

MEXICO CITY

Pilot

by

Peter Blake

Story House Entertainment
April 25, 2017

FADE IN:

CLOSE ON a handsome man in a Prada suit and tie, 35, lost in silent thought. This is **EDUARDO ("LALO") YZAGUIRRE**.

A voice comes from O.S., in Spanish with English subtitles (all Spanish-language dialogue will be in **BLUE INK**):

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Here we go. Five, four, three,
two...

Pounding **THEME MUSIC** begins and:

1

INT. MEXTEL STUDIOS, MEXICO CITY -- DAY

1

REVEAL that we are in a very modern TV studio in Mexico City. A talk show set. Lalo sits next to two other men in suits.

On a monitor, we watch the **CREDIT SEQUENCE** for a weekly TV show called *Justicia en la Ciudad de México*.

Shots of Mexico City crime scenes. Interspersed we glimpse Lalo: *At a crime scene in a bulletproof vest. Giving a speech in front of a giant crowd. Shaking hands with Barack Obama.*

We go live. The host addresses the audience:

HOST
Good morning and welcome to "Mexico City Justice." I am your host Carlos Puig. With us today is our good friend, the Mayor of Mexico City, Eduardo Yzaguirre.

Lalo's face breaks into a beatific smile as the live feed starts. He's mesmerizing: movie-star handsome and telegenic.

LALO
Always a pleasure to join you, Carlos.

HOST
Likewise. And we also have an extremely special guest, the new American Ambassador, Mr. Thomas Moran. So...
(in English)
You might have to hear some English spoken.

AMBASSADOR MORAN is a heavysset man in his 50s.

AMBASSADOR MORAN
Thank you for having me. I can
certainly try my Spanish.

Lalo answers, in fluent, accentless English:

LALO
Where's the fun in that? As I've
said, I'm sure far too often, it's
an interconnected world...

Then we CUT TO a very different world:

2 **INT. TIN-ROOF HOUSE, MEXICO CITY - SAME TIME** 2

A tin-roof house, almost a shack. Graffitied walls, dirt floor. But Lalo's voice continues through laptop speakers:

LALO (O.S.)
...so get connected.

Through a broken window, we look west past a giant *favela*-like shantytown. Beyond it loom the skyscrapers of downtown Mexico City (AKA the "**Distrito Federal**," or "**D.F.**").

A **BEARDED MAN** in his 50s is unpacking a duffel. He wears a tank top, work pants and military boots. On one shoulder he has a **TATTOO: a spear, a skull, an eye.**

Around him are expensive comms devices powered by portable generators. A laptop streams the talk show -- the host is asking about Mexican-American relations under Trump.

The Bearded Man turns away from the screen and starts performing a ritual:

From the duffel, he removes a bottle of water, a plate, and a **BLACK CANDLE**, which he lights.

Then a foot-tall, chipped porcelain **STATUETTE**: a **SKELETON** with a woman's long hair, in a cloak, carrying a scythe.

3 **INT. MEXTEL STUDIOS - SAME TIME** 3

AMBASSADOR MORAN
...new administration will aid your
government in combatting drug
trafficking, whether it be Mexico
City or elsewhere.

LALO

Thank you, Ambassador, but I must stop you there. The situation in our great city is nothing like the rest of Mexico. *El D.F.* makes up twenty percent of the population of the country. We are a world-class city. A haven of education, culture, tolerance -- we legalized gay marriage here six years before you did in America.

4

INT. TIN-ROOF HOUSE - DAY

4

The Bearded Man pours the bottled water over the statue.

LALO (O.S.)

And we take security very seriously. We have ninety-thousand police, practically our own army. We're safer than Washington D.C.

A SECOND MAN, also bearing the spear/skull/eye tattoo, joins and kneels down before him. A **POWDER BURN** scars this man's face.

The Bearded Man dips his fingers into the now holy water on the plate. He sprinkles it over his *compadre*, a blessing.

LALO (O.S.) (CONT'D)

El Narco has not made inroads to Mexico City, Ambassador.

As we CUT WIDER, we see that Powder Burn is spattered red, and is carrying a bowl of FRESH BLOOD. Behind him, in the shadows, sliced up and tied to a chair, is a DEAD MAN.

LALO (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Nor will they. Not on my watch.

The Bearded Man takes the bowl. He smears the statuette with blood.

HOST

Bueno! Let's take some calls...

OFF the statue's bloody face...

CUT TO MAIN TITLES

5 **INT. MEXICO CITY AIRPORT BAR - DAY** 5

CLOSE ON a glass of water. Two Alka-Seltzers drop in and begin to fizz.

REVEAL: A **DISHEVELED MAN** in his late 50s, bloodshot eyes, sits at an airport bar. He's dressed Mexican working-class -- baggy jeans, counterfeit Abercrombie hoodie, *fútbol* cap.

He opens another Alka-Seltzer, tosses the tabs in the air and catches them in the glass. He drinks a shot of tequila, chases it with the antacid.

He sees an attractive WOMAN walk past, wheeling a carry-on and carrying a heavy shoulder bag. He throws a 500 peso bill on the bar, puts on sunglasses and follows.

6 **INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY** 6

Now we're with the woman. Her name is **ZOE ALFARO**, 33, Hispanic, U.S. Citizen, just arriving from the States. She's smart, patriotic, and, as we'll see, possessed of an efficient ruthlessness when necessary.

The Disheveled Man follows her from a distance.

Zoe pauses at a television, which is playing the talk show. Lalo is politely admonishing the U.S. Ambassador:

LALO (ON TV)
Mexico does not want a
confrontation with you. But if we
are pushed, we will push back.

A hint of a smile crosses Zoe's face. Then she moves on.

7 **INT. AIRPORT - HERTZ RENTAL COUNTER - DAY** 7

Zoe gets waits in line for the rental counter. She's reading a local newspaper about an art opening at the "Palacio de Bellas Artes" that night.

The Disheveled Man watches.

8 **INT. RENTAL CAR PARKING LOT - DAY** 8

Zoe gets inside her rental car. She adjusts her rear view. No one in sight. She starts to back her car out of the space--

But the Disheveled Man steps into her path. Just stands there, his expression unreadable under his sunglasses.

Zoe honks the horn. No response. He's not going to move. She looks over and spots a SECURITY GUARD not too far away.

After a moment of deliberation, Zoe exits and stands behind the car door for safety. In fluent Spanish, commanding:

ZOE

Do we know each other?

(off his silence)

You've been following me since the terminal. So again, do we know each other? Cause if not, I'm about to call for that security guard--

DISHEVELED MAN

--What the fuck are they teaching at the Farm these days?

He speaks in accentless English, clearly American. He takes off his sunglasses. He looks pissed.

DISHEVELED MAN (CONT'D)

Never break the seal of your vehicle unless necessary. Never rage out.

ZOE

(thrown)

I didn't--

DISHEVELED

--And never confront hostile intelligence. You make them look like assholes, they get pissed, next thing, you're on bumper lock, completely shut down.

