

I N C O R P O R A T E D

Pilot

by

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FADE IN:

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

MUZAK fills the air.

Two EXECUTIVES in their 40s, sharply dressed and carrying briefcases, stand next to each other. They watch the elevator counter go down, bleary-eyed: 10, 9, 8...

EXECUTIVE 1 sighs. Come on...

EXECUTIVE 2  
Did you get Karen's memo?

EXECUTIVE 1  
Ugh, yes. She expects the sales projections by Monday? We just got the numbers yesterday.

EXECUTIVE 2  
I hear you, man. My weekend is now officially fu--

PING! The elevator has reached the LOBBY, but when the doors open, they reveal: a SQUAD OF ARMED GUARDS, wearing kevlar vests, toting automatic weapons. More Blackwater than rent-a-cops. They look tense, on high alert, their weapons drawn.

Between them, there's a MAN IN A SUIT, HANDS in PLASTIC CUFFS behind his back, his head covered with a HOOD. He struggles, trying to protest, but all we hear are MUFFLED GRUNTS and MOANS-- his mouth must be taped shut under the hood. \*

WTF? After an awkward beat...

EXECUTIVE 2 (CONT'D)  
Excuse us.

The two execs exit the elevator, sidestepping the Guards and continuing on their way, as if this is nothing unusual. \*

Meanwhile, two Guards push their Prisoner into the elevator and one of them places a thumb on a FINGERPRINT READER. \*

The doors shut, and the ELEVATOR keeps going down while the muzak continues.

INT. UNDERGROUND LEVEL - DAY

The Prisoner is dragged kicking and screaming down a dingy hallway. We're somewhere deep in the belly of the building.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

The Guards drag the Prisoner into a windowless WHITE-TILED ROOM. There's a one-way mirror on a wall, and thick groaning pipes crisscross the ceiling.

They handcuff him to a chair in the middle of the room. The Prisoner sits there. He can't see anything, but he can HEAR (we'll see this as a series of CLOSE UPS):

The METAL DOOR OPENING and CLOSING. And then: STEPS, CALM, DELIBERATE, APPROACHING...

A HAND SNAPPING ON A SURGICAL GLOVE. We see the TATTOO of a SNAKE on the back of the hand.

Then the HAND grabs a SCALPEL from a medical tray.

The PRISONER's panicking now, hyperventilating. Breathing so hard we see the shape of his mouth as he sucks in the hood.

And now we hear the VOICE of the man with the snake tattoo:

VOICE

I want you to know, I take no  
pleasure in what I'm about to do.

We PUSH IN ON THE HOOD as the SCALPEL APPROACHES... then a hand reaches out and YANKS OFF THE HOOD, as we --

CUT TO BLACK

**I N C O R P O R A T E D**

FADE TO:

WHITENESS fills the screen, as if we were surrounded by fog.

A TITLE CARD reads: **"THREE DAYS EARLIER"**

Then the face of a man emerges from the whiteness in SLO-MO, his features slowly becoming clear to us. This is BEN LARSON (29). Is he the man in the hood? We don't know yet. He closes his eyes and lets water pour all over him. We realize he's taking a hot and steamy SHOWER.

INT. BEN'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Ben steps out of the shower, wrapping a towel around his waist. Now we can appreciate that he's a handsome, fit man.

As he spreads shaving cream over his face, different POP-UP WINDOWS appear on the MIRROR, surrounding his reflection.

One of them shows a 24h NEWS CHANNEL, while a news ticker under Ben's face gives him the STOCK MARKET information.

NEWSCASTER

...meanwhile, Hurricane Zoe has finally made landfall on the coast of Rhode Island. It is yet unclear if the Providence levees will be able to sustain a category 5 storm. The material damages could be in the billions of dollars.

Another window shows the POLLUTION REPORT of the day and the WEATHER. If we look closely, we'll realize that today it's 75 degrees even though we are in Milwaukee on November 7th.

The year reads 2062.

Ben finishes shaving and leaves the room, prompting the windows to disappear.

INT. BEN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

As Ben enters the bedroom, a PICTURE ON THE WALL becomes a screen. The NEWS CHANNEL has automatically "followed" him into the bedroom.

There's a suit carefully laid out on the bed. He dresses up as the newscaster drones in the background.

NEWSCASTER

In other news, Gasko Oil unveiled today its third offshore platform on the former Arctic ice cap. The rig is expected to produce an encouraging 50,000 barrels per day.

Ben delicately ties his necktie and checks himself in the mirror. He looks sharp. Impeccable.

INT. BEN'S HOUSE - DINNING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ben walks briskly down the stairs towards the dinning room, where LAURA LARSON (27), his beautiful wife, waits for him at the table.

LAURA

Good morning, handsome.

As he walks into the room, more pictures on the wall turn into screens, blaring the news channel.

BEN  
 (eyes on the news)  
 Good morning...

LAURA  
 Ben, honey...

BEN  
 Mute.

Immediately, the sound is turned off.

BEN (CONT'D)  
 Sorry.

Laura rolls her eyes at him, jokingly. When Ben KISSES her on the neck, she giggles delighted. And then he notices the SUMPTUOUS BREAKFAST displayed on the table: coffee, eggs, bacon, fresh fruit...

BEN (CONT'D)  
 What is this?

He grabs a crispy STRIP OF BACON and takes a bite as he sits. His eyes brighten.

BEN (CONT'D)  
 Mmmh... The real deal?

LAURA  
 (smiling, pleased)  
 Uh-huh... I thought a special breakfast was in order.

BEN  
 And what's the occasion?

Laura glares at him.

BEN (CONT'D)  
 Oh, was it today? Kidding, kidding! I made a reservation for tonight. Don't worry, we won't be having take-out on our anniversary.

LAURA  
 (teasing)  
 Like last year, you mean?

BEN  
 Hey! You told me it was the best General Tso's you ever had.

Laura chuckles as RACHEL, their maid, a Midwestern woman in her 40s, pours Ben some coffee. We notice an ELECTRONIC BRACELET around her wrist. What is that?

BEN (CONT'D)

Thank you, Rachel.

Ben takes another bite of the bacon and closes his eyes in delight.

BEN (CONT'D)

I don't think I can go back to that "petri-shit".

LAURA

I don't think we can afford not to.

And suddenly, Laura GASPS. Ben, puzzled, follows her gaze and sees what she's seeing:

Behind him, the news channel shows images of a high-tech, glass and steel SKYSCRAPER with a BLACK COLUMN OF SMOKE emerging from a top floor. The caption reads: **BREAKING NEWS: BOMBING IN JAKARTA.**

BEN

Shit. Unmute.

NEWSCASTER

--suspected terrorist attack. Local authorities blame "The Sons of Tomorrow," but the radical environmentalist group hasn't claimed responsibility yet. The device detonated in an R&D laboratory of the biochemical giant Chrysalis, causing at least a dozen fatalities and an immediate two point drop in the company's stock.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

On Ben, as the disturbing news sinks in.

EXT. STANFORD MILLS - DAY

Ben and Laura step out to a beautiful upper middle class SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD. Shiny new two story houses and manicured lawns. The American dream incarnated. We notice that each roof is covered in gleaming SOLAR PANELS.

BEN

--had to happen today of all days. Ugh... Security at the office's gonna be a shit show.

Suddenly, a SHRIEK!

They turn to find a neighbor, MARSHA (53), in robe and PJs, by her MAILBOXES (instead of the regular USPS one, there's three different ones labeled as FedEx, DHL and UPS). She holds a FedEx envelope, stares at its contents, horrified.

Ben and Laura rush to her.

LAURA  
Marsha! Are you OK?

Marsha can't speak. With a trembling hand, she shows them the envelope. Inside, there's a SEVERED HUMAN EAR. Fuck! Laura GASPS, horrified.

MARSHA  
(teary-eyed)  
That... son-of-a-bitch. That  
piece-of-shit son-of-a-bitch...

LAURA  
Marsha...

MARSHA  
The bastard's been slumming again,  
Laura! Screwing that slut he has  
out there.  
(she sneers)  
And he got himself kidnapped.  
Idiot. Serves him right...

Ben is not sure how to ask this...

BEN  
What... are you planning to do?

MARSHA  
Oh, I'll pay, don't worry. But not  
right away. Let him sweat it out a  
bit longer.

LAURA  
I'm sorry.

Ben checks his watch. Is that the time?

BEN  
I should really get going.

LAURA  
If there's anything you need...

MARSHA

Thank you, darling.

Marsha walks back inside, ranting under her breath. Ben and Laura walk towards their slick and shiny ELECTRIC CARS waiting on the driveway. \*

BEN

(jokingly)

You should've given her your card.

Laura FLICKS him.

LAURA

Ben!

BEN

What?! Frank's gonna need a new ear as soon as he's back home.

LAURA

You know I'm classier than that.

And they both KISS by the cars. The picture of the perfect marriage, completely in sync.

INT. BEN'S CAR - DAY

Ben takes the driver's seat.

BEN

Work.

With this command, the car starts itself with a low hum and drives into the street in AUTOPILOT.

BEN (CONT'D)

News.

A window pops up on the windshield. Again, the news channel.

NEWSCASTER

--Canadian Prime Minister announced the construction of a new high security fence after 2061 became a record year in illegal immigration. It is estimated that already 12 million US citizens live in Canadian territory illegally...

Ben watches the news as the vehicle drives itself through the suburban neighborhood. Men and women leave their houses, ready for another day of work.

When the car approaches the edge of the neighborhood, we notice the ELECTRIFIED CHAIN-LINK FENCE surrounding it. Ben's vehicle exits the neighborhood through an ENTRANCE heavily guarded by ARMED PRIVATE SECURITY.

The guards watch the influx of DAY LABORERS lining up at the gates. Maids, gardeners, cooks... they all go through ID checks, body scanners and pat downs. Before they start their day's work, a TRACKING DEVICE is attached to their wrists. It's the same electronic bracelet we saw on Rachel, the maid.

By the entrance, a SIGN reads **"Welcome to Stanford Mills, a Chrysalis community"**

EXT. TOLL FREEWAY - DAY

Ben's car silently slips into a PRIVATE TOLL FREEWAY. The toll gate opens automatically as CAR PLATES are scanned. The vehicle doesn't even have to stop.

The traffic is light, just a handful of self-driving cars, since this is a private road for company men and women. On the horizon, the SKYLINE OF DOWNTOWN MILWAUKEE beckons: a cluster of high tech office skyscrapers, gleaming in the sun.

On either side of the freeway, we see a BUCOLIC LANDSCAPE of luscious green meadows, rolling hills and trees. Gorgeous.

But then the CAMERA rises, to reveal... all this natural beauty is nothing but a mirage, a 3D DIGITAL LANDSCAPE projected on the walls protecting the private road.

From this vantage point, we see: on both sides of the road, hidden by the digital landscape, an endless sprawl of SLUMS AND SHANTY TOWNS. Makeshift houses and derelict buildings spread as far as the eye can see. The contrast is staggering.

