUEL

... Spots?

Gallo nods.

GALLO

Some are orange and white. Some black and orange.

(MORE)

GALLO (CONT'D)

My favorite is this big (holds his hands three feet apart). It's black and white and fat like Santa. Looks like a dairy cow with gills.

*

Gallo chuckles. So does Miguel.

GALLO (CONT'D)

If you get caught, I'll carve your mother into little pieces and feed her to him. If you get the pollos across, I'll pay you more than your father made last year. What I do is up to you ...

Miguel tries to speak, but nothing comes. All he can manage is a nod. Gallo pulls him close, his dirty mouth inches from Miguel's ear.

GALLO (CONT'D)

They are sheep. Treat them like it.

Gallo stands and points to a group of migrants.

*

GALLO (CONT'D)

Those are yours. Take them across.

Miguel walks to the group -- all of them 10 years older than him or more. He sucks in a breath, then shouts --

MIGUEL

Oye, bandejos! No hablan! No preguntas! Si quieren ir a los Estados Unidos, yo soy el pastor. Siguame, y no dicen nada!

Miguel looks at the GPS, starts walking on the illuminated path. The group of migrants follows as he leads them north. To salvation ...

EXT. RIO GRANDE RIVER -- NIGHT.

Miguel stands at the bank of the river, the migrants behind him. He walks into the river until it's up to his waist. Until the current fights his every step. Time to swim ... He holds the GPS high and kicks his way across the river, eight terrified souls treading water right behind him.

*

*

He kicks and swims, the bank on the US side getting closer. Sees something to his left --

A WATER MOCCASIN slithers through the water in a collision course with the boy. He slows, treads water, and lets it pass inches from his face. Fights his panic and continues ...

Reaches the shore. Crawls up the steep bank, all eight still behind him. Waits for them to reach the shore then moves quietly through the brush ...

A HELICOPTER SOARS OVERHEAD. It's searchlight piercing the night.

MIGUEL
A BAJO! A BAJO!!

Everyone ducks into the brush until the light passes and the sound of the helicopter fades. Miguel stands and motions for them to follow ...

EXT. TEXAS DESERT -- NIGHT.

Miguel stares at the GPS, the end of the red line is close. In the distance, he sees TWO VANS parked in the mesquite. Walks toward them. As he gets closer, TWO YOUNG MEN WITH TATTOOS FROM HEAD TO TOE EMERGE FROM THE VANS, PISTOLS IN THEIR HANDS. One of them looks at Miguel, smiles.

GANGSTER
Good job, little jefe. Follow the trail to the road. Your ride's waiting.

*
*

Miguel keeps walking as the gangsters force the terrified migrants into the vans -- their journey very far from over. Miguel sees a MINIVAN parked on the side of a road. Miguel stops, stares at it. The window rolls down ...

*
*

A YOUNG BLONDE WOMAN looks out and smiles.

BLONDE WOMAN
It's okay. Come on ...

He walks to the minivan, climbs in the shotgun seat. In the seat behind him is AN INFANT SOUND ASLEEP IN A BABY SEAT. She motions for him to be quiet. Hands him a brown paper bag. Miguel looks inside -- more money than he's ever seen.

*

BLONDE WOMAN (CONT'D)
Name a job that pays better and I'll do it. Where do you wanna go, baby?

MIGUEL
Home.

BLONDE WOMAN

Where's home?

He looks at her, doesn't trust her for a second.

MIGUEL

Get me to the grocery store on
Trenton. I can take it from there.

BLONDE WOMAN

What ever you say, sugar. You're
the boss.

*

She puts the minivan in drive and pulls onto the road ...

EXT. USS NEW YORK -- DAWN.

THREE MH-60 TRANSPORT HELICOPTERS climb from the deck are
whirl toward shore ...

INT. MH-60 HELICOPTER -- CONT.

Isabel -- now dressed in NAVY WHITES two sizes too big, holds
her school uniform in her lap and studies the contractors --
all dressed IN DESERT CAMOUFLAGE. Looks at Alejandro who
stares out at nothing. Looks at Matt, who is staring right
back.

ISABEL

What?

MATT

You don't ask questions. Don't cry.
Don't complain ...

ISABEL

I'm pacing myself.

Matt laughs.

MATT

The mouth on this girl.

ISABEL

You wouldn't tell me the truth if I
asked. What's crying ever
accomplished, and complaining ...
Children always suffer the sins of
their fathers, why should I be any
different? I can only imagine the
sins your kids suffer.

MATT

Don't have kids.

ISABEL

That figures. (Looks at Alejandro)
What kind of father are you?

She looks at Alejandro and his hollow eyes suck the defiance from her.

Alejandro moves beside her, leans close. Close enough to make her look away. *

ALEJANDRO

Not once in your life have you wondered what the future held -- what you want, you get. What scares you is removed from your sight and destroyed. You've never suffered a day in your fat life ... You have no idea how close to death you've been for years because you're so spoiled you can't even fathom the notion of danger. You don't cry because you don't know how. Because you never had a reason to learn.

She stares at the floor, eyes filled with a violated fury as the truth of his words burn through her.

INT. MIGUEL'S HOUSE -- MORNING.

Miguel sits at the breakfast table, but he doesn't eat. Just stares in the furious eyes of his father. On the table between them: 5,000 dollars. *

Blandina stands in the corner, eyes wet from crying. Miguel's brother and sisters peek around the corner like weary deer. Arturo stands up. Takes the money and a SAUCE PAN. Puts the money in the pan and lights it on fire. *

Looks at his other children who disappear behind the wall. Then back at Miguel ... *

ARTURO

You made your choice ... Now I make mine. *

Arturo grabs Miguel by the collar and drags him to the front door and tosses Miguel outside with a strength we did not credit him with having ... *

MIGUEL

Don't come back until you choose something different.

Arturo slams the door leaving Miguel alone in the front yard, looking very much the little boy again ...

EXT. PORT OF VERACRUZ -- MEXICO -- DAY.

A CRANE lifts railcars from the ship's deck -- they sway back and forth as the crane lowers them in neat rows ... *

A MEXICAN NAVY INSPECTOR walks past railcars, reading the SECURITY STICKERS that seal the doors. Stops at one, reads it, then unlocks the railcar and swings it open ...

Steps inside the dark. Walks a narrow alleyway past box after box until the inspector's flashlight FINDS A FACE. *

THE MAN IS EARLY 20S. THICK BEARD. SHORT HAIR. He wears a t-shirt and jeans. Two duffel bags at his feet.

INSPECTOR

Speak English?

The young man nods.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

Got water?

Young man nods again.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

Drink lots. Will get very hot in here.

He looks at the duffel bags.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

Which one is mine.

YOUNG MAN

The blue.

The inspector picks up the blue duffel and walks out. Closes the door and covers it with a giant sticker that says --

INSPECTED AND CLEARED.

EXT. U.S. BORDER PATROL STAGING CENTER -- OLMITA, TX -- DAY.

In a room the size of a school gymnasium, CONTRACTORS cram RIFLE MAGAZINES IN ASSAULT VESTS. CHECK WEAPONS. SIFT THROUGH GEAR. Jimmy holds up a pair of NIGHT VISION GOGGLES to Matt. *

JIMMY

Should we bring these?

MATT

Better safe than sorry. Hate for night to come and we're sitting in the dark with our dicks in our hands.

D.E.A. AGENT ED RAMIREZ walks to Matt, phone in hand.

RAMIREZ

They're saying 'no go' on the Humvees and sidearms only. They want passports on your men and want to cap the team at 6 --

MATT

Give me that. (swipes the phone) I'm not negotiating with you. If I want to drive her over in a tank division you will provide me the escort ... Fuck it, we'll keep her here and issue a press release explaining the Mexican government is unwilling to offer safe transport. Can you spell your name for me? Want to make sure I get it right ... What I thought. We'll be there in an hour.

Hands the phone back. Looks at Ramirez.

MATT (CONT'D)

How can a government that corrupt have so many regulations ... *

RAMIREZ

They're as worried as I am: when you're using bait you're supposed to dangle it out of reach.

MATT

Not this time. They need to take a little bite.

Matt looks at Isabel sitting against the wall -- dressed in head to toe in white. Shifts his eyes to Ramirez. *

MATT (CONT'D)

We got any tactical green in extra small? She looks like a giant target.

*

Ramirez walks off. Matt looks at Isabel as she sits, oblivious of her fate. If it possible for him to feel regret he feels it now. Looks across the room at Alejandro as he checks the action of an M-4 ASSAULT RIFLE. No regret there. Not even a little ...

*

EXT. 7-11 STORE -- MCCALLEN, TX -- DAY.

Miguel sits against the wall of the 7-11. Stands when he sees Hector's Camaro pull up in front of him. He walks to the car and climbs in ...

EXT. MEXICAN DESERT -- DAY.

CAMERA LOOKS DOWN ON THE DESERT FROM 10,000 FEET ON A CONVOY OF VEHICLES. A PREDATOR DRONE BLASTS THROUGH FRAME ...

PUSH IN ON THE CONVOY --

A MEXICAN MILITARY ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER leads the way. Behind it, a MEXICAN FEDERAL POLICE TRUCK, machine gun on a tripod mounted to the bed. Behind it are 4 HUMVEES. Behind the Humvees is another Mexican Police truck ...

*

*

INT. HUMVEE -- CONT.

Matt sits beside Alejandro, Isabel by his side. They sit shoulder-to-shoulder with contractors cradling assault rifles between their legs, barrels to the floorboard.

Matt turns and glances out the tiny window-slit -- MESQUITE TREES COVER THE LANDSCAPE. Looks back at TRAE.

MATT

Having fun yet?

TRAE

Hate these fucking tuna cans. Feel like I'm back in Fallujah.

Matt speaks into his radio mic.

MATT

Air, how we looking?

VOICE

Clear on both sides.

Alejandro looks through the window-slit.

ALEJANDRO

This is where I'd do it.

MATT

Me too. (Speaks into his mic) Air,
you see no vehicles?

VOICE

Nothing but desert. You're clear.

MATT

What's your field of view?

VOICE

10 mikes in every direction. Mexico
Fed said the road would be clear.
Looks like they're keeping their
word ...

*
*

MATT

Well, that fucking sucks ...

Matt looks at Alejandro.

MATT (CONT'D)

Road's clear.

ALEJANDRO

They will never let her pass
through without trying to strike a
blow. As a matter of pride if
nothing else ...

*

MATT

Looks like they're swallowing
pride today.

