

CROSSING OVER

by

Wayne Kramer

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. US/MEXICAN BORDER - NIGHT 1

Heavy rain lashes a U.S. BORDER PATROL TRUCK as it navigates a winding trail above a steep ravine.

2 INT. BORDER PATROL TRUCK - NIGHT 2

CBP (Customs Border Patrol) AGENT CHRIS FARRELL (40's) fighting piss poor visibility and lousy reception on his radio... \*

CHRIS  
... can't see a goddamn thing in this mess. Even the Orteza Brothers aren't dumb enough to try a run through this shitfall... Over.

Sector Dispatch replies with another burst of unintelligible static. It's a one way conversation. Time to bag it. He reaches for his coffee flask, one arming the turn in the road...

... when suddenly a FIGURE steps in front of his truck. A MEXICAN WOMAN (30's) wrapped in a RED FLANNEL BLANKET.

CHRIS  
SHIT!!!

He instinctively swerves to avoid hitting her...

The Bronco skids off the muddy trail, slides down the side of the ravine, tumbling end over end... finally righting itself at the bottom. But it's not going anywhere. It's seriously banged up. \*

Chris, dazed and bloodied, remains still, slumped over the wheel. The front windshield has been shattered -- rain pouring into the driver's cabin. A couple of beats and Chris comes to. He leans back, forearm the gash above his brow. Groans. Immediately clutches his shoulder in pain. \*

He instinctively glances out his side window -- She's standing there, just a few feet away, looking on with a concerned expression. The Mexican woman.

Chris, startled, climbs out, almost loses it...

CHRIS

(in Spanish)

What the hell's wrong with you,  
trying to get across on a night  
like this? Jesus, look what you  
done to my truck. C'mon...

Still clutching his shoulder, he leads her around to the back  
of his Bronco, throws open the gated hatch, gestures her  
inside. She climbs in obediently, shuffling herself into the  
far corner. He slams the hatch shut.

CUT TO:

Back in the Bronco. Chris grabs his radio up off the floor.  
Nothing but static. Same with his shoulder mic. Gives it a  
shot anyway...

CHRIS

Dispatch 820, come in... Bravo 31  
in a bit of a fix here. Dispatch,  
you reading me? Anyone? Fuck!

The rain keeps whipping at him through the shattered  
windshield...

CHRIS

(sotto)

Ah man, this is so fucked up.

He glances back at the woman through the steel mesh window --  
can just make out her unmoving silhouette. She stares  
straight ahead of her. Trance-like.

To hell with it. He climbs out, joins her in the back.

3

INT. BACK OF BRONCO - NIGHT

3

Chris positions himself across from her. Shakes off the  
rain. His shoulder is killing him. We hear it in his voice.

CHRIS

(Spanish)

You're going to catch pneumonia in  
those rags. Christ, any other  
night I get it...

She looks up at him with a chilling sense of calm...

MEXICAN WOMAN

You are the one.

CHRIS

I'm the one? What are you talking about?

MEXICAN WOMAN

You are the one who will help me cross over.

CHRIS

Are you blind, senora?

(taps his badge)

La migra. LA MIGRA. I'm the last person who's going to help you get across. As soon as this storm's over, you're outta here.

She just smiles at him and nods. He checks his watch...

CHRIS

Guess neither of us is going anywhere for a couple of hours. Man, I haven't seen it come down like this in ages.

He leans back against the side of the truck, studies her intently. She just stares at him, her gaze never wavering. Her fingers occasionally caressing a small, rusted crucifix around her neck.

Chris reaches into his shirt pocket, fishes out a crumpled bag of M&Ms. Pops a few in his mouth, munches on them. Feels awkward snacking alone. Extends the bag to her. She shakes her head.

CHRIS

No? I lifted them from my son's lunch box this morning. Kid's becoming a little porker. How about you? Got any kids?

She stares at him for a couple of beats -- then reaches into her dress and produces a cheap, plastic purse. Digs out a faded POLAROID, holds it out to him. He doesn't take it from her -- it feels like too much effort -- just leans forward to look at it. LIGHTNING illuminates the snapshot... \*

INSERT POLAROID --

We see the woman holding a YOUNG BOY, both of them smiling. The boy appears to be about four years old. They're standing in front of a rundown house, an ELDERLY MEXICAN COUPLE hovering in the b.g.

CHRIS

Your son?  
(she nods)  
What's his name?

MEXICAN WOMAN

Juan.

CHRIS

Juan. That's it, just Juan, no others?

She nods.

CHRIS

Where is he? Back home?

She shakes her head. A hint of tears in her eyes. Chris nods, starting to understand. A glimmer of compassion creeping into his expression. He pulls his wallet out of his jacket, flips it open, extracts a snapshot of his attractive wife and five year-old son. Offers it up to her. She doesn't motion to take it. But, much like he did, she leans in to get a closer look.

CHRIS

My wife, Jessie. And Shaun. He's seven. That was taken when he was five. I keep meaning to update it... He's a good boy. Can't throw a ball for shit, but he's crazy smart. Knows every character in the Justice League.

MEXICAN WOMAN

Mireya.

CHRIS

What?

She points at herself...

MEXICAN WOMAN/MIREYA

Mireya.

CHRIS

Mireya.

He hesitates. Not quite sure he should be exchanging niceties with a detainee.

CHRIS  
(jabs his chest)  
Chris.

She nods. Sad eyes locked right into his.

CHRIS  
Look... I'm sure your kid is okay.  
I figure he's with someone you  
trust and they're taking care of  
him. And maybe one of these nights  
it'll play out differently and  
you'll make it over. You got that  
determined look 'bout you. But  
I've got a job to do and I'm not  
about to turn my back... That's not  
gonna happen. Okay?

She smiles beatifically at him...

MIREYA  
I knew you would be the one.

Before Chris can protest, she leans her head back against the window, closes her eyes. It's as if a great weight has been lifted off her shoulders. A look of serenity reshapes her attractive features.

Chris eyes her suspiciously for a few moments, then stands down, taking her lead and closing his eyes. The thrashing rain swiftly lulls him into sleep.

FADE OUT...

4	EXT./INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - DOWNTOWN L.A. - NIGHT	4	*
	An Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention bus enters through the main gates and pulls up in front of the processing center loading dock. IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AGENTS escort about TWENTY UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS -- male and female Hispanics of varying ages -- off the bus and through into the facility. The IEA agents are assisted by the ICE agents responsible for the raid.		* * * *
	We STEADICAM past those disappointed, yet resolute faces as they file inside. The detainees are searched, interviewed, fingerprinted, and moved through a system that will soon see most of them bussed back to Mexico.		*

We veer off to the main ICE processing desk. SEVERAL ENFORCEMENT AGENTS working the night shift behind protective glass. Arriving at ICE SPECIAL AGENT MAX BROGAN (late 50's) in heated conversation with an IEA AGENT on the other side of the window. \*

MAX

... all I'm asking, Petraglia, is did the old man get seen to? He was sweating and shaking as I was leading him to the bus. Said his arm felt numb. I'm truly sorry you feel so inconvenienced. \*

IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AGENT

(punching into his computer)

Jesus Christ, Brogan, it's always some humanitarian crisis with you. You've signed off on more Orders of Recognizance than the rest of your unit put together. I hear the ACLU is looking for a few good men. \*

MAX

Don't give me that shit. If a man's about to have a goddamn heart attack, I want him seen to.

IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AGENT

Yeah, that's right. We're not spending enough of our tax dollars on them as it is... All right, here it is. Your guy was given a clean bill of health by Doc Sturgess. Bussed out three hours ago. You happy now? Give him my regards when you pick him up again next week. Via con dios. \*

The agent turns away. Off Max's exasperated expression...

5

EXT. DRESS FACTORY - DAY

5

Coming off the downtown L.A. skyline to a grimy, faceless sweatshop in the Garment District. Establish -- and PULL BACK to reveal we're looking at it through the window of an unmarked Chevy across the street.

Max and another agent pulling surveillance. They're with the Los Angeles Immigration Work-Site Enforcement Unit.

The man next to Max is Special Agent HAMID BARAHERI (early 40's), Iranian-American.

HAMID

You'll come on Wednesday, Max. You know they've been wanting to meet you. I offer you my word, they're not as scary as I've made them out to be.

Max uncomfortable with this. His eyes asking "Why?"

HAMID

You'll just tell them some favorable things about me and that'll be the end of it. It's an important thing in my culture, that I make my father proud. Is that so much to ask?

MAX

Hell, Hamid, I already lied on your performance review.

(jerking him around)

Now I gotta sweet talk your parents... If you were really looking to impress them you woulda joined LAPD or, better yet, the fucking Bureau. They're loving your kind these days.

HAMID

FBI can kiss my ass, they weren't interested in me six years ago. Now, I'm an asset to them. Shit on them and their mosque detail.

As Hamid speaks, he catches sight of the local lunch wagon pulling into the factory parking lot.

HAMID

Better do it before they blow the lunch whistle.

Max thumbs his radio...

MAX

Alright, compadres, let's hit it.

Max pulls a U-turn across the street, screeching into the factory's lot, followed by several other unmarked vehicles and a pair of windowless ICE detainee buses.



6

INT. DRESS FACTORY - DAY

6

FIFTEEN ICE agents storming in through every available entrance/exit, Max and Hamid amongst them. They yell out in Spanish, overlapping each other...

ICE AGENT 1  
Police! ICE! Nobody move!

ICE AGENT 2  
Stay seated. I said, sit down!  
Nobody reach for their documents.  
Just keep your hands where we can  
see them...

Like that's going to work. Half the factory floor stumble-bolts for the exits. ICE agents chasing after them, others yelling for calm in Spanish. Amidst the chaos, an attractive MEXICAN WOMAN (20's) backs away from her work bench, ferret glancing around... Then sneaks over to the side of the room, hiding behind several racks of hanging dresses. Another MEXICAN WORKER (male, 30's) takes cover behind the racks a few feet away from her. He steals a panicked glance over at her, sweat glistening on his acne scarred forehead.

All around the floor, fleeing workers are being apprehended and cuffed with plastic ties. OTHERS sit complacently at their benches, resigned to their fates. While the few in possession of work permits, wait patiently for the opportunity to declare themselves.

Several of the agents, Max and Hamid included, start working the floor, questioning the seated workers about their status. When the worker is unable to show a green card or temporary work permit, he/she is cuffed and marched outside into the hands of processing agents.

A jittery looking YOUNG MAN offers up his laminated green card to Hamid. Hamid studies it with an experienced eye. Tilts it toward the light...

HAMID  
(in Spanish)  
Where did you buy this? Alvarado  
Street? Sorry, my friend. Stand  
up.

Hamid pockets the bogus card, cuffs the man. The worker shrugs, offers up a cynical smile to the agent. It was worth a shot.

Max checks the green card of a middle-aged MEXICAN WOMAN. He \*  
runs it through his fingers, testing it for the right \*  
thickness and texture. She looks up at him with a self- \*  
satisfied look, confident in the legitimacy of her status.

MAX

Gracias.

He hands her the card back with an apologetic look.

MIDDLE-AGED MEXICAN WOMAN

(in a whisper)

La Migra...

She gives him a look that suggests he might want to search  
the side of the room over by the clothing racks.

MIDDLE-AGED MEXICAN WOMAN

We make beautiful dresses. Maybe  
you find something pretty for your  
wife over there.

Max walks over, starts pushing aside some of the racks. He's \*  
about five feet away from where the attractive Mexican woman  
is hiding, and about three feet from the YOUNG MEXICAN MAN.

The Mexican man grabs up a metal clothes hangar, throws it  
toward where the woman is hiding. The sound immediately  
draws Max's attention. He whips around, pushing the racks  
aside, exposing the cowering woman.

She glances up at him pleadingly, her fingers kneading at a  
silver crucifix around her neck. There's a familiar, feral  
desperation in her eyes. He's seen it a thousand times.  
Surprisingly, he doesn't move to detain her. He's about to  
give her a pass, when...

ICE AGENT 3 (O.S.)

What you waiting for, Brogan? A  
marriage proposal?

An ICE AGENT is right behind him. Slaps him on the shoulder.  
Continues poking around in the racks, obviously missing the  
hiding Mexican Man.

Max shrugs at the woman. Not your day, sweetheart. Gestures  
her to stand. She comes to her feet, immediately rushing  
over to her work bench, where she snatches up a cheap plastic  
purse, starts rifling through it... ICE AGENT 3 grabs hold \*  
of her.

MIREYA

Please, there is no one to take  
care of my son. I must give you  
his information...

Max comes over...

MAX

It's okay, Hank. I got it.

The agent defers to Max with a smug look that suggests Max  
has a looker on his hands. The woman pulls out a pen and the  
back of a recent pay stub, hurriedly scribbles on it.  
Practically forces it into Max's hand, along with three  
twenty dollar bills.

ATTRACTIVE MEXICAN WOMAN

Please, Senor, he's upstairs with  
the neighbor lady. If she doesn't  
get her money today, she'll put him  
out on the street. Please, you  
must go here and pay the lady in  
apartment 320. Tell her I will be  
back in... Soon.

Max shoves her cash back in her purse. Returns it to her.  
He does not cuff her.

MAX

Someone will take care of it.  
Sorry, Senora.

She breaks down, sobbing violently.

7

EXT. DRESS FACTORY - DAY

7

With a dozen ICE agents' eyes on him, Max marches her  
outside, delivers her to an IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AGENT at  
the entrance to the detainee bus. Hamid steps up behind him,  
hands off a MEXICAN WOMAN in her 30's. Hamid has cuffed her,  
in contrast to Max who has chosen not to.

Ice Agent #3 (HANK) makes an off-handed remark to Max. He's  
the agent who made the "marriage proposal" dig to Max  
earlier.

ICE AGENT 3

Muy bonita. You get her number?  
I smell an OR. Then maybe they  
hook up over a plate of tostadas.  
What do you think, Hamid?

HAMID

I think it's very likely. He  
always gives the pretty ones a  
pass. Sometimes even the not so  
pretty ones.

Max hits Hamid with a piercing look that suggests: I'm tired  
of this shit -- then glances down at the pay stub in his  
hand... He holds it out to Ice Agent 3's face, crumples it  
up. Drops it to the ground. Heads back inside.

MAX

C'mon, let's wrap this up.

Hamid and Agent 3 exchange amused looks.

8

INT. CASTING OFFICE - AUDITION ROOM - DAY

8

CLAIRE SHEPERD, a beautiful actress in her early to mid 20's, addresses the camera...

CLAIRE

... I'm not interested in you, Nicky... Mr. D'Angelo. For one, you're too old for me. I don't ride the Viagra expressway. Two -- I don't do married guys. Seems to me you're pretty fucking married. And three: I don't shit where I eat. You wanna can my ass, fine -- just know you're never getting in these pants. Are we clear on that?

WIDEN OUT to show Claire standing in front of a roomful of HBO EXECUTIVES. She lowers her sides. Awaits their reaction. Unanimous APPLAUSE erupts from all present. Especially from the SHOWRUNNER (50's). She basks in it for a few precious moments.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Very nice, Claire.

SHOWRUNNER

Are you kidding me, Diane. That was amazing. That was fucking great. I've got a hard-on just listening to you. Jimmy's gonna love you. What have I seen you in before?

CLAIRE

I've... well, I've only done one student film since I've been over here.

As she talks, we realize that she has an Australian accent. We'd never have guessed it from her audition.

CLAIRE

I did some commercials back in Sydney: L'Oreal and Outback Grill -- that's, uh, a big franchise over there. And I had a guest role on Queensland 24 -- it's like the Aussie version of CSI.

\*

SHOWRUNNER

Well, sweetheart, I've been in this business a long time, and I think you're going to be the next Naomi.

9

INT. CASTING OFFICE - HALLWAY - DAY

9

Claire walking with DIANE, the casting agent...

DIANE

Look, hon, they're not going to sponsor you. Not worth the legal fees for a six episode arc. You're going to have to complete an 1-9 and provide me with proof of employment eligibility. I don't give a shit, as long as it looks like the real deal...

CLAIRE

Thank you so much, Diane, I know you're taking a big risk...

DIANE

(stops)

No, hon, I'm not taking any risk. As far as I know, you're legit. Get me your paperwork by the end of the week or you can kiss the part goodbye.

10

INT. JEWISH DAY SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

10

A classroom of SECOND GRADERS sit in a circle around teaching assistant, GAVIN KOSSEF (mid-20's) as he sings a traditional Jewish song, *Hinei Ma Tov*, strumming along on his guitar. The teacher, MARLA RABBINOWITZ (mid-20's), looks on affectionately. Gavin catches her eye as he comes to the end of the song, silently querying: How am I doing? She nods at him, then claps her hands, her applause echoed by the children.

MARLA

Let's all thank Mr. Kossef for singing that beautiful song.

(together with class)

Thank you, Mr. Kossef!

(claps her hands)

Okay, pack up and get ready for car pool.

(MORE)

MARLA (cont'd)  
August, don't forget your project.  
Michelle, remember to give your mom  
my note.

Gavin joins her at her desk as the kids start packing up.

GAVIN  
Sucked, didn't I?

He speaks with a distinctive South African accent. We can  
tell Marla's attracted to him.

MARLA  
For someone who just learned it  
last night, you did great.

GAVIN  
I have no idea what I was singing.

MARLA  
Don't take this the wrong way, but  
what kind of Jew gets hired by a  
Jewish day school who can't speak  
Hebrew or even knows the first  
thing about Judaism?

GAVIN  
The atheist kind.

MARLA  
Excuse me?

GAVIN  
I needed a job and my manager, his  
mom's the director of the school  
and...

MARLA  
Oh.  
(taken aback)  
It's not all about singing anyway.  
I hope you're good with these.

She hands him a pair of scissors and several pages of  
illustrated Judaic symbols that need cutting.

MARLA  
(smiles)  
You didn't completely suck.

11 EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY 11

Gavin jogs across the playground, heading for the administration building.

12 INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - DAY 12

Gavin stands awkwardly in front of ROCHELLE KAPLAN's desk. She's a stern looking woman in her 50's. She examines some paper work in front of her.

ROCHELLE

(Israeli accent)

I do not want you saying a word about this to anyone. I mean, anyone. Because it would get the school in serious trouble. And myself.

GAVIN

Nobody's gonna know anything. I swear.

ROCHELLE

And you're going to cover all lawyer's fees. We're not paying for anything. I don't want to deal with any lawyers. No lawyers. Okay?

GAVIN

I'm paying for everything.

Rochelle, about to sign the document, looks up at him...

ROCHELLE

I want you to know, I'm only doing this because of my son. He tells me you're going to be an important musician. Otherwise, I would never do something like this.