The image is more reminiscent of Sao Paulo or New Delhi than of any American city as we know them today.

EXT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - DAY

The CHRYSALIS US HEADQUARTERS, a massive and intimidating monolith of glass and steel. Dwarfed by the building's size, a steady stream of COMPANY MEN AND WOMEN is swallowed by automatic revolving doors, Ben among them.

An UNMANNED DRONE flies over the entrance, circling the skyscraper protectively. On it, the Chrysalis logo.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Ben walks across the marble lobby, past a massive SCREEN WALL showing a CORPORATE VIDEO:

A radiant sunset, a young and beautiful FAMILY having a picnic by a crystal clear creek, a farmer proudly watching his golden fields of wheat and corn... A caption under the images of the farm reads **Anchorage, Alaska.**

VIDEO NARRATOR (O.S.)

Over the past 40 years, Chrysalis has been using the latest genetic engineering technology to produce the best seeds in the market. Successful in the most challenging environments, our pest and drought resistant crops are sold in over a hundred countries. Chrysalis, committed to feeding our ever-growing world.

Ben sighs when he sees the long lines of company men waiting their turn for the stringent SECURITY SCREENINGS, and joins one. The checkpoints are also guarded by armed security.

A FEMALE EXECUTIVE drops her briefcase on the belt of an advanced X-RAY machine and steps into a BODY SCANNER, hands raised and feet apart.

A SCREEN produces a detailed 3D image of the subject and detects the SMART-PHONE in her pocket, scanning the files in its hard drive. The screen also shows the contents of the briefcase, and the files in the LAPTOP stored within.

A GREEN LIGHT and one of the guards signals the woman that she's been cleared.

ARMED GUARD

Next.

A hand falls on Ben's shoulder. He turns to find ROGER CAPLAN (32), an ambitious and charming junior executive.

ROGER

Full cavity search for my friend!

BEN

Hey, Roger.

ROGER

(re: the Guards)

Those guys seem in an especially pissy mood today.

SUSAN (38), a female drone also in line, chimes in.

SUSAN

Don't you watch the news? Some environmentalist nuts killed a dozen of our guys today.

\*

ROGER

Eco-terrorists my ass. Word is it was Radiance agents.

\*

SUSAN

Radiance? You think they'd dare to?

BEN

I'd expect anything from those assholes. Remember the hostage crisis of '56.

ROGER

I'm telling you. This is no terrorist attack. It's sabotage.

BEN

I've heard we were working on some new prototype in Jakarta.

SUSAN

What kind of prototype?

BEN

The "we-don't-have-the-clearance" kind.

Suddenly, a deafening ALARM GOES OFF. The crowd falls into a tense silence as they all turn towards the security check. Some gasp, others crouch. Are they under attack?

A chubby middle-aged sad sack, GARY (47), stands inside a body scanner, RED LIGHTS FLASHING. The source of the alarm. He's frozen in place, sweaty and terrified, as he sees...

HALF A DOZEN GUARDS gather around him, carefully unholstering their handguns, fingers off the trigger.

GUARD 1

Please step out of the scanner, sir. Slowly.

Gary complies, trying not to make any sudden movements.

The SCREEN yells in bright red: **"WARNING! UNAUTHORIZED FILE"**. GUARD 1 talks to his radio, carefully approaching GARY'S BRIEFCASE as it slowly comes out of the X-Ray machine.

GUARD 1 (CONT'D)  
We got a code 6 down here. Yeah,  
some kind of malware. A trojan  
maybe.

Guard 1 waves a HANDHELD DEVICE over the briefcase.

GUARD 1 (CONT'D)  
Doesn't seem to be booby-trapped.  
I'm gonna open it.

Click. Click. He releases both lashes, carefully opens the briefcase and... NOTHING HAPPENS. Phew...

GUARD 1 (CONT'D)  
I'm turning it on now.

He presses a button on the LAPTOP inside and it powers up. He clicks on the highlighted files and suddenly... SCREAMS!

Moans of pleasure actually! A VIDEO has popped up on the laptop's screen. An amateurish looking video of a MORBIDLY OBESE COUPLE screwing in a dinghy room.

After a second of confusion, GUARD 2 shakes his head and hushes to a third guard.

GUARD 2  
Can't they erase this shit before  
coming to work?

The whole room fills with whispers and giggles from the company men and women.

ROGER  
Loser...

GUARD 1  
(into the radio)  
False alarm. It's just "fat porn."

CUT TO:

DING! A PAIR OF ELEVATOR DOORS OPENING.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - FLOOR 23 - DAY

As Ben and Roger step out, the elevator announces...

FEMALE VOICE  
23th floor. Security and  
Counterintelligence.

They continue their conversation as they walk down the  
HALLWAY, towards a pair of BULLETPROOF GLASS DOORS.

BEN  
But they *can't* be real.

ROGER  
Oh they're real. Maybe not by  
birth, but surgically conjoined.

BEN  
Ugh. Who wants to see *that*?

ROGER  
People pay top dollar for it.

As they walk and talk, SENSORS imbedded on the wall flash as  
they SCAN THEIR RETINAS.

BEN  
For what, exactly?

ROGER  
Depends on how much you're willing  
to pay! If you can't find it in  
the red zones, it doesn't exist.

The DOORS OPENS automatically in front of them. They enter  
without even having to slow down.

ROGER (CONT'D)  
Anyway, what about *your* weekend?  
What did you do?

BEN  
Barbecue.

Roger LAUGHS as the DOORS close between us and them.

ROGER  
You guys are too sweet.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - LAB - DAY

A TEST SUBJECT sits in a small, nondescript room, his scalp  
connected to an EEG through a series of electrodes. He  
watches a SCREEN WALL that shows a series of HEADSHOTS of  
people of different ages, races and gender: A YOUNG WOMAN, A  
MIDDLE-AGED ASIAN MAN, AN ELDERLY AFRICAN AMERICAN...

WE PULL BACK to reveal that we're watching this through...

A ONE-WAY MIRROR--

Behind it, Ben watches the experiment along with CHAD (40s), his boss, a gray bureaucrat, and JULIAN (50s), an inscrutable man that stands behind them. A computer monitor shows the same headshots, but here the IMAGES ARE BLURRY, UNSTABLE. People's features are in constant flow, shifting, mutating...

CHAD

(to Julian)

The Torchlight software scans the subject's brainwaves and translates them into images. Literally shows you what they're thinking-- most importantly, what they're dreaming. Traitors can't lie in their sleep, right?

JULIAN

What's the accuracy?

Chad looks at Ben: you're the engineer, you take this one.

BEN

We're at sixty-five percent... For now.

JULIAN

And that's going to hold during REM?

BEN

(admits, reluctant)

No. We expect to lose about ten points when the subject's asleep.

Julian processes this, rubbing his knuckles. We notice a TATTOO of a SNAKE peeking from under his cuff and we realize: he's the man with the scalpel from the opening scene.

Chad awaits his reaction, nervously. When Julian speaks, he does so deliberately.

JULIAN

What happened yesterday in Jakarta... someone's going to end up in the Boiler Room for that. Do you know what goes on down there?

CHAD

We've all heard stories.

JULIAN

If you really knew, you wouldn't send someone my way on a fifty-five percent chance he's guilty.

BEN

We--

CHAD

(cutting him off)

I'm as disappointed as you are, sir. Fifty-five percent is unacceptable. But we'll pick up the pace. That's a guarantee.

A tense beat. Then Julian nods: alright. And he exits the room. Ben is left feeling he's been thrown under the bus.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Is there a problem?

BEN

No problem. Torchlight's learning. It'll hit seventy-five percent in six months.

CHAD

Good.

BEN

But not before.

CHAD

What are you trying to say, Ben?

BEN

Just that maybe you should be careful about the promises you make. Especially to him. I mean, "we've all heard stories," right?

Ben exits the room, his point made. Left alone, we can see a sense of dread invading Chad.

EXT. MILWAUKEE - DAY

The CAMERA flies over the majestic skyscrapers of downtown to reveal the maze-like narrow streets of the RED ZONES...

EXT. METCALF PARK - DAY

This neighborhood of Milwaukee would not look out of place in any overpopulated metropolis of the Third World:

Pothole-ridden streets lined with PAWN SHOPS, LIQUOR STORES and storefront CHURCHES. VACANT LOTS where barefoot CHILDREN play. Hundreds of BICYCLES AND MOPEDS zooming up and down the street in a chaos of noise and pollution. \*

This is the RED ZONE. It's so different from Stanford Mills that it feels like another country. Hell, another planet. \*

A VIDEO SCREEN shows a SOLDIER SALUTING, an oil field in the background. A TEXT FLASHES: "JOIN THE GASKO SECURITY FORCES. KEEPING THE PEACE AT HOME AND ABROAD". It's a recruitment ad for a corporate army. \*

THEO, a tough-looking 17 year old, walks past the screen and along the MAKESHIFT STALLS where skewers of suspicious-looking meat are grilled and jerry-rigged appliances are sold: portable water purifiers, solar-powered camping stoves, hand-cranked radios... \*

Theo's followed by a MORBIDLY OBESE MAN (40s), panting and using a crutch to keep up. \*

OBESE MAN

What's a punk like you doing with something like that?

THEO

Got my ways. You interested or not?

OBESE MAN

Let me see it.

Theo stops behind the stall of a KNIFE SHARPENER, spinning an upturned bicycle to sharpen a blade. The boy looks around, making sure he's not being watched, takes off his BACKPACK, unzips it and reveals...

A CARTON OF CIGARETTES. He unseals one of the packs and hands the man a CIGARETTE.

THEO

100% pure unadulterated tobacco.  
No sawdust in these babies.

The obese man rolls the cigarette between his fingers and smells it. He seems pleased.

OBESE MAN

How much?

THEO

50 dollars a pack. 400 for the whole carton.

OBESE MAN

A bit rich for my blood.

THEO

Dude, you know how much these things go for in the green zones?

Suddenly, Theo spots THREE GUYS approaching, scanning the crowd -- and let's just say they don't look friendly. One of them, a muscular, heavily tattooed SAMOAN, spots Theo! Shit!

Theo rushes to put his merchandise back in the bag, as the three guys approach --

OBESE MAN

Ok, fine, 350.

And suddenly, Theo SHOVES the Obese Man towards them! And as they crash, THEO BREAKS INTO A RUN! Another guy, military looking, with a CREW CUT, motions to the other two:

CREW CUT

Goddammit! Get him!

Theo runs for his life, pushing bystanders, dodging merchants -- his pursuers are right behind him!

He CRASHES through one of the flimsy stalls. But he doesn't stop. He jumps over one of the red hot grills and keeps running, the soles of his sneakers sizzling with the heat --

Still they CLOSE IN on him. He needs to think of something...

And suddenly Theo takes a sharp turn and runs straight into traffic! Is he out of his mind? MOPEDS zoom by, honking furiously, missing him by an inch!