*

Matt looks out the window -- mesquites and broken country and
nothing else for miles ... Isabel looks at Matt.

*

ISABEL

Do you want them to take me?

Matt looks back at her.

MATT

Course not. Just want them to try.

*

Isabel is floored. Asks her second question --

ISABEL

... *Why?*

Matt ignores her, looks at Alejandro.

MATT

What a waste of time.

ALEJANDRO

It's coming. Trust me.

MATT

THERE'S NO ONE OUT THERE TO COME.

Matt reaches for the roof latch, pushes it open and stands.

EXT. HUMVEE -- CONT.

Matt looks out over the desert where mesquite trees have grown so thick the desert floor is not visible ...

He strains to see through the trees. Nothing ...

He looks at the Mexican officer in front, hands gripping the .50 Caliber machine gun pointed out over the desert. But he doesn't look where the barrel points. He looks at Matt. Matt shouts at him.

MATT

ANYTHING??

The officer shakes his head 'no'.

VOICE

Shit! Ground, incoming on your right --

Matt looks to his right.

MATT

Negative, air. I see nothing.

Matt hears the faint sound of a whistle. Sees a thin trail of white smoke that races toward the armored personnel carrier that leads the way ...

The RPG PENETRATES THE ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER, rolling it off the road in a mass of black smoke. By the time Matt's eyes have shifted back to the Mexican officer manning the machine gun in front of him, the machine gun IS POINTED AT HIM.

Matt drops down the hole and screams --

MATT (CONT'D)

HARD LEFT!!!

The Humvee driver barrels off the road as rifle rounds pound into the Humvee. In an instant, it seems the entire desert is attacking them ... *

FROM ABOVE --

All Humvees peel off the road as trails of white smoke slam into one of the rear police vehicles. MEXICAN FEDERAL POLICE IN THE REAR OF THE CONVOY engage the muzzle flashes that spark from the desert.

THE TWO MEXICAN POLICE VEHICLES IN THE FRONT OF THE CONVOY turn sideways in the street and begin firing at both THE HUMVEES AND THE MEXICAN FEDERAL POLICE IN THE REAR.

IN AN INSTANT, EVERYONE IS FIRING AT EVERYONE.

It is utter madness ...

INT. HUMVEE -- CONT.

CONTRACTORS pile out of the Humvee, Alejandro looks at Isabel.

ALEJANDRO

Lay on the floor. Head under the bench.

He disappears as well. Isabel tries to curl in a ball under the bench as rifle rounds puncture the vehicle. She sees A LATCH on the floor beside her, pulls it and THE FLOOR ESCAPE HATCH drops. She climbs out ...

EXT. UNDER THE HUMVEE -- CONT.

The sound is deafening. All she sees is FEET. Running here. Running there. She looks to her left -- no feet there, just the gnarled trunks of mesquite trees. She crawls toward them.

ANGLE ON --

MATT, as he takes cover behind the giant tire of the humvee, spots muzzle flashes across the road, flickering then disappearing by the dozens. He shouts into his mic --

MATT

WEST SIDE. 100 METERS.

VOICE

Roger that. Heads down.

EXPLOSIONS ROCK THE FAR SIDE OF THE ROAD AS A PREDATOR DRONE WHIPS BY 50 feet off the ground ...

ANGLE ON --

ALEJANDRO, as he and A GROUP OF CONTRACTORS move on the MEXICAN FEDERAL POLICE VEHICLES BLOCKING THE ROAD --

Jogging forward, rifles to their shoulders, firing as they run. Alejandro and the contractors form a semi-circle that takes up the whole road, then close it into a circle surrounding the vehicles and punch rounds into Mexican Police who are no match for professional soldiers ...

ANGLE ON --

THE REAR OF THE CONVOY, WHERE A GROUP OF MEXICAN POLICE OFFICERS HOLD ANOTHER GROUP OF MEXICAN POLICE OFFICERS AT GUNPOINT WHO POINT GUNS BACK AT THEM.

MATT AND MORE CONTRACTORS HOLD WEAPONS ON BOTH GROUPS SCREAMING IN SPANISH FOR WEAPONS TO BE DROPPED.

Frantic men from every group swing rifles from one target to the next.

MATT

A BAJO! A BAJO! A BAJO!

TRAE

DROP YOUR WEAPONS!!

MEXICAN POLICE SHIFT THEIR SIGHTS FROM AMERICAN CONTRACTORS THEN BACK TO OTHER MEXICAN POLICE OFFICERS AS REASON AND ALLEGIANCE GIVES WAY TO PANIC AND SURVIVAL.

No one knows who anyone is. No one knows who's on their side. *
As American contractors shout for weapons to be dropped,
Mexican police officers shout the same in return.

AS ALEJANDRO AND HIS GROUP OF CONTRACTORS RUSH FORWARD SCREAMING -- A SHOT IS FIRED -- AND AN AMERICAN CONTRACTOR FALLS TO HIS KNEES.

Unclear who fired the shot, but now it doesn't matter --
Matt, Alejandro and the dozen contractors open fire until
they've killed everyone who wears a Mexican police uniform. *

Matt looks over smoking vehicles and bodies littering the
road. *

MATT
Are we clear??

Shouts of 'CLEAR' echo out all around him. Contractors move through the scene toward him.

JIMMY
ARE YOU FUCKING KIDDING ME MATT??
THESE WERE POLICE!!!

Matt looks at Alejandro.

MATT
Wasn't the ambush I was expecting.

ALEJANDRO
We must go back. Everyone will blame us for this if they find us here.

MATT
Gotta keep going. I gotta give her back.

ALEJANDRO
They hit with police, not gangsters. There's only more of this waiting.

MATT
I can't just keep her!

ALEJANDRO
There's no one to give to her to.

Matt's radio sparks to life. *

VOICE *
Ground, you have police vehicles *
approaching from the south. 5 *
clicks out. *

Matt looks at Alejandro.

MATT *
(Into mic) Roger that, base. (To *
contractors) LOAD UP.

Matt and the contractors rush to their Humvees, Matt freezes when he looks inside and sees the EMPTY VEHICLE AND OPEN FLOOR HATCH.

Alejandro peers inside the Humvee, then out over the desert. *

MATT (CONT'D) *

Goddammit. (Shouts to his men) NEW *
MISSION. *

ALEJANDRO *

No time for that. Get north. I'll *
find her. *

Matt hands him a GPS BEACON. *

MATT *

Any chance you can get her *
stateside? *

ALEJANDRO *

It's a big risk. *

Matt shakes his head, *

MATT *

They can't find her. No matter *
what. *

ALEJANDRO *

I'll take care of it. *

The look in Alejandro's eyes says how he'll do it. Alejandro *
moves into the trees as Matt and his team pile into Humvees *
and head north ...

EXT. DESERT -- CONT.

Isabel crawls on hands and knees through the mesquite.
Reaches an open pasture, then stand up and runs ...

Up ahead is a more mesquite. She ducks and claws her way *
through the thorny branches. Comes to A ROAD ... Looks to her *
left. To her right. Nothing ... She's not sure which way to *
go, sits against the tree while she figures it out ...

EXT. DESERT -- ISABEL'S TRAIL -- CONT.

Alejandro moves silently through the mesquite, studying the
ground. Has to duck low to avoid the thorns. Finds A
HANDPRINT IN THE DIRT. Then another ...

INT. MATT'S HUMVEE -- CONT.

All the men suck air. Check themselves for wounds. Jimmy *
looks at two bullet holes over his heart. PULLS OUT HIS *
TRAUMA PLATE AND PICKS THE SLUGS FROM THE STEEL ...

Yanks open his shirt and surveys the dinner plate-sized bruise forming over his chest.

Though the battle barely lasted three minutes -- from the look of the men it lasted all day. Blood and dust and grime cover every inch of them ...

TRAE

Feeling pretty fucking under-paid
at the moment, Matt.

MATT

Gotta play for the love of the
game, sport.

JIMMY

Goddam that fucking hurts.

MATT

Put that back in. We're not done.

All the men pant and suck water from CAMELBACK BLADDERS ON THEIR BACKS THROUGH TUBES THAT RUN BENEATH THEIR SHOULDERS.

One CONTRACTOR uses the tube like a garden hose, shooting water over his face.

TRAE

Give me some of that.

Sprays Trae's face as well, then notices THE BLOOD pooled on the bench between them.

CONTRACTOR

You're hit.

Contractors begin pulling off Trae's gear and clothes.

TRAE

Where?

They find a hole just beneath his armpit.

MATT

There an exit?

The find the exit hole through the shoulder blade.

TRAE

Fuck me --

MATT

Breathe in deep through your nose
and hold your breath.

He does. No cough ...

*

MATT (CONT'D)
Missed your lung.

A CONTRACTOR PULLS A TRAUMA KIT FROM HIS PACK, SHOWERS BOTH HOLES WITH A WHITE POWDER, BEGINS DRESSING THE WOUNDS as Matt speaks into his mouthpiece --

MATT (CONT'D)
I need a medivac from our rally point. Contact 47'th med at Laughlin, let them know patient is a low visibility subject.

*

VOICE
Roger that ground. You have police vehicles approaching your six in a code 3.

*

MATT
Have a lane clear for me at the border and NO BULLSHIT. Anything in our way we drive over ...

Matt reaches for the roof hatch as he shouts at the driver.

MATT (CONT'D)
Get on the speaker and give them a warning.

Looks at the other men who are already slamming fresh magazines into their rifles.

JIMMY
(mumbles to himself) here we go again ...

EXT. HUMVEE -- CONT.

Matt looks back as STATE POLICE VEHICLE SCREAM TOWARD THEM, SIRENS BLAZING. Matt places a BELT MAGAZINE IN THE M-60 MACHINE GUN MOUNTED TO A TURRET, YANKS BACK THE BOLT AND SENDS A ROUND INTO THE CHAMBER.

The sound of the Humvee driver's voice echoes out of LOUD SPEAKERS.

DRIVER (O.S.)
GET BACK! THIS IS A UNITED STATES MILITARY VEHICLE. IF YOU CONTINUE TO APPROACH WE WILL FIRE.

The driver repeats it IN SPANISH as Matt fires a dozen rounds into the street in front of the vehicles ... *

POLICE VEHICLES LOCK THEIR BRAKES. SKID AND SLIDE TO A STOP as the Humvees race past a sign that says:

INTERNATIONAL BORDER 1/2 MILE AHEAD.

Matt spins around and sees the border crossing and ducks back inside the Humvee.