ZOE

I work at the U.S. Embassy.

DISHEVELED MAN / WAYNE

Your name is Zoe Alfaro and you work in the Embassy but you work at CIA, which I'm pretty damn sure about, since you work for me. Wayne Addison, Deputy Chief of Station, Mexico City. Now grab your shit. I'm parked next door.

Zoe realizes with dismay that this is her boss, **WAYNE ADDISON**, one of the most famous and infamous officers at the CIA. Wayne is cynical, self-destructive, quasi-paranoid, yet he's a brilliant spymaster.

ZOE

I'm supposed to go straight to the Embassy for check-in.

WAYNE

The only thing you're supposed to do is what your boss says.

He walks off.

After a moment of indecision, Zoe grabs her bags from the car. She hurries after him, wheeling her suitcase behind her. He doesn't offer to help.

9

INT. AIRPORT - SHORT TERM PARKING - DAY

9

As they walk towards his car, Zoe tries to engage Wayne.

ZOE

So that was a test?
(off his silence)
It was my best option, given how you were blocking--

WAYNE

--Get on your knees.

She doesn't know how to respond. He hands her a pocket mirror. They're at Wayne's car, a beat-up 1989 TOYOTA CRESSIDA, duct tape on the windshield.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Look under the vehicle.

ZOE

For... tracking devices? Bombs?

WAYNE

I don't know, Clandestine Services Trainee. That's why you're looking, not me.

She gets down and starts to look under the car. She's pissed but successfully tamps it down:

ZOE

I'm a First Tour Officer...
(unsure what to call him)
...sir. And I spent five years as an analyst in counterterrorism.

WAYNE

This is your first day in the field. Headquarters in their inexplicable wisdom shipped you to me. So until you prove yourself, you're a Trainee, Trainee.

Zoe checks under the car in silence.

ZOE

Looks clean, sir.

WAYNE

Don't call me sir.

He unlocks the car.

10

INT. WAYNE'S TOYOTA - DAY - CONTINUOUS

10

Wayne and Zoe enter the car.

WAYNE

We got a big day. A source I'm running has gone M.I.A.

The Toyota's a shithole, filled with beer cans, cigarette butts, and old newspapers. Wayne notices her staring.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Don't be fooled, Sci-Tech pimped the shit out of this mother.

He flips on some polka-like *Norteño* music and backs out fast.

Zoe is thrown forward in her seat. He wasn't kidding.

11

INT. WAYNE'S TOYOTA - DRIVING THROUGH D.F. - DAY

11

A summer day with rain clouds. Wayne drives through the busy streets near the airport, humming along to the music.

ZOE

...I think we got off on the wrong foot. I'm looking forward to working with you. What you did with Bin Laden--

WAYNE

--What are you doing here?

Zoe tries to figure out what exactly he's asking.

ZOE

Well... Desk job got boring. I enjoy counter-intelligence -- lots of spies in *D.F.* Plus I think the Agency is in a unique position to help win the drug war.

Wayne shakes his head.

WAYNE

Wrong.

ZOE

Which part?

WAYNE

Whole quote 'drug war' is an unwinnable clusterfuck. It is a useless irritant to an already supremely fucked up relationship between this country and ours, which you might have noticed has recently become infinitely more fucked up than usual. But there is one part of said "war" I agree with, and small mercy, since we're tasked with it today. We are gathering intel for the Joint Mexican-American Narcotics Task Force to aid the apprehension of Rafael Bautista.

ZOE

(surprised)

Is your source in the Bautista Cartel?

WAYNE

Course not. No one's run any sources in there.

ZOE

I know. That's why I was surprised.
(off his silence)
Look, I know a lot about Bautista.

WAYNE

Prove it.

Zoe's flustered, not enjoying the grilling.

ZOE

Narco from Guerrero. At war with the *Federación del Norte*. Up-and-comer--

WAYNE

--You don't know shit.

He starts to root around on the messy floor. The car swerves.

ZOE

Hey, hey, careful.

He hands her a *Nota Roja* CRIME TABLOID. The cover's an old black and white photo of Bautista. We should recognize him: Bautista is the BEARDED MAN from the teaser.

ZOE (CONT'D)

I've read all the CND cables--

WAYNE

--This has prettier pictures.

ZOE

I honestly get a little carsick...

He gives her a look. She frowns and opens the paper.

12

INT. OLD CITY HALL - INTERIOR PATIO - DAY

12

The Mayor's office, in the historical center of the city, sits in a seventeenth-century palace of stone. Lalo, with two AIDES, is walking up a gilded monumental staircase.

He's approached by a powerful DIPUTADO (roughly a borough president), a short, nervous man--

DIPUTADO

Jefe.

LALO

Diputado.

Lalo motions to his Aides, who walk off.

DIPUTADO

We are so fucked on the Blue Skies bill--

LALO

--It's handled. Negron and Torrez are voting for it.

DIPUTADO

(stunned)

Holy shit. How'd you swing that?

LALO

I explained the world-historical importance of the bill. Then I told them you would find them hookers, and if not to their liking, you would give the blowjobs yourself.

The Diputado smiles, can't believe his good fortune.

DIPUTADO

I actually thought I had work to do. Fuck it, I'm gonna take a nap.

LALO

I thought the baby was sleeping better.

DIPUTADO

Yes, my wife actually let me escape for once. Your Chief of Staff had a dinner at his new house. That crazy fucker knows how to party.

LALO

(after a slight beat)
Why do you think I hired him?

DIPUTADO

Thanks again, *Jefe*.

The *Diputado* heads off. When he's gone, Lalo darkens. Something in what the *Diputado* said hit Lalo hard.

13

INT. WAYNE'S TOYOTA - DRIVING THROUGH D.F. - DAY

13

Zoe reads the tabloid, a little carsick. We glimpse horrifying CRIME SCENE PHOTOS: body parts, corpses hanging from bridges, *narcomantas* ("narco-blankets" -- the ubiquitous banners carrying messages from the Cartels).

WAYNE

Rafael Bautista is former Mexican military intelligence. Trained, disciplined. His men worship him -- literally, cause of that Santa Muerte shit they're all into. He's the most evil, most skilled of all these motherfuckers -- *El Patrón de la Sombra*: the man in the shadows. Half the cartels have bowed down to him already. The other half's putting on their kneepads.

ZOE

Due respect, no one's that powerful.

WAYNE

That's what the Baja Cartel thought. Heard from them recently?

He points to a horrifying full-page IMAGE: a dozen CORPSES. A family. Each one's head has been cut off and placed between its legs. And, most horrifying--

WAYNE (CONT'D)

The little ones are babies.

Zoe doesn't like Wayne. She's weirded out by him. But she's also excited by the task ahead of them.

ZOE

Got it. Bautista's not an up-and-comer. He's already come. And now we're coming for him.

WAYNE

You learn fast, Trainee.