Theo runs between lanes, against traffic, forcing the mopeds to dodge him -- the three guys following from the sidewalk, trying to get to him without being run over --

Now Theo sees an opening and runs to the opposite side of the street. He's almost hit a couple of times but manages to reach the sidewalk --

His pursuers have no choice but to jump into traffic to keep up -- and one of them, a buff WEIGHTLIFTER-type, is CLIPPED and thrown to the ground in the process!

Theo doesn't even stop to catch his breath. He keeps running through the crowd when...

Crew Cut reaches the sidewalk right behind him. Shit.

Theo keeps moving but Samoan and Weightlifter appear right in front of him. Double shit! He's trapped!

As the three men close in on him, Theo looks around and runs into the...

#### SIDE STREETS

Theo rushes down the MAZE OF NARROW SIDE STREETS created by a chaotic and tumorous expanse of SHANTIES. The little shacks have been thrown together with bricks, stones, reclaimed wood and rusty corrugated metal.

Theo takes one last turn to find... fuck, a DEAD END. The street's blocked by the rusty CARCASS OF A BUS turned into a dwelling.

Behind him, his pursuers BLOCK THE EXIT. Now he's truly trapped. Crew Cut deliberately walks towards him. He raises his right hand, revealing...

A robotic PROSTHETIC HAND. Reinforced titanium. It's a hand that could crush your skull.

#### CREW CUT

A souvenir from the Battle of  
Manila.

Suddenly, Crew Cut throws a SUCKER PUNCH!

But, with lightning-fast reflexes, Theo DODGES the mechanical fist and Crew Cut finds himself swinging at air.

Crew Cut takes another swing, charging towards the boy, but Theo easily SIDESTEPS him, swapping positions with him.

Now Weightlifter grabs Theo from behind -- but Theo uses this chance to DOUBLE KICK Crew Cut in the face! Blood spurts!

Theo finishes the move by dropping to the ground and SLIPPING OUT OF HIS JEAN JACKET. Weightlifter finds himself holding the backpack and the empty jacket as...

Theo runs towards Samoan, who gets ready to intercept him. But Theo jumps, takes a couple of parkour-like steps up the wall of a shack and grabs the CLOTHESLINES above his head.

He swings over Samoan's head, ready to jump to the other side when...

Samoan pulls out an EXTENDABLE BATON and swats Theo with it, sending 5000 volts through his body!

Theo LANDS ON THE GROUND. Hard. Ouch.

And just to make sure he won't try anything funny, Samoan tases him again with the baton.

INT. AUTOMATED SWEAT SHOP - DAY

Theo is pushed by the Thugs through a warehouse where row after row of 3D PRINTERS whir away, building all sorts of KNOCK-OFF LUXURY GOODS out of thin air: designer shoes, handbags, watches... Weightlifter opens a door and pushes Theo into the...

BACK OFFICE

At the other end of the room, a man sits in a chair with his back to us, a BARBER CLOTH around his neck. A GORGEOUS GIRL in a skimpy hairdresser outfit is carefully cutting his hair.

Weightlifter shoves Theo forward. The man in the chair glances up in the mirror in front of him and sees Theo.

WEIGHTLIFTER

Sorry to bother you, Terrence.

TERRENCE

Who's this?

WEIGHTLIFTER

The little shit that's been selling cigarettes all over Metcalf Park.

Hearing this, Terrence raises his hand and the hairdresser immediately stops. He yanks off the cloth and gets on his feet, turning to reveal...

...a PERFECTLY TAILORED SUIT and a CAREFULLY GROOMED APPEARANCE. If it weren't for the TATTOOS crawling up his neck, we'd think he just came out of the Green Zones. Meet TERRENCE HURT (40s), ruthless crime boss and self-styled businessman.

Terrence carefully considers the boy with steely eyes. Theo's scared shitless but does his best not to show it.

TERRENCE

I admire your initiative, boy. You can't make a buck in this world without a bit of entrepreneurial spirit and a big pair of balls.

(beat)

But if I let any punk with balls and a pack of cigarettes sell in my backyard, then pretty soon supply is going to exceed demand.

Terrence makes a gesture. Immediately, Samoan grabs Theo by the wrist and PUTS HIS HAND ON A NEARBY TABLE.

TERRENCE (CONT'D)

That creates what's called a zero-profit condition. Which isn't good for anybody. Especially me.

Terrence puts his hand inside a toolbox and produces a HAMMER. Shit.

TERRENCE (CONT'D)

(re: the hammer)

So this... this is what I like to call my strategic entry deterrence.

Theo starts hyperventilating. Shit-shit-shit-shit. This is gonna hurt.

Terrence RAISES the hammer, ready to strike when...

He notices Crew Cut behind his two mates, holding a handkerchief over his BLOODY NOSE.

TERRENCE (CONT'D)

What the hell happened to you?

Crew Cut's too embarrassed to reply. But the answer dawns on Terrence anyway. He looks at Theo, surprised, amused even.

TERRENCE (CONT'D)

You did that?

Theo stares back at Terrence. Scared, but defiant, too. Terrence mulls this over for a beat. Then:

TERRENCE (CONT'D)

Show me.

And off Theo -- huh?

INT. AUTOMATED SWEAT SHOP - DAY

We PULL BACK from the office door. Through its frosted glass we can make out SHAPES MOVING, FIGHTING. The sounds of the brawl become drowned by the noise of the printers. Whatever is happening in there, it's brutal and Theo's giving as good as he gets. As we--

CUT TO:

INT. PLASTIC SURGERY CLINIC - RECEPTION - DAY

A spotless reception area. A NURSE sits behind a desk, while a WALLSCREEN behind her shows A WOMAN WALKING ACROSS A WATERFALL. HER FACE FLAWLESS AS IT EMERGES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WATER. A SOOTHING VOICE announces:

FEMALE VOICE (TV)  
Bring out your inner beauty...  
Bring out a more perfect you...

INT. PLASTIC SURGERY CLINIC - CONSULTATION ROOM - DAY

Laura meets with two clients: CAROL GRANGER, late 50s, oozing money but not necessarily class, and her new husband, RAUL, early 20s, good-looking, more a boy than a man. He sits on an examining table, wearing a robe. He's the patient.

Laura flicks through a SERIES OF PHOTOS on a tablet: they show a HANDSOME MAN in his late 20s.

LAURA  
(re: the photos)  
And this is...?

CAROL  
Howard. The late Mister Granger.  
Right around our honeymoon. So is  
it possible?

Laura compares the photos with Raul, who just sits there with a confused smile on his face.

LAURA  
They've got similar bone structure.  
Sure it's possible... if that's  
what you and your husband want.

CAROL  
It is.

LAURA  
(to Raul)  
Mister Salgado, are you aware of  
what the procedure would involve?

RAUL  
(with an accent and a nod)  
Yes.

But does he? Laura decides to talk slowly and deliberately.

LAURA  
Do you understand that you will  
look exactly like this man?

She shows him a photo of Howard. Raul nods again.

RAUL  
Yes.

CAROL  
Of course he understands.

LAURA  
(to Raul, ignoring her)  
Then can you repeat back to me what  
you think will happen?

Raul turns to Carol, confused, looking for guidance. He  
doesn't really understand English.

Carol takes Laura aside.

CAROL  
Look, he wants the life that I can  
give him. And he doesn't want to  
go back to the red zone. He  
understands that much.

On Laura, conflicted...

INT. PLASTIC SURGERY CLINIC - RECEPTION - DAY

Laura walks Carol and Raul out of the consultation room. As  
they head for the exit, Laura hears a FAINT DING...

LAURA'S POV: Her CONTACT LENS displays TWO WORDS FLASHING IN  
RED: "NEW MESSAGE"

LAURA  
Open.

The message unfolds before her eyes. Before we can read what it says, we cut out of the POV and back to Laura.

Reading the message, she can barely suppress an excited laugh. Whatever it is, it must be good news.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DUSK

The SUN IS SETTING behind the towering skyscrapers of the downtown area.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - BEN'S OFFICE - DUSK

Ben's office is a simple, yet sleek affair, with a nice view of the sunset, but no corner.

He stands by the glass wall that separates him from the rest of the floor, watching his co-workers march towards the elevators. Among them, Chad, who glares at him.

Once the floor is almost empty, Ben slides his index finger down the glass. As he does this, THE GLASS BECOMES OPAQUE. Once he's done this, Ben moves quickly and precisely. It's clear he's done this before:

First he locks the door with his fingerprint. Then he sits behind his desk and pulls out his briefcase. He opens it, his fingers tracing the lining until they find a slight opening. And from that opening, he pulls out...

A PHOTOGRAPH. Faded and wrinkled. Old. It shows a BEAUTIFUL GIRL, no older than 18, smiling at us. Who is she?

Ben places the photo on a SCANNING SURFACE embedded on the desk itself. He's about to start it, when he stops himself.

He produces a SMALL DEVICE and plugs it to the computer. On screen, a message appears:

"SECURITY BYPASS: PHANTOM MODE ACTIVATED"

Ben hits a key and the surface of the desk GLOWS for a second as the PHOTOGRAPH IS SCANNED and appears on the screen.

The computer starts fast-forwarding through what appears to be HOURS AND HOURS OF SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE. Images from security cameras in all sorts of places run at high speed in front of our eyes.

The program "grabs" the FACES of every individual appearing in the footage and compares it to the girl in the photograph, discarding them when they don't match. We realize it's a FACIAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM.

But Ben is barely watching. He produces his TABLET, and starts reading an article about the Jakarta bombing.

He's definitely done this computer search before and it's become routine...

Then suddenly, a BEEP BEEP BEEP makes him sit up and pay attention. He drops the tablet and turns to the computer screen, where a message flashes:

"PARTIAL MATCH. 73% PROBABILITY"

Beneath the message, a surveillance footage clip plays in a loop. It's grainy and blurry, but it shows a GROUP OF GIRLS being escorted out of a van by tough-looking BODYGUARDS.

The face of one of the girls has been enlarged and compared to the girl in the photograph, both faces side by side. Ben's heart skips a beat as he watches the blurry face onscreen. 73% probability. Could it really be her?

CUT TO:

The SCENE in the photograph, come to life. The GIRL tucks a strand of hair behind her ear, looks directly at the LENS, at us, and whispers...

GIRL

Aaron...

She SMILES and... CLICK! The picture gets taken.

Who is she? And who the hell is Aaron?

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Ben rushes through the main room of a fancy restaurant. This is a man who's not only very late to his anniversary dinner-- he's also deeply unsettled. \*

He dodges waiters and diners, when he stops: across the room, he sees Laura at a table, reading the menu. She hasn't seen him yet. She looks radiant, innocent, and Ben feels a wave of tenderness wash over him. \*

Laura looks up from the menu as Ben takes a seat. \*

BEN  
Sorry, sorry, sorry...

\*

LAURA  
It's OK.

BEN  
I just lost track-- This Jakarta  
thing, everyone's--

\*  
\*

LAURA  
Hey. It's fine. Really. You're  
here. We're here.

\*

She smiles, as a WAITER approaches -- we notice he also wears  
a TRACKING BRACELET.