IT IS A MUCH SMALLER CROSSING THAN JUAREZ. Barely more than GUARD SHACKS ON EITHER SIDE. As the Humvees approach, AGENTS FROM BOTH COUNTRIES stand and stare, stunned motionless by the bullet-riddled vehicles blasting past them while tourists film the retreat on their IPHONES ... *

EXT. ROADSIDE -- NORTHERN MEXICO -- DAY.

Isabel hides in the mesquite. HEARS the sound of A VEHICLE APPROACHING. Sneaks a peak -- An old CHEVY PICKUP drives toward her. She stares at it gets closer. Has to make a decision -- stands and walks into the road. The truck slows to a stop. She walks toward it as the driver's door opens. A MIDDLE-AGED MAN, big belly, steps out of the truck. Nothing about him looks like a threat, until she steps closer and sees the falseness of his smile.

PICKUP DRIVER

Que esta haciendo aqui, chiquita?

She freezes. Starts to walk backward. His smile fades as he reaches out and grabs her arm ...

A BULLET pierces his forehead. The man collapses to the street like a jacket slipping from a coat rack.

Alejandro steps from the mesquite, rifle still at his shoulder, Isabel in his sights. *

She turns and runs like hell out over the desert. Alejandro takes off after her with a speed we did not credit him with having. *

She looks back, SCREAMS IN TERROR at the ground he has gained. Isabel trips and hits the desert floor face-first. In an instant, Alejandro is on her ...

Isabel explodes -- biting, kicking, screaming. Alejandro puts a knee in her chest-- pushing the air from her lungs and the fight from her spirit. She fights for air as she cries. *

Alejandro pulls a pistol, presses it to her temple. She looks *
him dead in the eye -- no fear. Wrestles against his hand. *
Turns her face into it, bites into his palm. *

He stares at this little fighter, never quitting. No beg in *
her. Pulls his bleeding hand from her mouth and stands over *
her, pistol pointed at her face. *

ALEJANDRO *
Now is a good time to cry. *

ISABEL *
If my father's such a monster *WHAT* *
THE FUCK ARE YOU?!?! *

He looks at the little warrior at his feet staring death in *
the eye with a dare, and lowers the pistol. *

ALEJANDRO *
Good question. Now's a good time to *
ask questions too -- you need to *
understand your new reality. *

She sucks heavy breaths. Looks up at him. *

ISABEL *
... Why did you take me? *

ALEJANDRO *
In a business of terrible men, your *
father is perhaps the worst. Maybe *
we'll talk about why and what made *
him terrible and if I am any worse, *
but not today. *

ISABEL *
Okay. *

ALEJANDRO *
Ask me another one. *

ISABEL *
You took me to find him? *

ALEJANDRO *
Yes. *

ISABEL *
And you brought me back so his *
enemies would try and take me from *
you? *

ALEJANDRO *
Why do you think we did that? *

ISABEL *
I don't know. *

ALEJANDRO *
So your father will go to war with *
the men who attacked us. *

ISABEL *
How does that make things better? *

ALEJANDRO *
You won't understand the answer. *
Not yet. *

She looks at him with her giant eyes. The fighter is gone. *
Only a little girl remains. *

ISABEL *
Now you're going to kill me and *
make it look like they did it. *

He stares down at her. *

ALEJANDRO *
No ... You, I think I'll save. *

He yanks her to her feet. *

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D) *
You want to tell the truth about *
Mexico? Now you know a little. I'll *
show you more. And if you can *
stomach what you see... *

He looks at her with sad, kind eyes.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)
Scream it from a rooftop.

He starts walking into the mesquite, motions for her to follow. She does ...

INT. BATHROOM -- D.E.A. STAGING CENTER -- LATER.

COLD WATER RUNS INTO A DEEP, CROOKED GASH ON A MAN'S FOREARM.
CAMERA PULLS BACK --

Matt stands in front of a sink, cleaning the wound. Dabs it dry with SURGICAL GAUZE. Dumps BETADINE SOLUTION into the wound, then starts pulling the gash closed with BUTTERFLY BANDAGES.

Bathroom door pushes open -- Forsing stands there. *

FORSING
You need stitches.

*

MATT
Lucky for me it'll still need them
tomorrow.

FORSING
How'd that happen?

*

MATT
Fuck if I know.

FORSING
J.C.U. just picked up the signal.

*

Matt forgets his wound and walks out the door.

INT. CONTROL ROOM -- D.E.A. STAGING CENTER -- MOMENT LATER.

A large room has been converted to a command center. Matt marches past JIMMY and other CONTRACTORS who are preparing both gear and themselves for the next operation.

JIMMY
How many you want?

MATT
Twelve man team, a medic and a
sniper.

He walks to a table where the J.C.U. SPECIALIST SITS BEFORE MONITORS AND COMPUTERS. The specialist points to a RED FLASHING LIGHT over a SATELLITE IMAGE OF THE GROUND.

JCU SPECIALIST
We just picked it up. 35 miles
southwest of Reynosa.

MATT
Let's gear up and go get him --

*

The door flies open -- Cynthia and two CIA AIDES march in. Matt watches her as she storms toward him. Her mood is somewhere between irate and panic. Matt forces a smile --

*

*

MATT (CONT'D)
... Fucking Mondays, huh?

CYNTHIA
Take me somewhere we can talk.

CYNTHIA

We don't *want* her back. We want this whole fucked up operation to disappear. Eliminate the source as well. Then shut this down.

MATT

This was the mission.

CYNTHIA

This was FAR from the mission. Not my call. POTUS doesn't have the stomach for it.

MATT

I did my job. Now you do yours. *Sit that fucking coward down and explain to him: this is how we win.*

CYNTHIA

He's not worried about winning. He's worried about getting FUCKING IMPEACHED. I just watched Youtube footage of YOUR SHOT TO SHIT HUMVEES RACING ACROSS THE BORDER!!!!

MATT

SO SPIN IT!! All it does is strengthen our position.

CYNTHIA

We don't have a position BECAUSE WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO FUCKING BE THERE ... Your objective was to start a war with Mexican cartels, not the Mexican Government.

MATT

It's the same thing.

CYNTHIA

Don't be simplistic ... They're an ally. Until they piece this fuck-up together ...

She shakes her head.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

You had a blank check and you still found a way to do the one thing you shouldn't do ... Wipe the chalkboard clean. Understand me?

MATT

It took me fifteen years to build
him into what he is ...

CYNTHIA

Is he the only grieving father in
Mexico, Matt? I could throw a
boomerang across the river and hit
fifty of them. Build another.

Matt shakes his head in frustration.

MATT

This is why nothing ever changes.

CYNTHIA

You think change is the goal?
You've been doing this too long to
believe that.

She walks out.

EXT. MEXICAN DESERT -- AFTERNOON.

Alejandro looks out over a field of corn. Sees A MAN pulling
weeds in the rows. Alejandro whispers to Isabel.

ALEJANDRO

Stay behind me.

Alejandro lays the rifle beneath the tree. Pulls off his
tactical vest.

Alejandro walks into the field -- hands held out, Isabel in
his back pocket. The farmer spots them and stands perfectly
still as they approach ... He studies the frail young woman
and the hulking man beside her -- both dressed in military
uniforms, and grips his rake a little tighter ...

ALEJANDRO (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)

We need help. I'll pay for it.

The farmer's name is ANGEL(40), kind face, trim body of a man
who works for a living.

ANGEL (SUBTITLE)

To give help here is expensive. And
I don't mean dollars.

ALEJANDRO (SUBTITLE)

Helping me won't cost you anything
because we are ghosts who were
never here.

Angel's eyes move over the girl -- a flicker of recognition in Angel's eyes, then a wave of realization as he looks at the gear on Alejandro's chest. The pistol on his hip ... *

ANGEL
... El Medellin?

Alejandro nods.

ANGEL (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)
If there were a thousand of you,
maybe I could walk my field at
night.

ALEJANDRO (SUBTITLE)
If there were a thousand of me it
would be my field. That's the
nature of power. Better I am alone.

Angel turns and walks toward his tiny house, motions for them to follow ... *

INT. KITCHEN -- ANGEL'S HOUSE -- LATER.

Alejandro sips coffee as Isabel devours a meal of eggs and tortillas, nods his gratitude toward Angel and his wife IDA(35), a baby boy in her lap. *

ALEJANDRO
Your only child?

ANGEL
We have two daughters in Dallas. My
work visa was expiring so we came
back to get it renewed ... *

Angel motions at the baby.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
Then he came early. They don't give
visas for babies. They do, but ...

Angel rubs his thumb and forefinger together.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
You need a lot of this for a lot of
pockets ... Now our family's there
and we're here. Hiding. It's what I
get for trying to do things the
right way. *

ALEJANDRO

It isn't the right way if you get
punished for doing it.

ANGEL

There is no right way. Not anymore.

Alejandro looks out the window at the setting sun. Looks at
his watch. Reaches into his pack and pulls out a SATELLITE
PHONE.

ALEJANDRO

Excuse me.

He walks outside as he dials ...

EXT. ANGEL'S FARM -- CONT.

Alejandro stares out over goats and chickens as the dying sun
paints the horizon a bloody orange.

MATT (V.O.)

You safe?

ALEJANDRO

Where are you.

Beat.

MATT (V.O.)

The base. You find her?

INTERCUT WITH --

EXT. D.E.A. STAGING CENTER -- CONT.

Matt walks across the giant parking lot filed with SUV's,
HUMVEES, and HELICOPTERS beneath a canopy of stars ...

ALEJANDRO

She's with me now.

MATT

They want to cut ties.

ALEJANDRO

Don't think I can do that.

MATT

What are you telling me?

ALEJANDRO
I'm telling you not this one.

Beat.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)
I'm bringing her to you.

MATT
Not sure this side is any safer.
She's got a lot to say they don't
want anyone to hear.

ALEJANDRO
Yeah ... I think maybe that's what
we need. It's the only thing we
haven't tried.

MATT
That thought crossed my mind too.

ALEJANDRO
If I get her back can you protect
her?

Matt sucks in a breath. What he says when he exhales will
determine his future.

MATT
Get her to me. I'll do the rest.
Good luck.

ALEJANDRO
Luck doesn't live on this side of
the border.

Alejandro hangs up and watches as the last rays of the day
dip to the horizon. Starts walking back to the little house.
By the time reaches the front door, night has overtaken them.

INT. HECTOR'S CAMARO -- NIGHT.

Miguel looks out the window as they drive through Reynosa,
Mexico. Turn down a narrow road and come to A WAREHOUSE.
Parked in front IS A ROW OF OLD SCHOOL BUSES AND VANS ...