Reluctantly, she signs the sponsorship document, slides it over to him.

GAVIN

Thank you, thank you so much, Rochelle.



ROCHELLE  
(wags her finger at him)  
No lawyers! May they all drown at  
the bottom of the ocean. Pheh!

Gavin nods, backtracks out of her office, relief painting a huge smile across his features.

13 INT. CENTRAL JUVENILE HALL L.A. - HALLWAY - DAY 13

DENISE FRANKEL (mid-30's), follows a female DETENTION OFFICER down a long, sterile hallway, arriving at an interview room. She clutches her briefcase tightly in her arms. No matter how many times she visits this place, it always manages to unsettle her. The officer holds the door open for her.

DETENTION OFFICER  
She'll be right along, ma'am.

DENISE  
Thank you.

14 INT. CENTRAL JUVENILE HALL L.A. - INTERVIEW ROOM 14

Denise sits uncomfortably at one end of a children's size table, staring at the door, anticipating...

It swings open and the officer leads a seven year-old NIGERIAN GIRL into the room. Her name's ALIKE. She has wide, sad eyes and a stoic expression, which instantly transforms into a joyous smile at the sight of Denise. She rushes into Denise's arms, embraces her tightly. The officer nods at Denise, bows out of the room.

DENISE  
How are you, my sweet girl?

Alike looks up at her, shrugs in that innocent childlike way. Not so good. Instinctively, she reaches for Denise's briefcase...

ALIKE  
What did you bring me?

DENISE  
Excuse me? It's not polite to reach for your gift, until it's offered to you.

Alike releases the briefcase, makes a solemn face. Denise pops it open, extracts an expensive colored marker set and a thick drawing pad. She places them on the table. Nods at Alike. She rushes over, pours them all out on the table.

DENISE

Got you something else. It was  
sent to me by your aunt Jumoke.

Alike glances up to see Denise removing a small African doll from her briefcase. The girl blinks recognition at it. But doesn't reach for it.

DENISE

She told me you lost it right  
before you left and you were very  
upset. But she found it a few  
weeks ago...

Denise hands the doll to Alike. She takes it with a haunted look in her eyes. The doll appears to be triggering a hundred childhood memories. She's immediately overwhelmed. Tears erupting, followed by guttural sobs. Denise kneels and hugs her ferociously.

DENISE

Just a little while longer, my  
love. We're working on finding you  
a really good mommy. The perfect  
mommy, who I know can never take  
your real mommy's place... but I'm  
personally going to make sure she  
never ever leaves you. C'mon,  
let's draw some beautiful pictures  
with your new markers.

15

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - OUTSIDE COURT - DAY

15

A shirts on skins game is taking place on the cement court. Huddled together at the top of the bleachers is a clique of FIVE KOREAN AMERICAN SENIORS. STEVE, self appointed leader, talks in hushed tones...

STEVE

It's for real. Kwan's uncle is  
into him for 50 large. He pays out  
on Saturdays, and the cash arrives  
at the store Friday night, usually  
right before closing.

KWAN

About three hundred K. There's only the fat fuck and his old bag wife in the store that late. We hit him just before he's locking up. He'll have the cash in a safe in the back.

MARK

They got cameras in those stores.

JUSTIN

So, we remember to take the tape with us. Yong knows all about that video shit. You take care of it, bro.

YONG KIM (17), less self assured, nods uncomfortably. Unlike the other teens, he speaks with a thick Korean accent.

YONG

I got it covered. No problem.

At that moment, a pretty Korean-American teen, EMILY (17), approaches.

KWAN

Watch your back, Yong.

STEVE

You don't tell her shit, bro. We'll fuckin' come down on you if you do.

EMILY

Hey Yong.

He turns to her, jacking up the bravado.

YONG

Hey.

EMILY

I thought we were going to work on our dimensional analysis paper together. I was waiting for twenty minutes...

YONG

Sorry. Just hanging out.

STEVE

Emily, why you still denying my boy? Yong tells me you got religious convictions about taking it any further than titty sucking. Is that true? Are you really saving yourself for marriage, Em?

YONG

Steve, shut up. I didn't say--

EMILY

It's none of your business.  
(to Yong)  
I need to talk to you...

She grabs Yong's hand, drags him to the far side of the bleachers.

EMILY

Why do you hang out with those losers? You're gonna trash your entire future if you get caught up in their shit.

YONG

I'm not caught up in anything.

She grabs his right arm, rolls up his sleeve. We see a cigarette burn scar. A sign of Korean gang affiliation.

EMILY

You think this makes you cool? You think you're *gganpae* now?

YONG

(snatches his arm away)  
What's wrong with being cool?

EMILY

I'm not impressed with cool, Yong. Those KTG assholes aren't cool to me.

She makes an attempt to lighten up...

EMILY

Anyway, I'm excited about Saturday for you. Your mom said I should come to the ceremony. If that's okay with you?

YONG

It's no big deal. We all just stand there and say the Pledge of Allegiance or some shit. Gonna be over in two seconds.

EMILY

Well, I think it is a big deal. It's a huge deal. I was seven when we did our ceremony. It was beautiful. And even at seven, I knew I felt proud. You don't even remember where you came from, do you?

YONG

(icy)

I remember. So what? I didn't ask to become a fuckin' American. My old man's making me do it. You wanna come on Saturday, fine. Just stop dogging me in front of Steve. Later.

Yong turns his back on her, returns to his clique. Steve high-fives Yong for having put Emily in her place. Emily, hurt, rushes from the bleachers.

16

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

16

School has just let out. TASLIMA JAHANGIR, an intense 15 year old girl wearing a hijab (Muslim headscarf), accompanied by her 12 year-old sister (Americanized), JAHANARA and her ten year old brother (Americanized) ABUL, approach a taxi cab that pulls up in front of the gates. At the wheel of the car is their frazzled looking father, MUNSHI (late 40's). He yells out the window in a thick Bangladeshi accent...

MUNSHI

C'mon, c'mon, I'm late for a pick-up.

As Taslima and her siblings head over, a group of TEENS open fire with some epithets...

DISPARAGING TEEN 1

Check it out, yo, it's the sand nigger express.

DISPARAGING TEEN 2

If a raghead chick is a dog, she  
lucky she can hide her face and no  
one even know she's butt ugly.  
Maybe you can get your sister to  
convert or something, AZ.

Taslima climbs into the front next to her father, biting down  
on her humiliation. Jahanara and Abul pile into the back.  
Their mutual looks suggest they know what's coming next.

MUNSHI

Why must you wear it? Does it feel  
good to be singled out every day,  
Taslima? How can we ever be  
accepted if you choose to mark  
yourself?

She just stares worlds of pain at her father, her expression  
forged with resolve.

17 EXT. PRINTMAX PRINT STORE - DUSK 17

Hamid's Ford Taurus pulls into the lot of a Hollywood mini-  
mall.

18 INT. PRINTMAX PRINT STORE - DUSK 18

Hamid enters, walks over to the counter. Seeks out his  
sister, ZAHRA (early 20's, attractive). She's in  
conversation with the store's manager, JAVIER PEDRAZA  
(Hispanic, mid-30's). Their body language hints at a  
possible intimacy. Zahra looks up, notices Hamid.  
Instinctively, she steps back from Javier. Heads over to the  
counter.

ZAHRA

Hey, I told you you didn't have to  
come. Javier's giving me a ride  
home.

HAMID

It was on my way.

She glances back at Javier. He catches her eye. An awkward  
moment between them.

ZAHRA

Alright. I just need five minutes  
to finish up. I'm in the middle of  
an order.

Hamid appears fixated on her blouse. Unbuttoned to the tip of her cleavage, no bra.

HAMID

Look at you, close yourself up.

ZAHRA

Just go. I'll meet you at the car.  
Please.

He glares at her, then storms out. We notice Claire, the Australian actress, is in the store. She walks up to the counter with a few pages of photo copies. Hands Javier the machine's counter -- along with a small envelope. He peeks inside the envelope.

CLAIRE

They okay?

JAVIER

Yeah, it's good. Come back on Friday.

CLAIRE

Friday? That's the soonest?  
(off his look)  
Okay. Friday.

She walks out, dumping her photo copies in the trash next to the door.

19

INT. HAMID'S TAURUS - MOVING - DUSK

19

Zahra in the passenger seat next to Hamid. He keeps shooting her the evil eye.

ZAHRA

My car's out of the shop tomorrow,  
so don't bother coming by.

HAMID

Why do you dress like that? That's not how you were brought up. You know what they would do to you in Tehran, if you walked outside like that?

ZAHRA

We don't live in fucking Tehran. I was born here. I'm an American. And you're naturalized, so get over it. Fuck.

HAMID

And your mouth. You bring shame  
upon our family.

Zahra massages her brow as if she has a headache. She  
doesn't want to go head to head with him tonight.

HAMID

You think I don't see what's going  
on?

ZAHRA

See what, Hamid?

HAMID

You and him. You disgust me.

ZAHRA

Just drop me off here, I'll take  
the bus.

HAMID

He's married, Zahra. And you're  
not. It's unforgiveable.

ZAHRA

Just let me off, please.

He keeps driving. She turns away from him, leans her head  
against the side window.

ZAHRA

(sotto)

You have no right. No right.

Hamid grips the wheel, rages under his breath.

20 EXT. JAHANGIR FAMILY APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

20

A graffiti tagged low income apartment complex.

21 INT. JAHANGIR FAMILY APARTMENT - NIGHT

21

Everyone is seated at the dinner table, except for Taslima.  
ROKEYA (mid 40's), Munshi's wife, dutifully serves up the  
food. She addresses her husband in Bangla.

ROKEYA

Call your daughter to the table.



MUNSHI  
Taslima, dinner!

TASLIMA (O.S.)  
I'm coming. Five minutes.

MUNSHI  
Now!  
(to Rokeya; Bangla)  
I'm tired of her running to the  
damn mosque every day. She used to  
laugh all the time. Now, she's  
always so... solemn. She doesn't  
watch TV, she doesn't act like a  
normal teenager. She has no  
friends her age...

22 INT. TASLIMA'S ROOM - NIGHT

22

Taslima sits at her desk, typing feverishly at her computer.  
The walls of her room are bare. A copy of the Koran sits  
open on the desk next to her. She barely registers her  
father's call to dinner.

MUNSHI (O.S.)  
Taslima, come to the table  
immediately. We're not dogs that  
we eat by ourselves!

TASLIMA  
I'm coming! I'm just trying to  
finish my essay! Five minutes!

MUNSHI  
Finish it after dinner. You should  
have been doing your homework this  
afternoon, instead of wasting your  
time at the mosque. Come eat.  
Now!

Taslima reacts with frustration. She saves her work. Exits.

23 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

23

Max sits watching an Animal Planet type show, TV dinner on  
his lap. He appears distracted, unable to eat. He pops open  
a beer, slugs it back. On screen: a crocodile snares a  
gazelle as it attempts to cross a river with the rest of its  
herd. It's the unlucky one in the bunch, and in a  
subconscious way it reminds Max of the girl in the dress  
factory.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Max flips the channel, keeps flipping, can't seem to land on \*  
anything of interest. Zaps the TV off. Stands. Paces a \*  
bit. Pops open another beer. Downs it. \*

CUT TO:

24 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT 24

Max lying on the bed in his darkened room. Wearing his undershirt and boxer shorts. Anxious about something. Another empty beer can on the nightstand. A couple of beats, and he sits up with resignation. \*

MAX

Ah, hell... \*

25 EXT. FEDERAL BUILDING - DOWNTOWN L.A. - NIGHT 25 \*

Max parks in the lot. Heads inside.

26 INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - PROCESSING AREA - NIGHT 26 \*

Max in mid-conversation with the same Immigration Enforcement Agent from the opening scene. \*

MAX

Look, I don't know her name. I'll recognize her when I see her. I want her released on an OR. She has a minor child that's been left unattended-- \*

IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AGENT

(punching into his console)

Endesol Fabrics, right? \*

(off Max's exasperated nod)

They're gone. They bussed out around seven.

MAX

You sure?

IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AGENT

One way ticket to TJ as we speak. \*

You shoulda made your request for an OR when you were catching and cleaning. \*

27 EXT. FEDERAL BUILDING/INT. MAX'S CAR-NIGHT 27 \*

Max slams the door, leans back in his seat. He just can't seem to let it go...

\* Revised 4/8/07 \*

24A.

MAX  
Motherfuckit...

28 EXT. DRESS FACTORY - NIGHT

28

Max pulls into the deserted lot. Grabs a flashlight from the glove compartment. Climbs out, creeps around, looking for Mireya's pay stub that he discarded. After an exhaustive search, he finds it. Reads her name off the pay stub...

MAX

Mireya Sanchez.

More importantly, the address she scribbled on it.  
427 South Boyle Ave., Los Angeles. Apartment 2D.

29 INT. YONG'S HOUSE - NIGHT

29

Yong sits on the floor in the family room, playing Project Gotham on Xbox360 with his brother, SEUNG (12). Yong's father, CHIN (50's), sits in an armchair, reading a Korean newspaper. Yong's younger sister, SOO (6), plays with her dolls on the sofa. Yong's mother, MIN (50's) pokes her head out from the kitchen. She addresses her son in Korean.

MIN

Yong, take out the garbage, please.

YONG

(without looking up)  
It's Seung's turn. I did it  
yesterday.

SEUNG

(in English)  
He's lying. I did it last night.

MIN

Yong!

Yong throws his controller at his brother, heads into the kitchen. Chin looks up from his newspaper...

CHIN

Joo-Chan's Men's Wear is having a  
sale this week. I want to get Yong  
and Seung a new suit for the  
ceremony.

SOO

What about me? Can I get a new  
dress?

SEUNG

You're not part of the ceremony.  
You were born here. You'll just be  
there to watch.

SOO

I don't want to be born here. I  
want to be like Yong and Seung, I  
want to get a new dress.

MIN

I'll take you to Auntie Shin's  
place. We'll find you something  
pretty. We'll both find something.

30

EXT. YONG'S HOUSE - NIGHT

30

Yong throws a couple of trash bags in the dumpster.  
Headlights hit him from behind. He turns to see a Toyota  
Camry pulling into the driveway. Steve at the wheel, Kwan  
next to him. Mark and Justin in the back. They climb out,  
head over.

STEVE

Yo, when did you become the little  
bitch of the family? What, you got  
no sibs to do the grunt work?

YONG

We take turns.

JUSTIN

That's fucked up. My little bro  
knows to front that shit.  
Otherwise, it's HWAAAAA...  
(does a spin kick)  
... when the rents ain't around.

KWAN

Yeah, man, you gotta get it under  
control.

STEVE

C'mon, let's hit it.

YONG

Where to?

CUT TO:

31 INT. STEVE'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

31

Yong squeezed between Mark and Justin in the back. Steve takes a swig from a bottle of Wild Turkey, hands it off to Kwan. The bottle makes its way to Yong, who swallows a mouthful with a grimace. Justin slaps him on the back, drains the rest of the bottle.

MARK

Hey, hey, what about me, you fuck?

KWAN

Chill, bitch. Plenty more.

Kwan hands back another bottle.

STEVE

(over his shoulder)

Show Yong the hardware.

Mark brings up a Nike gym bag from the floor. Unzips it. Dumps the bag in Yong's lap, giving him an eyeful of their mini-arsenal -- three automatics, a .357 revolver and a sawed-off shotgun...

JUSTIN

I got dibs on the Glock.

He aims it in front of him with childlike bravado.

STEVE

.357's mine. I'm gonna get John Woo with any motherfucka gets in my face. Give Yong the Ruger. That's one sweet gat.

Mark digs out a Ruger.45 auto, thrusts it in Yong's hand.

MARK

This shit's beast. Tell me that doesn't make your dick hard?

Yong notices the serial number has been filed off.

JUSTIN

Yong, you need to pop your cherry, bro.

YONG

What?

MARK

You gotta put a cap in a bitch,  
take credit.

STEVE

You up for that, Yong?

YONG

(cringing)

I don't... Serious?

Steve looks over his shoulder at Yong, stone cold eyes.

CUT TO:

32

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

32

Steve's Camry pulls up in front of a small house in  
Koreatown. An old LABRADOR is asleep on the porch.

YONG

It's just a dumb, old dog. What  
harm has she done--

JUSTIN

That bitch is toxic. She sits in  
front of that faggot's desk and  
farts the whole day.

STEVE

'Sides, Choi just flunked me in  
biology. Payback's a bitch, ain't  
it. Woof, woof.

Justin throws open the car door. Yong stares out at his  
intended victim on the porch with a look of dread.

KWAN

Fuckin' do it already, before  
someone comes.

MARK

Maybe he's a faggot like Choi. Got  
that sympathy gene.

Justin reaches over, racks the slide of Yong's .45.  
Reluctantly, Yong climbs over Justin, jumps out of the car...

STEVE

That's my boy.



He cautiously approaches the waist high gate. Glances in every direction around him, then shakily raises the Ruger at the sleeping lab about ten feet away. The old dog, illuminated under the porch light, is oblivious to Yong's presence. Yong draws down on the animal, but can't find it in himself to squeeze the trigger.

JUSTIN

(hisses)

Fuckin' do it, chickenshit faggot.

Suddenly a light clicks on inside the house. The lab comes awake...

Yong panics, jerks back the trigger... BLAM!

His shot goes wide, chewing into the arm of a wooden bench. The lab leaps up, scampers for the side of the house. Yong keeps FIRING, but fails to hit the animal, who darts out of sight. We hear a KOREAN ACCENTED VOICE yelling out:

VOICE (O.S.)

Who's there? I've already called  
the police!

Yong bolts for Steve's Camry, which is already moving. He pounds pavement to catch up with the car, throwing himself into the back. Steve punches the gas and the Camry fish tails around the corner...

33 EXT. DENISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

33 \*

A small house in Silver Lake. A Jeep and a Volvo in the driveway.

34 INT. DENISE'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

34

Denise quietly reacting to the results of a home pregnancy test. Negative. She discards it with disappointment. Starts removing her makeup at the sink.

DENISE

You know what she asked the Yoruba interpreter today? She said, "Are you my Mommy?" The interpreter said she's losing her ability to speak the language. Everytime I'm over there, I feel gutted. It's been twenty-three months. Twenty-three goddamn months.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

It's a shitty situation, but you  
can't keep beating yourself up over  
it.

DENISE

I was thinking...

Denise steps into the doorway, looking out into the bedroom,  
where her husband, COLE (40's) sits up in bed reading Sports  
Illustrated.

DENISE

I was thinking, we could, maybe,  
adopt her.

Cole lowers his magazine, taken aback.