WAITER  
Anything to drink for you, sir?

BEN  
Whatever my wife's having.

The waiter recedes into the background with a slight nod.

LAURA  
(re: her drink)  
Better enjoy this while I can.

BEN  
What do you mean?

A beat. A sly smile appears on Laura's face.

LAURA  
The permit. It came through today.

BEN  
The permit?

LAURA  
From Chrysalis. I've already made  
an appointment with their OB-GYN.  
He'll remove the IUD next week.

Laura takes Ben's hands across the table.

LAURA (CONT'D)  
We're pulling the goalies.

BEN  
(caught off guard)  
Wow, that's...

She's surprised to see her enthusiasm not being reciprocated.

LAURA

What? What's wrong?

BEN

Nothing. I just -- I thought we'd have to wait much longer-- I mean, I'm a junior exec-- at least till I made it to the fortieth floor.

LAURA

Well then this is good news, right? It means they like you. That's not so hard to believe. \*

BEN \*

Hey, I'm still trying to wrap my head around the fact that *you* like me. \*

Laura smiles, giddy, but instinctively covers her mouth. \*

BEN (CONT'D) \*

Hey, what did I say the day we met? \*

LAURA \*

"There's spinach in your teeth"?

BEN \*

After that. \*

LAURA \*

(protesting) \*

Ben... \*

Ben takes her hand, the one she was covering her smile with. \*

BEN \*

I said "A beautiful girl shouldn't cover her smile." And yes, you are. I can't believe you can't see that. \*

Laura smiles, moved. No covering this time. \*

INT. BEN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ben and Laura make love passionately. Ben's intensity feeds not only on passion, but also on his inner turmoil, and it's explosive. \*

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - ELEVATOR - DAY

BING! A glass-walled elevator rises up, offering an impressive view of the atrium of the Chrysalis HQ in all its sleek glory.

Inside, Ben watches the COUNTER as it shoots past the 30th floor, the 40th floor... all the way to the top.

The elevator doors open, revealing a spacious--

RECEPTION AREA

LUKE, a sharply dressed assistant in his 30s, welcomes him as he steps out of the elevator.

LUKE

Ben.

BEN

Good morning. Ms. Krauss called for me.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - ELIZABETH'S OFFICE - DAY

Luke opens the door to a ridiculously large office. Glass walls everywhere offer an even more breathtaking panorama of the city below.

Ben enters reluctantly, because at the other end of the room, sitting at her desk, ELIZABETH KRAUSS, mid 50s, is engaged in a VIDEOCONFERENCE with an ELDERLY MAN.

But Elizabeth waves for him to come in. Ben, uncomfortable, lingers at the entrance of the office, making himself busy by admiring the ARTWORK hanging from the walls: Old Masters and Pop Art, a Renoir rubbing elbows with a De Kooning... a melange that's as incoherent as it is impressive.

ELDERLY MAN

You think it's that easy? To sell water privatization to my constituents?

ELIZABETH

Come on, Senator, that's not what I'm asking and that's not what you're selling. You're selling safe, reliable access to clean water. That's what the Safe Water Act is.

SENATOR BRADLEY

Spare me the talking points. Let's call this what it is--

ELIZABETH

Let's. Quid pro quo. Or next time there's a riot in the Red Zones-- and if the shortages continue there will be-- who are you going to send? Your under-paid, unequipped, corrupt police? Or are you going to ask us to send our guys?

SENATOR BRADLEY

Your guys may be spreading themselves too thin, Elizabeth. I mean, this mess in Jakarta...

Elizabeth eyes Ben, uncomfortable with the turn the conversation has suddenly taken, and lowers her voice.

ELIZABETH

Do you think it's wise to gloat, Senator?

SENATOR BRADLEY

I'm too old and too scared to gloat. You're sitting on a powder keg, Elizabeth. We both are. But only one of us is aware of it.

Annoyed, Elizabeth taps her finger on the desk's interactive surface and the holographic image of the Senator vanishes.

BEN

Problem?

Elizabeth stands up and walks to Ben.

ELIZABETH

No problem. Bradley's a fool, not an idiot. You can't hold on to your seat for 40 years without knowing who your friends are.

When Elizabeth reaches Ben, she sees that he's admiring a painting that hangs apart from the rest. This one's special.

It's one of VAN GOGH'S HAUNTING SELF-PORTRAITS. Elizabeth indicates the brushtrokes on the canvas. It's clear she has a genuine appreciation of the work.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Those brushstrokes. Look at them.  
Furious, desperate. In a mad rush  
to pour himself onto the canvas.  
As if he was running out of time.

BEN

He was. He shot himself within a  
year.

Elizabeth looks at Ben. Impressive.

ELIZABETH

Poverty and suffering. Do you think  
you need them to create great art?

BEN

They're powerful motivators.

We still don't know it, but Ben's talking from experience.

ELIZABETH

I guess they are. Maybe if he'd  
sold a painting, he would've been a  
lesser artist, but a happier man.  
I wonder if he would've made that  
bargain.

Elizabeth returns to her desk. Ben follows.

BEN

(re: the painting)  
The Smithsonian caved?

ELIZABETH

Just last week. They fought and  
fought, and ended up getting half  
of what we offered them last year.  
Like you said, poverty's a powerful  
motivator.

She shows Ben a chair. He sits. But she doesn't. She leans  
on the desk, looming over him. He waits for her to tell him  
what she wants. And finally...

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

So... Laura, how is she?

Ben considers what he should tell her...

BEN

You know, you could ask her.

ELIZABETH

I'm asking you. Maybe if you convinced her to talk to me, I wouldn't have to.

Ben chuckles. So that's what this was about.

EXT. BEN'S HOUSE - DAY

Laura's stepping out of her car, which has just stopped at the driveway, when her cellphone rings. She answers.

LAURA

Hey, babe.

INTERCUT WITH:

BEN'S IN HIS OFFICE, on the phone.

BEN

She summoned me today.

Laura walks in the house. When she hears this, she stops.

LAURA

She did? What did she want?

BEN

Just to talk. About art... about you.

Ben waits a beat, but Laura doesn't answer.

BEN (CONT'D)

She wants to take you out for lunch.

LAURA

So now you're her errand boy.

BEN

I'm your husband. And her son-in-law.

LAURA

Sorry.

BEN

Look, Laura, just meet her. If she's going to be a grandmother, she has a right to know.

LAURA

Right, cause she has "grandmother"  
written all over her.

BEN

Laura...

LAURA

I'll think about it. OK?

BEN

OK.

LAURA

What time are you coming home  
tonight?

BEN

I'm... we were thinking about  
going out after work.

LAURA

Who's we?

BEN

Roger, a few of the guys. You're  
welcome to join us.

A slight feeling of dread creeps up on Laura as she asks...

LAURA

Where's the fun going to be?

BEN

They're thinking Southgate.

Ben's answer sounds casual, but it isn't. The name reaches  
inside of Laura and pushes a painful button. Ben waits for  
an answer, hoping that it will be...

LAURA

You guys have fun. Just come back  
with both your ears.

Ben exhales, relieved, but he's not happy. He feels like a  
scumbag for having to manipulate her. \*

BEN

(guilty)  
I'll do my best. Love you. \*

LAURA

Me too. But seriously, though...

BEN

Yeah?

LAURA

Be careful out there.

Laura hangs up. The conversation's left a bitter aftertaste in her mouth when...

RACHEL (O.S.)

Madam?

Laura turns: Rachel is at the kitchen door, waiting. How long has she been standing there?

LAURA

Yes?

RACHEL

I wouldn't ask if it wasn't important, but--

LAURA

What is it?

RACHEL

I was hoping I could leave early today.

LAURA

I don't think that's going to work today.

RACHEL

I mean it's just--

LAURA

(snaps)

I said not today.

Beat.

RACHEL

Very well.

She nods and backs away. Laura immediately regrets it, kicking herself for snapping at Rachel, but by the time she turns to the kitchen door, Rachel's gone.

LAURA

Shit.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Ben and Roger enter the parking garage and head towards Roger's SUV, where a small congregation of COMPANY MEN is waiting for them.

ROGER  
Gentlemen! ARE YOU READY FOR SOME  
GOOD OLD-FASHIONED DEBAUCHERY?!

They all respond with cheers and howls: LARRY, MARCUS, SUSAN and... CHAD, who waves sheepishly.

Roger's surprised to see Chad. He leans into Ben.

ROGER (CONT'D)  
What is he...? Did you invite him?

BEN  
Sure.

ROGER  
You like the guy?

BEN  
He's a lovable doofus. What's not  
to like?

ROGER  
You're working him, right?

BEN  
Just burying the hatchet.

ROGER  
(skeptical)  
Right.

A SERIES OF SHOTS:

The SUV exits the garage, the partying execs piled up inside.

The car gets on the TOLL FREEWAY, music blaring from their sound systems, until they approach an EXIT: **"SOUTHGATE"**.

An ELECTRONIC MESSAGE FLASHES on the SUV's windshield:

**"ATTENTION, YOU'RE EXITING A GREEN ZONE. USE CAUTION"**

The gates of a heavily armed TOLL PLAZA open to let the vehicle go through, exiting the freeway and pouring into the streets of:

EXT. SOUTHGATE - NIGHT

They drive through the poorly-lit streets of the RED ZONE, past SEEDY BARS, STRIP CLUBS and a FAST FOOD JOINT that announces: "THE DOUBLE WHAMMY. NOW WITH 25% REAL BEEF!"

The old-fashioned neon signs that advertise the strip joints are now complemented by VIDEO SCREENS and GIANT HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS: 30 FOOT TALL GIRLS DANCING on the rooftops of the strip clubs, gyrating around virtual poles.

MOPEDS and BICYCLES surround the SUV. A pair of HOOKERS beckon them, flashing their breasts as they roll by. The Execs howl, pant, cheer.

Only Ben notices a RECRUITMENT VIDEO AD that's been smashed (skipping every two second like a broken record) and covered in RED GRAFFITI that reads: "**CANNON FODDER**".

Roger pulls out a bottle of synthetic Scotch from under the seat, takes a long swig and passes it to Chad.

ROGER

Sir?

Chad hesitates. A proper man trying to seem "fun" around subordinates who don't respect him.

CHAD

Uh... Sure.

Chad stares at the wet bottle neck. He surreptitiously wipes it with his tie before taking a timid sip, when the car makes a right turn into a...

NARROW SIDE STREET

And comes to a sudden stop, because a POLICE CAR blocks the street. COPS (under-equipped, shabbier than the Chrysalis private security) are making arrests, pushing a group of YOUTHS (hoodies and handkerchiefs around their necks) against the CHARRED CARCASS OF A CAR and handcuffing them.

The situation is tense. The execs in the car freeze. A COP glares at them.

ROGER

OK, this is not... Reroute.

The GPS cheerfully chimes "REROUTING" and the car goes into reverse. Ben notices a CAN OF RED SPRAY PAINT lying on the ground by the Youths.