Exhausted MIGRANTS sleep against the warehouse wall using
backpacks as pillows. Must be a hundred of them ...

HECTOR
Lots of pollos today.

Camaro stops. Hector and Miguel walk past the sleeping 'sheep' to the warehouse ...

INT. WAREHOUSE -- CONT.

Old couches and chairs sit in no particular order. TWO MEN *
drink beer and play pool. TEENAGE BOYS AND YOUNG MEN sleep on
every available piece of furniture. Cigarette smoke hovers
over the warehouse in a hazy, blue cloud.

HECTOR

Get some rest.

Miguel looks for a place to sleep but every available couch *
is taken. He rests against the wall, knees to his chest,
looking more the little boy than ever ...

EXT. MESQUITE THICKET -- ANGEL'S FARM -- NIGHT.

Alejandro stands in a hole about 2 feet deep, shovel in hand.
Tosses the shovel to the ground and drops to his knees.
Begins scooping dirt with his hands.

He wears Angel's clothes -- which are far too small. Beside
the hole is all of Alejandro's gear -- the M-16 completely *
disassembled, his tactical clothes and gear -- A RADIO *
EARPIECE, SATELLITE PHONE, RIFLE MAGAZINES ... Beside all of
that is Isabel, wearing more of Angel's clothes -- all too *
big. Her hair has been cut short, like a boy. She stands,
arms crossed, face filled with worry.

ISABEL

Medellin ... I know who you are.
You're the attorney whose family
they --

ALEJANDRO

Not 'they'.

His eyes burrow into her until she understands the
implication.

ISABEL

... My father.

ALEJANDRO

A man who worked for him.

Beat.

ISABEL

Why?

ALEJANDRO

To send a message.

ISABEL

That why you hunt them, so you
won't be a message?

ALEJANDRO

I will always be a message. Only
now the message is different.

Alejandro stops what he's doing. Looks at the terrified girl. *

ISABEL *

Is it hard to cross? *

ALEJANDRO

Depends ... Do polleros control
border agents on the other side? Is
it a kidnap crew that will hold us
in a house in Texas until a ransom
is paid? What will they do if they
discover who we are ... *

He looks at her.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

We will walk through Hell tomorrow,
and all you can do is pray the
devil doesn't notice.

Isabel barely breaths as she digests his words ...

Alejandro climbs out of the hole, tosses his gear in, drops
to his knees and begins shoving dirt back in the hole.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

Come on, you need to get dirty.

Isabel drops to her knees beside him, starts shoving dirt ...

CAMERA WATCHES FROM A DISTANCE --

The black silhouettes of Alejandro and Isabel look like
mourners lost in prayer as they fill a grave by hand ... *

INT. ANGEL'S TRUCK -- DAWN.

Day breaks over the desert as the outskirts of Reynosa appear
in the distance. Isabel's eyes see a poverty that must be
witnessed to be fully understood -- crumbling cinder-block
buildings, a wall of OLD TIRES that runs a city block. *

Alejandro watches her as she absorbs the truth of the border. They pass group after group of MIGRANTS, huddled in parks. On empty lots. Sleeping on the sidewalk ...

ISABEL

I don't know this Mexico.

ALEJANDRO

They don't know yours. Most don't know Mexico at all ... From Honduras. Guatemala. From every edge of the world. Tonight they will be strapped with a bundle of marijuana and pay the cartel every penny they have for the burden of carrying it over. That is the price of seeking a better life ...

*
*
*
*
*

She looks at him, too stunned to weep.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

This is how your father pays for the fantasy.

Alejandro watches the migrants as they pass.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

When you scream, scream about this.

*

Angel looks at Alejandro, face wrecked with worry.

ANGEL

You should let me drive you to the bridge and take your chances with the police.

ALEJANDRO

That gives us no chance at all. Stop here.

Truck stops. Alejandro opens the door. They get out. Alejandro pulls a wad of money from his pocket, peels off hundred after hundred. Hands it to Angel.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

(Rubs his thumb and forefinger together) For all the pockets.

Then Alejandro pulls his pistol from his knapsack and slides it under the seat.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

For walking your field at night.

ANGEL

You need that.

ALEJANDRO

If I need it here, we're already
dead.

Alejandro closes the door. Angel drives off as Alejandro leads Isabel toward a group of migrants just starting to wake up. He looks at Isabel who is visibly shaking.

ISABEL

I think, maybe ... This is what I
deserve.

The migrants look at them as they walk closer -- their faces wracked with hunger and worry.

ALEJANDRO

No one deserves this.

Alejandro extends his hand to a man who shakes it. A small fire has been built. Some men huddle around it boiling water and pouring instant coffee in mugs. A cup is offered to Alejandro, who takes it and hands it to Isabel ...

She cradles the cup and looks over the faces around her. They nod at her, smile even. There is an odd bond between them all as they await their initiation into a fraternity of fear and suffering ...

A BOY ABOUT ISABEL'S AGE walks up to her, digs in his backpack, pulls out a roll of duct tape, hands it to her.

'BOY'

I can see them.

The 'boy's' voice is that of a teenage girl. She nods in the direction of Isabel's breasts.

'BOY' (CONT'D)

You should tape them down.

The 'boy' hands her the duct tape. Alejandro watches as Isabel follows the 'boy' around the side of a building. He walks after them. Comes around the corner and sees a glimpse of the 'boy' wrapping Isabel's breasts tight to her rib cage. He turns away and moves off, giving them the privacy an act of such delicacy deserves.

Alejandro walks back to the men huddled around the fire. Warms his hands over it. Isabel walks up, stands beside him. Does the same. He looks at her and gives a reassuring smile -- it is the closest thing to kindness we've ever seen from him.

INT. CONTROL ROOM -- D.E.A. STAGING CENTER -- DAWN.

Matt stares at the blinking light of the GPS BEACON on a computer monitor. Forsing and Cynthia look over his shoulder. CONTRACTORS pace about anxiously, geared from head-to-toe.

FORSING

We can't get to him in town.

MATT

He knows where I need him.

Matt looks at the contractors.

MATT (CONT'D)

Here comes round 2. Let's go. (to the J.C.U. SPECIALIST) I want a satellite over that beacon.

CYNTHIA

Wait until he gets her across the border. We take them then --

MATT

You want me cleaning a scene on this side of the border?

CYNTHIA

We can't breach their airspace.

MATT

It's the least worst option.

CYNTHIA

(Sighs) I'll ask.

Dials her cell, and steps away. Matt's eyes never leave her. She hangs up and walks back.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)

Spotless, Matt. You understand me?

Matt and his team walk out double doors to --

EXT. TARMAC -- D.E.A. STAGING CENTER -- CONT.

TWO BLACKHAWK HELICOPTERS AND A 'LITTLE BIRD' HUEY HELICOPTER (essentially a two-seater like news crew use to give traffic reports, except it has a GENERAL ELECTRIC 6 BARREL 20MM MACHINE mounted to it's belly ...

Matt's team divides in two and piles into the Blackhawks.
Rotors whirl to life ...

EXT. EMPTY LOT -- REYNOSA, MEXICO -- MORNING.

PICKUP TRUCKS PULL INTO THE LOT WHERE DOZENS OF MIGRANTS
STAND IN GROUPS. Cartel guides get out and walk to the
migrants, smiling like salesmen. Alejandro studies them --
the Cartels' middle-management don't look like criminals at
all -- they look like plumbers, like soccer coaches. They are
fat and bald and altogether unremarkable.

A DOOR OPENS ON THE FAR END OF THE WAREHOUSE --

A group of men and women: ASIAN, MIDDLE EASTERN, RUSSIAN, are
led to two SUBURBANS. Climb inside. The Suburbans drive off.

ISABEL

Who are they?

ALEJANDRO

Same as us. But they paid a
different rate. They go first
class.

Isabel looks at the sheer volume of people being loaded in
buses and vehicles, all headed to different areas of the
border in preparation for this evening's exodus.

ISABEL

So many ...

ALEJANDRO

Every day. Just like this. People
so desperate for a better life they
let the wolf be their shepherd.

Hector walks toward Alejandro and the group standing with
him. Alejandro looks at Isabel.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

Don't look directly at him but
don't look at the ground. Answer
questions 'yes' and 'no'. And
mumble when you answer ...

She nods as Hector walks to them. He instantly singles out
Alejandro who stands a foot taller than everyone else here.

HECTOR

De donde eres, amigo?

ALEJANDRO

Oaxaca.

He nods. Looks at Isabel.

HECTOR

Your son?

Alejandro nods. Hector studies Isabel ...

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Skinny ... He sick?

ALEJANDRO

Just skinny.

HECTOR

Looks sick. You know the price?

ALEJANDRO

Ten.

HECTOR

Each. We could work something out for you, but ... He doesn't look like much of a burro. You come with me for 10, and I'll send him over with a different group. You can pack his freight.

ALEJANDRO

We go together.

Hector's eyes narrow.

HECTOR

That wasn't a question.

Alejandro pulls a thick wad of money from his pocket. Hands it to Hector.

ALEJANDRO

We go together.

Pulls another wad of money from another pocket.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

For you, Senor. For the inconvenience.

Hector thumbs through the bills -- close to 15 thousand dollars.

HECTOR
Must be mowing the right lawns.

He points to a WHITE PICKUP.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
Get in the back of that one.

Alejandro guides Isabel to the pickup, they climb in the bed. Others do as well. Migrants fill the beds of pickups until the shocks sink under their weight. The pickups drive off. Some go north. Some go south. Alejandro's truck drives up the road for a while then turns left down a narrow street and stops before a warehouse with buses waiting ...

Migrants load onto buses like school children. Hector points Alejandro and his crew to the bus farthest to the left. As Alejandro and Isabel wait to board, Alejandro looks across the parking lot and sees --

MIGUEL, leaning against the warehouse wall, smoking a cigarette. Alejandro turns his face away as he steps on the bus ...

Alejandro ushers Isabel to the back. The bus fills quickly. No one speaks.

Hector sits in the driver's seat. Starts the engine. Miguel climbs on the bus -- and with no seats left, grabs a hand rail and looks back over the migrants. Freezes when he sees Alejandro ...

Alejandro holds his gaze as the bus starts moving, then casually glances out the window.

The bus pulls onto the street. Hector turns on the radio to something peppy. Something familiar. Something to keep the cattle calm ...

Alejandro glances in Miguel's direction -- he hasn't moved. Hasn't blinked. Just stares at Alejandro ... Alejandro slides the GPS BEACON from his pocket, hands it to Isabel.