14

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

14

The Mayor's office is austere: modern furniture, a Frida Kahlo painting on the wall. Lalo is working at his desk when his Chief of Staff, JAVIER, 30s, enters.

JAVIER

You wanted to see me?

LALO

Come in, Javi.

Javier enters and sits.

LALO (CONT'D)

A local politician is looking for a new Chief of Staff. Thought you could help.

JAVIER

Of course. Good position?

LALO

One of the best in city government.

JAVIER

I'll get you some resumes.

LALO

Great.

JAVIER

Who is the politician, may I ask?

LALO

The Mayor of Mexico City.

Javier's face falls.

JAVIER

You're... firing me? Why? Cause I bought a house?

LALO

(come on)

In Las Lomas. Of all the places--

JAVIER

--I got a loan from a friend.

(off Lalo)

Jaime Rosende.

LALO

The developer.

JAVIER

He's got no business with the city--

LALO

--Not now. But he has. And he will. Especially now he thinks he owns my Chief of Staff. Clean out your office, Javi.

Javier's face fills with anger. He rises---

JAVIER

The entire air pollution bill... That was me. I put it together. My connections with the *Diputados*. My--

LALO

--You're not going to sabotage me.

He takes a business card, passes it across the desk.

LALO (CONT'D)

You're going to call Senator Tapia. His chief aide is leaving to take a job in the private sector.

(MORE)

LALO (CONT'D)

You'll get a bump to Federal scale,
which should come in handy for your
mortgage payments. Good luck, Javi.

Lalo goes back to working. Javier turns to leave.

LALO (CONT'D)

(without looking up)
The card.

Javier takes the card and exits.

15 **EXT. TEPITO - DAY**

15

One of the the roughest barrios in the D.F. Wayne's car
cruises through.

16 **INT. WAYNE'S TOYOTA - DAY**

16

Zoe looks through the window: barbed wire, damaged buildings
abandoned after the 1985 earthquake.

ZOE

Tepito.

WAYNE

Land of boxers, gangsters and the
biggest pirated goods market in the
world. Everything's for sale here.

He pulls the car to a stop. She's about to exit but Wayne
grabs her hand. Looks at her ENGAGEMENT RING.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

You're engaged?

Zoe's surprised that he cares. Brightly:

ZOE

My fiance's CIA, too, he's a desk
officer in Washington--

WAYNE

--Not today you're not.

He pulls the ring off her finger.

ZOE

Ow.

WAYNE

Like the orange man in the White House said: lots of bad hombres here.

He tosses it to her. She bobbles it for a second, then catches it. He hands her a pry tool.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Open your side speaker.

Zoe pries off the speaker, finds a small GLOCK 26 PISTOL.

ZOE

You know I can't carry here.

Wayne's pried off his side and grabbed a large, GOLD-PLATED COLT 1911 with ornate engravings of the Virgin of Guadalupe and Pancho Villa on the grip panels.

WAYNE

I'm authorizing it.

ZOE

Are you gonna give me a signed waiver? And are you the Ambassador? Otherwise, your authorization doesn't mean shit. No offense.

WAYNE

Suit yourself.

He exits, stuffing the pistol into his waistband.

After a moment of indecision, Zoe puts the pistol back. She exits the car, unarmed and wary.

17

EXT. TEPITO STREET - DAY

17

Wayne and Zoe cross the street towards the market.

WAYNE

My source runs this barrio. His name's "El Cocodrilo" but you can call him Coco. He left me an emergency message yesterday. Then he went black.

ZOE

Cocodrilo's his cryptonym?

WAYNE

Does it sound like one?

ZOE
 (annoyed)
 Is he an asset or not?

WAYNE
 Let's say... an advanced
 developmental.

Zoe looks at Wayne for a beat, processing...

ZOE
 Right. So what you're dancing
 around is that he's a small-time
 gangster. His hands are too bloody
 for HQ to approve for recruitment.
 So you've been running him on your
 own, out of channels.

WAYNE
 He's a necessary evil. Cartels
 stay clear of D.F. because it's the
 center of finance and politics --
 if a real narco war broke out here,
 market would crash, the army'd
 invade Sinaloa. Hence Coco: the
 local connect for all the cartels.
 Good man to know.

Zoe knows she's pushing it, but--

ZOE
 This shit could get you fired.

WAYNE
 So could a lot of shit I do.

They enter--

18

EXT. TEPITO MARKET STALLS - CONTINUOUS

18

The massive *tianguis* or open-air market, the largest pirated goods *mercado* in the world. Whole streets covered by cheap plastic tarps. Thousands of stalls selling anything you'd ever want, legal or not.

ZOE
 How are you planning to find Coco?

WAYNE
 I'm not.

ZOE

Lemme guess: he's gonna find us.
The two kids by the DVD stalls.

REVEAL: two 17-year-old BOYS -- lookouts known as *halcones* -- are pretending to look at pirated NCIS DVDs.

WAYNE

His *halcones*. They'll spook if we approach. Go back to the car. One of them will follow you. I'll lose my tail, circle back, grab yours for a little chat.

He starts to walk off. Zoe doesn't like this at all--

ZOE

Wait. There's no ops plan. We don't know the risks, I'm unarmed, and if they're carrying weapons--

WAYNE

--There's minimal risk, you chose to be unarmed, and Coco doesn't let his boys carry. Okay?

(beat)

Trainee. Okay?

Reluctantly, Zoe nods. Wayne walks away.

19

EXT. TEPITO SIDE STREETS - DAY

19

Zoe walks, head down, through empty side streets. She passes a GIANT CROSS and MURAL of young men in a heavenly landscape, a memorial to victims of local violence.

She glances in a car mirror. A half block behind, one of the *halcones*, wearing a **SOCCER JERSEY**, is tailing her.

She walks past a group of YOUNG MEN who start to catcall her. She keeps her head down, turns a corner.

Keeps walking. She reaches Wayne's car.

She glances behind her. Soccer Jersey is nowhere to be seen. She doesn't have the car keys. Now what?

Then she sees, at the other end of the block, Soccer Jersey turning the corner. He ran around the block to cut her off.

She walks the other way, but he quickly catches up.

SOCCKER JERSEY
Hey. How you doing?

Zoe just nods, continues walking. The kid blocks her way.

SOCCKER JERSEY (CONT'D)
Hold on. I want to talk to you.

ZOE
Just be cool, dude.

SOCCKER JERSEY
Where's that guy you were with?

She tries to get past him. He grabs her arm.

SOCCKER JERSEY (CONT'D)
Let me talk--

Zoe shakes her arm free. He grabs her again, hard, hurting her. His shirt lifts up and she spots a 9mm PISTOL--

A split-second of panic--

Then RAGE kicks in. With adrenalized strength, she ELBOWS him twice in the face, bloodying his nose, sending him sprawling.

She's breathing hard. A darkness inside her coming out. She yanks the gun from his waistband and PISTOLWHIPS him.