The car is backing away, when one of the YOUTHS tries to run. \*  
A COP smacks him brutally with a NIGHTSTICK, but another \*  
Youth takes advantage of the confusion to grab the GUN of one \*  
of the cops and starts FIRING. \*

LARRY \*  
Shit, shit, shit. \*

ROGER \*  
Go! Faster! \*

GPS VOICE \*  
Sorry, speed limit is 25 miles... \*

But we cannot really hear it, because the cops are firing \*  
back, RIDDLING THE GUY WITH BULLETS. The GUN flies off his \*  
hand and slides under the CHARRED CAR while the automated car \*  
backs away at a leisurely pace... \*

MARCUS \*  
Override! Override, goddamnit! \*

...and turns back into the main drag, away from the violence. \*

They all catch their breath. After a beat to make sure he's \*  
OK, Roger tries to shrug it off and acts all pumped. \*

ROGER \*  
Holy shit, DID I PROMISE YOU \*  
EXCITEMENT OR DID I PROMISE YOU \*  
EXCITEMENT? That was no sim, guys! \*  
That was like front row seats to \*  
some honest-to-goodness violence! \*

But the rest of the group is still pretty shaken. \*

LARRY \*  
Where's that Scotch? \*

That's when they notice that Chad has dropped the bottle in a \*  
panic. It's emptied out. \*

CHAD \*  
Sorry. \*

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A HUGE WAREHOUSE by the river. Music pounds loudly from  
within, while a crowd slowly streams inside.

The SUV pulls up into the vacant lot across the street: an  
improvised parking lot.

A TWITCHY GUY limps towards the car as they're stepping out.

TWITCHY GUY

Hey, Rog.

Roger slips a bill into the guy's hand.

ROGER

(re: the car)

Keep an eye on my baby?

TWITCHY GUY

You got it.

They all head towards the warehouse. Roger notices that Ben looks sullen, so he puts an arm around his shoulder. \*

ROGER \*

You OK? \*

BEN \*

Yeah. \*

But he doesn't sound too convincing and Roger can guess why. \*

ROGER \*

They're troublemakers, man, RZ  
scum. You pull a gun on a cop,  
what do you expect? \*

Roger spots a GROUP gathered on the far end of the lot. He squeezes Ben's shoulder.

ROGER (CONT'D)

You go ahead. I'll catch up  
inside.

BEN

Sure thing, you degenerate.

ROGER

Hey, you're partaking too!

And he heads towards the group.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Ben leads Chad, Susan, Larry and Marcus past TWO BOUNCERS that scan people with HANDHELD METAL DETECTORS under a sign that reads: "NO FIREARMS BEYOND THIS POINT"

Inside, they find a a huge, cavernous space, air thick with smoke and sweat. The first thing that hits them is the ROAR of the crowd.

The centerpiece of the space is a CAGE, where two fighters are applying as much hurt to each other as it's (in)humanly possible. No gloves, no rules, no ref. Just brutal hand to hand combat. Life is cheap here.

The crowd is a mix of genuine lowlifes, gangster wannabes, partying college kids and other company men. They bet on the fight, cheering every blow. When a punch sends a gob of blood and teeth flying, the crowd goes wild.

Ben watches, but he doesn't cheer. Instead, he flinches at a particularly brutal punch that sends a fighter spinning against the mat. He's not enjoying this. Meanwhile...

AT THE BAR

Chad has pushed his way through the crowd and is trying to get the attention of a TATTOED BARTENDER.

CHAD

Hey. Hey!

Chad waves his ELECTRONIC WATCH, but the Bartender takes orders from other costumers.

CHAD (CONT'D)

What am I, invisible?

Marcus pulls down Chad's watch.

MARCUS

Cash only out here.  
(to the bartender)  
Hey, asshole!

The Bartender turns. He gives Marcus a stone-cold "what-did-you-just-call-me?" look. This guy is tough and Marcus... well, he isn't. He can barely mumble an apology.

Then, another SERVER plops FIVE BEERS in front of them.

LARRY

What--?

SERVER

Your friends send them over.

He points at a GROUP OF SUITS at the other end of the bar. Guys in their thirties who grin and wave at them.

Chad grabs a beer. It's...

CHAD  
Bintang.

SUSAN  
Indonesian.

LARRY  
Those Radiance fuckers...

The RADIANCE EXECs crack up. One of them yells over the din:

RADIANCE EXEC  
After what happened, we figured you  
guys could use a drink!

RADIANCE EXEC 2  
CHEERS!

LARRY  
Hey, fuck you!

Larry notices Marcus has grabbed one and is taking a gulp.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
Well don't drink it!

Marcus almost chokes pulling it out of his mouth.

MARCUS  
Sorry.

That's when Roger joins them.

ROGER  
Guys... don't ever say I never did  
anything for you.

He pulls out a Ziplock bag and shakes it: inside jangle what  
looks like half a dozen modified asthma INHALERS.

ROGER (CONT'D)  
Here's some primo, triple A, thank-  
God-it's-Friday Bliss.

They each grab one. Larry puts it in his mouth and presses a  
button. Chad is more hesitant but follows his example.

When Ben takes one, we notice that he blocks the inhaler's  
exit with his thumb. He presses the button, but doesn't  
really inhale. He's staying sober.

The same cannot be said about the rest of the group. Roger's the last one to take a hit. The moment he does, we see the world through his eyes and...

THE WORLD SLOOOOOOWS DOWN. Every movement, every laughter, every sound elongated... almost to a standstill.

This is your brain on Bliss.

In the cage, the two fighters are involved in a confrontation so slow that it's almost balletic. Every punch lands with breathtaking clarity. Blood and sweat droplets seem suspended in the air.

Ben, pretending to be high, hands Chad a shot.

CHAD

No, no...

BEN

Come on!

Chad takes the drink and downs it. Before he knows it, Ben is pouring him another one and the rest of the group encourages him with a chant...

GROUP

Go, go, go!

Chad downs it again, this time even faster. They all CHEER!

But immediately, Chad bends over and retches. They all jump back: not on my shoes! But it's a dry retch. For now.

LARRY

Someone's blissed out.

BEN

I got him.

Ben helps Chad stand up. Or if not stand up, at least not fall down.

BEN (CONT'D)

Let's go.

Ben places one of Chad's arms over his shoulder and helps him out of the room towards...

INT. WAREHOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The seedy hallway where the restrooms are located. Ben helps poor, limping Chad.

CHAD

Hey Ben?

BEN

Yeah?

CHAD

I'm not an asshole.

BEN

I know.

CHAD

It's just... the pressure... they  
got your balls in a vise and they  
just... never let go.

Ben looks around, to make sure no one follows them, before pushing the restroom door open and dragging Chad inside.

INT. WAREHOUSE - RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

This is one filthy place. Two college kids do lines of coke off the sink. In one stall, a Suit is getting a blowjob in plain sight. Couldn't they at least shut the door? Nevermind, the door fell off the hinges a long time ago.

BEN

Come on.

Ben finds a stall with the door still intact and helps Chad inside. He holds his forehead as Chad throws up.

While Ben holds him, he uses his free hand to pull out something from his pocket: it's a small plastic VIAL with a tiny needle attached.

BEN (CONT'D)

One more...

Chad retches again, but nothing comes out. Ben is about to pinch him in the back of his neck with the needle, when one of Chad's convulsions knocks the vial out of his hand.

Ben looks down: the vial has landed in a puddle of... what, exactly? Better not to ask.

Ben leans down to pick it up, disgusted, when...

Someone KNOCKS AT THE DOOR OF THE STALL.

MAN'S VOICE

Come on!

Ben struggles to pick up the vial.

BEN  
In a moment!

CHAD  
I think I'm done.

BEN  
One more.

THE KNOCKING CONTINUES, NOW LOUDER.

CHAD  
I don't think I--

BEN  
One more. Let it out.

Ben grabs the vial and sticks it in the back of Chad's neck. Chad GRIMACES as the vial instantly fills up with a sample of CHAD'S BLOOD.

CHAD  
What was that?

BEN  
What was what? Come on, let's go.

...and opens the door, only to find that the person knocking is the RADIANCE EXEC.

He smirks when he sees Ben and Chad inside the stall.

RADIANCE EXEC  
Let me guess.  
(points at Ben, then Chad)  
Pitcher. Catcher.

BEN  
Funny.

Ben tries to walk past him, but the Radiance Exec blocks the way with an arm against the stall.

RADIANCE EXEC  
Where are you going? There are so many more puns where that came from. I'm not even close to--

The Exec notices the TINY VIAL, still in Ben's hand. Ben quickly hides it away, but too late:

## RADIANCE EXEC (CONT'D)

What the hell are you guys doing in  
the--?

BLAM! Suddenly, with no warning, the Radiance Exec doubles over as Ben sinks a knee into the guy's groin.

Before the guy can even grunt, Ben spins him around and rams his head against a sink, which disintegrates in an explosion of porcelain and cocaine. The college kids jump aside.

Ben's moves have been fast, precise, brutal: in less than five seconds, the Exec lies unconscious on the floor.

Chad, still in a daze, looks at the Radiance Exec, then at Ben, who's disturbed about what he's just done.

CHAD

Wow... Who are you?

BEN

I'm Ben. Come on.

Fortunately, by tomorrow Chad won't remember any of this.

INT. WAREHOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ben's walking Chad back to the big room, when he stops.

BEN

Shoot, I... You think you can make  
it back?

CHAD

I... Yeah... Why?

BEN

I forgot something. Be right back.

CHAD

Ok...

And Chad stumbles towards the din of the cage fight while Ben recedes into the hallway.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Ben walks out of the building, looking back to make sure nobody sees him leave. He crosses the vacant lot and starts walking down the street towards...

A TALL BUILDING IN THE DISTANCE, LOOMING FROM THE DARKNESS OF THE NIGHT SKY.

No one's seen him. No one, except...

THE TWITCHY GUY keeping an eye on Roger's car. He emerges from between the parked vehicles and watches Ben walk away.

EXT. DERELICT HIGH RISE - NIGHT

As Ben gets close to the building, we realize that it could be more accurately described as THE SHELL OF A BUILDING. Abandoned before it was completed, the high rise is a mere skeleton of steel and concrete.

Ben approaches the entrance, guarded by a GROUP OF YOUNG PUNKS. The LEADER is a 16 year old with peach fuzz facial hair. Harmless? Not really: these guys are armed.

The Leader smirks when he sees Ben.

LEADER

Hey, Suit.

Ben stops. The Leader blocks the way and won't let him in.

BEN

You're new.

LEADER

Why?

Ben pulls out a wad of cash, peels out a twenty and offers it to him. The Leader eyes the twenty, but his eyes wander greedily to the rest of the cash. There's a lot more there.

Ben knows what he's thinking.

BEN

See this?

Ben nods at the BLOOD STAINS on the cuff of his shirt.

BEN (CONT'D)

Not my blood.

The Leader holds Ben's stare for a beat. A decision to be made... until he grabs the twenty and nods Ben to go in.