ALEJANDRO
Hide this somewhere no one will
find it.

She shoves the beacon down her pants. Alejandro grabs her arm, says with sadness --

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)
They will look there. Your shoe.

Alejandro looks back up the aisle where Miguel still stands frozen, incapable of removing his eyes from Alejandro.

Alejandro sees Miguel's mouth move. Sees Hector's eyes look in the rearview mirror. Watches Hector dial his cellphone ...

Alejandro closes his eyes, just for an instant. Opens them and looks at Isabel.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

You're name is Carina. From Panama.

ISABEL

Why Panama?

ALEJANDRO

Because no one else here is. You met me last night. Asked me to pretend I am your father. Paid me to do it ... Understand?

ISABEL

I'm not a good liar.

ALEJANDRO

You must get good.

Isabel sucks in a breath. Finds her center.

ISABEL

Where in Panama?

ALEJANDRO

Manila.

ISABEL

How much did I pay you?

ALEJANDRO

A thousand. US dollars.

ISABEL

... Where am I going?

ALEJANDRO

Detroit.

ISABEL

Where's that?

ALEJANDRO

Michigan.

ISABEL

Where's that?

ALEJANDRO

North. On a lake the size of an ocean.

ISABEL

Why there?

ALEJANDRO

Your sister lives there --

ISABEL

Serena.

Alejandro looks at her.

ALEJANDRO

Good.

Alejandro steals a peek at Miguel, who now looks anywhere but Alejandro. Alejandro looks back at Isabel and gives a nod that says 'it's gonna be okay', even though they both know it won't be ...

INT. BLACKHAWK HELICOPTER -- D.E.A. STAGING CENTER -- DAY.

Matt stares at an A.T.A.C.S.: a flip-down computer monitor strapped to his chest -- watches the red blip move over the map, ever-closer to the border. Matt speaks into his radio-mic --

MATT

Am I green?

Nothing.

MATT (CONT'D)

It's a half-hour flight to his location and his location is MOVING AWAY ...

Nothing.

MATT (CONT'D)

Fuck it.

Matt leans forward, taps the pilot. Circles his finger in the air.

PILOT

We're not cleared yet.

*

MATT
Put us in the air!

PILOT
I don't have clearance and I won't
fly 'till I do.

MATT
You don't work for them, you work
for me.

PILOT
It's their money, sir. And they're
watching. I work for them now.

Doesn't sway the pilot. Matt begins moving into the cockpit.

MATT
Fine. Get out.

PILOT
What??

MATT
Think I can't fly it? GET THE FUCK
OUT.

CONTROL CENTER (V.O.)
ROMEO-THREE, TANGO-TWO , ZULU-ONE,
YOU ARE CLEAR FOR LIFT-OFF.

MATT
Saved by the bell ...

EXT. D.E.A. STAGING CENTER -- CONT.

The choppers levitate skyward, then arc south. Toward Mexico.

INT. BUS -- DAY.

Alejandro looks out the window as mesquite gives way to
cactus. Feels the bus slow. Looks forward --

Hard to see what's ahead, but as the bus slows, it is
impossible to miss the MEXICAN STATE POLICE VEHICLES BLOCKING
THE ROAD.

EXT. MEXICO -- U.S. BORDER -- CONT.

SATELLITE FOOTAGE OF --

THREE MEXICAN POLICE VEHICLES BLOCKING THE ROAD. Police officers standing beside the vehicles. Beyond the blockade, a number of vehicles sit parked in the road. Among them -- A NAVY CHEVY PICKUP AND A TAN EXPEDITION.

INT. BLACKHAWK HELICOPTER -- CONT.

Matt's radio crackles --

J.C.U. SPECIALIST (V.O.)
There's interference on the road.

MATT
Are the vehicles unmarked or police?

J.C.U. SPECIALIST (V.O.)
Both.

MATT
Fuck. They know it's her.

FORSING (V.O.)
What if they know it's *him*? *

MATT
... That would be worse.

EXT. MEXICO -- U.S. BORDER -- CONT.

The bus stops and officers walk toward the bus.

INT. BUS -- CONT.

Hector walks down the aisle, all smiles -- like this is just part of it. He looks at Alejandro as he walks to the end of the bus and the rear emergency door.

HECTOR (SUBTITLE)
Relax. You're almost to Eden.

Hector pulls the emergency latch and the rear door of the bus flies open. STATE POLICE OFFICERS RUSH IN FROM THE REAR AS WELL AS THE FRONT. ALL POINTING GUNS. ALL OF THEM AT ALEJANDRO ...

A hand grabs him, jerks him out the emergency exit. He endures the three-foot fall with a thud. POLICEMEN SEARCH HIM. PULL OFF HIS SHOES. A POLICEMAN grabs a handful of his hair, and jerks his face skyward.

Gallo kneels down. Looks at him close.

GALLO

You were in Texas two days ago.

ALEJANDRO

Not me.

GALLO

Yes, you ... What you doing here,
you on vacation? Thought you'd take
a little tour of la frontera?

Gallo shakes his head.

GALLO (CONT'D)

Know what I think? I think if I dig
deep enough in your belly I will
find you swallowed a badge.

State police officers drag Isabel off the bus and drop her beside Alejandro. Gallo looks at her with vague recognition. Stands up and walks back to the Expedition. Returns with a WATER BOTTLE. Pulls off the lid and pours it over Isabel's face, washing away the filth that covers her.

Gallo pulls the cap from her head and stares at her. Knows what he just found. Looks at Alejandro.

GALLO (CONT'D)

... Who are you?

ISABEL

I hired him to say he is my --

Without even looking at her, Gallo sends his boot into her sternum, knocking the air from her lungs. She doubles over in the dirt.

Gallo knocks the hat off Alejandro's head, pours water over his face, tears open his shirt --

His chest is a road map of bullet holes and burns. Gallo just stares at him, then leans close and whispers in his ear --

GALLO

I know who you are ... Medellin ...

A BURLAP SACK is pulled over Alejandro's head. DUCT TAPE is wrapped around the sack so tight it takes effort to breath.

Alejandro is pushed to the ground, face first. His hands and are bound behind his back, ankles taped tight.

GALLO (CONT'D)
 (To one of his men) They ride with
 me.

He is then carried like luggage and tossed in the back of the Expedition. Isabel is loaded in the backseat behind the driver. Gallo looks back at Hector.

GALLO (CONT'D)
 Which boy knew him?

Hector points to Miguel. Gallo walks to him ...

He places a hand to his neck, guides him to a pickup where five boys just like him sit on the edge of the bed.

GALLO (CONT'D)
 No more muling for you. Today you
 become a soldier.

Miguel climbs in, looks at the other boys -- all his age. Beside him sits JOSE, who looks terrified, the others look like they've done this a thousand times before -- hard faces and uncaring eyes, pistols in their waistbands. Cigarettes dangle from their lips ...

Miguel puts on his toughest face, nods in their direction. Teenagers pretending to be men suck cigarettes and hold up their chins in mistrust.

MIGUEL
 What happens next?

The oldest boy sucks his cigarette, exhales.

TEENAGE SOLDIER
 Your initiation.

The truck engine starts and lunges forward ...

INT. EXPEDITION -- CONT.

Gallo looks back at Isabel, evil eyes running the length of her body.

GALLO
 Know how much you're worth?

ANGLE ON --

Alejandro, forced in a fetal position on the floorboard of the Expedition. Tries to reach back and grab at the tape around his ankles.

A CARTEL SOLDIER sitting beside Isabel looks back, sees Alejandro struggling, grabs his pistol by the barrel and beats Alejandro until he stops moving ...

The violence is too much for Isabel, try though she might, emotion overcomes her. Gallo laughs.

GALLO (CONT'D)
 There's nothing to cry about,
 chiquita. You should be thanking
 us, we just rescued you from the
 devil ...

He puts a burlap sack over her head, tapes it tight ...

INT. BLACKHAWK HELICOPTER -- CONT.

Matt watches all of this from a SATELLITE FEED to his A.T.A.C.S. -- essentially a laptop computer that is strapped to an assault vest, it's monitor flips down like a bib. Mtt shouts into his radio mic --

MATT
 ETA TO TARGET.

PILOT (V.O.)
 Fifteen minutes?

MATT
 Get me there in 10.

Beat.

PILOT (V.O.)
 Hang on back there. Gonna get
 bumpy.

The engines of the chopper whine, chopper tilts forward and vibrates everything aboard as it races faster.

EXT. ARROYO ABOVE THE BORDER -- DAY.

The Expedition and the pickup pull to a stop. Alejandro is pulled out and drug across the desert. Forced to sit on his knees. Gallo leans close.

GALLO
 I'd like to cut your face off and
 sew it to a soccer ball, then kick
 you across the river ... But I
 don't have the time.
 (MORE)

GALLO (CONT'D)

I must decide what to do with the prize you brought me. Lots to think about. Because it's the kind of treasure that ends empires ... I'm going to give you a pollo's death, Sicario. At the hands of a baby ... That's all you deserve.

*
*
*
*

Gallo pulls a pistol from his waistband, walks to the teenage boys huddled around the pickup, and hands it to the first boy he reaches -- Jose.

INT. BLACKHAWK HELICOPTER -- CONT.

Matt stares at the satellite feed on his A.T.A.C.S., screams into his mic --

MATT

E.T.A.??

PILOT (V.O.)

Three minutes.

ON THE A.T.A.C.S. MONITOR --

A bird's-eye view of the MAN WITH A BURLAP SACK OVER HIS HEAD, Jose beside him, pistol raised.

EXT. DESERT -- U.S./MEXICAN BORDER -- CONT.

ALEJANDRO'S OBSCURED FACE FILLS THE FRAME as Gallo shoots Jose. BLOOD SPLATTERS over the burlap sack.

WIDEN TO REVEAL --

Gallo scooping up the pistol. Looks at Alejandro as he rises.

GALLO

That baby was no good. Don't worry, Sicario ... I have more.

INT. CHOPPER -- CONT.

Matt watches the satellite feed as Miguel walks to Alejandro, points the pistol to his face ...

MATT

Hang on. Almost there ...

EXT. DESERT -- U.S./MEXICAN BORDER -- CONT.

MIGUEL'S FACE FILLS THE FRAME. Breathing is short, rapid. Eyes blink at the recoil of the pistol. He stares down, closes his eyes, tries like hell to stop his body from shaking ...

WIDEN TO REVEAL --

Alejandro's body pitched forward in the dirt ...