SOCCKER JERSEY (CONT'D)
Please...

Zoe presses her eyes shut, opens them. Sees the kid, terrified, face bloody. She softens, hit by guilt.

She ejects the magazine, clears the chamber. Tosses the gun and ammo into a sewer drain.

Then she quickly walks off... right into the other *halcón*, who carries a sharpened **SCREWDRIVER**. He's not happy.

Fuck. This is bad. A long beat. Then--

WAYNE (O.S.)
Hola.

Wayne's there, pressing an electric STUN GUN to Screwdriver's neck. The kid collapses, dropping his weapon. Wayne turns to Soccer Jersey--

WAYNE (CONT'D)
Where's your *jefe*, asshole?

ZOE

You told me they weren't armed. I could have gotten killed.

WAYNE

If anyone was gonna get killed, it was that kid you were going apeshit on.

She doesn't hide her anger anymore:

ZOE

What are you doing? Testing me? Hazing me? Punishing me cause you didn't bring me here yourself?

WAYNE

Good questions. Here's one for you. Why didn't you tell me you know the Mayor?

A long beat.

ZOE

Why are you changing the subject?

WAYNE

Because your subject bores me.

She really doesn't want to talk about this.

ZOE

I don't know him. I knew him. Long time ago. He was studying art in Boston, I was at Tufts.

WAYNE

Your boy controls law enforcement in a way that American mayors do not. We get on his inside, he could help us get a fix on Bautista.

ZOE

...Okay.
(then)
You're not asking me to recruit him?

WAYNE

Why not?

ZOE

He'd never go for it.
(he gives her a look)
(MORE)

ZOE (CONT'D)

He's the cleanest politician here.
He's like the Mexican Obama. He's
probably the next President.

WAYNE

You might have heard, we've had
three *Presidentes* sign our pay
vouchers.

ZOE

Look... I didn't know him that
well. He left junior year. We
didn't part on great terms.

WAYNE

Then I'm honored to facilitate your
tearful reunion.

ZOE

(defeated)
I'll reach out.

Wayne glances in the rear view, seems to spot something.

WAYNE

You're the best. 203 Calle Río
Lerma.

ZOE

What?

She looks behind her, doesn't see anything.

WAYNE

203 Calle Río Lerma. Got it?

ZOE

What's there?

But Wayne just stops the car short. Cars behind honk their
horns. Wayne takes the key from the ignition, exits.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Hey.

Wayne tosses the key onto the sidewalk.

ZOE (CONT'D)

What the fuck, Wayne!

But he's walked off. Zoe can't believe it.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Motherfucker.

She exits, walks around the car, as the motorists she's blocked watch in anger.

DRIVERZOE

Move your goddamn car!Looking for my fucking keys!

She finds them. Re-enters the car.

As she's putting the key in the ignition, she notices a couple of HIPSTERS on the sidewalk pointing at the cars behind her.

She looks in her rearview. Three cars back, partially obscured by traffic, two BIG MEN IN SUITS are riding BIKES. Behind them is a ARMORED SUV.

She knows exactly what this means. Even more pissed:

ZOE (CONT'D)
Motherfucker.

A long beat, then she takes off her engagement ring and exits the car. The honking starts again. She ignores it.

Then she wills herself through a transformation: she suddenly looks relaxed and happy, as she calls out:

ZOE (CONT'D)
Lalo! Lalo Yzaguirre!!

Because next to the two bike-riding BODYGUARDS and the armored SUV, is Lalo. He's on a Mexico City-rental "ecobike," waiting for traffic to start moving.

LALO
...Zoe?

22

EXT. LA ROMA SIDEWALK - MOMENTS LATER

22

Zoe's car is now parked. Lalo and Zoe stand on the sidewalk, mid-conversation. Lalo's surprised, even uncomfortable--

LALO
You're living here.

ZOE
Just started a posting at the Embassy. Consultant with the State Department. Rule of Law stuff.

LALO
Huh... You were always into that.

A long beat.

LALO (CONT'D)
Listen, I'm late for lunch.

ZOE
We gotta catch up.

LALO
Of course. Call my office.

It's clearly a blowoff. But Zoe has a job to do:

ZOE
I read in the paper about an
opening at Bellas Artes tonight...

LALO
You'd like to go?

ZOE
I'd love to.

LALO
...I'll get your name on the list.

ZOE
Thanks, Lalo.

LALO
Hasta luego.

He walks into a nearby restaurant. OFF Zoe, mixed feelings...

23 **INT. TAXI - DAY**

23

Zoe's in a taxi. The DRIVER pulls up next to a restaurant in a commercial neighborhood. Zoe's surprised:

ZOE
This is it?

TAXI DRIVER
203 Calle Río Lerma.

24 **INT. HOOTERS - MOMENTS LATER**

24

Zoe enters the local HOOTERS franchise. She sees Wayne, at the bar, eating a burger and drinking a Miller beer. He's flirting with a WAITRESS on roller skates.

WAYNE

...doesn't deserve you. Not to mention you don't want Ambar growing up in that environment.

Zoe comes up to him. The Waitress skates off.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Stop hovering. Want a beer?

ZOE

No.

WAYNE

We work for the only U.S. Government agency that can expense liquor. So do your patriotic duty and put your ass on that stool.

She sits down next to him.

ZOE

Congrats on your magic trick.

WAYNE

Your boy eats at Rosetta every Friday. Just had to line it up. We gotta work out an ops plan how you approach him next.

ZOE

Done. The Surrealist Ball tonight.

WAYNE

Sure... I can get you a ticket.

ZOE

Already on the list.

Wayne looks her over. Surprised and impressed.

WAYNE

Really?
(genuine)
Nice going.

Zoe, for the first time that day, feels good.

ZOE

I'll take that beer.

25

INT. ROSETTA RESTAURANT - DAY

25

Lalo is finishing a business lunch with DANIEL, 50s, a powerful functionary in the PRD, Lalo's political party.

DANIEL

One last piece of business... I heard about Javi.

(off Lalo)

I know, I know, but... His father's on the Political Council...

LALO

One of the many reasons he'll end up on his feet.

DANIEL

Having his dad on your side would be very useful if you want the nomination.

LALO

Who says I do?

Daniel just smiles at that.

DANIEL

Look, forget Javi, forget the dad... Think about how you're starting to get perceived. Clean is one thing. But fanaticism...

LALO

A fanatic against corruption? I'll put that on my business cards.

DANIEL

Come on, *Jefe*. This is not Sweden. Without greasing the wheels a bit, the machine of government will grind to a halt.

A beat. Lalo speaks softly, but with utter conviction.

LALO

Corruption makes the people distrust their government. Which is why they distrust the police. Which is why they turn to violence on their own. Which is why we have cycles of killing and revenge, and two hundred thousand murdered in the narco wars. Corruption is violence, Daniel.

(MORE)

LALO (CONT'D)

Do you really think, just to get elected, I'd take part in that genocide?