Ben pockets the wad and walks past the Leader into...

INT. DERELICT HIGH RISE - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The lobby makes the outside of the building look good. Concrete floors, the guts of the building out for everyone to see. The ELEVATOR SHAFTS are just two black, gaping holes.

Inside, a PUNK sits on a DIRT BIKE. The bike starts with a VROOOM and Ben sits behind the driver.

BEN

Eighteenth.

The Driver nods and guns the bike towards a STAIRCASE...

INT. DERELICT HIGH RISE - STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

The bike drives up the stairs, carrying its passenger floor after floor, until...

INT. DERELICT HIGH RISE - 18TH FLOOR - NIGHT

The bike bursts out of a staircase and comes to a stop.

Ben gets off the bike and peels off another bill. The driver takes it and roars back down the stairs.

Ben is left alone in the dark hallway, the only light source being the moon that seeps in through the holes in the walls.

He approaches an UNMARKED DOOR and knocks...

...then waits, until...

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Yeah?

BEN

It's me.

The sound of numerous locks. Then, the door opens, revealing... THEO. Very much alive.

He turns back, leaves the door open, trying not to face Ben.

THEO

Hey, Aaron.

That name again. Who's Aaron?

BEN

Theo.

Ben enters and closes the door behind him.

INT. DERELICT HIGH RISE - THEO'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The inside of the apartment is modest, but someone's done his best to make it livable.

THEO  
(brusque)  
What are you doing here?

BEN  
Getting the usual warm and fuzzy  
welcome, I gue-- What's that?

Ben's noticed something on Theo's face: is that a bruise?

BEN (CONT'D)  
What happened?

THEO  
Nothing.

Ben grabs Theo's shoulder and spins him around: there's definitely a bruise on his cheek, and a cut on his lip.

BEN  
What do you mean "nothing"?

THEO  
It's just the training. I've...  
started training.

BEN  
You mean for the cage.

THEO  
Yeah.

Ben takes a beat to process it.

BEN  
That's insane.

THEO  
That's not what Terrence says.

BEN  
Terrence?

THEO

Terrence, he's... "the guy" around here. He says we'll make a shitload of money together.

BEN

He'll make a shitload of money. You'll end up soiling your underwear in some street corner.

Suddenly, the LIGHTS in the apartment DIM AND FLICKER. Without missing a beat, Theo reaches for a LAMP on the table. The lamp has a handle, and Theo starts cranking it while he speaks... This is not unusual.

THEO

What do you want me to do? Join one of the corporate armies? Get blown to pieces in some gas field in Siberia?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

By the time the lights die out in a full-blown BLACK-OUT, the HAND-CRANKED LAMP has enough power to light up the room, however faintly.

THEO (CONT'D)

(re: the black-out)

I bet you miss these.

Ben ignores the comment. He's still concerned about Theo.

BEN

I bring you cigarettes, Theo. Real ones. There's good money there.

THEO

And what do you think got me in trouble with Terrence in the first place, Aaron?

BEN

It's Ben.

Beat.

THEO

Sure. I'll call you Ben. As long as you don't forget Aaron.

BEN

I don't.

Ben produces a folded piece of paper. He hands it out to Theo, who unfolds it by the glow of the lamp:

It's a PRINT-OUT from the FACE-RECOGNITION SOFTWARE. It shows the GIRL being escorted out of the minivan.

Theo's mouth suddenly goes dry. He finds it hard to speak when he says...

THEO

Is that... is that her?

BEN

Seventy-three percent chance.  
Never even got close to forty  
before.

The printout shakes in Theo's hand.

THEO

So you found her?

BEN

I may have.

THEO

Where is she?

BEN

If it is Elena--

THEO

Where. Is. She?

Ben points at the print-out.

BEN

That's a group of girls being  
escorted to Arcadia. New girls.

THEO

(afraid)  
That's a...

BEN

It's an Executive Club. \*

THEO

Sure, keep telling yourself that. \*

BEN

Theo-- \*

THEO

Can you get in there?

BEN  
Not at my level, I--

THEO  
You can't--?

BEN  
Not till I get a promotion...

THEO  
You fucking Suits.

BEN  
...not till I get to the fortieth  
floor. Access is restricted to  
senior execs.

Theo sits on a mangy couch, deflated.

THEO  
Tell me you got a plan.

Ben produces the SMALL VIAL WITH CHAD'S BLOOD.

THEO (CONT'D)  
What's that?

BEN  
Opportunity.  
(beat)  
A position is about to open up on  
the fortieth.

Theo stands up and faces Ben.

THEO  
You better get that promotion then. \*  
For your sake and the sake of that \*  
dumb piece of ass you ma-- \*

BEN \*  
(shutting him up) \*  
Careful. \*

Theo smiles. \*

THEO \*  
See, Ben? You're already \*  
forgetting. \*

Theo was testing him and Ben took the bait. \*



Elena KISSES him passionately and we realize we are on the ROOFTOP of a derelict town house. Behind them, the reds and oranges of the SUNSET make the shanty town almost beautiful.

EXT. RED ZONE - MOMENTS LATER

Ben and Elena run out of the building and jump on the MOPED waiting for them on the curb. Elena wraps her arms tight around Ben as he starts the bike and ZOOMS AWAY.

Elena presses her cheek against Ben's back and closes her eyes. With the sun on her face and the wind in her hair, she SMILES. They're young, happy, in love.

But suddenly, Ben brings the bike to a HALT with a worried look on his face.

Alarmed, Elena looks over Ben's shoulder and sees what he's seeing: A COLUMN OF SMOKE rises at the end of the street.

CUT TO:

A RAGING FIRE. A HOUSE IS BURNING TO THE GROUND.

A crowd of curious bystanders watch as a DESPERATE MAN (50s) pleads to a couple of FIREFIGHTERS leaning on their fire truck. They're just watching the house burn.

The Desperate Man produces his wallet.

DESPERATE MAN

Please, please! I-- I have two-- no, three hundred. 300 dollars.

FIRE FIGHTER

I'm sorry, sir, but that's not how it works. It's first day of the month, every month.

DESPERATE MAN

So what the fuck are you here for then?! To watch?

FIRE FIGHTER

In case the fire spreads. There's paying costumers all around you.

Suddenly, Elena comes out of the crowd, followed by Ben.

ELENA

My God, dad! DAD! What happened?!

The Desperate Man, ELENA'S FATHER, turns around, furious, teary eyed. A broken man. \*

ELENA'S FATHER \*

He happened! He fucking happened! \*

He's talking about Ben. The Father lunges towards him while Elena tries to contain him. \*

ELENA'S FATHER (CONT'D) \*

They came looking for him. They wanted their money and-- and now... now we've lost everything. Every. Goddamn. Thing!!! \*

BLAM!!! The Father CLOCKS Ben, hard, right in the jaw. And with the punch, we... \*

CUT TO:

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - STORAGE ROOM - DAY

Ben follows ALAN (46), a chubby, tired-looking engineer, down the hallway of a storage room. The walls are lined with endless rows of little DOORS, similar to a morgue.

ALAN

The Whistle? I thought you were on the Torchlight team.

BEN

I am. But after Jakarta, bosses are scrambling. They're fast-tracking any anti-riot tech on development. See what we can get ready to deploy.

ALAN

Natives are getting restless, huh?

BEN

Looks like it. They're keeping it exclusively non-lethal, though.

ALAN

Yeah, for now.

Alan stops by one of the doors and produces a TABLET.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Sign here.

Ben presses the palm on the touch screen and it gets scanned.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Alan turns to the door and puts his own palm against its surface. The door reads his hand and OPENS. Alan produces a SMALL BLACK BOX and hands it to Ben.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Well, see if you can stabilize the inhibitors. The pitch always ends up frying the circuits.

BEN

I'll see what I can do.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - BATHROOM STALL - DAY

CLICK. CLICK. Sitting on the toilet, Ben opens the two latches on the box and lifts its cover.

Inside, he finds a TRIGGER-SHAPED DEVICE, and two electronic EARPLUGS. The Whistle...

Ben considers it for a beat, nervous, unsure. Is he ready?

Finally, he squeezes one of the earplugs and both come to life with a very low hum and a tiny blue light: they're on.

CUT TO:

A TABLET falls into a glass of water, DISSOLVING WITH A SIZZLE.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - CHAD'S CORNER OFFICE - DAY

On one of the top floors, Chad's massive office displays a breathtaking view of the financial district of Milwaukee.

Severely hung over, Chad squints at the GLARE of the sun on the glass of a neighboring skyscraper. He slides a finger over his desk and the WINDOWS DARKEN, dimming the sunlight.

Chad takes a sip of his medicine when suddenly, BEEEEEP! The intercom makes him flinch. His head is killing him.

CHAD

What now?

SECRETARY (O.S.)

Mr. Larson is here to see you.

Chad lets go a tired sigh.

CHAD

Let him in.

The SECRETARY (25) opens the door and Ben walks in.

Chad leans back on his chair and points at the one in front of his desk. An invitation to sit.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Ben...

As he takes a seat, Ben notices his boss's bloodshot eyes, the medicine on the table...

BEN

Crazy night, huh? I woke up myself to this horrible splitting he--

CHAD

(curt)

How can I help you?

Chad is not only back to his "boss mode", he's also in a shitty mood. He'll have none of last night's familiarity.

As Ben talks, the CAMERA closes in on his EAR, revealing a faint blue hue and a barely audible hum: the EARPLUGS.

BEN

I've been thinking. About Torchlight. How to speed things up.

Still talking, Ben slips a hand inside his pocket and wraps his fingers around the TRIGGER.

BEN (CONT'D)

The learning process is just a matter of man-power, and putting in more hours.

And CLICK! Ben squeezes the trigger. The WHISTLE emits the faintest high-pitched frequency. Chad doesn't seem to notice.

CHAD

Tell me something I don't know.

Or maybe he does notice. Chad starts to fidget uncomfortably in his chair as the faint high-pitched noise floats in the background. He's not feeling well.

BEN

What I'm suggesting here is double shifts.

(MORE)

BEN (CONT'D)  
I'm happy to do overtime, come in  
on weekends, get more test  
subjects...

CHAD  
Sure, and go over budg--

A WAVE ON NAUSEA interrupts Chad mid-sentence. He immediately covers his mouth. Ben pretends not to notice.

BEN  
We could bring volunteers from the  
Red Zones. Shouldn't be too  
costly.

CHAD  
But the security clearance process  
would be a nightmare. Look, Ben--

Suddenly, a second wave of nausea, intensified by a cramp. Chad flinches, in pain.

BEN  
Are you OK?

CHAD  
I'm fine, I'm fine. It's just--  
(another cramp)  
Excuse me a second, will you?

Chad jumps out of the chair and storms out of the office.

SECRETARY (O.S.)  
Sir, are you alright?

As soon as the door closes, Ben rushes to the other side of the desk. He doesn't have much time.

A swipe on the desk's surface and a section of it rises and tilts, turning into a TOUCH SCREEN. Ben navigates the interface as fast as he can, until he finds the FOLDER he was looking for.