COLE

Dee...

DENISE

Cole, I'm dead serious. Alike's  
mother is dying of AIDS in a  
hospice. Her father back in  
Nigeria denies paternity, won't  
accept custody of her. Nearly two  
years she's been in detention,  
watching other kids come and go,  
and she's just stuck there. It's  
cruel and inhumane and this child  
needs a mother... and a father. We  
can do this.

COLE

We're working on it, Dee. One of  
our own.

DENISE

And we can keep trying, but I've  
been thinking about this for a  
while now and it feels right. It  
feels like it's meant to be.

COLE

Jesus... You can't just lay this on  
me and expect me to... God, Dee.

She turns off the bathroom light, climbs into bed alongside  
him. He tosses his magazine to the floor, switches off his  
reading lamp. They both just lie there in darkness.

DENISE

Just tell me you'll think about it.  
It's important to me. Okay?  
Please?

COLE

(a couple of beats)  
I'll think about it.

DENISE

Thank you.

Even with that, there's a sense of distance between them.

35

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

35

Gavin fronts a Coldplay style band to a receptive audience. The band's called LINCOLN'S BEDROOM and he's lead vocals and guitar. We're witness to the flip side of his classroom performance: confident, charismatic, sexually charged. He flirts with a couple of YOUNG WOMEN up front as they make suggestive eye contact with him. \*

None of this is lost on Claire, who sits at a table off to the side, joined by a friend of hers, ROSALYN (20's). Gavin comes to the end of the song and announces:

GAVIN

Okay, thank you, thank you. You guys are awesome. The best. We're going to take a fifteen minute break and then we'll pick it up again. Lots of good stuff, I promise.

He hops off the stage, heads over to Claire. Pulls up a seat alongside her, kisses her on the cheek.

GAVIN

Glad you came.

CLAIRE

This is Ros -- she's in my workshop.

ROSALYN

Wow, you guys remind me of--

GAVIN

Coldplay?

ROSALYN  
No... uh, yeah. Sorry.

GAVIN  
It's okay. I'm used to it.

ROSALYN  
You guys are way better, though. I mean it.

Gavin toasts her with his beer.

GAVIN  
Cheers. How was class?

CLAIRE  
I got a recurring role on "The D'Angelos."

GAVIN  
"The D'Angelos?" For real?

ROSALYN  
(affectionately)  
Bitch.

CLAIRE  
I know, it's unbelievable. I'm going to be playing Nicky's new mistress. Well, she starts out as his paralegal.

GAVIN  
Congratulations, Claire. I know how long you've been... I'm really happy for you. This calls for another round...

Gavin looks around for the waitress. Claire catches Rosalyn's eye.

ROSALYN  
I'll get 'em. There's a seriously cute guy at the bar right now. Solo. Think he's straight? My luck...

She takes off. Gavin and Claire just stare at each other. There's a whole lot of history in that look.

GAVIN  
How'd you pull off--

CLAIRE

The casting agent knows my situation. She's given me until Friday to get my I-9 in. There's a fella I met through someone at Crunch, he works at PrintMax on Fountain. He's gonna help me out.

GAVIN

Jesus, Claire. You get nailed with a bogus green card, they'll hit you with fraud. It's not worth it--

CLAIRE

Well, what am I supposed to do? You tell me? 'Sides, it's no different to Photoshopping your social security card to remove the "not for employment stamp." Or passing yourself off as a religious Jew when you're an atheist...

GAVIN

Come home with me tonight.

That stops her cold. She softens...

CLAIRE

We talked about this, Gav. We made a decision...

GAVIN

You made the decision.

CLAIRE

Well, you agreed to go along with it.

GAVIN

I can't get beyond you. That's the sad fucking truth.

CLAIRE

It's not practical, Gav. We can't make a go of it without status. I've got to get legal and so do you.

GAVIN

So why haven't you found him yet? Your American guy? The one who's going to marry you, make you legit?

(MORE)

GAVIN (cont'd)  
Someone like you should have no  
problem...

Before Claire can respond, Rosalyn returns with their drinks.  
Gavin takes his beer, gets up...

GAVIN  
I gotta get back. Nice meeting  
you, Ros. Thanks.  
(to Claire)  
Email me when your show comes on.

CLAIRE  
I'll see you before.

GAVIN  
(walking off)  
Yeah, whatever. Good luck.

He heads off toward the stage, immediately beset upon by a  
trio of GORGEOUS YOUNG FANS. Claire tries to feign  
disinterest, but Rosalyn sees through her.

ROSALYN  
Just friends, huh?

CLAIRE  
It's complicated.

ROSALYN  
When has it ever not been?

Off Claire's saddened look...

36	EXT. SUBSIDIZED APARTMENT BUILDING - BOYLE HEIGHTS - DAY	36	*
	Max parks out front, heads up a flight of grimy steps and		*
	into a second floor hallway overlooking the street. He		*
	arrives at a graffiti tagged door. We hear CHILDREN crying		*
	from within. An annoyed female voice shouting in Spanish.		*
	Max knocks.		*
	FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)		*
	(in Spanish)		*
	Who is it?		*
	MAX		*
	La Migra!		*
	A moment of silence, then...		*
	FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)		*
	Who?		*

MAX  
(Spanish)  
Immigration and Customs  
Enforcement. Just open the door.

He raps again, hard. The door creaks open, still chained. A tough looking HISPANIC WOMAN (40's) peers out. The sounds of CHILDREN crying and running around the apartment more audible. Max flashes his shield at her.

MAX  
(Spanish)  
I'm looking for Mireya Sanchez's son. She left him with you yesterday.

HISPANIC WOMAN  
(Spanish)  
No, I don't know. These are my sister's children. And my own. I don't know.

MAX  
(Spanish)  
Don't fuck with me.

HISPANIC WOMAN  
(English)  
She owes me for the week.

MAX  
Are you negotiating with me? Is that what you think you're doing?

The woman just stares back at him with a stone cold glare.

MAX  
How much?

HISPANIC WOMAN  
Fifty dollars.

Max matches her hard stare for another few beats, then extracts two twenties and a ten from his wallet. He hands it over to the woman. She reaches for it, but Max maintains his grip on the cash...

MAX  
If it's not the right kid, I'm coming back. Sanchez.

The woman snatches the money, disappears into the apartment. We hear her barking impatiently at someone.

Moments later, the woman returns with a four year-old boy in tow. He looks unkempt, wearing a stained T-shirt and soiled underpants.

MAX  
(Spanish)  
What's his name?

HISPANIC WOMAN  
Juan. Juan Sanchez.

She pushes the boy over to Max.

HISPANIC WOMAN  
(to Juan)  
Go with him.

Juan looks back at her, then up to Max. There's something feral about him, a child who has learned not to trust at the earliest age. The woman slams the door on them, returns to yelling at her unseen charges.

Max just stands there in the hallway. What now?

37 EXT. SUBSIDIZED APT. BUILDING - FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY 37

Juan rushes toward a first floor apartment. Max follows behind with the APARTMENT MANAGER (50's). The man unlocks the front door, throws it open. Juan charges inside...

38 INT. MIREYA'S STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY 38

... searching for his mother. Upon realization, he sinks to the floor, starts sobbing quietly. Max just stands in the center of the tiny apartment taking it in. We see almost no furniture; only a card table, two fold-up chairs and a queen sized mattress on the floor.

Max starts rifling through a pile of bills on the kitchen counter. Finds what he's looking for: a phone bill in Mireya's name. Max scans the list of calls. Most are long distance to Mexico. The same number. He whips out his cell phone, dials the number. A voice in Spanish announces the number is temporarily out of service. He dials another number.

MAX  
J.C., it's Max. A favor, amigo? I  
need a reverse directory on 664 555-  
7782. Yeah, Tijuana. Gracias.



He jots down the address, hangs up.

CUT TO:

Max talking on his cell phone as he grabs up a fresh change of clothes for Juan from a pile of worn clothes lying on the floor.

MAX

... It must be that damn stomach  
flu that's going around. I've been  
throwing up all morning. I  
appreciate it, amigo.

He doesn't say anything to the boy as he kneels to remove his stained T-shirt. Juan just holds Max's gaze as his arms involuntarily swing up into the air.

39 INT. MAX'S CAR - MOVING - DAY

39 \*

Max, on his cell, glances over his shoulder at Juan strapped into a cheap car seat in the back. The boy is devouring a Happy Meal, still eyeballing Max with deep suspicion. We see a small suitcase on the seat next to him. \*

MAX \*

... Okay, I leaned on him a little. \*  
I was concerned that she wasn't \*  
getting involved with some creep. \*  
I apologized... Yeah, well, if it \*  
came across that way... Look, she's \*  
my only daughter, don't tell me she \*  
doesn't want me there. Put her on \*  
the phone. Put her on the goddamn \*  
phone, Janine. From her lips. I \*  
wanna hear it from her lips... \*  
Janine? Janine SHIT! Bitch! \*

He throws his phone down. Meets Juan's eyes in the mirror. \*

MAX \*

(Spanish) \*

It's okay, little man, you're gonna \*  
be with your mom real soon. Just \*  
hang in there. \*

\*

40 EXT. SAN YSIDRO BORDER CROSSING - DAY 40 \*

Max pulls into one of the six southbound lanes heading into Mexico. He passes through without incident.

41 EXT. TIJUANA ROAD - DAY 41

Max drives through a poverty-stricken landscape.

42 INT. MAX'S CAR - MOVING - DAY 42

Max turns onto a dusty strip of rundown homes. Juan registers excitement upon recognizing the street. Max squints, trying to read off the faded house numbers...

MAX

Goddamn, never heard of street numbers...

43 EXT. MIREYA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY 43

Max parks out front. He walks Juan to the front door. Knocks. An ELDERLY WOMAN opens the door, instantly shrieks with joy at the sight of Juan. She snatches him up, embraces him, both of them sobbing. AN ELDERLY MAN appears and lifts Juan up in the air, peppers him with kisses. We recognize them from Mireya's photograph.

44 INT. MIREYA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY 44

Max seated across from the couple in the kitchen. Juan plays on the floor with a toy truck. Max expresses disappointment and a small amount of concern... They converse in Spanish.

MAX

She tried to get back last night?

JUAN'S GRANDMOTHER

Si. She was very worried about him.

MAX

And you haven't heard from her?

JUAN'S GRANDFATHER

No, senior. She was supposed to call when she got across.

CUT TO:

Max standing in the kitchen doorway, speaking on his cell phone...

MAX

Sanchez. Mireya. 35. Last night or early this morning? You're positive? Okay, thanks.

Max hangs up, looks over at Mireya's anxious parents. Shakes his head. Juan picks up on the tense silence. He jumps up, rushes over to his grandmother, embraces her.

45 INT. U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES BUILDING - DAY

Claire stands at one of the many service windows, talking to a USCIS WORKER.

USCIS WORKER

(punching buttons)

I'm not finding any record of your I-539 in the system. You say you sent it in six weeks ago?

CLAIRE

Eight. Eight weeks.

USCIS WORKER

Okay, do you have a mailing receipt?

CLAIRE

What? No, uh... I just copied my I-94 and sent it by regular mail.

USCIS WORKER

What about a cancelled check for the application fee?

CLAIRE

I paid by money order. I don't think I have the receipt... You know what, I'm starting to get a little concerned here...

USCIS WORKER

Ma'am, you're not out of status until you receive a decision on your extension application -- however, if your application is lost in the system, or for whatever reason didn't get to us, then how are we supposed to know that you even sent it in the first place? From our perspective, with no mailing receipt or cancelled money order, you're out of status. Unless--

CLAIRE

-- my application turns up.

Off the USCIS worker's stoic reaction...

46

EXT. USCIS BUILDING - DAY

46

Claire, flustered, climbs into her '95 Geo parked at a meter across the street.

CLAIRE

Fuck! Brilliant, Claire, just brilliant. Uhhhhhggrrr...

She pounds the steering wheel, fires the engine up and pulls out into traffic, when... SCREECH-WHAM-! A Jeep Cherokee SLAMS into her side. She's jolted in her seat, but unharmed. More shaken than anything.

We recognize the driver of the Jeep. Cole Frankel, Denise's husband. He rushes around to the passenger side of the Geo, helps Claire out onto the sidewalk. A pile of her HEADSHOTS (stacked on the seat) are swept into the street. Cole kneels and collects them. Dumps them back on the seat.

COLE

I'm sorry, didn't have time to stop, you just shot out like that.

CLAIRE

I signaled, didn't I?

COLE

Maybe, but it's supposed to be clear before you turn into... Are you okay? You look dazed? Do you need to sit down? Does it hurt anywhere?

CLAIRE

I'm alright... I think. I've just had a really, really shitty day.

COLE

Where you from, New Zealand?

CLAIRE

Australia.

COLE

It's always one or the other. I can never quite tell the difference. I said New Zealand to impress you if I was right. Most people usually say Australia, which upsets the Kiwis...

CLAIRE

Shit, I don't have the money to pay for this. I don't have... I'm not... insured.

COLE

Ouch... that's not good.

CLAIRE

I must have fucked someone over really badly in a past life, because it's just piling up for me today. You don't understand, I've just spent the last three hours in there, trying to convince some bureaucratic bitch that I actually did file for an extension on my visitor's visa.

COLE

What's your name?

CLAIRE

Oh, sorry. Claire. Sheperd.

COLE

Well, Claire Sheperd, I'm Cole Frankel.

(MORE)

COLE (cont'd)  
And I know of your frustrations.  
I'm a Supervisory Center  
Adjudications Officer. What that  
means is, I get to determine  
whether a green card application  
has merit or not.

CLAIRE  
Oh...  
(starting to feel uneasy)  
That must be interesting.

COLE  
I'll tell you what's interesting,  
what's of a bit of concern to me,  
aside from you having no  
insurance...

We can tell that Claire's heart has pretty much stopped  
beating.

COLE  
... and that's someone who's filing  
for an extension of their visitor's  
visa driving around with a stack of  
headshots. Nothing wrong with a  
beautiful woman like yourself  
having headshots in her car -- if  
you were back in Australia. Where  
in Australia are you from?

CLAIRE  
(barely rolling off her  
tongue)  
Melbourne.

COLE  
Melbourne. You Aussies make some  
pretty good movies over there.  
Ever see "Breaker Morant?"  
(she shakes her head)  
Great film. "Gallipoli" - another  
good one.

CLAIRE  
Yeah, I've seen that. Years ago.

COLE  
You're not authorized to seek  
employment in the United States,  
Claire. Am I wrong about that?

She just kinda shrugs at him. Knows she's completely fucked.

COLE

Here's what I propose -- we call Triple A, my card, of course. If you don't have insurance, you sure as hell don't have Triple A. We get your vehicle sorted out. Then we go grab some lunch together.

CLAIRE

Excuse me?

COLE

I'd like to buy you some lunch, Claire. Explain your options to you.

She just stares at him, not comprehending...

COLE

Or we can just take a walk back into the building. Sort it out there.

Off her devastated and confused look...

47

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

47

Taslina stands before the class, reading her essay. It's not going over well. Taslima's teacher, MRS. BENEDICT, is having a quiet meltdown.

TASLIMA

... but we never want to talk about the 9/11 jihadists as real people. The media and our leaders are quick to label them as terrorists and monsters and murderers, but shouldn't we try to understand them as human beings?

STUDENT #1

Fuck, no!

TASLIMA

As fathers and brothers and sons and uncles. Everyone calls them cowards for murdering helpless passengers and causing the deaths of thousands of innocent lives.

STUDENT #2

And they're right. Please...



TASLIMA

But cowards do not knowingly sacrifice themselves for a greater cause. You may not agree with their cause, but I do not believe their actions were either cowardly or irrational.

STUDENT #3

Mrs. Benedict, we have to listen to this shit?

TASLIMA

I feel, that like the oppressed Palestinian people or the Iraqi citizens under occupation in their own homeland, that they found themselves without a voice, and the only way to be heard was to scream with the might of tons of steel and thunderous jet engines behind them. Upon impact, their voices were finally heard. We may not like what they had to say, or how they got their message across, but we heard it. For the first time we heard it.

STUDENT #4

Yeah, here's what I heard...

The student lets out a loud fart. The class starts laughing and applauding.

TASLIMA

(raises her voice to be heard)

And what we heard was a cry for justice and consideration for the Muslim people. I know that is not a popular view, but...

The entire class starts hissing and booing. Some of the students are standing in their seats, flipping her off. Mrs. Benedict leaps to her feet, cuts Taslima off.

MRS. BENEDICT

Okay, yes, thank you. I'm not sure that that was the point of the assignment, Taslima, but, uh, yes, it was certainly thought provoking.

STUDENT #1

Fucking traitor. Why don't you just get the fuck out of our country and go and live in camel humping Saudia Arabia or wherever the fuck camel humpers live.

MRS. BENEDICT

Ryan, I know you're upset, but I'm not going to condone an outburst like that.

A student seated directly behind Taslima raises his hand.

STUDENT #5

I got one question for you, Mrs. B? You frisk Mahattma-Crazy 'fore she came in here? Bitch probably be strapped with dynamite or TNT or something, take us all out.

With that, he reaches around, starts frisking her. Taslima writhes against his aggressive pawing...

MRS. BENEDICT

Marcus, get out. Wait for me outside.

Before the student can take his leave, Taslima, in tears, bolts from her seat, rushes from the classroom. The room applauds her exit. Marcus walks the high-five line on his way out. Mrs. Benedict glances down at Taslima's essay in her hand. Troubled and not unsympathetic to the class's outrage.

48

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

48

Claire sits across from Cole, nursing a cup of coffee, while he digs into a Chinese chicken salad.

COLE

... That's a great show. Nothing can touch it on TV. The only shitty thing is, they make us wait too long between seasons. What's it been, a year and a half already?

CLAIRE

You said you wanted to discuss my situation...

COLE

Here's the thing, Claire. You've clearly established that you're not above lying, committing fraud and breaking the rules to get what you want. And I'd like to be bold enough to take advantage of that.

CLAIRE

What, I'm supposed to just spread my legs for you, 'cause I'm afraid of getting deported?

COLE

You want to be an actress, like Nicole and Naomi -- obviously. Well, the work they do in Australia doesn't count for shit. They're stars because they make films in America, for an international audience. If you get deported, or even choose voluntary departure, you ain't getting back in this country for a minimum of ten years. I know with voluntary departure, they say it's closer to five, but the truth is, you're lucky if you ever get back in.

Claire fixates on his wedding ring...

CLAIRE

What's your wife do?

COLE

She's works for the other side. She's an immigration defense attorney.

CLAIRE

She available for a consult?