Off Daniel, both amazed by Lalo's righteous conviction and worried about it--

26

INT. HOOTERS - DAY

26

Wayne and Zoe have moved to a BOOTH and are a little drunk. Food and beers in front of them. Both in a good mood.

WAYNE

How'd you get TDY'd here so fast?

ZOE

Someone in the Agency likes me. I assume it's Faustino Walsh, runs CND. He's the guy who found me, convinced me to switch to operations, eight months ago.

WAYNE

Still... Surprised headquarters went for it. Seeing how your Dad was in Mexican politics.

Zoe reacts, uncomfortable.

ZOE

Stepdad. Late stepdad. That was all before he moved to the states, met my mom.

WAYNE

Either way... I remember when the PRI tossed him in jail for corruption. Big deal.

ZOE

The PRI always used to scapegoat someone in the outgoing administration.

WAYNE

Yeah? You think he was innocent?
(looks at her closely)
Or maybe the opposite. Maybe you know he was dirty. Is that why you're down here? Trying to unsully the family name? Fix the country Daddy fucked up?

(beat)

(MORE)

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Or maybe it's deeper. Take a girl, starts having troubles, right about when her new stepdad arrives from Mexico. Some bad shit goes down. Some acting out. Not clear what exactly, cause juvie record's sealed. But then she turns her life around. Joins the Agency. Always wonders, though, if that darkness inside her is gonna bubble up again. What's it mean to that girl, coming to this place...

Zoe stares for a long beat...

Then she laughs.

ZOE

Man, you're always on, aren't you? You can't case-officer this shit out of me. Snoop my file all you want, you're not getting into my head.

Wayne can't help smiling.

WAYNE

We gotta get ready for tonight.

ZOE

You're going, too?

WAYNE

Fuck yeah. Gotta work my cover. I'm the Cultural Attaché.

ZOE

You do seem really cultured.

Wayne is dipping a deep-fried pickle in ranch dressing and watching a baseball game on a nearby TV. He drops some cash on the table and rises.

WAYNE

We gotta dress you up. I got a safe house nearby.

ZOE

(pats her suitcase)
Already got my glass slippers.

WAYNE

It's a masked ball, Cinderella. You got a mask?

He walks away, once again neglecting to help with her bags.

27

EXT. CENTRO HISTORICO STREET - DAY

27

Now we're in the tourist-filled historical center of Mexico City. A skinny 28-year-old STREET VENDOR hawks counterfeit purses. We'll come to know him as **MAURICIO**.

MAURICIO

Hermes, Gucci, Louis Vuitton... You gonna like it, *buen precio*.

Mauricio notices a old **HOMELESS MAN**, with a white beard, sitting nearby. The Homeless Man pours solvent into a wad of tissue paper and huffs it in.

MAURICIO (CONT'D)

Old man. This is my corner. You're gonna scare people off.

The Homeless Man just sits, zoned out. Mauricio approaches.

MAURICIO (CONT'D)

Hey asshole. Can you hear me?
(beat)
Fuck. How much you want? 100 pesos?

A shadow falls over them. Mauricio looks up.

He doesn't recognize the two LARGE MEN standing there. But we recognize one of them: The Man with the Powder Burn.

POWDER BURN

Come with us, Mauricio.

MAURICIO

Do I know you?

POWDER BURN

You do not. We have a job for you.
You do it, no fuckups, then we go
back to not knowing each other.

Mauricio knows this is bad.

MAURICIO

I'm not going anywhere.

Powder Burn holds out a cellphone. On it is a photo: A woman, scared, holding a child in her arms. Mauricio's WIFE and SON.

Mauricio goes white with terror.

MAURICIO (CONT'D)

Oh, God, no... *Mijo*... He's just a baby... Why...

POWDER BURN

Sometimes your number comes up.

Powder Burn points out a waiting SUV. Mauricio's panicked, looks around for help.

POWDER BURN (CONT'D)

No one can help you but you.

Mauricio heads towards the waiting vehicle like a man walking to his execution.

28

INT. WAYNE'S SAFE HOUSE - DAY

28

Zoe and Wayne enter his safe house, a small apartment in a bad neighborhood.

ZOE

This is the safe house?

The place is a mess. No air conditioning, peeling paint, water dripping into a bucket.

WAYNE

Got a few around the city. Switch it up most nights. More like an "unsafe house," to be honest. That reminds me, I rigged up a little alarm system, case anyone breaks in while I'm asleep. Shaped plastique charge. Don't be knocking too hard.

ZOE

Funny.

WAYNE

I'm not kidding.

She realizes that, in fact, he's not kidding about the bomb.

ZOE

Okay... So the masks?

WAYNE

Our techies whipped me up a few options. Take your pick.

He points. She starts perusing. Surrealist-themed, almost sculptural masks: a SKULL, a BIRD CAGE, a patch of BLUE SKY.

Wayne lays his PISTOL on a table, along with his phone. Heads to his kitchenette, starts making an Alka-Seltzer.

ZOE

I kinda like the birdcage.

She turns to Wayne. He's taken off his long-sleeved shirt and is wearing a t-shirt, sticking to him with sweat. Arm up, drinking. And that lets Zoe SEE something she hadn't before.

A shadow passes over her.

She makes her way over to Wayne's pistol. She suddenly grabs it in a two-handed Weaver stance, aiming at his chest.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Pull up your sleeve.

WAYNE

What the fuck are you--

ZOE

--Let me see your arm.

He complies. Near his shoulder is a small TATTOO -- *a spear, a skull, an eye.*

Exactly like the one we saw on Rafael Bautista and his man in the teaser.

Zoe tries to control her panic.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Who are you?

WAYNE

You know who I am.

ZOE

I have no fucking idea. Con man? Sicario? Maybe that shit you told the kid in Tepito wasn't cover, maybe you really are trafficking. Or you're freelancing for another service. Who -- Cuba, China, Iran--

WAYNE

--You're drunk. Get a fucking hold of yourself.

ZOE

What I do know: No normal C/O would have grabbed me off the street, kept me out of the Station on my first day. No normal C/O would have pulled that shit with the Mayor.

(MORE)

ZOE (CONT'D)
 No normal C/O would have almost gotten me killed in Tepito. And no normal C/O would have on his arm Rafael Bautista's only known distinguishing mark.

She carefully grabs Wayne's cell.

WAYNE
 Who are you calling?

He steps forward a little.

WAYNE (CONT'D)
 Let me explain.

ZOE
 Stay back, hands on your head.

He walks forward another step. His raised hands now only a few inches from her gun. She steps back.

<p style="text-align: center;">ZOE (CONT'D)</p> <p>I said your <u>head</u>--</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WAYNE</p> <p>This is crazy--</p>
--	---

His right hand suddenly HITS the inside of her forearm while his left SLAPS the gun in the other direction.

The pistol spins to the floor.