When he clicks on it, a WARNING appears: "**CLEARANCE LEVEL 5. DNA IDENTIFICATION REQUIRED**" And a small section of the table opens, revealing...

...a TINY NEEDLE.

Ben produces the vial with Chad's sample and carefully places a DROP OF BLOOD on the needle.

The computer starts analyzing the sample, a DOUBLE HELIX being formed on screen.

Finally, **"ACCESS GRANTED. WELCOME CHAD PETERSON"**

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - BATHROOM STALL - SAME TIME

The door swings open and Chad storms into the stall. He immediately drops on his knees and hugs the porcelain toilet.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - CHAD'S CORNER OFFICE - SAME TIME

Ben places a SMALL SPHERE on top of the table. When it touches the surface, the SPHERE lights up: a PORTABLE DRIVE.

Ben drags the folder to a corner of the screen and another message appears: **"COPYING FILES: 0%, 1%, 2%"**

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - MEN'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Chad splashes water on his face. Far from the Whistle's range, he seems to be feeling better.

He looks himself in the mirror for a beat, takes a deep breath and exits the bathroom.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - CHAD'S CORNER OFFICE - SAME TIME

Meanwhile, the files are copying at an excruciatingly slow pace: **%45, %46, %47...**

Ben's eyes dart from the door to the screen. Come-on-come-on-come-on...

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - OFFICE - SAME TIME

Chad's secretary watches her boss walk briskly across the floor, back to his office. She would say something but Chad's sour face tells her he's not in the mood.

Shit. He's coming back and Ben is far from being done.

Chad wraps his fist around the knob, ready to walk back in...

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - CHAD'S CORNER OFFICE - SAME TIME

Ben sees Chad's silhouette through the frosted glass and his heart skips a beat.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - OFFICE - SAME TIME

But, suddenly, Chad FREEZES. A drop of cold sweat drips down his brow. He slowly rests his forehead against the door.

SECRETARY

Mr. Peterson?

Then we hear it. Very faint. The high-pitched drone. Back in the Whistle's range, his stomach is churning again.

Before we know it, Chad is rushing back to the men's room.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

Mr. Peterson!

Secretaries and executives watch him with surprise and suppressed amusement as he runs across the office.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - CHAD'S CORNER OFFICE - SAME TIME

Ben lets out a sigh of relief.

**%62, %63, %64...** The CAMERA closes in on Ben's ears, towards the blue hue and the low hum, when...

Suddenly, the blue light starts to flicker. Once, twice, three times... and it's out. The hum also stops. Unbeknown to him, the EARPLUGS have stopped working.

Slowly, without him noticing, the high-pitched frequency starts to flood his brain, growing and growing in intensity.

**%75, %76, %77...** A drop of cold sweat runs down Ben's temple. He starts to feel dizzy, sick.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - MEN'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Chad wipes his mouth with a paper towel, takes one last look at his paled face in the mirror, and exits the men's room.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - CHAD'S CORNER OFFICE - SAME TIME

**%83, %84, %85...**

A cramp and a wave of nausea make Ben double over.

He realizes that the earplugs are fried. They're not working. Doing his best to contain the nausea, Ben has no choice but to press the trigger again, **TURNING OFF THE WHISTLE.**

After a beat, he heaves a sigh of relief. But...

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - OFFICE - SAME TIME

Chad, enraged and humiliated, walks briskly across the office under the gaze of the other employees, now whispering behind his back.

The Secretary immediately stands up as she sees him approach.

SECRETARY

How are you feeling, Mr. Peterson?

CHAD

(brusque)

I'm fine!

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - CHAD'S CORNER OFFICE - SAME TIME

Ben freezes when she hears the muffled conversation between Chad and his Secretary beyond the frosted glass.

No protection now. Nothing he can do to keep Chad out.

**%90, %91, %92...** Jesus Christ! Finish already!

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - OFFICE - SAME TIME

Finally, Chad puts his hand on the doorknob and PUSHES IT OPEN, revealing...

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - CHAD'S CORNER OFFICE - SAME TIME

...Ben BACK IN HIS CHAIR, like nothing had happened. Phew...

BEN

You OK?

Chad mumbles a grumpy response and drops on his chair.

CHAD

Where were we?

INT. LAURA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Laura sits in her car, returning from work, as the vehicle takes the next exit and, through the windshield, we see the sign: **"Welcome to Stanford Mills"**

The car silently glides towards the gated community's checkpoint, where the daily laborers are being searched and screened as they leave for the day.

Suddenly, something catches her attention. There's a commotion in one of the BODY SCANNERS: Two ARMED GUARDS grab a WOMAN and forcefully shove her against the wall.

The woman screams and protests as she's searched, but one the guards barks at her...

ARMED GUARD 1

Shut up!

...as the other one grabs her arms and closes a pair of PLASTIC HANDCUFFS around her wrists.

None of the other laborers dares to glance at the scene.

As the gates open for her car and the vehicle enters the community, Laura catches a glimpse of the woman being arrested. It's none other than RACHEL, Laura's maid.

Laura hesitates for a beat, but finally...

LAURA

Stop. Stop!

The car automatically pulls over to the curb and Laura rushes out of the car and towards the check point.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Hey! HEY! What's going on here?

ARMED GUARD 1 turns to Laura while ARMED GUARD 2 keeps Rachel pinned against the wall.

ARMED GUARD 1

This woman works for you, ma'am?

LAURA

She does. Why?

ARMED GUARD 2

I'm very sorry, Ms...

LAURA

Larson.

ARMED GUARD 2

...but I'm afraid we've caught her leaving with stolen goods.

LAURA  
Stolen goods?

She directs a betrayed glance at Rachel, who lowers her gaze, ashamed.

ARMED GUARD 1  
Do you recognize this?

Armed Guard 1 shows Laura A THICK SLAB OF BACON wrapped in wax paper. The guard takes a quick SNIFF at it.

ARMED GUARD 1 (CONT'D)  
Real meat. I'd say \$400 worth.

LAURA  
Yes... That's mine...

Rachel shoots a terrified glance at her boss. She silently begs her for mercy.

Laura considers it for a beat, and finally adds...

LAURA (CONT'D)  
It was a... present. For her.

ARMED GUARD 1  
(skeptical)  
A present.

LAURA  
Yes. For her years of service.  
She's been quite good to us.

ARMED GUARD 1  
It's a very expensive present,  
ma'am.

ARMED GUARD 2  
You have to provide your maid with  
a signed authorization for things  
like this.

LAURA  
Look, I-- I really don't have time  
for this. You know what? Why  
don't you just keep it. So you  
know we appreciate your service  
too.

The two guards look at each other, silently conferring.  
Should they take the bribe? Finally...

ARMED GUARD 1

Much appreciated, ma'am. Have a good day.

Rachel can't believe her luck. Armed Guard 2 produces a box cutter and CHACK, cuts the plastic handcuffs off her wrists.

LAURA

You too.

Laura walks back to her car, but before getting into the vehicle, she looks back one last time. On the other side of the gate, she sees Rachel looking back at her.

Rachel sends her a NOD, a silent "thank you." Laura responds with ANOTHER NOD. "You're welcome." And shuts the car door.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

The office drones gather in lines, waiting for their turn to be screened on their way out of work. It's check out time.

We move along one of the lines, past men and women, some chatting cheerfully, some annoyed at the slow speed of the line, others plugged to their portable devices, watching videos or listening to music...

Finally, we reach Ben, waiting in silence for his turn. He seems a little nervous, fidgety. He observes the body scanners as people come in, they're cleared and then leave...

ARMED GUARD

Next.

As he gets closer, Ben seems to grow more nervous, more insecure, his eyes darting across the room, watching the other lines. Does he have something to hide?

ARMED GUARD (CONT'D)

Step up, sir.

It's his turn. Here we go...

Ben places his briefcase on the belt and steps into the scanner. He spreads his legs and raises his arms. The machine buzzes as the sensors spin around him, constructing a detailed 3D image of Ben on the screen.

Blink, blink, blink... All the devices in his pockets are highlighted one by one, their contents analyzed: A list of files rapidly cascades on the screen when, suddenly...

AN ALARM GOES OFF. Hysterical. Deafening.

Ben stays still, legs spread, arms in the air, as the crowd gasps and the guards spring into action.

Behind him, we can see a SQUAD OF GUARDS running across the lobby, making their way past the drones, approaching him...

...and then, surprisingly, RUSHING PAST HIM towards...

...the NEXT BODY SCANNER.

And then we see it. It's actually the next scanner that has set off the alarm, all its LIGHTS FLASHING RED.

The armed guards surround the scanner, weapons drawn, barking a cacophony of orders to...

...CHAD, who stands terrified, covered in cold sweat, inside the machine.

ARMED GUARD (CONT'D)

(to Ben)

Sir. Sir? You can go now.

Ben snaps out of it, and steps out of the scanner.

BEN

Thank you.

Ben calmly picks up his briefcase and walks away, doing his best not to look back as Chad is dragged out of the scanner.

CHAD

Wait. Wait! There must be a mistake!

As he's roughly frisked, Chad sees the WARNING flashing on the screen: **"WARNING: UNAUTHORIZED EXTRACTION. CLASSIFIED FILES"**. What the hell?

And then, a Guard pops Chad's briefcase open, and produces something familiar:

A SMALL SPHERE, the portable drive Ben used to copy the classified files. He planted it in Chad's briefcase.

Chad's eyes widen in disbelief.

CHAD (CONT'D)

That's not-- that's not mine!

But the guards ignore him. They pull his arms behind his back and slide a pair of PLASTIC HANDCUFFS around his wrists.

CHAD (CONT'D)  
THAT'S NOT MINE! IT'S NOT M--

Suddenly, a BLACK CAPTURE HOOD falls over Chad's head. Two guards grab him by the arms and drag him, kicking and screaming, out of the room. And now we realize: Chad was the man in the hood we saw at the beginning of the episode!

Immediately, the lobby goes back to normal. The chatter resumes as if nothing had happened.

EXT. BEN'S HOUSE - DUSK

Ben's car parks itself on the driveway and Ben steps out of the vehicle, somber, disturbed.

The neighborhood is cheery, in contrast: TWO BROTHERS play catch on a nearby house while a ROOMBA-LIKE DEVICE mows the lawn, a WOMAN reading a tablet on her porch...

INT. BEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ben drops his briefcase by the entrance and immediately walks to the dining room.

There, he opens a sideboard, revealing a collection of LIQUOR BOTTLES. He takes the WHISKEY and pours himself a generous serving. Neat.

Ben downs the whiskey in one gulp. It burns as it goes down his throat, but the pain feels good.

He stays there in silence, with his eyes closed, until...

LAURA (O.S.)  
Honey?

Laura appears at the door, behind him.

LAURA (CONT'D)  
You're home.

Ben doesn't reply. He doesn't turn.

LAURA (CONT'D)  
Is... everything OK?

BEN  
Chad got fired today.