COLE

Funny. Sexy and with a terrific sense of humor. You got it all, Claire. Except for a work permit. I don't think you'll feel so witty when they introduce you to a holding cell down in San Pedro. Strip search, the whole bit. Some mama Latina makes you her bitch for a couple of nights...

CLAIRE

All right, you've made your point.  
So where do you want to do it?

49 EXT. HOLLYWOOD MOTEL - DAY

49

A real dump. PANNING ACROSS to Cole's Jeep Cherokee parked outside one of the rooms.

50 INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

50

Cole thrusts against Claire, both of them sweaty and naked. She has that thousand yard stare as he convulses on top of her. A grimace of relief overcomes her as he rolls over, breathing heavily.

CLAIRE

What are you on, bloody Viagra or something?

COLE

It's not Viagra, Claire. It's you. You're goddamn amazing. The perfect little fuck machine.

CLAIRE

Without a green card.

COLE

Well, maybe we can do something about that.

CLAIRE

You can get me a green card?

COLE

I can't just manufacture one for you. I'm not in the counterfeiting business. But I could have you file an application, which would conveniently land on my desk, and regardless of the merits of that application, it would be approved.

CLAIRE

You could really do that? Like, on what grounds?

COLE

You're a recognized TV star in Australia.

CLAIRE

I'm bloody well not. Not even close.

COLE

I don't know that. And no one else does. You fabricate some credits, a few Aussie awards, some bullshit testimonials and I'll make it fly. It's called an EB1. A green card for persons of extraordinary ability. And if they gave them out for fucking, you'd qualify without question.

CLAIRE

Are you jerking me around, or is this real? Because if you could make this happen for me...

COLE

You'll make it worth my while.

CLAIRE

You can own my ass for two weeks.

COLE

For a green card? Six months, baby.

CLAIRE

I don't think so. A month. Whatever sick, fucked-up fantasy you have, I'll make good on. But no bags over my head or asphyxiation games.

COLE

Three months. Don't worry, I'm not into that shit.

CLAIRE

Two months. And you get me approved up front. You can hold on to my paperwork, but I want to know it's real.

COLE

Two months. Done. But you're on the clock from tomorrow. I call and you get your ass over to whatever address I give you.

CLAIRE

So, you through with me for today?  
Can I go grab a shower?

COLE

I got one more favor to ask of you,  
Claire.

(off her fatigued look)

I want you down on all fours at the  
edge of the bed. Here, put your  
face in this...

He throws a pillow at her. For a moment she considers  
throwing it back in his face. For a moment.

51 INT. JAHANGIR FAMILY APARTMENT - NIGHT

51

Taslima and her family are eating dinner, Taslima helping her  
younger sister with her homework at the same time. Her  
parents are arguing about something in Bangla. When suddenly  
a KNOCK on the front door. A MALE VOICE yells out:

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Immigration Customs Enforcement,  
open up!

Everyone freezes at the table. A look of disbelief sets in.  
Slowly, Munshi rises, walks to the door.

MUNSHI

(through the door)

What is this about?

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Federal agents! Open the door,  
please. We have a warrant.

Munshi glances back at his family with panicked eyes, then  
opens the door. A DOZEN SPECIAL AGENTS enter the apartment.  
A handful of them are ICE AGENTS, but the majority of them  
are FBI. Munshi is immediately frisked and cuffed.

MUNSHI

What is this? Why is FBI here?

A FEMALE FBI AGENT (Middle Eastern looking, 30's) approaches  
Taslima, who is standing next to the table, her sister  
clinging to her.

FBI AGENT

Are you Taslima Jahangir?

Taslina nods.

FBI AGENT

I'm Special Agent Phadkar. Can you show me to your bedroom, please? We have a search warrant for the entire apartment.

52

INT. TASLIMA'S ROOM - NIGHT

52

Special Agent Phadkar, flanked by an ICE AGENT, stands over Taslima. She's seated on the bed. Two other Feds are searching the room, one of them checking out Taslima's computer. A third stands watch at the door.

TASLIMA

(complies)

I don't understand what this is about?

Agent Phadkar produces a photo-copy of Taslima's 9/11 essay. Hands it Taslima...

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR

Did you write this?

Taslina looks it over, nods solemnly.

TASLIMA

Why do you have it?

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR

It was brought to our attention by the principal of your school. He was troubled by the position you took.

TASLIMA

I thought there was something like freedom of speech in this country.

Agent Phadkar notices Taslima's veil on her dresser. She picks it up.

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR

I've been told that you wear this out in public.

TASLIMA

And that's against the law?

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR  
Your essay elicits sympathy for the  
9/11 hijackers. It suggests you  
feel their cause was just.

TASLIMA  
That's not what I wrote. I said  
that I understand why they did what  
they did. I didn't write that I  
support it.

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR  
Do you? Support their actions?

TASLIMA  
I understand their need to be  
heard. I don't think they went  
about it the right way.

One of the agents approaches Agent Phadkar with Taslima's  
diary. He draws her attention to a page of scribblings. We  
make out the word "suicide" amidst some other key words.

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR  
Do you have an interest in suicide?  
Your diary suggests you do.

TASLIMA  
That's not... those are notes I  
made for a class paper on why  
religions oppose suicide. It's not  
what you think it is.

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR  
And you're not opposed to it?

TASLIMA  
I wouldn't become, like, a suicide  
bomber, if that's what you mean.

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR  
But you condone suicide bombing as  
a legitimate means to make a  
statement. That's what you wrote  
in your essay.

TASLIMA  
You're twisting my words. That's  
not what I wrote.



SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR  
Reads that way to me. "Upon  
impact, their voices were finally  
heard. We may not like what they  
had to say, or how they got their  
message across, but we heard it.  
For the first time we heard it."

TASLIMA  
I was just saying, they got our  
attention. Maybe we should try and  
understand why they did it. That's  
all.

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR  
So, if someone is pissed off with  
America, they should hijack and fly  
planes into our buildings? That  
seems like a reasonable thing to  
do?

Before Taslima can respond, the agent at her computer calls  
Agent Phadkar over.

FBI AGENT  
Over here.

Special Agent Phadkar leans in over his shoulder.

FBI AGENT  
She has a PalTalk account. Been  
frequenting some interesting  
chatrooms: Muslim Brotherhood,  
Jihad Talking Points, Teachings of  
Sheik Omar Bakri Muhammed...

TASLIMA  
I'm just interested in all Muslim  
points of view. Keeps me informed.

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR  
Taslima, your parents are in the  
United States illegally.

TASLIMA  
My brother and sister were born  
here. They're American citizens.

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR  
True. But you and your parents are  
not.

(MORE)

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR (cont'd)  
When your brother and sister reach  
the age of 21, they're entitled to  
petition for your parents to enter  
this country. Until then, your  
family has no status.

Taslina starts sobbing silently. She notices the other agent  
paging through her Koran.

TASLIMA  
Can you please not touch that.  
Please...

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR  
Listen to me, Taslima. Here's what  
I'm willing to do for you. I'm not  
interested in detaining your  
family. But I'd like to talk to  
you further. Immigration and  
Customs Enforcement has every right  
to take your family into custody.  
But if you leave with us now and  
cooperate with us, immigration  
won't detain them. They'll still  
have to resolve their status, but  
nobody's looking to make an issue  
of that right now. You understand?

She looks up at Agent Phadkar and nods through her tears.

53

INT. GAVIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

53

Gavin opens his front door to greet HOWIE CARP (late 20's), a  
fellow South African, who wears a yarmulka on his head.  
Howie is carrying an armful of books.

GAVIN  
Ah man, thanks so much for coming.

HOWIE  
Just to be clear, the deal  
according to Mitch, was that you'd  
sing at my sister's wedding. And  
you'd arrange for the band as well.

GAVIN  
Yeah, yeah. No problem.

CUT TO:

54

INT. GAVIN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

54

Gavin and Howie seated next to one another on the couch, finishing the *Kiddush* from a Jewish prayer book.

HOWIE

... bi-ahava uv-ratzon hinchal-tanu. Baruch ata Adonoy, mi-kadesh ha-shabbos.

Gavin stumbles along with him. He's starting to realize that he's in over his head...

GAVIN

Agh, man, I can't remember how to read this shit.

(off Howie's pointed look)

The last time I looked at Hebrew was on my bar-mitzvah.

HOWIE

You guys are all the same. You're all reform at best, most of you haven't gone to shul since your bar-mitzvahs, but the first thing you do when you come over here is play the Jew card. Don't you have any shame?

Before Gavin can respond, the phone rings.

GAVIN

Hi, ma. You get my message? I know it's three in the morning... You've got to find it and overnight it to me immediately. No, not a photocopy, has to be the original birth certificate. And what about the Rabbi? Yeah, I need a letter from him on the temple's letterhead that I attended services every week and I was barmitzvah'd by him, and I'm strongly committed to the Jewish faith. Have Dad ask him, he's the big schmoozer... Yes, it's really happening. Okay, me, too. Bye.

Gavin hangs up, stressed.

HOWIE

Look, I gotta get home by ten.  
This book's got all the phonetic  
translations. I suggest you learn  
some of these by heart. The  
kuddish, wine, bread. I'll  
bookmark them for you.

GAVIN

Check it out, I'm growing my  
sideburns.

Howie just hits Gavin with an exasperated look.

55

INT. DENISE'S OFFICE - RECEPTION - DAY

55

Denise greets a very tense looking Munshi and Rokeya.

DENISE

Hello, I'm Denise Frankel.

MUNSHI

Hello. Please, thank you for  
helping my daughter.

DENISE

Come through.

56

INT. DENISE'S OFFICE - DAY

56

Munshi and Rokeya seated across from Denise.

DENISE

I'm pushing for a one on one with  
the FBI task force officer  
tomorrow, so if that pans out, I'll  
have a better idea of where we  
stand. Clearly, this is not about  
her immigration status, but they're  
using her lack of status to get  
around normal criminal and juvenile  
proceedings.

ROKEYA

(in Bangla)

When can we see her?

MUNSHI

My wife wants to know when we can  
see her?

DENISE

I'm working on it. Right now, your entire family is at risk for removal. I recommend that you don't go back to your apartment. Do you have any friends or relatives that you can stay with?

Off their devastated reactions...

57 EXT. HAMID'S PARENTS' HOME - NIGHT

57

Max parks across the street from a two story stucco house in Rancho Park. A pair of bronze lions guard the steps to the entrance. Several cars are parked in the driveway, and in front of the house. We recognize Hamid's Taurus. Max lingers in his driver's seat, reluctant to head inside.

58 INT. HAMID'S PARENTS' HOME - NIGHT

58

Hamid introduces Max to his father, SANJAR (late 60's) and his mother, MINOO (early 60's). The living room is crowded with members of the Baraheri extended family, all of them dressed to the nines, including the children. The furnishings are opulent, with an emphasis on antiques. Decorative pairings of American and Iranian mini-flags are prominent around the room.

SANJAR

(clasping Max's hand)

Max, welcome to my home. You honor me with your presence tonight.

MAX

Congratulations, Mr. Baraheri. You have a beautiful home. And a beautiful wife.

Minoo blushes, lowers her head.

SANJAR

(calls out)

Farid, come over here. Come meet an important gentleman.

Hamid's brother, FARID (late 20's) comes over. He's holding his INFANT DAUGHTER (six months) in his arms. His wife, POONEH (early 20's) follows behind.

SANJAR

This is Max, he is the partner of Hamid. You show him the respect or he will have you deported.

FARID

(shaking Max's hand)

He can't deport me, papa. I'm already naturalized. You're the only one who can be deported in this house. Until Saturday. Then you become one of us.

Sanjar grunts, dismissive of Farid's comment.

FARID

My father, Max, is not taking on citizenship because of his patriotism. He simply doesn't want to be harassed at the airport anymore.

Sanjar waves them off, his attention drawn to the front door. Hamid's sister, Zahra, enters. Sanjar stiffens...

SANJAR

Please excuse me.

Sanjar heads over to his daughter, tension evident in his features. Zahra, in contrast to the other women, wears a leather jacket and a thigh length leather skirt. Her attire screams interloper. We sense that the entire room has taken a deep breath...

We observe their interaction from Max's POV. Sanjar appears angry at Zahra's presence. He gestures to her attire, pointing to the door. Minoo comes over, tries to appeal to her daughter. They snap at one another in Farsi. Instead of leaving, Zahra brushes past them, heads through to the dining room, pours herself a cup of tea. Sips at it, intensely.

Minoo attempts to calm her husband. He bites down on his rage, walks away, heading to the opposite end of the room, turning his back to Zahra and the rest of his guests.

HAMID

Families, you know, Max. My father disapproves of her lifestyle.

MAX

Seems like your father speaks for everyone.

And Max is right. No one dares approach Zahra or makes an attempt to greet her.

HAMID

It's complicated. Let me get you a drink. Straight up, right?

Before Max can respond, Hamid heads over to where Zahra is. He starts pouring Max a shot, mumbling something to Zahra. She ignores him. Hamid repeats himself. Zahra slams down her cup, walks away. She heads over to a group of CHILDREN playing. Embraces some of them, kneels to their level. They appear pleased to see her, a few stealing glances back at their parents.

Max observes the growing discomfort of the parents around the room. Hamid returns with Max's drink, Max's attention on Zahra and the tense family dynamic.

HAMID

(looking to Zahra)  
She shouldn't have come tonight.

MAX

Yeah, I'm really sensing the love.

HAMID

It's family matter, Max. She puts herself before the family, she shouldn't expect to be welcomed around here. Come, let me get you a plate. You gotta taste my mothers khoreshht...

Hamid leads Max through to the dining room, where an elaborate spread has been laid out. Max glances back to see Pooneh and a few other parents dragging their children away from Zahra. Once again she stands alone. Isolated from the rest of the room.

Hamid fixes a plate for Max. Escorts him over to some chairs against the wall. Farid comes over...

FARID

(to Hamid)  
Papa.

HAMID

Excuse me. I'll be right back.

Farid takes Hamid's seat. Max watches Hamid head over to where his father is standing. Sanjar appears to be reprimanding Hamid in Farsi.

There's a rabid intensity about the way the older man gets in Hamid's face. Hamid just nods, attempts to calm his father.

FARID

So, Max, Hamid speaks so highly of you. He looks up to you. I never understood why he joined the immigration Gestapo. I think, deep down inside, he doesn't think he belongs. What better way to prove you're red, white and blue than by throwing out those who also don't belong.

MAX

(with an eye still on  
Hamid and Sanjar)  
Hamid says you're a lawyer.

As Farid speaks, Max notices Zahra walk outside. She lingers on the front porch, lights up a cigarette. All that cast iron composure is starting to melt away.

FARID

I'm a junior partner at Berkoff, Mazzollo & Klein. I specialize in personal injury. We have thirty five lawyers under us. I bill 150 hours a week.

MAX

So you're an ambulance chaser.

FARID

I don't chase anyone. I turn clients away...

MAX

Excuse me...

Max gets up, walks outside. Hamid glances over his shoulder, startled to see Max walking out.

59

EXT. HAMID'S PARENTS' HOME - NIGHT

59

Max approaches Zahra...

MAX

Got another one of those?

She turns to him, seizes him up with a cynical look.



MAX

Max Brogan. I work with Hamid.

ZAHRA

I know who you are.

She hands Max a cigarette. Gets up close, lights it for him. He admires a striking silver bracelet on her wrist, Persian script engraved into the metal.

MAX

What's that say, your bracelet?

ZAHRA

(snorts contemptuously)

Little angel. My father gave it to me when I was 12.

(before Max can respond)

You realize that they're all staring at us. Very disapproving looks you're getting. For consorting with the outcast.

MAX

I'll risk it.

He inhales deeply, appreciating something he hasn't indulged himself in a while.

MAX

I've never been a personal witness to a shunning before. Something you guys brought over with you?

ZAHRA

I was born here. I'm the only one who's an actual American in this family.

(MORE)

ZAHRA (cont'd)

MAX

They made the decision to  
naturalize. That makes them every  
bit as American as you.

ZAHRA

Let me tell you about my father,  
the great American to be. He was  
always critical of the Shah, but  
after the revolution, a business  
rival of his spread rumors that he  
was anti-Khomeini and the whole  
family had to flee across the  
border to Turkey. He spent most of  
his savings getting everyone over  
here. But, see, he doesn't pine  
for the days of the Shah. I think  
he would be perfectly content in  
the fucked up Islamic shithole that  
the country is today. Which is why  
he resents every day he spends over  
here.

MAX

He could go back.

ZAHRA

He's too old to start over. And  
he's still paranoid about those old  
rumors. People have a way of not  
forgetting the past in Iran.  
Nobody remembers anything here.  
And for all the shit we talk about  
this place, we're still pretty damn  
tolerant. So what's your story?  
Got any family?

MAX

I have a daughter. I'm not with  
her mother anymore.

ZAHRA

How old is she?

MAX

Twenty-six. No... twenty-seven.

ZAHRA

Better get that one straight. You  
might piss her off.

MAX

I think I already did that.

Zahra picks up on Max's pained expression.

ZAHRA

Sounds heavy. Maybe you guys will  
work it out. Any chance of that?

Before Max can respond, Hamid appears in the doorway.

HAMID

Max, my father's asking for you.

ZAHRA

It was nice meeting you, Max.

She takes his hand, shakes it in a sexually provocative way.  
Maybe more for Hamid's benefit than as a come-on to Max.

ZAHRA

I'm outta here. Got a date.  
(again for Hamid's  
benefit)  
Got a real hot date, Max.

She takes off, heading for her car. Max stares after her,  
then turns to Hamid in the doorway.

HAMID

Ignore her. She's crazy.

MAX

I'm tired, Hamid. I'm going home.

HAMID

Max, my father wants to--

MAX

I'll see you tomorrow. Thank your  
family for me.

Max walks off. Hamid stares after him, humiliated. He turns  
to look at his family and extended family watching through  
the living room window. Solemn faces.

60

INT. U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

60

Denise is seated across from Special Agent Phadkar. The  
agent has an open file in front of her. An ASSISTANT U.S.  
ATTORNEY is present.

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR

Officially, she's being held for an  
unlawful presence in the United  
States. Unofficially, and I'll  
never repeat this outside this  
room, she's being detained for  
presenting an imminent threat to  
the security of the United States,  
based upon evidence that she  
planned to be a suicide bomber.

DENISE

And what evidence would that be?

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR

Don't play coy with me, Counselor. The signs are all there: we're talking about a devout Muslim young woman who at 15 years of age walks around veiled, who engages in internet talk focused on the duty of Jihad and writes openly about suicide. Did you take a look at her bedroom, how austere it was? This isn't the life of a normal teenager. Everything about her is a red flag.