Zoe PUNCHES. He weaves. Her fist hits his cheek. He reacts, grabs her in a bear hug. She struggles, gets a hand free--

He KNEES her in the solar plexus, hard. She drops to her knees, unable to breathe.

Wayne picks up the pistol.

She looks up in disbelief, that this is how it ends...

But he lays the gun on a table and sits on the couch.

ZOE (CONT'D)
 (gasping for breath)
 Who... are...

WAYNE
 I'm not killing you. And I'm not pitching you. Who does that make me?

Her mind spins. Finally concludes:

ZOE

Who... you say... you are.

He says nothing more. Just stares, a challenge. Despite the pain, Zoe tries to calm herself, think...

ZOE (CONT'D)

CND cables... The tattoo... was military... Bautista was Mexican Army Intelligence...

(putting it together)

You were at School of the Americas... You trained him...

WAYNE

CI, weapons, general tradecraft. Sixteen years back. The five guys in his unit all had this tattoo.

ZOE

So why do you...

(realizing)

He was... your asset... You ran him...

He doesn't deny it. Zoe's gotten her breath back. She stands.

ZOE (CONT'D)

What are you saying? You created this monster? You're trying to fix your mess? No. No. That doesn't explain why you'd keep the tattoo--

WAYNE

--There's a lot more you don't know.

ZOE

Tell me--

WAYNE

--When you deserve it.

She looks at him with hatred.

ZOE

"Deserve it." Fuck you. What is this, your personal death squad? You have any idea how fucked up it is to be running an op as a vendetta?

WAYNE

Actually, I do. Now get dressed.
You got a party to go to.

He hands her his car keys. She takes her bag, turns to leave.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Zoe.

She turns. He's got the birdcage mask. She grabs it and goes.

29 **INTERCUT: D.F. STREET / CIA PARKING LOT (VIRGINIA) - DAY** 29

Zoe stands on the street near the safehouse. She's on a freshly-bought burner cell, birdcage mask by her side.

She's talking with her fiancé, **BOYD SORENSON**. He's an athletic, thirty-year-old CIA Desk Officer, a practicing Mormon. He's in the **CIA PARKING LOT IN VIRGINIA**, pacing. (No cellphones are allowed inside CIA buildings.)

BOYD

Get to a secure terminal. Write up exactly what happened. Email it to your Chief of Station. CC the CMO, even the head of CND.

ZOE

Snitch. There goes my hall rep.

BOYD

Your rep's not gonna be worth zip if this guy gets you killed. I'd heard stories, but... Wayne Addison is out of control. I don't care how many points he gets for shooting Escobar--

ZOE

--Wayne shot Escobar? Pablo Escobar?

BOYD

Yeah. I think so.
(unsure)
Didn't he?

ZOE

I thought... I thought he was the one who wrote the cable, OBL's gonna strike the Towers?

BOYD
Well... I do know he made
Distinguished Officer. So he's got
some magic.

A LABORER, walking by with some CO-WORKERS, catcalls to Zoe:

LABORER
Baby... Tell me who's sticking it
in you so I can find him and lick
you off his dick--

ZOE
--Fuck you, asshole!

The Laborer's shocked by her fury. Dumbfounded, he walks off.
His friends laugh.

BOYD
What was--

ZOE
Nothing.
(beat)
Sorry. I cursed.

BOYD
It's okay. That's my faith, not
yours.

ZOE
Thanks, baby... Can you ask around,
anything you find on Wayne...

BOYD
Of course.

She considers, doesn't want to do this...

ZOE
After the party, I'll write him up.

BOYD
Wait, you're going to this party?

ZOE
Yeah.
(off his silence)
Oh, come on. It's work.

BOYD
It's make-work given to you by a
mentally unstable DCOS.

ZOE
Is this about Lalo? Please don't
tell me you're bothered--

BOYD
--No.
(frustrated)
This is exactly why I didn't want
you to become a Case Officer.

ZOE
...What does that mean?

Boyd knows he messed up--

BOYD
We had plans...

ZOE
We had plans we changed for the
good of my career, which you said
you were cool with--

BOYD
--I have been cool about
everything, including...

ZOE
The religious stuff? Now you're
guilting me?

BOYD
Can we step back a second?

A beat. Zoe calms herself down.

ZOE
Okay. Please send what you find.

BOYD
I love you--

She hangs up. This is a shitty fucking day.

30

INT. PALACIO DE BELLAS ARTES -- NIGHT

30

The most iconic building in Mexico City. A 1934 Art Nouveau
masterpiece. Interiors of Carrara marble and Marotti glass.

Tonight there's an elegant black tie opening-night party, an
homage to Salvador Dalí's 1972 Surrealist Ball. The
partygoers wear elaborate masks or costumes -- a DEER HEAD, a
GIANT EYE, a tuxedo made up of **DECAPITATED DOLLS**.

Zoe enters, wearing a black dress and her birdcage mask. You'd never know what she'd been through today.

An African-American woman, **CARLA GOYNE**, polished, charismatic, 50s, walks up to her.

CARLA

Zoe? I'm Carla.
(off Zoe, quietly)
I'm the Chief of Station.

ZOE

Oh. Oh God. I am so sorry I didn't check in today...

CARLA

No, no. Wayne just told me he threw you in the deep end. How was it?

ZOE

...Deep.

Carla reads her discomfort.

CARLA

Wayne's an amazing officer but there's a... learning curve. We'll talk more at the SCIF, okay?

ZOE

Thanks. Have you seen him?

Carla motions with her eyes. Zoe sees that Wayne is the man wearing the tuxedo made up of decapitated dolls. In a convo:

DEER HEAD

Did you read my article in *Letras Libres*? The party culture. The art scene. We're Weimar, 1932. Everyone knows something apocalyptic is slouching towards D.F. to be born.

WAYNE

Well, if it keeps the art cheap...

GIANT EYE

I'd be honored to give you a studio visit, by the way.

WAYNE

The honor would be all mine. You show at Kurimanzutto, no?

Wayne talks in fluent, elegant Spanish. Zoe watches, impressed. Cleaned up, charismatic, living out his cover, Wayne is almost unrecognizable.

31 **EXT. PALACIO DE BELLAS ARTES - BALCONY - LATER**

31

Zoe steps out onto the balcony. A beautiful view of the Plaza de Bellas Artes, the city lights all around.

LALO (O.S.)

Zoe.

Lalo is there. He's dressed as Magritte's *Son of Man*: bowler, overcoat, oversized green apple. Next to him, the left half of her body done up as the *Mona Lisa*, stands his wife **YADIRA**. She's a gorgeous actress, 35, down-to-earth, smart.

ZOE

Hi!

(to Yadira)

Hi, I'm--

YADIRA

--I know who you are, Zoe! Lalo's told me all about you. I'm Yadira.

ZOE

I've seen your telenovelas.

YADIRA

Oh, please, it's all horrible. One day Scorsese will call, but until then...

A FILM DIRECTOR calls her out--

FILM DIRECTOR

The Mayor's wife should not be shitting on one of our most important cultural exports.