Laura immediately understands the gravity of the situation.

LAURA  
My God...

BEN  
Must be in the Boiler Room by now.

Laura embraces him from behind.

LAURA  
What will happen to his family now?

Ben shakes his head, wrecked by the guilt of what he's done.

BEN  
I'll talk to Elizabeth.

LAURA  
She won't help. You don't know her  
like I do.

BEN  
She's family.

LAURA  
No. You and me, right here. This  
is family. The two of us.  
(reaches for her belly)  
The three of us.

And she holds Ben tighter, so close and yet incapable of  
seeing his face.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - OFFICE - DAY

The whole floor has gathered along the tables and hallways of  
the sea of cubicles. The crowd gossips in hushed voices.

Finally, DING! an ELEVATOR opens and CLICK CLACK CLICK  
CLACK, the footsteps of a very expensive pair of HIGH HEEL  
SHOES echo all over the floor.

Elizabeth faces the crowd and starts to talk.

ELIZABETH  
Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

The whispers immediately subside.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)  
Two days ago we buried fourteen  
loyal men and women. Yesterday, we  
captured a rat. Hell of a week.

And her speech triggers a MONTAGE SEQUENCE:

EXT. LUXURIOUS SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY (MONTAGE)

A MIDDLE AGED WOMAN in a bikini lazily sunbathes on a pool lounge in the back yard swimming pool,.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)  
It's heartbreaking to watch someone  
bite the hand that feeds him.

Suddenly, a NOISE wakes her up. She looks up and SCREAMS!!!

ELIZABETH (V.O.)  
Chrysalis is a generous mother. It  
will feed you, dress you, protect  
you...

DARK FIGURES are emerging from the shrubbery: AN ASSAULT TEAM, in helmets and kevlar vests, holding assault rifles, rapidly invades the back yard and rushes towards the house.

INT. LUXURIOUS SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY (MONTAGE)

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! The front door is kicked down and...

ASSAULT TEAM LEADER  
Go-go-go-go-go!!!

...more ARMED GUARDS storm the place, meeting the others irrupting through the back door.

The assault team spreads across the rooms, opening drawers, emptying them on the floor, throwing pillows, flipping the furniture upside down.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)  
In exchange it only asks for hard  
work and loyalty.

A FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH falls on the floor and cracks. It's a FAMILY PORTRAIT that shows a smiling Chad with his WIFE (the middle aged woman) and their TWO KIDS.

This is CHAD'S HOME.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)  
The alternative... well, you all  
know Mr. Peterson's fate.

As some guards rush up the stairs, TWO TERRIFIED KIDS, Chad's children, run down from the upper floor...

KIDS

MOM!!!

...and jump into their mother's arms, still soaked.

CHAD'S WIFE

Shhhh. It's OK. It's gonna be OK...

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - BOILER ROOM - ? (MONTAGE)

The BLACK HOOD is yanked off Chad's head. And now the tape covering his mouth is ripped off. \*

Pale, sweaty, terrified... Chad finds himself chained to a chair in the middle of a windowless WHITE-TILED ROOM. \*

This is the scene we saw at beginning of the episode. This is the Boiler Room. \*

ELIZABETH (V.O.)

His connection to the bombing is yet to be determined...

Chad's eyes widen in terror when he sees JULIAN walking to him with the SCALPEL...

CHAD

Nonononono...

ELIZABETH (V.O.)

...but make no mistake, we will find it.

As the camera rises, we realize the chair is standing on a PLASTIC TARP. To make the clean-up easier, probably.

INT. PLASTIC SURGERY CLINIC - DAY (MONTAGE)

Laura holds the door of the consultation room open for Carol Granger, who steps out followed by a man wearing a TRANSLUCENT POST-OP MASK.: RAUL, after his complete makeover.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)

We always do.

As Laura uncomfortably shakes hands with Carol, she notices someone over her shoulder, in the waiting room: Marsha, her neighbor, sitting next to an EMBARRASSED-LOOKING MAN in his 50s with a bandage over his LEFT EAR. \*

This is FRANK, Marsha's husband. Looks like his wife finally paid the ransom.

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - OFFICE - DAY (MONTAGE)

ELIZABETH

The good news, for all you  
ambitious young men and women, is  
that now we have a job opening.

Among the young executives eagerly listening, we find Ben and Roger, now rivals for this coveted promotion.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

Theo splashes cold water on his face and looks up at his own reflection on a stained and rusty mirror. He looks unsure, doubtful, scared even, when KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK!!!

TRAINER (O.S.)

Are you ready?!

THEO

Gimme a second!

Theo slaps his own face a couple of times, hard, trying to pump himself up. Suddenly, he SCREAMS at his own reflection. Primal, ferocious. Now, he's ready.

Theo opens the door to find his TRAINER (60s), short, stocky, with a nose broken over and over again in past fights.

TRAINER

Showtime.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS (MONTAGE)

Escorted by his trainer, Theo walks down a hallway towards the BLINDING LIGHTS at the end of it. He finally steps into the light, climbs up the steps of the CAGE and the CROWD ROARS in a frenzy, ready for blood.

TERRENCE watches his new fighter from an elevated walkway above the cage. The man at the top.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)

This opening is a chance not only  
to serve this family...

Theo raises his arms, soaking in the madness.

EXT. EXECUTIVE CLUB - DAY (MONTAGE) \*

A slick sports car stops in front of an ELEGANT VILLA surrounded by luscious gardens. One of the BELLBOYS by the entrance rushes to the vehicle, and helps the driver out:

It's none other than ELIZABETH.

EXT. EXECUTIVE CLUB - GARDENS - DAY (MONTAGE) \*

Elizabeth walks briskly past the SCULPTED SHRUBBERY and the colorful and meticulously arranged FLOWER BEDS. \*

ELIZABETH (V.O.) \*

...but to enjoy all the perks and  
privileges that come with a senior  
executive position. \*

A SWIMMING POOL appears in front of her, male and female SENIOR EXECUTIVES lounging by it, sipping cocktails, enjoying hot stone massages and other spa treatments. \*

Elizabeth enters the main building. A PLAQUE by the door reads: **"ARCADIA, a Chrysalis Executive Club"**. \*

INT. EXECUTIVE CLUB - DAY (MONTAGE) \*

The main room is elegant and vintage. Picture a luxury hotel cocktail bar or a Soho House kind of club. \*

WAITERS in white uniforms and gloves serve drinks to the executives at their tables or booths, while they discuss business or watch the show: a GORGEOUS DANCER sensually swaying onstage to the beat of the music. \*

Elizabeth eyes a BEAUTIFUL GIRL in a cocktail dress and gestures her to follow her to... \*

...the bar, where an AFRICAN HEAD OF STATE (50s) in military uniform drinks Scotch, neat. \*

ELIZABETH \*

Your excellency, there's someone  
I'd like to introduce you to. \*

(to the girl) \*

Amelia, please meet his excellency  
General Adrisi. \*

AMELIA \*

*Enchanteé, mon général.* \*

ADRISI  
*Parlez-vous français?*

AMELIA  
*Mais bien sur!*

Elizabeth smiles as Amelia takes the General's arm and they walk towards a booth.

INT. OB/GYN OFFICE - DAY (MONTAGE)

Laura lies on an ob-gyn table under the cold and harsh fluorescent lights, wearing a robe, her legs propped up.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)  
We'll soon start evaluating the candidates.

The GYNECOLOGIST prepares to remove the contraceptive device.

GYNECOLOGIST  
It will only take a moment.

Is that a flash of doubt that we see in Laura's face?

EXT. SOUTHGATE - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

BLACK BOOTS stomp the ground as POLICE, in full riot gear, advance in perfect formation down the street, their SHIELDS up to protect themselves from...

A RAIN OF BRICKS being tossed by a mob of PROTESTERS, their faces covered with hoodies and handkerchiefs.

Suddenly, POP-POP-POP, TEAR GAS CANISTERS start landing in the middle of the crowd. And taking it as their cue, THE POLICE VIOLENTLY CHARGE against the protesters.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)  
We live in troubled, uncertain times...

Amidst the chaos and violence, a YOUNG GIRL (12) runs for her life. She slides under the CHARRED CARCASS OF A CAR for protection, as the battle rages around her.

And then, she notices something next to her: A HANDGUN. The same weapon lost by the police during the previous shoot-out. She takes it and holds it in her hand, feeling its weight...

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - BEN'S OFFICE - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

Ben sits behind his desk, the glass partition now OPAQUE.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)

So the vetting process must be  
extremely thorough and rigorous.

\*

Ben stares at ELENA'S PHOTOGRAPH, comparing it to the blurry security camera image on the screen. A secret that can cost him his life.

INT. RED ZONE SHELTER - DAY (MONTAGE)

We follow a YOUNG BEN pushing people aside as he makes his way across a CROWDED SHELTER in a desperate hurry. We realize we are in a FLASHBACK.

\*

\*

\*

ELIZABETH (V.O.)

Those who have nothing to hide have  
nothing to fear.

Ben finally bursts into the SOUP KITCHEN AREA, where we find Elena, sitting at a table next to an EXEC IN AN EXPENSIVE SUIT reading out loud from a tablet. Two ARMED GUARDS stand behind them.

\*

\*

\*

\*

EXECUTIVE

--hereby agrees to waive any  
applicable constitutional rights  
and enter into indentured servitude  
as the property of Chrysalis  
Incorporated, for a period not to  
exceed 20 years. In exchange, she  
or her designee will receive a  
payment of \$250,000 at the  
beginning of her service and ano--

\*

\*

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\*

Two GUARDS by the door GRAB Ben before he can go any further.

\*

BEN

(pleading, to Elena)

Elena! Please, don't! Don't do  
it. You don't have to do it.

\*

A YOUNGER THEO and Elena's Father eye Ben resentfully. Elena seems about to break down, but tries not to show it.

\*

\*

ELENA

You know I do.

The Exec places the TABLET in front of Elena. There's a CONTRACT on-screen, emblazoned with the CHRYSALIS LOGO.

\*

Elena presses her thumb on the dotted line. She's signed it.

BEN

Noooooo!

Ben lunges forward, but the Guards restrain him. The Exec takes the tablet and Elena stands up. The Guards escort her towards the exit, passing right in front of a devastated Ben.

BEN (CONT'D)

I'll find you. I *will* find you.

But Elena stops by his side. Trying to hold it together. Trying to protect him, the only way she can:

ELENA

Just forget about me.

She looks in his eyes, gives him one last kiss... and then she lets the Guards take her away.

Ben kicks and screams, but the guards subdue him. All he can do is watch as Elena disappears out the door.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)

But those who do should know...

We stay on Young Ben as we DISSOLVE BACK TO...

INT. CHRYSALIS BUILDING - OFFICE - DAY (END OF MONTAGE)

BEN, in the present, listening to Elizabeth's speech.

ELIZABETH

...that we won't let another  
traitor slip through. Not again.

We close in on Ben's face, as if Elizabeth's words were meant specifically for him, and we...

CUT TO BLACK.