DENISE

Only if seen through the distorted looking glass of your own paranoias.

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR

I could joust with you all day, but here's the reality of her situation: she's illegal. She's removable and I intend to have Immigration and Customs Enforcement remove her to ensure the safety of the American people.

DENISE

Just like that? You're going to uproot a 15 year old American teenager who arrived in this country when she was three years old? Who doesn't speak Bangla -- at least not with any fluency. And based on the most circumstantial of evidence, you're going to exile her to a third world garbage dump that might just as well be another planet to her.

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR

That's exactly what I'm going to do, Counselor.

DENISE

What about the rest of her family? The two younger children are American citizens.

SPECIAL AGENT PHADKAR  
Maybe one day when we amend the  
constitution and stop granting  
instant citizenship to the children  
of illegals, that won't be an  
issue. But, yes, they're American  
citizens, and they're shit out of  
luck. Unless...

Denise sees where this is going. She reacts with quiet  
devastation.

61 INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

61

Cole fucking Claire from behind -- not doggie style; he's  
lying on top of her, thrusting against her, his head resting  
on her shoulder. As he thrusts, he talks...

COLE  
... Your file's sitting on my desk  
right now. I'm going to approve  
your application this afternoon.  
Put you in the system. How's that  
for efficiency?

He thrusts into her. She moans, more from the force of it  
than the pleasure. Maybe it's a little of both. They're  
watching themselves in the mirror. A flicker of a smile  
appears on Claire's lips.

CLAIRE  
That's all it takes?

COLE  
That, and two more months of this.

CLAIRE  
I start shooting next week. I've  
got a wardrobe fitting this  
afternoon. Still can't believe  
it's actually happening.

COLE  
(moans)  
It's happening... Wait... don't  
move, I don't want to come. No,  
don't... Ah shit... Grnnngggghh...

Cole climaxes, crushing down on her. After a while, he rolls  
over onto his back. She remains on her stomach.

COLE

Shit, I can go all night with my wife. I'm like a teenager with you.

CLAIRE

Doesn't sound like you've gone all night with her in a long while.

COLE

It used to be hot between us. We used to fuck in public all the time. In the middle of Griffith Park, on every level of the Beverly Center parking garage, behind an exhibit at the Museum of Natural History... One day you're just not into it anymore. It becomes like an effort. It's easier just to jack yourself off in the shower than rub her back for half an hour.

CLAIRE

That's bloody sad.

COLE

I think it really died when Denise couldn't get knocked up. Sex stopped being fun, turned into chemistry class. Now she wants to adopt some abandoned Nigerian kid's been sitting in a juvie lock-up for almost two years.

CLAIRE

I'm for that -- I mean, if you're committed to having kids. Back home, we always adopted puppies from the pound. Made more sense than paying some rip-off breeder for a thoroughbred. Why bring something new into this world when there's so many who aren't wanted?

COLE

Maybe, I'll come and watch you on the set. Next week.

Claire climbs off the bed, starts dressing.

CLAIRE

That's not part of the deal.

COLE

It's not supposed to be. I could just stop by...

CLAIRE

Don't. Don't mistake this for anything other than what it is. I gotta go. I got a meeting with an agent. If she signs me, it's major. She reps Cate Blanchett.

COLE

What's your schedule like tomorrow?

62

INT. DISCOUNT MEN'S WEAR STORE - DAY

62

Yong and his younger brother, Seung, are trying on new suits. Chin looks on with pride. They speak in Korean.

YONG

This is really lame. I'm never going to wear this again.

CHIN

You only become an American once, boy. You should be old enough to appreciate what it means...

YONG

I didn't ask to come over here. We're just gooks to them.

CHIN

This country has given us a life. We own a home, a business... I'm not under anyone. Stop acting like a peasant. We're past that.

YONG

You know how the rich got rich and earned respect in this place? At the end of a gun. You don't stand in line to make it in this country. You cut in and you take what you want. All they respect is balls.

Chin grabs Yong by the collar, drives him into the wall.

CHIN

Who's been putting this shit in your mind?

(MORE)



CHIN (cont'd)

Those *ggangpae* friends of yours  
that keep you out all night? I see  
what's going on. What's happened  
to you, you used to be such a good  
boy? I brought you and your  
brother to this country so you  
could have a future. Don't piss it  
away. Please.

Yong just stares at his father with contempt. Chin releases  
him. More disgusted at himself for losing his cool than his  
son's attitude.

63 INT. MEAT PACKING PLANT - HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE - DAY 63 \*

Max and Hamid sit across from the HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER  
(50's). They each have a pile of EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS in  
front of them. They're auditing the company's 1-9s  
(employment authorization forms). Laptop computers are open  
in front of them, into which they punch in the 'A' number off  
each worker's green card - a photocopy of which is attached  
to most of the 1-9s. The information is fed into an ICE  
verification program (connected via the internet to the ICE  
mainframe). \*

They make two piles on the table. Separating the workers  
with legitimate status from those with fraudulent green  
cards. Max and Hamid barely acknowledge one another as they  
go about their task, the tension between them palpable. \*

Max enters the 'A' number off the application in front of him  
into the computer. The photograph on the green card belongs  
to a rotund Hispanic man named LUIS GARCIA. The computer  
responds with: NO ENTRY FOUND. \*

MAX  
Sorry, Luis. \*

Max tosses the man's application on the not kosher pile. The  
Human Resources Manager is looking extremely uncomfortable as  
the fraudulent pile starts to outnumber the legit one. He  
shrugs... \*

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER  
We do our best. \*

Max punches another green card number into the computer. An  
attractive Hispanic woman is pictured on the card. ROSA  
SALDIVAR. \*

MAX  
C'mon, Rosa, I'm rooting for you. \*

The program spits back the details on a legitimate green card. With one small problem. It belongs to a CHINESE MAN named LIANG GUANG. His birth date puts him at 55 years-old. The Hispanic woman in the picture is early 20's.

MAX

Ah, Rosa...

Suddenly Hamid's phone rings. He answers it.

HAMID

Yes? Yes, this is him. Who?

Hamid stands, heads outside. We can see him through the office window looking out onto the factory floor. He appears to be winded. Lowers the phone with a stunned look. Shakily heads for the plant exit. Max, having observed Hamid, jumps up, heads after him. Still framed on them through the office window, we see Max grab Hamid's arm, querying him about the phone call. Hamid jerks away from Max. Max reaches for him again. What, Hamid, what?!

64 INT. MORGUE AUTOPSY ROOM - DAY

64

A MORGUE ATTENDANT throws back the sheet on Zahra. She's been shot at close range in the face. Hamid closes his eyes for a moment, then turns away, chokes back his grief. Max, just behind Hamid, studies her lifeless features, sadness welling up in him.

DETECTIVE STRICKLAND, 40's, draws their attention to a SECOND BODY on a flanking table. He exposes the man's face.

We recognize him as Javier Pedraza. He's also been shot at close range in the head.

DETECTIVE STRICKLAND  
You recognize him? Agent Baraheri?

Hamid slowly turns to the body on the table. Looks him over.

HAMID  
He was her boss at the print shop where she worked.

DETECTIVE STRICKLAND  
We got security video from the motel of an unidentified male perp in a hooded sweatshirt leaving the scene. He musta been parked close by, but not in the motel lot. No way we can make out his face. Time of death somewhere between 11 and midnight.

Hamid nods slightly, fighting back his emotions.

DETECTIVE STRICKLAND  
Did you know that your sister was having relations with Mr. Pedraza, who was married with two young kids?

Hamid fixes Detective Strickland with a steely glare.

HAMID  
I never discussed with her the details of her private life.

Off Max's skeptical reaction. Hamid avoids looking at him.

\*

DETECTIVE STRICKLAND

I don't mean to be insensitive, but the shooter placed a pillow over your sister's face, shot her through it. But not Pedraza. He did him clean. There's the possibility he knew her. Couldn't look her in the eyes. Know anyone who has it in for her? A jealous lover, perhaps?

Hamid shrugs, shakes his head. Max watching him carefully.

HAMID

Like I told you, I didn't get into her life.

DETECTIVE STRICKLAND

Something else. We found these while going through Mr. Pedraza's jacket, looking for identification.

Detective Strickland holds up a clear evidence baggie. Inside we see a bunch of green cards, social security cards and driver's licenses.

DETECTIVE STRICKLAND

They come in sets of three. Green card, driver's license, social. All counterfeit. We found more of this stuff at his apartment earlier this afternoon. As best we can figure, he was cranking it out after hours at the store. We've referred that end of it to your Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force.

MAX

You think it could be connected? Mexican Mafia not too happy with him cutting into their action.

DETECTIVE STRICKLAND

We're looking at any number of possibilities right now. When would be a good time to interview your other family members, Agent Baraheri?

HAMID

Can I just... I'd like to spend  
some time with my sister alone.  
Please...

DETECTIVE STRICKLAND

Of course. I'm sorry for your  
loss.

He hands both Max and Hamid his card.

DETECTIVE STRICKLAND

I'll be in touch.

Max, Strickland and the morgue attendant exit the room.

65 INT. MAX'S CAR - MOVING - DAY

65

CLOSE-UP on a sealed morgue envelope containing Zahra's  
personal effects resting on Hamid's lap. Max and Hamid  
driving in silence. Until...

HAMID

I hate the fucking smell of that  
place...

He rips off his jacket, throws it in the back of the car.  
Sniffs at himself. Smells death everywhere. Turns to Max...

HAMID

I know you're sitting in judgement  
of me, Max.

MAX

How's that?

HAMID

My sister, what you witnessed last  
night. And now I'm mourning her.  
You doubt the veracity of my heart?

MAX

I'm just sitting here feeling your  
pain, my friend. Feeling for your  
entire family. It's a sad,  
terrible thing, your loss. In no  
way am I doubting your love for  
your sister.

Hamid nods a silent thanks to Max. He clutches the envelope  
on his lap tighter.

66 EXT. HAMID'S PARENTS' HOME - DAY

66

Max pulls up out front. Hamid just sits next to him in silence. The front door to the house opens. Sanjar appears in the entrance, Farid behind him. They stand there, waiting on Hamid.

MAX

If you need someone to talk it out with...

HAMID

(doesn't look at him)

Thanks, Max. They're waiting.

Hamid climbs out, heads over to his father and brother. Sanjar embraces Hamid in the doorway, leads him into the house. Farid shuts the door.

67 EXT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DUSK

67

Max pulls into his parking spot. Emotionally spent. As he climbs out, he notices Hamid's jacket in the back seat. He stares at it for a moment, decides to leave it there.

68 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

68

Max sits in front of the TV trying to focus on a Monster Truck rally. He picks up the phone, reaches for Mireya's phone bill. Checks the number. Dials...

\*  
\*

MAX

(in Spanish)

Buena noches, Mrs. Sanchez. This is Special Agent Brogan. Yes, that's right. I was wondering if Mireya turned up. No, no, senora, I don't have any word... I'm asking you... Senora, we don't know... I'll keep making inquiries. I'm sorry I disturbed you. I'm really sorry.

Max hangs up, sucks in a deep breath. Reaches for his beer, drains it.

69

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

69

Emily and Yong are making love on her bed. From her responses, we can tell it's her first time.

EMILY

Is it okay? Tell me what you want  
me to do different?

Yong, unable to hold back, climaxes at that moment. He clings to her in the aftermath. They lie there in silence. Until...

YONG

I need to tell you something.

EMILY

Okay...

YONG

I never... before. You're the  
first.

Emily sits up, a little stunned. Now she's really saddened.

EMILY

Why didn't you tell me, Yong? That  
would have meant a lot to me, to  
know before...

YONG

I didn't want you to think I didn't  
know what I was doing.

EMILY

You always gotta keep things from  
me. Is that what Steve and those  
jerks advised you to do? Pull one  
over on me.

YONG

No. No way. Those guys wanted me  
to fuck some slut that always gives  
it away the other night. And I  
didn't. I don't do everything they  
say.

Emily softens. Likes what she's just heard.

EMILY

I'm glad you waited for me.

She leans in, kisses him. A beat later, Yong's cell phone rings in his pants on the floor. He grabs it up...

YONG

Steve, hey. I'm at Emily's place.  
No, man, her olds are out. Right  
now?

He looks to Emily. She silently pleads with him. Whatever Steve is saying to him on the other end, it's working.

YONG

Okay, I'll be out front in ten.

He hangs up, starts dressing. Glances back at her...

YONG

What? Your parents are gonna be  
back like any moment now. I don't  
want your old man to cut off my  
dick.

EMILY

Just go, little *ggangpae* boy. Get  
out.

She slumps down, turns her back on him, fetals into herself.

YONG

Fuck, I don't need this.

He storms out. She jerks her head up, yells...

EMILY

Yeah, be sure to give 'em all the  
details. I want to hear about it  
all over school tomorrow. How you  
popped her cherry and made her beg  
for it. That slut, Emily!

She breaks down, sobs into her pillow.

70

INT. GAVIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

70

Gavin is boning up on his Judaic studies, when the doorbell sounds. He looks to the door, not expecting company. He throws it open, surprised to see Claire standing there.

CLAIRE

You got company?



GAVIN

No.

CLAIRE

Looking for some?

CUT TO:

71 INT. GAVIN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

71

Claire wandering around, checking out his stuff. She runs her hand sensuously over his guitar strung over a bar stool. He watches her from the couch, not sure where this is leading.

CLAIRE

I met someone... He's with immigration. He's working something out for me. It's an EB1 visa. For extraordinary ability. You get a green card right away. No sponsorship. No labor certification.

GAVIN

And why would some INS guy commit fraud for you? I mean, you're not famous enough to get that kinda visa. I know, I inquired for myself.

CLAIRE

They don't call it the INS anymore.

She comes over to the couch, drops down next to him.

CLAIRE

I always thought I'd have to marry an American guy. That's why I didn't see any point in us. But I don't have to take that path now. I can get serious with the guy I'm really into. I want to be with you, Gav. This changes everything.

She folds herself into him, seeks out his lips. He goes with it. He's always wanted it to be this way. They grope at each other, things heating up. As he tugs at her belt, trying to get her jeans off...

GAVIN

So, why's he doing it for you?  
Taking the risk? You paying him?

CLAIRE

Doesn't matter. It's worth it.

GAVIN

How much are you paying him?  
Where'd you get the cash?

CLAIRE

Sshhh... just fuck me, c'mon. I  
want you to fuck me, Gav...

He pulls back. Wants to get to the bottom of this.

GAVIN

How are you paying him, Claire? I  
want to know.

CLAIRE

Don't go there.

GAVIN

(realizing)

Ah... I shoulda known. I'm such a  
fucking idiot.

CLAIRE

C'mon, Gav. It doesn't mean  
anything. I want you. You.

GAVIN

Were you with him today? Was he  
inside of you today?

CLAIRE

Please don't do this.

GAVIN

How many times? How fucked do you  
have to get for a green card,  
Claire?

She sits up, her mood turning dark.

CLAIRE

As often as he wants for two  
months. And then I'll never see  
him again, and I'll never have to  
worry about being deported or being  
narc'd on.

GAVIN

Jesus...

CLAIRE

You know what the difference  
between him and you is? He comes  
off in the shower.

She stands, starts buttoning herself up. She picks up  
Gavin's *Siddur* (prayer book) from his coffee table. Tosses  
it gently at him.

CLAIRE

Good luck tomorrow.

She grabs up her purse, walks to the door. As she opens it,  
Gavin comes bounding over, slams his weight against it. He  
tries to kiss her, rewind it back a few minutes...

GAVIN

The thought of someone else  
inhabiting you, you touching him...  
it fucking kills me, Claire.

She pulls away from him. The moment lost. Opens the door...

CLAIRE

You killed it, Gav.

She rushes off. Gavin closes the door after her, slumps  
down. Bangs his head repeatedly against the door, trying to  
rid himself of those images she painted in his mind.

72

INT. CENTRAL JUVENILE HALL L.A. - DORMITORY - NIGHT

72

A drab institutional dormitory with twenty cots, ten in each  
row. A matronly FEMALE OFFICER announces "Lights out in two  
minutes" in several different languages. The detainees are  
comprised of CHILDREN and TEENAGERS under 16 years. All  
different ethnicities. Most of them scatter to their beds.

We MOVE IN on Alike talking to another African girl, DAYO (10  
years old). Dayo is barely able to contain her excitement.

DAYO

I'll ask Effi if you can come stay  
with us. Maybe they'll let you  
leave with us tomorrow. You can be  
my younger sister. We can be three  
sisters.

ALIKE

They won't let me. I'm supposed to stay here until my mother comes for me. But I'll make a new friend soon. There's always a new friend.

Alike turns her back on Dayo and despondently walks over to her cot. She sits on the side of the cot, stares down at the floor. An older TEENAGE VOICE sounds from the next cot over.

TASLIMA (O.S.)

I'll be your friend. If you want.

Alike looks up to see Taslima sitting with her arms wrapped around her knees. She's trying her best to put a happy face on a miserable situation.

ALIKE

You're too old to play with.

TASLIMA

I'm fifteen, that's not old.

ALIKE

I'm seven.

TASLIMA

Okay, I could be your big sister.

ALIKE

Are you waiting for your mommy to come get you, too?

It takes Taslima a moment to answer. It hurts.

TASLIMA

Yeah. Yeah, I am.

ALIKE

When she's coming?

TASLIMA

Anyday now.

ALIKE

So you'll only be my big sister for a little while. And then you'll leave me like Dayo and Manuela and Kadija and...

TASLIMA

Probably. But we'll stay sisters in here...

(MORE)

TASLIMA (cont'd)  
(touches her heart)  
Okay?

ALIKE  
(debates it for a while)  
Okay. Can I come and sit on your  
bed when the lights go out?

TASLIMA  
Of course.

ALIKE  
Do you know any good stories?

TASLIMA  
I know a lot of good stories. Have  
you ever heard of the prophet  
Muhammad?

ALIKE  
I don't think so.

The lights flicker on and off, then remain off. We stay in  
the darkness.

TASLIMA  
Come over here and I'll tell you  
all about him.

We cut out on the sounds of Alike's feet scuttling across to  
Taslina's cot.

73 INT. DENISE'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

73

Cole arrives home to find the living room aglow with candles.  
A sumptuous spread laid out on the dining room table. Denise  
glides toward him, grinning from ear to ear...

COLE  
Wowza -- I'm, like, did I forget  
our anniversary...

DENISE  
(takes his hands)  
She's ours. It came through.

COLE  
What are you talking about?

DENISE  
Alike. The adoption. They're  
releasing her into my custody  
tomorrow.

COLE

So soon?