INT. CHOPPER -- CONT.

Matt stares at Alejandro's body as Miguel and the others walk back toward their vehicles, shakes his head ...

PILOT (V.O.)

Two minutes out.

MATT

Base, do you have subject's exact location inside the vehicle?

VOICE

Subject is backseat, left side, behind the driver.

Matt looks at the contractors.

MATT

Know your target. Watch your angles. Prize is driver's side, second seat, tan Expedition.

JIMMY

R.O.E. Matt?

*
*

MATT

None at all. We wipe it clean.

JIMMY

Fuck that. Let me out here. I ain't killing no teenage girl.

*
*
*

Matt looks at Jimmy.

*

MATT

That's not the mission.

*
*

JIMMY

Sure sounded like the mission.

*
*

MATT

It's not the mission now.

Matt looks at the men.

MATT (CONT'D)

New game. This is an extraction.

Men nod, pull bolts and rack rounds, then stare straight ahead, finding their focus ...

INT. TAN EXPEDITION -- CONT.

Gallo drives. Hears a DULL THUD. Turns back and looks out the rear windshield to find the source -- the distant images of HELICOPTERS MOVING TOWARD HIM. Everyone looks back, then at Isabel. Gallo yanks the sack from her head.

GALLO

Where is it?

Too scared to speak. Gallo nods to the man beside her. He starts pulling at her shirt, her pants, she screams and kicks and yells --

ISABEL

MY SHOE! MY SHOE!!!

He pulls off her shoe and finds the GPS BEACON. Gallo grabs it, shuts it off and tosses it out the window.

Gallo slams the gas pedal down as he looks back -- doesn't see the choppers.

GALLO

Donde estan?!?!

Gallo slams on the brakes as A BLACKHAWK HELICOPTER BLASTS OVERHEAD THEN HOVERS OVER THE ROAD IN FRONT OF HIM ...

EXT. ROAD -- CONT.

The Expedition and pickup skid to a stop as the Blackhawk touches ground, depositing a dozen men who race toward the vehicle, rifles raised ...

ANGLE ON --

MIGUEL, WHO LEAPS FROM THE TRUCK BED BEFORE THE PICKUP HAS EVEN SLOWED DOWN. Lands in the bar ditch, is on his feet and running as fast as he can through the mesquite.

The pickup slams to a stop, the momentum hurling the remaining boys into the truck cab with a thud. By the time they have picked themselves up from the truck bed, RIFLE BARRELS STARE BACK AT THEM ...

Gallo reaches for his pistol as MATT AND THE CONTRACTORS RUSH FORWARD. Looks back at the man sitting beside Isabel --

GALLO
HOLD HER TIGHT!!

The man grabs Isabel and pulls her close, puts his pistol to her temple ...

The man looks through the windshield at Matt, who looks him dead in the eye and shakes his head 'no'.

Matt puts two rounds through the man's head, then it all happens in an instant --

Gallo raises his pistol and fires wildly through the windshield as rounds punch into both him and the man sitting shotgun.

Gallo climbs into the backseat, his body shielding Isabel from Matt's view --

MATT
HOLD FIRE!!! GET AROUND HIM!!!

Matt and the contractors surround the vehicle, standing not 10 feet from it. Gallo smothers Isabel with his body, forcing her face into the seat, cutting off her air.

GALLO
YOU SHOOT ME YOU SHOOT HER!!!

Isabel fights against the big man's weight as Gallo surveys the bullet holes that perforate him. Knows he's running out of time ...

ANGLE ON --

Matt, looking through his scope, seeing nothing but fat man.

MATT
CAN YOU SEE HER!!!

Looks at Jimmy who shakes his head. *

JIMMY
I HAVE HIM BUT DON'T SEE HER!!!! *

MATT

WE HAVE A MEDIC. RAISE YOUR HANDS
AND WE'LL BRING HIM TO YOU. IT'S
THE ONLY WAY ...

*

BACK WITH GALLO AND ISABEL --

His filthy face pressed against hers. His hand finds her neck
and closes like a clamp.

GALLO

All this for you ... I don't think
you're worth it.

*

*

Squeezes tighter. Her hands flail, scratch, reach for
anything she can as Gallo squeezes the life from her ..

WITH MATT AND THE CONTRACTORS --

They see her arm flailing ...

MATT

WHO HAS THE SHOT?!?!?

'NO SHOT' is yelled by all the contractors, who twist and
turn, attempting to see a clear shot that won't kill them
both ...

MATT (CONT'D)

Fuck it. MOVE IN!!!

Gallo looks up as they approach, presses the muzzle of his
pistol to Isabel's forehead as he looks in Matt's furious
eyes and screams --

GALLO

I'LL FUCKING KILL HER --

Isabel grabs Gallo's hand with both of hers, and pushes with
all her might, pressing the pistol under Gallo's chin, closes
her hands around his and depresses the trigger, blasting
Gallo back in a heap.

Matt opens the rear door of the Expedition and watches Isabel
try to fight Gallo's dead weight off her. Matt grabs Gallo's
shirt and yanks. Isabel looks at Matt as she heaves
traumatized breaths.

ISABEL

Look what you made me do ...

MATT

Come on.

She climbs over Gallo's body and out the vehicle. Contractors guide her toward the waiting chopper. Matt walks toward the pickup, anger rising with each step. Looks at the contractors surrounding it.

JIMMY

What do you want us to do?

*

Matt walks toward the truck cab, raises his rifle and puts a round through the driver and the man riding shotgun. Looks at the boys in the bed of the truck, then at the contractors.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

They're fucking kids.

*

Matt looks at the boys, speaks in Spanish --

MATT

Lift your shirts.

They hesitate. He raises his rifle. They lift their shirts --

Pistols are tucked in every waistband. Matt looks at the contractor.

MATT (CONT'D)

You see any kids here? I don't.

The boys seem to sense what's coming. One reaches for his pistol -- he never even gets it out of his pants ...

Matt and the contractors punch rounds into the boys, collapsing them into the truck bed. One of the contractors looks at Matt.

JIMMY

Goddam, man ... Not the choice I wanted to make.

*

MATT

They didn't give us a choice. They never do ...

*

*

Matt turns and jogs back toward the choppers, the contractors following ...

CAMERA HOLDS ON THE PICKUP AS THE ROTORS SCREAM ...

INT. CHOPPER -- CONT.

Matt looks down on the road, stares at the dead bodies in the truck bed. Sits back against the chopper wall, looking straight ahead.

Can't take it anymore, turns his eyes to Isabel -- who stares at him, the horror of the day carved into her face.

She doesn't cry. Doesn't scream or yell, just looks at him in a way that should force his eyes somewhere else ... But it doesn't. He accepts the hate ...

MATT

Going say something to you I've
never said in 26 years of doing
this for a living ... I'm sorry.

*

She takes in the sincerity in which it was said. Says with as much sincerity as she received --

ISABEL

You should be.

Tears run her face. Can't call it crying. More like innocence bleeding out of her. There's only so much guilt Matt can swallow in a day, and he just reached his quota -- he turns his gaze to the window ...

EXT. DESERT -- U.S./MEXICAN BORDER -- CONT.

FEET SLAM EARTH. FAST. RACING OVER CACTUS. OVER MESQUITE STUMPS.

CAMERA PIVOTS UP AND --

MESQUITE BRANCHES SLAM INTO FRAME. DOESN'T SLOW US DOWN. Not one bit ...

ANGLE ON --

Miguel, running like his life depends on it, which it does. Up ahead is the arroyo and trail that leads to the river.

FEET RUSH PAST A POOL OF BLOOD. Then the feet stop.

ANGLE ON --

Miguel, staring at the spot where Alejandro used to be. He looks around, panicked. Freezes when he sees --

ALEJANDRO slumped beneath a mesquite tree, rubbing his wrists against the thorns of a branch in a futile attempt to remove the duct tape.

Alejandro stops moving as he senses a presence. Hears FOOTSTEPS APPROACH THEN STOP RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM ...

THROUGH THE BURLAP SACK --

Now caked with blood and dirt, Alejandro can barely make out the image of Miguel standing before him. Feels him kneel close. Feels the tension of a KNIFE BLADE cutting through the duct tape around his feet.

ANGLE ON --

Miguel, standing over Alejandro, knife in hand. Alejandro rolls to his stomach, exposing his bound wrists. Miguel kneels down, every muscle in his body tense ...

He stretches his arm out, attempting to keep as much distance between him and Alejandro as possible -- like feeding a wild animal -- and slices halfway through the duct tape, then turns and runs like hell toward the river ...

Alejandro pulls and twists and tears his arms free. Begins unravelling the tape around his neck and pulls the sack from his head ...

His fingers search for the bullet holes in his head -- finds the entrance wound just beneath his cheekbone. Finds the exit wound on the bottom of his other cheek ...

Alejandro stands, looks down on the river -- sees the ripples of boys swimming across it. Turns his back to the river and walks south ...

EXT. ROAD -- U.S./MEXICAN BORDER -- DAY.

Alejandro walks down the road, sees in the distance -- the pickup truck and Expedition in the middle of the road, engines still idling. Looks down and sees THE GPS BEACON. Picks it up and walks to the pickup ...

Looks inside -- two dead men and not much else. Reaches in the cab and grabs the REARVIEW MIRROR, yanks it from the windshield.

Alejandro assesses his wounds. Opens his mouth and looks in -- not good. Scours the pickup for anything useful. Finds a WATER BOTTLE.

Rinses his mouth with half of it, then forces the bloody water out the entrance and exit holes in his cheeks, cleansing the wounds -- then leans against the truck with his mouth wide open, letting warm air ease the pain before repeating the process. Pulls off the driver's shoes and puts them on. Notices the bodies in the bed of the pickup for the first time, stares at the dead boys for a moment then walks to the Expedition.

Opens the door. Takes Gallo's pistol. Searches his body, finds TWO PISTOL MAGAZINES. Takes those as well then yanks Gallo's body to the street ...

Walks around to the passenger side, finds a BOTTLE OF TEQUILA on the floorboard. Rinses his mouth with that -- the pain is so intense, he punches the vehicle hard enough to leave a dent ...

Keeps searching. He takes the passenger's pistol as well. Opens the glove box and finds TWO HAND GRENADES. Puts them in his pocket then throws this body to the street ...

Alejandro gets behind the wheel, puts it in gear, and heads south ...

A STATE POLICE VEHICLE is racing toward him. THE DRIVER recognizes the Expedition, slows his vehicle and waves out the window for Alejandro to stop ...