YADIRA

Go back to film school, Miguel, then we'll talk.

They bicker, leaving Zoe and Lalo alone. After a beat:

ZOE

Thanks for inviting me. Or... letting me invite myself, I guess.

LALO

Yeah.. About earlier...

ZOE

Must be a shock, seeing me. The way we left it, back in Boston.. I never really apologized...

LALO

No, no... I actually wanted to apologize myself.

ZOE

For what?

LALO

I put pressure on you...

ZOE

You didn't. I was just too young to move down here.

(beat)

I was too young to get married, honestly.

LALO

I was, too. I just didn't know it.

And we realize how deep their connection goes.

ZOE

I still can't believe it. You were a... hipster artist boy, like out of a Bolaño novel. And, to end up in politics? You were pretty wild...

LALO

As were you.

(off her smile)

You'll see... *El D.F.* moves in *formas misteriosas*...

ZOE

You happy?

He has to think about it.

LALO

It's beyond that. It's a calling. This city is my life. Everyone thinks us *chilangos* are under siege from dark forces out there. Just between you and me? We are.

(switching to Spanish)

But our fortress has glass walls.
All Mexico can see how we live.

(MORE)

LALO (CONT'D)

Culture, security, prosperity.
Civilization. One day, they're
going to realize that's what they
want themselves. They're not
spreading darkness to us. We are
spreading light to them.

Zoe's moved. She smiles. And something passes between them.

Then Yadira comes back, hugs her husband. Breaks the spell.

YADIRA

Miguel says I'm an idiot and also
that you and I should mingle.

LALO

Both indisputable. See you soon,
Zoe.

Zoe nods. She watches Lalo and Yadira walk away...

PRE-LAP: MUFFLED TECHNO MUSIC

32

EXT. MN ROY NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

32

Two Ubers pull up outside an unremarkable townhouse on a side street. Out climb SIX YOUNG MEN in preppy clothes, shirts unbuttoned to the chest, just this side of garish. They're what are known as "**MIRREYES**" (for "My Kings"): sons of the rich and powerful who ruled Mexico this last century.

The *Mirreyes* flash membership rings and cards at a beautiful TRANSGENDER HOSTESS at a velvet rope. She smiles at the ringleader, **PEDRO**, a polished 35-year-old in a Zegna suit.

HOSTESS

Hola, Pedro. Come on in.

33

INT. MN ROY NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

33

The *Mirreyes* enter the private club. A DJ spins techno in front of massive wooden and copper pyramidal walls. The men split off, greeting friends.

Pedro and ELIAS (30s) head up to the SECOND FLOOR. Nearby, a BEAUTIFUL RUSSIAN WOMAN in a little black dress sits on a swing with a MEXICAN BILLIONAIRE. He has his hands up her skirt. Pedro smiles, enjoying the bacchanalia.

ELIAS

You want a bump?

Pedro nods. Elias takes out a baggie of coke, snorts some off his Ferrari keys. Pedro takes a hit too.

PEDRO
Good shit.

ELIAS
Mmm... Dude, did you hear there was a shooting on my block?

PEDRO
Fuck. In Condesa?

ELIAS
Yeah. Some loser second-generation narcos in a beef.

PEDRO
Jesus. Kids live there.

ELIAS
This country is going to shit...

Pedro nods. Then he gets a funny look on his face.

PEDRO
Tastes like Hawaiian Tropic.

ELIAS
You like? It's the coconut flavor.

The Pedro's blood runs cold. A man across the dance floor is staring at him. The MAN WITH THE POWDER BURN.

Powder Burn looks directly at Pedro. He taps his wrist three times, a pre-arranged sign. Then disappears into the crowd.

PEDRO
(to himself)
Fuck.

He gets up, frazzled. Rushes off.

ELIAS
I have pineapple, too.

Pedro runs into the bathroom. Gets on his knees, checks the stalls are empty. Takes out his cell, dials.

PEDRO
 (into cell)
 Hey. Are you at the office? Well
 then get the fuck over there. Call
 Morgan Stanley and Goldman and sell
 two billion Pesos, buy US dollars.

Someone tries to open the door, but Pedro kicks it shut.

PEDRO (CONT'D)
 One second!
 (back to cell)
 Yeah... 93 million sounds right...
 Of course I know they're closed,
 you stupid fuck, call Hong Kong.
 (beat)
 Because I fucking say so, Hernán!

He hangs up. He gathers himself then exits.

35

INT. TOYOTA - NIGHT

35

It's raining, as it does most nights in the summer. Zoe's at the wheel of Wayne's Toyota, stopped at a light.

Zoe's burner cell chimes: a text from her fiancé, with a photo of a bouquet of flowers: "*Beyond the delivery zone but...*" She smiles, calls Boyd.

ZOE
 Hey.

BOYD (ON PHONE)
 Hey.

She digs into her bag and puts her engagement ring back on.

ZOE
 Was I a dick?

BOYD (ON PHONE)
 No, no. That was all me. I was just
 scared. I really love you.

ZOE
 I love you, too.

BOYD (ON PHONE)
 So... How was the party?

Zoe hesitates a beat, then:

ZOE
I didn't go. You were right.

Utterly convincing. Zoe, it turns out, is a great liar.

BOYD
(relieved)
Oh, thank you so much, Zoe. That really means a lot to me.

As Boyd's sweetness prompts a hint of guilt on Zoe's face--
A sudden KNOCK on the car window scares the crap out of her.

ZOE
Hold on.

Outside, soaking in the downpour, stands Wayne. He's asking something, muffled. She opens the window.

WAYNE (CONT'D)
...that a black phone?

ZOE
It's a burner. Totally sterile.

He holds out his hand: gimme. She hands him the phone. He checks the outgoing calls, then smashes it under his shoe.

WAYNE
Not sterile enough.
(off her annoyance)
Dump the car. I heard back from
Coco.

36 **EXT. AJUSCO - NIGHT**

36

Wayne and Zoe (both in civilian clothes again), drive up in a JEEP to Ajusco, a forested hill above the city.

A black SUV is waiting. One man sits inside.

Wayne exits the passenger side and meets up in the rain with **EL COCODRILO** (50s, with the face of an ex-boxer).

WAYNE
Why'd you disappear on me, Coco?

EL COCODRILO
Got busy, man. Why'd you fuck with
my boys today?

WAYNE

You leave an emergency message, I'm gonna act like it's an emergency.

EL COCODRILO

Yeah, well... It's finally happening. A sitdown between your friend and my friends.

WAYNE

Where?

El Cocodrilo laughs.

EL COCODRILO

Don't worry, *Güero*, you gonna come out smiling. *La Federación's* got plans, you feeling me?

WAYNE

Yeah... I'm feeling you.

EL COCODRILO

So we gonna be friends, after?

WAYNE

We sure would be... But I honestly doubt you're gonna be around.