DENISE

I thought you wanted to do this?

COLE

It's just that... I figured we'd move ahead slowly. I'd visit her a few times with you, get to know her a bit... Jesus...

DENISE

You're gonna love her, Cole. She's perfect. And she needs us. You won't have to deal with any diapers and crying and all that stuff. She's seven years old. She'll be able to communicate with you and you'll make an immediate connection. Cole, please, if you love me, you'll get me behind me on this.

Cole just stands there at a loss. Finally...

COLE

I want what you want, Dee. Let's make it work.

She rushes into his arms, clings to him. Oblivious to the conflicted look in his eyes.

74

INT. DRY CLEANER - DAY

74

Max enters, carrying Hamid's jacket. He's greeted by Chin behind the counter. We realize that this is his dry cleaning store.

CHIN

Good morning, sir.

MAX

Just need to get the smell out of this.

CHIN

(sniffs it)  
Hospital?

Max doesn't argue the point. As Chin turns Hamid's jacket over, something metallic tumbles out, lands on the counter. Chin hands it over to Max...

CHIN

Better not forget this. Very nice.

A SILVER BRACELET. Max examines it. He's seen it before. On Zahra. The Persian script engraved into the metal having caught his eye before. He notices that the clasp has been broken. Max pockets it with a troubled look.

MAX

Thanks.

75 INT. LEATHER GOODS FACTORY - DAY

75

A Work Site Enforcement raid taking place. Max and TWO DOZEN OTHER AGENTS rushing in, screaming out "ICE," "POLICE!" and "Don't move!" But, of course, half the factory floor of undocumented workers scatters.

Max catches sight of a MEXICAN WOMAN across the room. Is it who he thinks it is? He bounds after her as she attempts to evade several agents coming her way.

MAX

Mireya!

She doesn't answer. He catches up with her, grabs at her arm. Her beaded bracelet comes off in his grasp -- he's left holding it. She glances over her shoulder at him, moments before she's grabbed by another ICE AGENT. It's not her. There's a superficial resemblance, but it's not Mireya.

Max glances down at the bracelet in his hand. The clasp has been damaged, not unlike Zahra's. He takes on that troubled look again. Heads over to the Mexican woman who's been cuffed by her captor. He places the bracelet in the front pocket of her jeans.

MAX

Los siento, signora.

76 EXT. LEATHER GOODS FACTORY - DAY

76

Max sits in his car, front door open, talking on his cell...

MAX

Mireya Sanchez... Yes, Sanchez.  
No, Mireya. M-i-r-e-y-a.  
(MORE)

MAX (cont'd)

That's right, you processed her three days ago. No, she's come back. But I think she was picked up again. Nothing? You sure? Okay, thanks.

He hangs up, frustrated.

77

INT. LOW INCOME APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

77

Denise converses with Munshi and Rokeya. Jahanara and Abul are outside on the balcony with the owners of the apartment, another Bangladeshi couple.

DENISE

I'm sorry, but you have very few options, none of them favorable to your situation. You can request voluntary departure as an entire family and leave the United States immediately, or you could fight the matter, which would inevitably lead to deportation. Taslima would be kept in a juvenile lock-up for as long as it took to resolve the case. Could be as long as two to three years. If any of you attempted to visit her, you would also be taken into custody.

Rokeya breaks down sobbing. Munshi attempts to console her.

DENISE

There's one other option, and as painful as it is, I'm required to present it to you. One of you could leave on voluntary departure with Taslima, while the other stays in the U.S. with Jahanara and Abul. This would allow them to finish school and have a future in this country, as is their right.

ROKEYA

How is that possible?

DENISE

Special Agent Phadkar has intimated to me that if we were to choose that course of action, immigration would not seek out the remaining parent if they maintained a low profile.

(MORE)



DENISE (cont'd)

Taslima's name would be placed on a terrorist watch list, and in all likelihood, she would never be allowed to return to the United States.

MUNSHI

But she knows nothing of life in Bangladesh. She's American. She speaks like an American, she acts like...

DENISE

I'm so sorry. I truly am. If you do consider the last option, there's something you should understand. Whichever one of you remains, you'd be putting yourself at risk if you try and see Taslima before she leaves. She'll be most likely accompanied by immigration agents all the way to the departure lounge.

Off Munshi and Rokeya's distraught reactions...

78

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

78

Zahra is laid to rest in a traditional Muslim ceremony, being presided over by an IMAM. Her body, wrapped in a white shroud, is lowered into the ground by several male family members, including Hamid and Farid. Sanjar braces Minoo, both of them grim featured. Max looks on from a small group of MOURNERS. CUT TO:

The ceremony is over. Mourners departing for their vehicles. Max approaches Hamid who stands rooted to the ground in front of Zahra's filled in grave.

HAMID

Thank you for coming, Max.

MAX

Hamid, you left your jacket in my car when I brought you home from the morgue. The smell offended you, so I took it into the dry cleaner.

(hands him the cleaning receipt)

You can pick it up anytime.

HAMID

Thank you. That wasn't necessary.

MAX

This fell out when I was at the cleaner.

Max hands Hamid Zahra's bracelet. He tenses up at the sight of it. Dumps it in his pocket.

MAX

I was wondering why it wasn't in the personal effects envelope you received at the morgue.

HAMID

She... she broke it a few days ago. I told her that I would get it repaired. I have a friend with a store on Western.

Max just nods at Hamid's explanation, not choosing to remind him that Zahra was wearing the bracelet at Sanjar's party, the night she was killed.

79

INT. USCIS BUILDING - INTERVIEW WAITING AREA - DAY

79

Gavin arrives for his interview. He's dressed in his most respectable looking suit and wearing a knitted yarmulka on his head. Tension oozes out of every pore in his body. He signs in at the main window, takes a seat amongst the other interviewees.

Sitting directly across from Gavin is an ORTHODOX RABBI in full regalia. The man locks eyes with Gavin sternly, almost as if intuiting his fraudulent intent -- at least in Gavin's mind.

Gavin averts his eyes, panic starting to set in. Just off to his right is an AFRICAN PRIEST in a black cassock. The man smiles benevolently at Gavin. He reciprocates with a nervous grin. It starts to occur to Gavin that many in this area are religious workers, all applying for similar status.

An IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR (male, Caucasian, 40's) appears in the doorway leading to the interview rooms.

IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR

Gavin Kossef?

Gavin jumps up a little too eagerly.

GAVIN

Right here.

IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR

Come with me, please.

80

INT. USCIS INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

80

Gavin seated across from the IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR. The man studies Gavin's file, scratches his head. Looks up at Gavin...

IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR

I have to be honest, Mr. Kossef, I don't see much experience here as a religious worker. You're not an ordained rabbi, am I right?

GAVIN

No, I'm not. But I've spent many years devoted to my faith -- I grew up in a religious family and I attended services regularly; I was barmitzvah'd, I've taken Jewish leadership courses. I attended Jewish camps... We learned all the popular songs and prayers...

IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR

I'm still not sure that qualifies you...

GAVIN

What you have to understand, is that I live my religion. I honor my religion daily. At the Jewish day school where I teach, I lead the class in prayers, I discuss bible stories with them, I sing them songs... I'm responsible for a big part of their daily religious studies...

IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR

And you've been working at this school illegally, right?

Gavin is about to lose it. He's not going to make it...

GAVIN

Yes, I've admitted to that. But I believe I'm doing a lot of good at that school. I feel I've found my home there. My calling...

IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR

You can read the language? Hebrew, right?

GAVIN

Hebrew, yes. Yes, I can read it.

IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR

What about prayers? You can recite the important prayers of your faith? That you can do, right?

GAVIN

Yes, prayers. I can do for you, the prayer for wine, prayer for bread, prayer for...

IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR

Excuse me a moment...

The immigration adjudicator leaves the room. Gavin is in a Def-Con 1 panic. He wipes his hand across his forehead, it comes away glistening wet. He tries to dry it on his pants leg. A moment later, the immigration adjudicator returns to the office... with the ORTHODOX RABBI from the waiting area. Gavin's heart sinks. He's fucked. He's truly fucked and he knows it.

IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR

Mr. Kossef, this is Rabbi Yoffie. Ordinarily, I would file a Request for Evidence, but something tells me this approach will prove more expedient.

Gavin stands, extends his hand to the rabbi.

GAVIN

Rabbi.

The rabbi doesn't move to take it. Just nods at him.

IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR

I would like Mr. Kossef to recite a prayer that would substantiate his knowledge of the Jewish teachings above those of a layman's.

(MORE)

IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR (cont'd)  
If you could suggest something and  
authenticate his response, I'd  
greatly appreciate it. Rabbi.

The rabbi hits Gavin with the sternest of looks. Appears to  
be thinking about it. Nods...

RABBI YOFFIE  
(Israeli accent)  
You may recite the Mourner's  
Kaddish, no?

GAVIN  
(fuck me)  
The Mourner's Kaddish?

RABBI YOFFIE  
No?

GAVIN  
Okay. Uh...  
(to immigration  
adjudicator)  
Sir, it's tradition that you cover  
your head. If you could just place  
your hand over your head.

GAVIN  
Alright...

Both pairs of eyes looking at him, expectantly..

GAVIN  
(singing)  
Baruch atai Adonai melech  
Ha'olam... Alvenu Shalom Alechem...  
Borai pri Hagafem vitivanu  
l'hadlick ner shel Shabbat. Alvenu  
Shalom Alechem... Adonolam  
Ashemalam... ha motzi lechem min ha  
aretz... Amen.

It's not even close. He's combined several different prayer  
and song fragments together, in a crazed attempt to sell the  
moment. It might have worked had it just been him and the  
adjudicator, but in the presence of the rabbi, he's  
completely and utterly fucked.

Rabbi Yoffie looks at him sternly, almost with sheer  
disbelief, then glances over at the immigration  
adjudicator... and nods.

RABBI YOFFIE  
Very nice. Very moving.

Gavin looks like he's just been hit by a truck.

RABBI YOFFIE  
(back to Gavin)  
You should come sing in my services  
sometime.

GAVIN  
Uh... Yeah, sure. Thank you.

IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR  
Thank you, Rabbi. We'll be with  
you shortly.

Rabbi Yoffie shoots Gavin a slightly less stern look, nods  
and leaves.

IMMIGRATION ADJUDICATOR  
Well, I can't argue with that.  
Good luck with the job, Mr. Kossef.

The adjudicator brings his stamp down on Gavin's application:  
APPROVED. Gavin almost keels over with surprise.

81 INT. USCIS BUILDING - INTERVIEW WAITING AREA - DAY 81

Gavin returns to the waiting area just as Rabbi Yoffie is  
being called for his interview. The rabbi stops in front of  
Gavin, hands him a card.

RABBI YOFFIE  
I wasn't kidding about the voice.  
I'll expect you tomorrow morning.  
Temple Beth Shalom. The rest, we  
can teach you.

He walks through into the interview area before Gavin can  
respond.

82 EXT. HOLLYWOOD MOTEL - DAY 82

Max parks out front. Heads inside.

83 INT. HOLLYWOOD MOTEL - FRONT DESK - DAY 83

A sleazy looking MOTEL MANAGER (50's) dumps a pile of  
surveillance tapes on the desk in front of Max.

MOTEL MANAGER

Homicide boys took everything from the night it happened. I didn't volunteer to them that they had been around before. I don't like to get involved -- 'specially not when it's gang shit.

MAX

You're a real citizen.

MOTEL MANAGER

Woulda liked to have had a camera in their room, those two. Come in here around lunch time the day before, all over each other -- I mean, like she's grabbing his cock while he's signing the register. Nice looking piece, too. Shame about...

(off Max's cold look)

Yeah, well, also two nights last week when I was on evenings. Same thing.

MAX

That's all of them?

MOTEL MANAGER

We only keep the tapes for two weeks, then we erase them.

84 INT. CENTRAL JUVENILE HALL L.A. - INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 84

A JUVENILE DETENTION OFFICER escorts Denise and Rokeya inside. Jahanara and Abul trail behind them. Taslima, who is seated at the table, leaps up, rushes over to her mother, embraces her, breaking down into convulsive sobs.

Rokeya loses it as well. They just hold each other for a while. Finally Taslima lets go, turning to her siblings and hugging them tearfully as well. Jahanara cries openly, Abul tries to maintain his 10 year-old composure, but fails. Denise looks on with a heavy heart. CUT TO:

Denise and the Jahangir family seated at the table. Sadness permeates the room.

TASLIMA

I don't want to leave Jah and Abul.  
When will I ever see them again?

Denise can't bring herself to answer that.

TASLIMA

Or papa?

ROKEYA

He wants to be able to say goodbye to you, but if he was to come here today, they would arrest him and deport him as well, and Jah and Abdul will have to leave as well.

TASLIMA

I don't care. Why can't we all go? Why do they get to stay?

DENISE

Because they were born here. They still have opportunities if they finish school in the United States.

TASLIMA

And I don't, because my life's shit now.

DETENTION OFFICER

I'm sorry, we're out of time.

It's times like these that Denise just wants to quit. We read it in her eyes. Rokeya kneels next to Taslima, kisses her, holds her tight. Whispers in her ear...

ROKEYA

(in Bangla)

I'm going to be with you, daughter. We will travel together and I will always be there to love you. Praise Allah, one day we will all be reunited.

(to Jahanara and Abul)

Come, my sweets, say goodbye to your sister. You won't be seeing her for a long time.

Jahanara and Abul head over to Taslima, who stubbornly remains seated. They embrace her, sobbing openly. Taslima fights her tears. Defiantly, doesn't reach out for them. But it's killing her.

DETENTION OFFICER

Please, I need the room for the next visit.



Rokeya gently pulls Jahanara and Abul away from their sister.

ROKEYA  
(to Taslima)  
I will be with you soon.

As she's about to lead them out the door, Taslima jumps up, rushes over, throws her arms around her siblings, squeezes them tight, not wanting to ever let go.

TASLIMA  
(to Jahanara)  
I want you to have my prayer rug.  
Don't let papa throw it out.  
Promise me, okay?  
(she nods)  
I will see you soon. Allah will  
make sure of that. Tell papa that  
I'm sorry. I'm sorry and I love  
him. Go...

And with that they're gone. Denise as well. Taslima sobbing openly in the presence of the detention officer.

85

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

85

On Claire dutifully stretched out naked on the bed. PULL BACK to find Cole lethargically unbuttoning his shirt on the edge of the mattress. He's working up to something...

CLAIRE  
Hey, what's with the lack of  
enthusiasm?

COLE  
(just blurts it out)  
I'm leaving her.

CLAIRE  
Okay...

COLE  
We won't have to skulk around.

CLAIRE  
Skulking's fine with me. I'm not  
exactly proud of this arrangement.

COLE  
I don't want an "arrangement,"  
Claire. I want to know you. I  
want to start over...

CLAIRE

Cole...

COLE

Just listen to me... I know this started out in a fucked up place.. and you're not here of your own volition and there's a good chance I make your skin crawl... but I'm not this guy, Claire. You're not seeing the real me. The best me. I wish we could go back and start over. And I wouldn't say who I was, put any kinda scare in you, and I'd just ask you out for coffee...

CLAIRE

I'm not looking to renegotiate.

COLE

You're not hearing me...

CLAIRE

No, you're not hearing me. This is what you need to understand. When I walk into one of these flea bag rooms, I switch off. You might as well be making it with a rubber fuck doll, because she's giving you more emotionally than you'll ever get from me. That's not me being hot for you when you touch me down there -- that's a five ninety five bottle of AstroGlide. And when I get home, I'm an hour in the shower getting clean of you. That's the extent of it. That's as real as it's going to get between us. Is that clear enough for you?

Cole just stares at her slackjawed. With a programmed sexbot smile, she spreads her legs (Cole's positioning obscures our view) and pats the mattress...

CLAIRE

You want to do this now, or what?  
It's your dime.

Cole slowly stands up, buttoning his shirt on auto pilot. Claire doesn't move to close her legs. Just regards him with Freon eyes. He drinks her in with finality, one last swallow of that poison... self realization burning all the way down.

COLE

You won't hear from me again.  
Your green card will be in the  
mail. Good luck, Claire.

He grabs up his jacket, walks out.

86 INT. MOTEL SHOWER - DAY

86

Claire rocks on the shower floor, water raining down on her, sobbing uncontrollably.

87 INT. ICE FORENSIC LAB - DAY

87

A room filled with high tech audio/video equipment. Max is seated in front of two large monitors, running the surveillance tapes, more or less in sync. Both tapes are time/date stamped. Tuesday. 12:50pm. We're looking at footage from the day before the murder.

On the left hand side screen, we see Zahra and Javier enter the front office of the motel. True to the motel manager's word, Zahra is all over Javier as he signs the register and pays for the room.

Max shifts his attention to the monitor on the right. The surveillance camera offers a wide view of the front of the motel, including the parking lot. We see a dark colored three series BMW pull into one of the parking spaces. No one gets out of the vehicle, it just waits there. We can't make out the identity of the driver.

Max freezes the tape, uses the zoom function to pop in on the license plate. As the image magnifies, it loses resolution. He tweaks a resolution enhancing control and the image sharpens slightly. He can just make out the numbers on the plate. Jots them down on a notepad. CUT TO:

Another tape playing. The previous week. Friday. 10:05pm. The same BMW parked across the lot. Just waiting, watching. As soon as Zahra and Javier leave their room, the Beamer takes off.

The last tape logs the date/time at Wednesday, 10:45 pm. Also the previous week. The BMW visible and lurking, the driver's features always blurred or in shadow.

Max grabs up the phone, dials feverishly...

MAX

It's Brogan. I need to run a  
license plate. ASAP.

88 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

88

Max hits the message button on his answering machine. Slumps down on the edge of his lazy boy. We hear the voice of his daughter, KIRSTEN...

KIRSTEN (over answering machine)

Dad, it's me. Kirsten. I'm sorry,  
but you're not welcome on Sunday.  
I don't know how much more straight  
forward I can put it. You offended  
Ben, you never offered him an  
apology, and your presence is just  
going to ruin my special day --  
just like you always do, birthdays,  
graduations, holidays... I'm sorry,  
it's really cowardly of me to leave  
you a message like this, but I just  
can't deal right now. Not this  
weekend. It's not like you've ever  
had much stake in my life... Shit,  
shit... I didn't mean to...  
Disregard that last part. Sorry.

Max just nods repeatedly with a pained look.

MAX

(sotto)

Loud and clear, sweetheart. Loud  
and clear.

He reaches for the phone, dials...

MAX

Hamid, it's Max. Where the fuck  
are you? I need to talk to you.  
Call me when you get this.  
Immediately. I don't care what  
time.