Without slowing down, Alejandro pulls the pin of a grenade and hurls it like a baseball through the front windshield of the police vehicle as he passes.

Doesn't bother looking back as it explodes ...

EXT. LANDING PAD -- D.E.A. STAGING CENTER -- DAY. *

Cynthia marches across the tarmac toward the choppers as they land. Matt steps and the other contractors file out, ducking beneath the rotors. *

Cynthia is on Matt in an instant, face red with fury -- *

CYNTHIA *

There's a dozen FBI agents and
Marshals in the lobby all asking
for you. Care to explain -- *

Cynthia's face goes from crimson to ash-white as she watches Isabel led from the chopper. *

CYNTHIA (CONT'D) *

You're so fucking done. *

MATT *

There's a thousand people in DOD
who can do your job, Cynthia. There
aren't five on the planet who do
mine. I ain't going anywhere. *

He brushes past her. Cynthia stands frozen as Isabel is led past her and into the staging center headquarters. *

INT. BREAK ROOM -- D.E.A. STAGING CENTER -- LATER.

Isabel sits on a couch watching CNN talk about everything but what happened in Mexico today. Door opens and Matt and US MARSHAL GERARD WILLIAMS(38), demeanor as stiff as his suit, walk in. Take seats around her.

MATT

This is Gerard. He works for the Department of Justice.

ISABEL

Are you my attorney?

GERARD

You're not under arrest.

ISABEL

So ... I can go?

GERARD

Door's right there.

She doesn't waste a second -- is on her feet and to the door in an instant. Matt speaks with a kindness we don't expect from him.

MATT

Where are you going?

ISABEL

None of your fucking business.

GERARD

Do you even know?

She stops.

ISABEL

Away.

MATT

That isn't a location, Isabel. It's a direction.

Beat.

GERARD

Should we call your father --

ISABEL

NO.

GERARD
(pulls out his phone) I'll dial
your mother. What's her number?

Isabel starts to shake.

MATT
Don't know it, do you?

ISABEL
... It's in my phone.

GERARD
Tell me when I'm wrong: you get a
new phone each month. And all the
numbers of all the people who lead
to your father are already on that
phone. Correct?

She nods.

GERARD (CONT'D)
Even if you did know her number, do
you really want to call her? Can
she keep you safe?

ISABEL
... There's no one else.

MATT
That's not what he asked.

Fights emotion and shakes her head 'no'.

GERARD
I work for the Witness Protection
Program. What we do is provide
people whose lives are in imminent
danger a new identity, money,
housing, education ... A new start.

She looks at Gerard, then at Matt, then at the floor.

ISABEL
In exchange for what.

GERARD
You were involved in a very
sensitive operation, and it only
benefits your enemies to learn the
specifics of that operation.

ISABEL
You're asking me to lie.

GERARD

We're not asking you anything,
Isabel. There's no strings here.
But by talking about what you've
been through, you expose yourself
to the very people we're trying to
protect you from. If you feel
compelled to speak publicly about
what's happened to you ... Best of
luck. There's the door.

And then the door opens. Jeff pops his head in.

JEFF

(To Matt) Something you need to see.

INT. CONTROL ROOM -- D.E.A. STAGING CENTER -- MOMENT LATER.

Matt leans over the J.C.U. SPECIALIST and stares at the
computer screen, sees the GPS BEACON'S blinking light on a
MAP. MOVING ...

J.C.U. SPECIALIST

Was reactivated 10 minutes ago.
Figured someone just found it, but
it's moving south and west. Toward
Monterrey ...

MATT

Can you get me a satellite feed?

J.C.U. SPECIALIST

(Shakes his head) N.S.A. clearance
has expired. We're shut down, I got
no eyes ...

*

MATT

Get creative.

The specialist scratches his head, then speaks into his radio
mic --

J.C.U. SPECIALIST

NS 12-12-39, this is outpost 395,
assigned to team-termed classified,
identifying number as follows:
three-three-seven-two-niner-niner-
zero.

VOICE

Code for access?

J.C.U. SPECIALIST
Delta, Bravo, Montana, one-five-
three-niner.

Beat.

VOICE
Code's no longer authorized.

J.C.U. SPECIALIST
We left gear on the ground. It's on
the move. Just need to take a
picture for the file.

VOICE
Can't release satellite, three-nine-
five, but give me coordinates, I'll
take the shot and send it to you.

J.C.U. SPECIALIST
Twenty-five, dot, six-six-six-five
degrees north by one hundred dot
three-zero-zero-zero-one degrees
west.

VOICE
Stand by three-nine-five ...
Picture's on it's way.

J.C.U. SPECIALIST
Roger that, three-nine-five out.

A SATELLITE PHOTO OF THE HIGHWAY INTO MONTERREY APPEARS ON
THE SCREEN. CARS FILL BOTH DIRECTIONS OF THE HIGHWAY.

MATT
Punch in.

The specialist zooms in tight -- the roof of the tan
Expedition coming into view.

FORSING
What do you think? *

MATT
... Don't know.

FORSING
Can't be him. I mean, we saw it. *

MATT
Yeah ... But someone's driving
toward ground zero and wants us to
know it.

FORSING

Could be a lot of explanations --

MATT

For someone activating a GPS Beacon then taking a Reynosa cartel soldier's vehicle and driving it toward the leader of the Sonoran cartel's fucking summer house?! What the explanation? I can't wait to hear this, I've got goosebumps.

Forsing leans close.

FORSING

If you're right, that means your assassin is running around Northern Mexico -- *on his own* -- wearing a GOVERNMENT ISSUE GPS LOCATOR ... Buddy, we were ordered to shut him down. I say we inform the State department and have Mexican police intercept before he does something that parks us in front of a goddam grand jury --

MATT

He doesn't do anything on his own. EVER. He goes exactly where he's pointed, because if he doesn't he knows we'll kill him. And dying is in direct conflict with his goal. (To the JCU SPECIALIST) Get rid of this image. Break everything down. I want you off-line. And not a word to anyone.

FORSING

If he hits the house it's going to start a war.

Matt looks at Forsing.

MATT

It's what they asked for, isn't it?

Matt pulls out his cellphone, walks off.

INTERCUT WITH --

INT. MEXICAN INTELLIGENCE CENTER -- MONTERREY -- CONT.

Rafael's cellphone rings. He answers --

RAFAEL

Bueno.

MATT

Hey, bud.

Beat.

RAFAEL

Hold on.

Rafael walks down a hall, takes stairs to the roof -- the Sierra Madre Mountains loom over a sleek, modern city that is the antithesis of Juarez. *

RAFAEL (CONT'D)

Okay.

MATT

Whatcha up to?

RAFAEL

Oh ... Looking at satellite photos of your helicopters violating our airspace.

MATT

Wish I could've given you a heads up. Happened too quick ... How you guys going to play it?

RAFAEL

Like we play everything else you do: pretend we didn't see it ... What a mess, Matt. And it achieved nothing.

MATT

Not yet. But I think our friend's on his way to the Alamo.

RAFAEL

... You *think*?

MATT

Extraction got a little sloppy. I lost him on the ground, but it looks like he's still on target. Need a little help. *

RAFAEL

I'm surprised it was an extraction at all.

*
*
*

MATT

Yeah, well. I'm deviating from the original plan.

*
*
*

RAFAEL

What can *I* do? You haven't even told us where the Alamo is --

MATT

If I told you, the Alamo would move and you know it. If he cuts the head off this snake it's a win for all of us.

RAFAEL

When you cut the head off these snakes, a new one grows. From both ends. Maybe just one snake is better.

MATT

Playing not to lose now, Rafael? When it gets messy enough, they'll send me in to stay, and WE will GO TO WORK on these fuckers. You have my word.

*
*

RAFAEL

What do you want?

MATT

Go public on our raid. Blame it on Reynosa. Say they killed the girl. Let's see how many generals we can get to the Alamo before our boy gets there ...

RAFAEL

... How public?

MATT

I want to watch it on Telemundo in an hour.

RAFAEL

See what I can do.

Rafael hangs up, walks back inside.

CAMERA MOVES OVER MONTERREY --

Miles off in the distance, a thin ribbon of asphalt weaves through the city. CAMERA SOARS TOWARD IT. Over buildings. Over streets. Toward the highway that dissects the financial heart of Northern Mexico.

CAMERA FLIES OVER THE HIGHWAY -- racing east over westbound traffic. FLIES RIGHT OVER THE ONCOMING TRAFFIC, VEHICLES WHIPPING PAST. IN THE DISTANCE, A GOLD EXPEDITION MOVING TOWARD US. CLOSER. CLOSER .. UNTIL IT APPEARS IT WILL SMASH THROUGH THE LENS ...

INT. EXPEDITION -- CONT.

Alejandro's face is covered in a thin sheen of sweat. Face is swollen. Cheeks look like they may explode. Breathing is labored as he fights pain. But his eyes, cold and resolute and fixed firmly on the mountains that tower over the city stretched out before him ...

INT. BREAK ROOM -- D.E.A. STAGING CENTER -- NIGHT.

TELEMUNDO plays on the television -- a SCHOOL PHOTO OF ISABEL DISPLAYED IN A CORNER OF THE SCREEN AS THE NEWS ANCHOR SPEAKS.

NEWS ANCHOR (SUBTITLE)

Officials say they have recovered the body of Isabel Reyes, daughter of billionaire businessman Carlos Reyes, who is also the reputed leader of the Sonoran drug cartel. A spokesman for the Mexican Military states a daring raid along the border by members of the rival Reynosa cartel are responsible for the attack today as well as an attack on Mexican Federal police and US Military advisers in a daring attempt to rescue the girl two days ago. The whereabouts of Mr. Reyes is unknown and there has been no statement from the family.

*
*
*
*
*

Isabel watches, then looks up at Matt.

MATT

Just like that. Your old life's behind you -- if that's where you want it to be.

*
*

ISABEL
Nothing she said is true.

MATT
She said what she was told to say.

ISABEL
You people control everything ...

MATT
Only thing we control is the
illusion.

Matt looks at her as she shakes her head in disbelief.

MATT (CONT'D)
What I'm offering you is a clean
start. From here out, you decide
the course of your life.

*

ISABEL
I decide ...

Matt nods.

ISABEL (CONT'D)
How's the University of Michigan?

MATT
Good school.

ISABEL
Send me there.

Matt smiles as he stands and walks to the door.

*

MATT
You're making the right choice.

ISABEL
Someday I'm going to tell the world
everything that happened to me.
Everything I saw ... Everything.