He slams down the phone, cups his head. Fuck.

89 INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

89

Claire opens the door to find Gavin standing there. They just stare at each other for a while.

He steps toward her and she meets him halfway. Kisses him hungrily, pulls him back into the apartment...

90

INT. COCKTAIL BAR - NIGHT

90

Hamid, seated at the bar, stares at a shot of whiskey in front of him. A couple of REGULARS hug the counter, blue collar types. A 40-something HOOKER seizes him up.

HOOKER

If you don't want it, honey, you  
got a taker over here.

Hamid ignores her. Slowly reaches for the glass. Throws it back in a single gulp. Grimaces. Fire in his chest. A HEAVYSET BARTENDER with inked-up forearms hovers nearby.

HAMID

Another, please.

The bartender, not liking where this is going, obliges him. Hamid downs his second shot like a kid swallowing medicine. To the bartender, one more time.

HOOKER

Easy there, hon. That shit put  
hair on your chest.

REGULAR #1

Them Osamas don't have no hair on  
their chests. They shave that shit  
off. Like little girls. Right  
before they blow themselves and the  
rest'a us up.

REGULAR #2

That's right. Maybe he's just  
working up some courage before he  
takes out a shopping mall or a  
school yard.

HOOKER

Why don't you boys leave the man  
alone? Fella wants to enjoy a  
drink by himself, nothing wrong  
with that. Unless, he's looking  
for a little female  
companionship...

She sidles over, takes a seat next to him.

HOOKER

Buy a lady a drink?

HAMID  
(without looking at her)  
Just go away, please.

HOOKER  
It can't be all that bad, hon. Why  
don't you tell Gina about it?

HAMID  
(barks)  
Get away from me! Filthy whore!

She backs off real quick...

HOOKER  
Jesus, fuck, what's your problem?  
Fucking Arab pig.

Now he's really raised the ire of the regulars.

REGULAR #3  
Hey, Al, you gonna let this sand  
nigger talk that way to Gina?

BARTENDER  
He's just gonna finish his drink  
and take his leave. That's what  
he's gonna do.

Hamid downs his third whiskey. Beckons for another shot...

REGULAR #1  
Don't think he's getting the  
message, Al. Camel coon must have  
too much sand in his ears.

BARTENDER  
That's it. You're outta here.

Hamid turns eerily toward the regulars...

HAMID  
You want to come and repeat that to  
my face? Your "camel coon" is  
sitting right here...

Regular #1, egged on his pals, walks over. He's a huge tree  
trunk of a man. Stands mighty and tall in front of Hamid.

REGULAR #1  
What I said, shitdick, is--

Hamid lightning punches the man in the solar plexus. As he buckles over, Hamid grabs the regular's head, SMASHES it down on the bar counter. He's out cold. Regular #2 and #3 are on him in seconds. Hamid snatches up his bar stool and sledgehammers Regular #2, knocks out half his teeth. Regular #3 grabs up a beer bottle, smashes it against the bar, jousts toward Hamid, when...

REGULAR #3

Fuck me, he's packing!

He catches sight of Hamid's H&K holstered against his waist, as his jacket flaps open. Also reveals his ICE shield pinned to his belt.

HOOVER

Shit, he's a cop...

The bartender, wielding a baseball bat, backs off.

BARTENDER

Take it easy, man. You don't want no trouble. I got a lot of friends on the force. Just go. Get out.

Hamid stares the room down, contempt in his eyes. Fumbles for his wallet, throws down some cash. Stagger out...

91 INT. HAMID'S CAR - TRAVELING - NIGHT 91

Hamid driving with meltdown eyes. Sweaty, fidgety, mumbling incoherently as he vice grips the wheel. He's cruising South on Western, passing into KOREATOWN. Storefront neon tints his already sickly features in garish hues. He can still taste the alcohol on his lips. Craves further anaesthesia. No bars in sight. But there's a LIQUOR STORE in a strip mall up ahead. Pulsating neon pulls him in.

92 EXT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT 92

Hamid parks in front of the store, climbs out, staggers inside. A moment later, STEVE'S CAMRY pulls into frame.

93 INT. STEVE'S CAMRY - NIGHT 93

Steve and Kwan in front. Justin, Yong and Mark in the back. All of them packing, pulling SKI MASKS over their heads...

STEVE

Let's own this bitch.

They climb out, rushing into the store...

94

INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

94

Hamid, reaching for a six pack in the refrigerator, is oblivious to the five ski-masked youths exploding through the door, guns jabbing at the store owner and his wife behind the counter. Until the YELLING starts...

STEVE

Don't you fucking move,  
motherfucker! You too, bitch!  
Nobody fucking moves!

There's one other MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN in the store besides Hamid. She drops her shopping basket, cowers to the floor.

KWAN

That's right, you old bag, just  
stay down. If you even twitch,  
I'll splatter your prune face.

Hamid backs up against the end of the aisle, unseen by the rest of the crew. Shakily pulls out his H&K...

STEVE

(to the store owner)  
I'm gonna ask you one time, open  
that fucking door.

Steve gestures to the back room. The store owner doesn't respond, just stares straight through Steve. His wife barks something at him in Korean. He snaps something back at her.

STEVE

Don't you fucking dick me, old man.  
Open that fucking door -- Now!

Hamid, attempts to clear his head. Starts inching his way down the aisle, unseen by the others yet...

STORE OWNER

You making big mistake. You no  
idea who money belongs to. If I  
give to you, I die anyway.

Steve smashes the store owner across the face with his .357. The man crumbles to his knees. As he raises himself up, blood streaming from his nose, he makes a grab for his revolver under the counter...



Kwan catches sight of the store owner's intent on the surveillance monitor -- steps in, POPS him point blank in the head. His wife screeches, drops to her knees alongside him...

Hamid sobering up fast, as he comes upon them...

YONG

What the fuck? What did you go and do that for? We weren't supposed to hurt anyone? Jesus...

STEVE

Shit happens. We're cool. Justin, search him. Find the key!

Justin hops the counter, pushes the owner's wife away, starts rifling through the dead man's clothes... comes away with several keys on a keychain. He sticks his gun in the sobbing old woman's face, drags her over to the back door...

JUSTIN

Yong...

He gestures Yong to follow him...

JUSTIN

Yong, blow her fucking head off if she tries anything.

He shoves the woman over to Yong. Yong, hyperventilating, oh shit-oh shit... places his .45 at her head, hand shaking more than she is. He can't fucking believe this is happening to him...

Justin holds the keys up to the old woman's face...

JUSTIN

Which key? Which fucking key?

Yong repeats it in Korean... The woman shakily points to one of the keys...

JUSTIN

She better know that combination as well...

Mark heads over to the cowering middle-aged woman on the floor. Levels his sawed-off shotgun at her head...

MARK

What the fuck, we're all in...

That's when a bullet explodes through his brain. Hamid coming toward him... Mark collapses on top of the middle-aged woman, who starts shrieking...

Everything happening in a blur... Whip-whirl, what the fuck? Kwan the first to draw down on Hamid -- BLAM! Hamid puts one clean through his chest. Kwan SLAMS into the counter, takes a faceful of glass.

Steve blasts away wildly at Hamid, bullets kicking up cans and bottles around him. Hamid moving recklessly into Steve's line of fire, tags Steve in the head. Before Steve can hit the floor, he whips to Justin, who unloads in his direction...

A slug singes Hamid's shoulder. Justin's next shot misses Hamid completely, his third... There is no third. Justin's gun jams. Hamid, still advancing, puts two in Justin's chest.

That leaves Yong.

Yong using the old woman as a human shield. Ruger jabbed into her head. Can't tell who's shaking more, Yong or the woman.

Hamid keeps his H&K trained on Yong and the old woman. Yong's boxed up against the back room door, which Justin had unlocked just before the shooting began.

YONG

Put it down, man. I'll do her, I swear.

HAMID

"You'll do her?" Where'd you learn to talk like that? You hear that on that some American cop show when you were growing up in Seoul?

YONG

I'm not from fucking Seoul. I'm from Daejeon.

HAMID

My mistake, what would a dumb camel jumper like myself know.

YONG

You a cop?

HAMID

Immigration and Customs.

YONG

Yeah, well, fuck you. I've got nothing to lose, I'll blow this bitch's head off.

HAMID

How old were you when you came over? You've still got the accent, so I'm going to say, maybe, 11, 12?

YONG

I don't give a shit, I'm gonna blow this bag's head off if you don't put down your gun.

HAMID

Twelve is my guess. That puts you in this country about five years. You still on a green card?

YONG

What the fuck? What's with the fucking history lesson. I'm an American citizen, raghead. My whole family just got naturalized. We're doing the oath ceremony shit tomorrow.

HAMID

Tomorrow. You haven't taken your oath yet, that means you're not a citizen. Not until you take the oath. And I don't see how that's going to happen now. You're either going to die here, or you're going away for murder. You've done your parents proud.

YONG

It wasn't supposed to be like this. They told me no one would get hurt. I didn't kill anyone.

HAMID

Doesn't matter. You're an accessory. They stick the needle in you just the same. You are shit out of options, my friend. Even if you could beat the wrap, your ass is removable. And that's the least of your worries right now.

YONG

Fuck, fuck... What am I supposed to do?

HAMID

How many in your family?

YONG

I don't know what to fucking do, why do you keep asking me about my family? They're not here now, are they?

HAMID

(calmly)

How many in your family?

YONG

My parents, my younger brother and sister. My sister was born here.

HAMID

Tomorrow was supposed to be a special day, and you just shit on it for your whole family. Pissed it away for yourself. I've been through it. It's the most spiritual moment of my life. You're standing there, looking around you, and you see all these people, from everywhere, countries you can't even pronounce, didn't even know existed, elated to be there -- because it's their choice. You wouldn't be here right now in this mess you're in, if you could ever appreciate the awe you'd feel in that moment. The worthiness of the journey.

(beat)

So, when you're standing there, in your new suit and tie, I want you to look around... look at those faces... and understand the sublime promise of this moment...

YONG

What the fuck, man, I'm not going to be there. You said it yourself. Stop messing with my head.

HAMID

There's two of us in this place right now. I'm talking about you and me. The others, they're not here. Forget about them. There's you and me, and one of us has already betrayed that promise.

YONG

Yeah, I fucking know. Okay. So, let's just end this...

HAMID

Alright, my friend, the way to end this, is for you to put down your gun, and I'll put down my gun...

Hamid slides his H&K across the floor, far out of reach.

YONG

What the fuck you doing?!

HAMID

Now you put down your gun, let go of that woman, and you walk into that back room and take the surveillance tapes out of the system. And then you keep on walking. Those keys will unlock the loading door to the street.

YONG

You're fucking with me, stop fucking with me! You think I'm some jack-off, some off the boat fucking retard?

HAMID

I think you made a mistake. And you will never make a mistake like this again. You are the only one who's armed right now. No one's going to stop you.

We're starting to hear POLICE SIRENS in the distance.

HAMID

You're out of time, my friend. Go in the back, take your tapes, and leave. If you want to be at that ceremony tomorrow. If you want to continue the path. That is my gift to you.

Yong starting to realize that Hamid is for real. He pushes the old woman away, grabs up the key chain, trains his .45 on Hamid. Hamid just stands there, a look of tranquility descending over him. Yong backs up through the open door.

We stay with Hamid, hearing Yong fumbling with the VCRs, extracting the tapes. Then working the different keys in the loading door lock.

The middle-aged woman comes crawling out of the aisle, covered in Mark's blood. She's catatonic with shock, tears trickling down her cheeks. She nods gratefully at Hamid. He doesn't even see her. He's somewhere else. The old woman scurries over to her dead husband's body, starts moaning loudly over him. POLICE CARS SCREECHING UP outside. The sound of the supply room door SLAMMING closed. An army of LAPD officers storming the store, Hamid ready for them with his ICE shield visible in his raised hand.

HAMID

Hamid Baraheri, Immigration and  
Customs Enforcement. Situation is  
under control.

95

INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

95

Hamid being interviewed in the aftermath. The middle-aged woman being checked over by PARAMEDICS in the b.g.

POLICE OFFICER

I'm a little confused. You're  
saying there were only four of  
them, but the owner's wife is  
positive there were five. She says  
you let one of them walk. She also  
says he took the surveillance tapes  
with him.

HAMID

She's confused. She had her head  
down most of the time. Why would I  
allow one of them to leave? I  
killed four of them. Do I look  
crazy to you?

Suddenly the MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN in the b.g. pipes up...

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN

I can tell you how many there were.

Everyone looks to her...

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN

There were only four. She's mistaken. This man, he saved our lives. He deserves a medal.

POLICE OFFICER

(turns to another officer)

There were four. The other witness just corroborated it. They musta been lax on the surveillance. I think she's covering up for insurance reasons.

Hamid looks over at the middle-aged woman. She smiles at him appreciatively. He responds with a subtle nod. His cell phone rings in his pocket. He glances at the read-out: MAX calling. He declines the call.

96

INT. YONG'S HOUSE - YONG'S BEDROOM - DAY

96

Yong stands in front of his mirror, fixing his tie. There's a transcendent look about him. It's the first day of the rest of his life and he knows it. His hand actually trembles as he tightens the knot.

A KNOCK on his door and Emily enters. She looks prom radiant.

EMILY

Your whole family's waiting on you. Here...

She starts reworking his tie.

EMILY

I'm proud of you, Yong. I know deep down inside this day has meaning to you. Even if you don't want to let on...

Yong clamps his hand gently over Emily's.

YONG

We should go. I can do this in the car. I don't want to be late.

She picks up on something different about him. Nods. Okay.

97

INT. LOS ANGELES CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

97

A naturalization ceremony underway. Thousands of immigrants and spectators looking on. Red, white & blue for as far as the eye can see. A JUSTICE of the Los Angeles County Court addresses the thousands of new citizens before her.

JUDGE FREEMAN

Good morning everyone. My name is Judge Leslie Freeman of the Los Angeles County Circuit Court and it is my great pleasure to welcome you here today. All of you seated here before me share one thing in common: You have made the choice, out of your own free will, to become citizens of this great nation. For most of you, the road to this joyous moment has been paved with hardships and sacrifice. But as I can tell from many of your faces, it is a journey that has been well worth the struggle. I feel it is incumbent upon me to remind you of your newfound responsibilities as citizens, and also to remind you that American citizenship is a not a guarantee of success, but rather a promise of opportunities. Unlimited opportunities to... ..

As the Justice speaks, we pick out Yong and his family in the seats on the floor. Emily is sitting with Soo in the friends and family section. The little girl waves one of those mini American flags. Min waves back at her.

We linger on Yong's face. He's going through a whirlwind of emotions. The events of the previous night still raw in his mind. He looks over at his family and in that instant, he gets it. Maybe he always knew it, but he really starts to feel it. The unity of this moment. It overwhelms him. He fights back his tears, almost coming apart in his seat. Chin reaches out, places a proud hand on his son's thigh.

We TRAVEL across the sea of new citizens, arriving at...

SANJAR. Sitting alone, the last hold out of the Baraheri family. In a strong contrast to all the other faces, he looks grim. His elderly face creased with silent grief.



And there to celebrate him in the spectator section is his family and extended family. We see Sanjar's wife, Minoo, his other son, Farid and Farid's wife, Pooneh and their children.

Finally arriving at HAMID.

He's changed jackets. He's wearing the jacket Max took to the dry cleaner for him. (We assume he picked it up yesterday.) Keeps sniffing at it. Not convinced they've gotten that morgue smell out of it.

Hamid glances over at Farid. There's a somberness shared between the two of them. Hamid averts his gaze...

... to find MAX sitting down next to him.

MAX

I guess I called it right.

HAMID

Max...

MAX

Always gotta put the family first. Ain't that right, Hamid? You're know what I'm talking about. The family honor.

HAMID

You think you understand us. You don't understand anything.

MAX

I can dig it, Hamid. The whole melting pot thing. You bring your ways over with you, it all blends in. We might be hicks at heart, but we don't mind a little bit of culture. Hell, we're all over your restaurants. Got no problem with your food. Just a couple of your customs. One in particular.

HAMID

Do we have to do this right now, Max?

MAX

(hisses)

Yes, goddammit. Right now. You know where I'm going with this, don't you? Your family's precious, goddamn honor.

(MORE)

MAX (cont'd)

So precious that a family member  
would take the life of another to  
protect that honor.

HAMID

You think a family takes pleasure  
in traveling that road?

MAX

I don't give a crap. I don't give  
a crap about your faith or your  
honor or any of your self-righteous  
shit. An innocent -- yes, Hamid,  
innocent -- young woman was  
brutally murdered because she broke  
with your precious customs and  
flashed a little tit on occasion,  
got it on with a married guy, tried  
to live her life outside of the  
family. You passed a death  
sentence on her and a sick  
motherfucker carried it out.

Farid looking across at them, a combination of rage and panic  
in his eyes...

MAX

She was your sister, and you owed  
her better than that. In this  
country, in my country, we don't  
abide by that shit. We got a name  
for it. Murder. Cold blooded  
murder. And you and Farid are  
going down for it. Your whole  
goddamn family should be going down  
for it, but I can only point the  
finger at you two.

Farid hears his name, stiffens. He's starting to sweat  
badly. The whole family is focused on Max and Hamid now.  
Even Sanjar on the floor is staring back at them.

JUDGE FREEMAN

Will all our new citizens please  
stand, place your right hand over  
your heart and join me in reciting  
the Pledge of Allegiance...

A breaking wave of new citizens and spectators rising to  
their feet. Hands reaching for hearts...

Max, Hamid and his family doing the same...

*CITIZENS*

*I pledge allegiance to the Flag of  
the United States of America...*

MAX

I've got the surveillance tapes  
from the motel. From the day  
before. And last week. Identified  
Farid's Beamer. He was watching  
her every move. Reporting back to  
you. Waiting for you to take  
action.

*CITIZENS*

*... and to the Republic for which  
it stands...*

HAMID

I begged him to leave it alone.  
But he was being pressured by my  
father. We both were. I should've  
taken her away from here.

*CITIZENS*

*One Nation under God, indivisible,  
with Liberty and Justice for all.*

MAX

She had a right to be here. To be  
herself.

Farid is getting more and more jittery. Fixated on Max and  
Hamid. His eyes darting around, pin-pointing the exits.

HAMID

He arrived at my apartment that  
night, after he had... done it...

98

INT. HAMID'S APARTMENT - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

98

Hamid opens the door. Farid brushes past him into the  
apartment, wearing a gray hoody. He's sweating and shaking,  
a feverish look in his eyes. He holds up Zahra's silver  
bracelet to Hamid...

FARID

(in Farsi)

I did it, brother. I've restored  
our honor.

Farid is crying as he says it. Hamid snatches the bracelet  
from his hand, stares at it aghast.

Then starts furiously slapping Farid. Farid makes no attempt to retaliate; he welcomes the punishment.

HAMID  
(in Farsi)  
What have you done? What have you  
done? What have you done...?

He pulls Hamid to him, embraces him tightly...

HAMID  
(in his brother's ear)  
What have we done?

99 INT. HAMID'S APARTMENT - FLASHBACK - LATER

99

Hamid and Farid sit on the edge of Hamid's bed. Hamid appears devastated.

HAMID (O.S.)  
He told me the way it happened...

100 INT. MOTEL - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

100

Farid KICKS OPEN the door, rushes inside...

Zahra and Javier are entangled naked on the bed. She jumps up as she sees her brother approaching, attempts to head him off. He grabs her by the wrist -- her BRACELET tearing loose, tumbling to the floor -- and shoves her back onto the bed...

Javier sits up with a stunned expression on his face. Farid walks right up to him, produces a .38 revolver from his pocket...

JAVIER  
Hey, man, wait a minute...

BLAM-! Shoots him point blank in the head. Zahra is hit with the splatter. She starts cowering, whimpering...

Farid snatches up a pillow, shoves it over her face --

FARID  
(in Farsi)  
May Allah have mercy on your soul.

BLAMPH-! Bloody feathers swirl upwards around him.

He walks to the door... then turns back into the room, scoops up her fallen bracelet, pockets it, along with his .38 revolver.

101 INT. LOS ANGELES CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

101

An AFRICAN AMERICAN MAN belts out the National Anthem on stage. Many of the new citizens and spectators join in. Yong hesitates at first, then starts singing along. He smiles over at his father, who sings as well.

Sanjar remains silent. He glances back at his family...

MAX

Why didn't you come to me,  
goddammit?

HAMID

I was ashamed. Ashamed for myself  
and my family.

Farid jumps up, gets in Hamid's face...

FARID

(in Farsi)

What have you told him, brother?  
What are you doing?

Hamid doesn't respond. A great weight has been lifted off his shoulders...

MAX

Maybe one of your ambulance chasing  
partners can recommend a good  
criminal attorney for you, Farid.  
You're going to need one.

Farid backs away from Max, panic in his eyes. He grabs his wife's arm, starts dragging her and the children to the nearest exit...

... to find DETECTIVE STRICKLAND and FOUR UNIFORMED OFFICERS blocking their path. The officers grab hold of Farid, cuff him.

DETECTIVE STRICKLAND

Running out on our National Anthem,  
that's just plain disrespectful.  
Farid Baraheri, you're under arrest  
for the murder of your sister,  
Zahra Baraheri and Javier Pedraza.

(MORE)

DETECTIVE STRICKLAND (cont'd)  
You have the right to remain  
silent...

The new citizens finish singing the National Anthem. Sanjar, who has witnessed Farid's arrest, slumps back down in his chair. A lonely figure with only the promise of grief and sadness in his newly arrived at future.

JUDGE FREEMAN  
Congratulations to all our new  
citizens. If you would like to  
apply for a United States passport,  
today, we have members of the U.S.  
Passport Services Office on hand to  
assist you with your  
applications...

The rest of the family is in a state of shock, whispering nervously amongst themselves.

MAX  
I'm going to allow you the dignity  
of walking out of here without  
being cuffed.

HAMID  
Thank you, Max.

There's nothing more that needs to be said.

102

INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

102

Claire and Gavin are making early morning, lazy, sleepy love. She's astride him, teasing him with her hair. They maintain strong eye contact all the way to completion. She collapses on top of him, face resting on his chest.

CLAIRE  
That was delicious. But you know  
what would be even better?

GAVIN  
You almost gave me lockjaw last  
night. Have mercy.

CLAIRE  
(play punches him)  
Bagels. You perv. And some Coffee  
Bean Cafe White Chocolate. Take  
you five minutes to walk to the  
corner. I'll be out of the shower  
by the time you get back.

She affectionately pushes him out of the bed. He starts dressing, doesn't bother with his underpants. She lies on her stomach, exposed, enjoying the view, which she obviously reciprocates. As he opens the door...

GAVIN

Keep it warm for me.

CLAIRE

It was worth it, wasn't it?

Off his confused look. What's she getting at?

CLAIRE

The lockjaw.

He grins at her. Exits.

103 INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

103

Claire, fresh out of the shower, is about to lay out the Sunday papers for Gavin and herself. A KNOCK on the door. She rushes over with a huge smile, throws the door open...

CLAIRE

Better still be war--

TWO MEN in suits standing there. One of them flashes an ICE SHIELD at her.

SPECIAL AGENT LUDWIG

Ms. Sheperd, I'm Special Agent Ludwig with ICE's Document and Benefit Fraud Unit. This is my partner, Special Agent Howell. May we have a word with you inside, please?

TIME CUT TO:

Claire sitting on the sofa, staring at a COUNTERFEIT GREEN CARD, DRIVER'S LICENSE and SOCIAL SECURITY CARD on the coffee table. Her picture is on the green card and driver's license.

SPECIAL AGENT LUDWIG

We discovered these, and quite a few others, when we performed a search of Javier Pedraza's apartment.

CLAIRE

I never went back for them. I never used them. Surely, you can't...

SPECIAL AGENT HOWELL

You see, what's interesting, Ms. Sheperd, is we ran a check on your name. A Claire Sheperd arrived on a B-2 Visitors Visa seven months ago. She also applied for an extension of the B-2 about eight weeks ago. And then just two days ago she has her status adjusted to an EB1 green card for persons of extraordinary ability.

SPECIAL AGENT LUDWIG

Something didn't compute. Why would someone just approved for an EB1 be trying to purchase a counterfeit green card?

SPECIAL AGENT HOWELL

According to the Internet Movie Data Base, the only Claire Sheperd that matches your spelling, age, and place of birth, has two credits on little known Aussie TV shows. Walk on roles. She's never won any national or international awards..

SPECIAL AGENT LUDWIG

Which is something the adjudicator who handled your case would have to have been aware of. And yet, he approved you for an EB1. We checked the case file for the supporting evidence -- and lo and behold, you're the star of a dozen award winning Australian films and TV shows that you don't appear in.

Claire can't even bring herself to look at the agents. She knows it's over.

SPECIAL AGENT LUDWIG

Ms. Sheperd, we'd like you to tell us about your relationship with Center Adjudications Officer Cole Frankel.



104 EXT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - DAY

104

Gavin is just returning from Coffee Bean as Agents Ludwig and Howell are escorting (a now dressed) Claire to their unmarked sedan. He stops dead in his tracks, steam rising from the bag in his grasp. She glances back at him as she's about to climb into their vehicle -- and shakes her head. Her devastated expression says it all: Don't get involved. Please.

He stands there watching as they drive away. Gutted.

105 INT. JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY - REC ROOM - DAY

105

Alike is playing chess with Taslima. Taslima shifts her pieces around robotically, her thoughts elsewhere. A DETENTION SUPERVISOR approaches their table. Neither of them look up.

DETENTION SUPERVISOR  
Guess who's going home today?

Alike, without looking up, just points to Taslima.

ALIKE  
All my friends leave.

DETENTION SUPERVISOR  
Not today, sweetie. You're going home, Alike. Someone's come for you.

Alike looks up, stunned. She cranes her head to the side, to see past the Supervisor. We see DENISE standing there, tears of joy in her eyes. She steps forward...

ALIKE  
Where is she? Where's my mommy?

Denise just smiles at her, tears now streaming down her cheeks. Shrugs her shoulders: it's me.

Alike understands. As if she knew it all along. She breaks into a wide smile.

106 INT. COLE'S OFFICE - DAY

106

Cole signs off on an application, throws the folder onto a larger pile and grabs up his jacket, ready for a smoke break.

He doesn't get very far. The doorway to his office is blocked by two official looking men in suits. They're special agents with the Office of the Inspector General. AGENTS WOMACK and MONTTOYA. Montoya badges Cole.

\*  
\*  
\*

SPECIAL AGENT MONTTOYA  
Mr. Frankel, Special Agents Montoya and Womack, OIG. We have a warrant for your arrest.

\*  
\*  
\*

COLE  
This is a joke, right?

SPECIAL AGENT WOMACK  
I take it you're familiar with Claire Sheperd. She just traded you for voluntary departure. Turn around, please, hands behind your back...

\*

107 EXT. COLE'S OFFICE / USCIS BULLPENS - DAY

107

Denise, leading Alike by the hand, is bringing her to meet Cole. As they approach Cole's office, Agents Womack and Montoya are escorting Cole out in cuffs. They lead him off in the opposite direction. Denise dragging Alike chases after them.

\*  
\*

DENISE  
What the hell's going on? Where are you taking my husband? Cole?

SPECIAL AGENT MONTTOYA  
Ma'am, your husband is under arrest for immigration fraud. I suggest you find him a good lawyer.

\*

DENISE  
Cole, is it true? Is this true?

Cole doesn't answer her. His eyes tell her all she needs to know: I fucked up. Big time. Denise stops keeping pace with them. He glances back at her one more time, before they turn the corner. Denise stands there in a state of shock, until she feels a tug on her hand. She looks down at the little girl.

ALIKE  
Is that my Daddy?

It takes Denise a while before she can answer. Almost a whisper.

DENISE  
I don't think so.

FADE TO BLACK...

108 INT. BORDER PATROL TRUCK - DAY

108

We're in the back of the same border patrol truck from the prologue. The morning after. Bright and sunny. Chris stirs awake, glances over to Mireya...

Only she's no longer there.

CHRIS  
Goddammit... Bitch. She fucking  
played me.

109 EXT. BORDER PATROL TRUCK / RAVINE - DAY

109

Chris climbs out of the truck, snatches his binoculars off the dashboard, sprints to the top of the ravine. 360's the terrain in search of Mireya. Nothing.

He stomps back down to his truck, frustration turning to rage. Intensified when he sees the state of his vehicle. Back tire still lodged in that muddy ditch.

CHRIS  
Motherfucker!

He starts punting the tire, kicking up a shitload of mud. Realizing the futility of his actions, he's about to head back to the front of the truck. When something catches his eye. A piece of RED FLANNEL material. Trapped under the wheel. Familiar.

He drops to his knees alongside the wheel, starts digging around the material. Realizes that it's not just a fragment. It's the edge of a red flannel BLANKET. What the hell's it doing under his tire? Nothing seems to make sense this morning. He starts digging further... His hand making contact with a muddied branch or something. He rips the branch up... only to realize it's not a branch. It's the decomposed arm of a HUMAN CORPSE.

CHRIS  
Oh Jesus...

He staggers back, just staring at that hand, with its broken fingernails. Female. Definitely female.

CUT TO:

110 EXT. RAVINE - DAY

110

CLOSE-UP on Chris' vehicle being dragged free of that muddy grave site by a Border Patrol tow truck. There are now FOUR OTHER BORDER PATROL AGENTS on the scene. Two of them wielding shovels. Chris is being attended to by a pair of BORDER PATROL EMTS.

\*  
\*  
\*

BORDER PATROL EMT #1  
We need to get you over to the  
E.R., get some pictures of that  
shoulder.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CHRIS  
I'm okay. I want to see her.

\*  
\*

This gets some looks from the other agents. Chris's supervisor, RAY COOPER (50's) steps up...

\*  
\*

RAY  
Alright, let's see who we got here.

\*

The agents start digging...

CUT TO:

111 EXT. RAVINE - LATER - DAY

111

The agents have unearthed a FEMALE CORPSE wrapped in a red, flannel blanket. Her features may be decomposed, but it's clearly MIREYA. We recognize the dress and crucifix around her neck. Her throat has been slashed.

RAY  
Been dead at least a week. Most  
likely raped and killed by her  
douche bag coyote.

Chris, in a state of shock, drops to his knees, almost gagging from the stench. Covering his nose with one hand, he reaches for that cheap plastic purse thrown into the grave on top of her. Starts digging through it, coming away with the Polaroid that Mireya showed him last night. He's struggling to regain his grip on reality. None of this can be happening. But there it is, the Polaroid, along with her Mexican identity card. MIREYA SANCHEZ.

RAY  
What you got there, Chris?

CHRIS  
(studying the Polaroid)  
I know her.

RAY  
What's that?

CHRIS  
It's the same girl.

Off Ray and the other agents' weirded out looks...

CHRIS  
(checks himself)  
It's always the same girl.

Ray comes over, takes a look at the Polaroid.

RAY  
Pretty one like this, she died  
scared and alone and betrayed by  
god. She's in a better place now.  
(to the others)  
Where the fuck is Hector and his  
forensic team?

Ray steps past Chris, heading back to his truck. We PUSH IN on Chris who's trying to keep it together. He has a pained look in his eyes that quietly attests to Ray's last sentiments. He calls out to Ray...

CHRIS  
Hey, Ray?  
(Ray turns)  
I think you're right.

RAY  
What's that?

CHRIS  
She's in a better place.

Ray just shrugs, walks off. Stay on Chris. Fighting a torrent of emotions.

112 INT. LAX INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - DEPARTURE GATE - NIGHT 112

Claire, accompanied by two uniformed IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AGENTS, makes her way to the departure gate. She drags her carry-on case behind her. Puts on a good face about her leaving. But her eyes betray her true feelings. She wipes a tear away as she arrives at her gate. Los Angeles to Melbourne. All sass to the end, she turns to her minders, gestures outwards with her hands. Okay, boys, you did your job. I'm outta here. She offers up her boarding pass and steps through into the boarding corridor, disappearing from sight.

\*  
\*

113

INT. LAX INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - LOBBY - NIGHT

113

Taslina and Rokeya accompanied by another pair of IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AGENTS. They've just checked in, their carry-ons strung over their shoulders. The terminal is crowded with families and friends seeing each other off. There's a long line ahead of them to get to the metal detectors and X-ray machines.

\*  
\*

As they make their way over, Taslima's eyes are searching out the throngs of people around them. Families embracing one another, lovers kissing, friends shaking hands, just a sea of faces in throbbing motion. And that's when she sees him. Just catches a glimpse of him at first. He's keeping pace with them from a distance, camouflaged by others in transit.

MUNSHI.

He's come to see her off. But knows he can't get close to her. She smiles through her tears at her father. He allows his own tears to flow freely. Just keeps pace with her and Rokeya, from at least ten feet away.

There's nothing but forgiveness in both their eyes. Rokeya trying not to draw attention to her husband, averts her gaze, looks straight ahead. The agents trailing behind her are oblivious.

They're almost at the entrance to the security area. Only passengers permitted to pass through. Taslima allows herself one last look to her father. Not sure if she'll ever see him again. The finality of the moment is profound. Only then does he raise his hand and hesitantly wave to her. Her last smile to him, and she's gone. Munshi devastated, receding into the crowd.

114

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

114

Gavin walking across the playground, dodging children at play. There's an excited look on his face as he opens an official looking envelope in his hand. His GREEN CARD has arrived. He stares hypnotically at the little plastic card bearing his picture and the words PERMANENT RESIDENT. He raises the card to his lips, kisses it. Marla watches him from the doorway to her classroom. He notices her, smiles. Waves that Willy Wonka golden ticket at her. Jumps up in the air, jubilantly. She applauds silently. There just may be something in the cards for these two.

115 INT. DENISE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 115

Denise is preparing lunch for Alike. Alike is helping out, doing the kind of stuff little girls like to do in the kitchen. Denise leans in to her, kisses her on the head. Whispers something in her ear. Alike mouths something back. If we read her lips, it appears to be "I love you, too."

We PAN ACROSS to the kitchen counter, where we see SEPARATION PAPERS. Freshly signed. With a pen still resting on the final signature page.

116 INT. PRISON BUS - MOVING - DAY 116

Hamid riding along with a DOZEN OTHER PRISONERS, including Farid. Farid sits up front, doesn't look at him. Hamid stares out through the secure windows at his disappearing freedom. There's a look of resignation on his face. His heart is still heavy, and not just because he's headed for incarceration. Or worse.

117 INT. YONG'S HOUSE - YONG'S BEDROOM - DAY 117

Yong, lying on his back on his bed, studying for an exam. We RISE ABOVE HIM to reveal Yong's newly framed NATURALIZATION CERTIFICATE on the wall above his bed.

118 EXT. LUMBER YARD - DAY 118

Max sits across the street from the lumber yard in his unmarked vehicle. Seated next to him is his new PARTNER, a HISPANIC AGENT in his late 20's. They're about to embark on yet another work site raid. We see several detainee buses heading down the street toward them, accompanied by several other enforcement vehicles.

HISPANIC PARTNER

Here we go.

It's at that moment that Max's cell phone RINGS. He debates whether he should answer it. Doesn't recognize the number on the read out. After a beat, he accepts the call.

MAX

Brogan. Yes, that was me.

We don't hear the voice on the other end, but we have a pretty good idea what they're saying.



MAX

Are you sure about that? Mireya Sanchez?

(takes a deep breath)

Ah Christ... Dammit. What about the family, have you...? Do me a favor, hold off on that. I'd like to take care of it myself. I just want to do right by her. Thank you -- I'll be down as soon as I get off shift.

He hangs up. Stares ahead of him. The detainee buses and other vehicles are already tearing in the lumber yard lot.

HISPANIC PARTNER

Goddamn, Max, we gotta roll.

He just sits there for a moment. Something broken inside. Quietly considering his options. There's a look in his eye that suggests he's about to throw in the towel.

HISPANIC PARTNER

Max, we gotta go, man.

MAX

Don't worry, Garcia, you won't miss a thing.

\*

And with that, Max fires up the car and guns it across the street into the yard, pulling up next to the others. They're out their vehicle and running toward the entrance. Just another day on the job. Another goddamn day.

DISSOLVE TO:

119 EXT. MIREYA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

119

Max's car pulls up in front. He approaches the front door, Mireya's purse in hand. Before he can knock, the door is opened by Mireya's mother. Juan, looking fit, stares out from behind her. Mireya's mother's gaze travels from Max's face down to Mireya's purse in his grasp. She knows. Nothing needs to be said. With a saddened expression, she gestures Max into the house.

120 INT. MIREYA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

120

We observe this moment through the doorway, never intruding on the family's grief. Or the solemnity of Max's mission.

He sits across from Mireya's parents in their sparsely furnished living room. Juan clings to his grandmother, a sad comprehending look in his eyes. The dialogue between Max and Mireya's parents is inaudible. We don't need to hear the specifics; it's a familiar script. A heartbreaking pantomime of atonement and acceptance.

We FADE OUT on that image.