*

*

MATT
I'm counting on it.

*

Matt walks out and Isabel returns her focus to her yearbook
photo on the tv screen.

PUSH IN ON THE SCREEN UNTIL IT FILLS THE FRAME --

INT. CARLOS REYES'S COMPOUND -- EAST OF MONTERREY -- CONT.

ISABEL'S FACE STILL FILLS THE FRAME BUT THE SOUND IS DIFFERENT. Better. Like we're watching the news in a MOVIE THEATER.

ANOTHER ANGLE --

CARLOS REYES is almost 60. White hair is slicked back. His tailored suit hugs his frame. Looks much more the billionaire *
than drug dealer ...

He sits in an office the size of a dance hall, staring at one of numerous TV MONITORS on the wall -- some show the stock *
market in China and Europe. But he's looking at the one with his daughter's face pasted across the screen.

As he watches, there is no sadness in his eyes. He stands and *
walks out of the room ...

EXT. HILLSIDE -- REYES COMPOUND -- NIGHT.

On a steep hillside sits a man, rifle across his lap, wearing NIGHT VISION GOGGLES ...

THROUGH THE NV GOGGLES --

The field of view is narrow. No depth of field. MOVEMENT catches his attention -- THREE DEER lope up the hillside through thick brush ... He watches them as they stop and look back over their shoulder.

He looks where the deer look, sees nothing. Looks back to the deer -- takes a minute to find them in the goggles. When he does THEY ARE LOOKING RIGHT AT HIM ...

LEGS WRAP AROUND THE MAN'S TORSO AND CONSTRICT AS AN ARM COMES AROUND HIS NECK AND WRENCHES THE MAN BACK ...

The man frantically fights the choke. Reaches for the trigger of the rifle but A LARGE HAND GRABS HIS WRIST AND WRENCHES IT BACKWARD ...

The man's arm is bent back into his face, then the arm around his neck readjusts to compress the bent arm against the man's head -- using his forearm as a fulcrum and snapping the man's neck ...

ALEJANDRO stands, grabs the goggles and rifle and moves silently up the steep hill ...

EXT. REYES COMPOUND -- LATER.

Vehicles pull out of the compound, more pull in -- it is a hive of activity.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- REYES COMPOUND -- LATER.

Carlos stands in the living room with the entire command structure of the Sonoran Cartel. Hands are shook, then the men are led up a wide staircase. Down a long hall. They come to double doors -- A BUTLER PUSHES THEM OPEN. Carlos and the men filter in and walk to couches that face a fireplace so large a child could stand in it. *

All the men stop in unison and stare in the direction of an enormous MAHOGANY DESK -- *

Alejandro looks back at them. Dried blood is caked to his face. His shirt. To every part of him. As Alejandro exhales, the faintest whistle emits from his cheek as air passes over broken teeth.

The men seem too terrified to process what they are seeing -- it's as though all the victims of every crime they committed were compressed into one man ... *

No one moves. No one speaks. No one blinks. The only sound is the slow, constant in-and-out of Alejandro's heavy, whistled breaths -- like a big, angry engine idling ... *

REYES *

Let me guess ... The child killer. *

ALEJANDRO *

Look who's talking. This is where you tell me it's all business. And if not you, someone else would do the same. *

REYES *

Mexico is the only nation on earth where the poor who have fled this nation provide the welfare for the poor who remain. Mexico's economy depends on it. So does America. Why do you think the United States allows 400,000 people to sneak across its border every year? *

ALEJANDRO *

They don't. *

REYES

They pretend they don't. Mexico provides a work force they aren't responsible for. Don't have to educate. Don't have to house. Don't have to treat when they're sick ... And when they're too old to work, they come back here to die. You're an attorney, I shouldn't have to explain this to you ... Mexico has two cash crops and half the states in America have legalized one of them. So we send a few people across the border to remind them not to change the rules of the game. It's not business, Alejandro. It's a negotiation. It's theater.

Beat.

REYES (CONT'D)

I should thank you for saving my daughter. I hear she's safe in the States now ... I'll pretend I don't know and start the war they want anyway. That's how this works.

ALEJANDRO

I think the world will be a better place when men like you and I are no longer in it.

REYES

We aren't the exception, Alejandro. We're the rule ...

ALEJANDRO

I know. I've got a lot of work to do ... You're right, though. They do want a war. But they don't want you to start it. They want it to start with you ...

Reyes looks in Alejandro's lifeless eyes and knows what's coming next. No one in the room breaths ...

A WOMAN DRESSED LIKE A MAID CARRIES A TRAY OF HOR D'OEUVRES into the room. She screams and drops the tray at first sight of Alejandro, then everything happens in an instant --

Pistols are pulled from every jacket. Alejandro doesn't even bother to stand, just tosses a grenade in their direction then flips the desk over ...

EXT. REYES COMPOUND -- CONT.

THE SOUNDS OF SCREAMING ARE SWALLOWED BY THE ERUPTION OF THE GRENADE, SENDING PLUMES OF DIRTY SMOKE AND BROKEN GLASS A HUNDRED FEET OUT THE WINDOW. *

SECURITY ALARMS chirp in ear-piercing moans.

VOICES in the yard start moving toward the house as a GUNSHOT illuminates the office windows, then disappears. *

Then another ... Then another window is illuminated by a muzzle flash and muffled pop. *

MEN RUN INTO THE HOUSE AS ALL LIGHTS IN THE HOUSE GO OFF.

The shooting builds to a frenzied pace -- sending bursting light from every window.

Looks like someone dropped the house on a thunderstorm ... *

The shooting stops as quickly as it started. Now there's only dark and silence ... Then another gunshot and another window illuminated -- this one downstairs.

CAMERA RETREATS FROM THIS HELL. Pulls back until there is no sound at all when muzzle flashes appear.

CAMERA PULLS BACK MORE --

Until the muzzle flashes are so small, they look fireflies on a moonless night ...

INT. HOUSTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT -- NEXT DAY.

Isabel sits in a chair at the gate. A few seats away are TWO FEMALE FEDERAL MARSHALS. Isabel wears the uniform of an American teenage girl -- jeans, tank top, hoodie. Headphones cover her ears as she bangs keys on a laptop computer. *

SOMETHING ON THE TV MONITOR ON THE WALL CATCHES HER EYE --

She can't hear what the news reporter is saying, but she can read the HEADLINE that proclaims in bold letters --

SONORAN CARTEL LEADER MURDERED IN MONTERREY, MEXICO.

An OLDER PHOTO OF REYES with his family -- A jewelled and hair-sprayed mother, a teenage boy, and a SEVEN YEAR-OLD ISABEL -- the only person in the photo smiling ... *

She stares at a family that is no more, then closes her eyes. *

ISABEL (V.O.)

I used to believe the end justifies
the means. Now, I know there is no
end to consider. The means is all
there is ...

*
*

A FLIGHT ATTENDANT speaks into a microphone.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to
flight 1119, with service to Gerald
R. Ford International airport in
Grand Rapids, Michigan. Right now,
we'd like to start boarding all
first class customers and ...

*

ONE OF THE US MARSHALS taps Isabel on the shoulder.

MARSHAL

Emily.

Isabel opens her eyes, looks at the marshal.

MARSHAL (CONT'D)

Time to go.

Isabel stands, takes one last look at the photograph of the
life she leaves behind, then walks toward the flight
attendant checking tickets ...

ISABEL (V.O.)

There is a moment in each person's
life. A choice. Do what feels
good... Or do what *is* good ...

Isabel hands her ticket to the flight attendant. She tears
the stub, hands it back. Isabel disappears down the jetway.

*

EXT. DESERT -- U.S./MEXICAN BORDER -- SUNSET.

THE YOUNG MAN FROM THE RAILCAR KNEELS ON A PRAYER BLANKET AND
CALLS TO ALLAH AS HE FACES THE LAST RAYS OF DAY ...

WIDEN TO REVEAL --

Miguel and TWO TEENAGE BOYS stand at an arroyo overlooking
the Rio Grande. A GROUP OF MIGRANTS FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE
EARTH prepare to swim the river. The teenage boys pass out
GARBAGE BAGS, which the migrants fill with their belongings,
then seal tight ...

*

The sun disappears as the praying man stands, rolls up his blanket, and walks back to the group. Miguel hands THE YOUNG MAN a garbage bag. The young man looks across the river. *

YOUNG MAN
That's America?

MIGUEL
Land of the free.

The young man's eyes look out. They are heavy. Determined.

YOUNG MAN
Doesn't look so rich to me.

MIGUEL
Where you going?

YOUNG MAN
Denver.

MIGUEL
It'll look plenty rich there.

YOUNG MAN
Good.

Miguel looks in the young man's eyes, sees something he's become familiar with -- the eyes of a killer ... Miguel and the other boys lead the group down the trail to the river. *

ISABEL (V.O.)
Make the wrong choice enough and it is not presented again. Then all choices are bad ... And the consequences worse ... *

CAMERA RISES --

Across the river, TWO VANS AND A BORDER PATROL VEHICLE SIT PARKED BY THE RIVER BANK. The BORDER AGENT and COYOTES standing side-by-side. Casual ...

Garbage bags for belongings and a police escort -- in CARTEL LAND, this is first class ... *

EXT. PARKING LOT -- LA PLAZA MALL -- NIGHT.

A MINIVAN pulls to a stop across from STARBUCKS. Miguel climbs out and it drives away ... *

As Miguel reaches the patio he notices a man sitting at a table holding out a BROWN PAPER SACK. Miguel walks to him, grabs it. But the man doesn't let go.

Alejandro raises his face to Miguel -- who almost faints with fear. *

ALEJANDRO

Sit down.

Miguel sits ...

Alejandro turns his face to the night sky and ponders the stars above ...

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

So ... You want to be a Sicario.

Tears well in Miguel's eyes as he shakes his head 'no'.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

Yes ... I'm the proof.

Alejandro leans into the light and Miguel can see the scars. *
One the size of a penny. One the size of a silver dollar -- *
on each side of his face.

ALEJANDRO (CONT'D)

It's time we discuss your future.

CAMERA WATCHES FROM ACROSS THE PARKING LOT --

Alejandro and Miguel sit at the table -- from this distance they look like father and son discussing baseball, or school, or girls. Anything but victim negotiating how to survive with his killer ...

CAMERA RETREATS --

Until Alejandro and Miguel are recognizable only as shapes, indistinguishable from other human shapes walking to and from cars and restaurants. At this distance, killer and victim look the same ...

THE END.

(CONT'D)

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