EL COCODRILO

Federación's been playing this game 40 years. They seen the Bautistas of this world come and go. Remember Nazario? Zeta-40? *El Patrón de la Sombra's* just the next motherfucker with big ideas to wind up with a hole in his skull.

WAYNE

I'm warning you. You want this done, let me handle it.

EL COCODRILO

Nah, man. This is all ours. Bye, *Güero*.

37

INT. JEEP - MOMENTS LATER

37

Wayne jumps into the passenger seat, in furious motion.

WAYNE

Go, go, go.

ZOE
Where?

WAYNE
Down.

He grabs some stuff from his back seat. As Zoe starts to maneuver down the mountain roads, Wayne attaches a cellphone-sized IMSI CATCHER to a LAPTOP.

WAYNE (CONT'D)
Coco's arranging a sit-down between Bautista and the *Federación*. But it's an setup. Coco's teaming up with the *Federación* to take out Bautista. And we're gonna crash the party.

Zoe sees numbers coming up on the laptop screen.

ZOE
You used a cell interceptor.

WAYNE
Sucked up my phone number, the one Coco uses with me... and one more.

Wayne starts to message someone. Zoe gets it:

ZOE
A burner Coco's using to set up the meet. Who are you tasking the number to?

WAYNE
Guy I know in the *Policía Federal*.

Zoe's confused.

ZOE
So this whole op is going through the Joint Task Force?

WAYNE
(no)
It's off the books on both sides.

Zoe has a really bad feeling...

ZOE
And if two CIA officers are found with boots on the ground? Now?
(MORE)

ZOE (CONT'D)

That's practically a declaration of war. We have to work through liaison.

WAYNE

And if liaison's been penetrated by the Cartels? You can't trust institutions in Mexico. You can only trust people.

(off her silence)

I am giving you, first day in the field, a chance to run Rafael Bautista to ground. You don't want in? Fine. Pull over, let yourself out.

Zoe's torn... But fuck it:

ZOE

I'm in.

38 **INT. IZTAPALAPA APARTMENT FOYER - NIGHT**

38

The doorbell rings in a small apartment. A 40-year-old HOMEOWNER opens up. El Cocodrilo stands outside in the hallway with **TEN ARMED SICARIOS**.

HOMEOWNER

(completely unfazed)

Come in. I'll get her.

39 **INT. IZTAPALPA BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

39

The Homeowner interrupts a YOUNG GIRL of 12, who is in pajamas, doing her math homework.

HOMEOWNER

Mija.

40 **INT. IZTAPALAPA LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

40

The girl follows her father into the living room. It's filled with candles and statues like we saw in the teaser: paraphernalia for the Santa Muerte cult, of which this young girl is apparently a **PRIESTESS**. And indeed, she's now dressed like one, in a long WHITE GOWN.

El Cocodrilo and the Sicarios silently lay AK-47s, pistols, and grenades on the floor. The Priestess lights black candles and recites a prayer:

PRIESTESS

O Skinny One, O White Girl
 O Santa Muerte
 You watch over us and give us life
 And you take it, too
 Rich and poor alike
 We are all equal before you
 Once again, we need your protection
 From those who seek to do us ill
 So please bless these men
 And the tools of their trade
 And curse those who seek to harm them
 Use your scythe to protect their necks
 And bleed those of their enemies

She's just a kid. But so was Joan of Arc. As she continues to bless the killers' guns...

41 INT. JEEP - DRIVING - NIGHT

41

Zoe weaves in and out of traffic on the Periférico highway. Wayne's cell rings. He puts it on speaker.

WAYNE

Was it the right phone?

CHIEF INSPECTOR (V.O.)

Looks like. Texting with another burner. Got 'em both on intercept. Must have agreed on the place beforehand, cause they just set a time. Two hours from now.

WAYNE

Can you triangulate them?

CHIEF INSPECTOR (V.O.)

Cocodrilo went off the grid. Must have taken out his battery. But the Bautista phone is still pinging.

WAYNE

Where?

CHIEF INSPECTOR (V.O.)

El Hoyo. Watch your ass, *amigo*. That's Indian Territory.

WAYNE

(to Zoe)

Take this exit. We're going to Iztapalapa.

42 **EXT. EL HOYO, IZTAPALAPA - NIGHT**

42

Wayne and Zoe drive through Iztapalapa, the D.F.'s most densely populated and dangerous slum. Forty years ago it was wilderness. Now two million people live here, packed into tiny houses and tin-roof shacks.

The car reaches "El Hoyo," the roughest part of Iztapalapa. Streets almost deserted, the few windows facing the street heavily barred up, broken glass glued to the top of every gate. A burned out car. Tattooed GANG MEMBERS staring with dead eyes as they pass. A pack of feral DOGS roaming.

The Jeep pulls up in an alley, next to a PARKED VAN.

43 **INT. POLICÍA FEDERAL SURVEILLANCE VAN - MOMENTS LATER**

43

The van's doors open and Wayne and Zoe step inside, carrying heavy plastic PELICAN CASES. The doors close after them.

The *Policía Federal* team is there: five body-armored elite SWAT troops, a TECH, and the CHIEF INSPECTOR (40s). None wear badges or any other insignia ID'ing them as cops.

CHIEF INSPECTOR

(re Zoe)

Who the fuck is this?

WAYNE

Let me introduce my colleague
Ivanka Bannon.

(drops the pelican cases)

Merry Christmas.

The Swat Team swarms and opens the cases to reveal an ARSENAL inside -- shotguns, ammo, H&K 416 assault rifles... They all start grabbing the guns, loading them.

The TECH shows Wayne and Zoe video on a laptop.

TECH

There's only one guy inside the
house. Could it be Bautista?

Wayne looks: THERMAL IMAGING of a man's silhouette.

WAYNE

I don't know. I'm going in with
you.

CHIEF INSPECTOR

If shit goes bad, we're dumping you
in the sewers, my friend.

WAYNE

That's not very eco-friendly. At
least let me fertilize your lawn.

Wayne tosses Zoe a bulletproof vest. She pulls it on, uneasy about what she's gotten into.

44 **EXT. TIN-ROOF HOUSE - NIGHT**

44

The group, armed and all wearing helmets, vests, and full-face masks, exit the van and move on a tin-roof house.

Wayne, the Chief and five *Policía* stack up outside the door.

Zoe, carrying an H&K submachine gun, and one young *Policía* with an assault rifle head around to cover the back.

ON ZOE, waiting, tense:

There's a noise. The *Policía* spins his rifle around--

But Zoe pushes his handguard towards the sky, stopping him from firing.

It was a wide-eyed NEIGHBOR coming home, pushing a food cart.

The *Policía* gives Zoe a look of silent thanks, then signals for the neighbor to get the fuck out of there.

IN FRONT, the Chief SHOTGUNS the door off its hinges. They enter, tossing FLASH-BANG grenades...

45 **INT. TIN-ROOF HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

45

It's the house where we met Bautista in the teaser. Now empty except for a table with TWO CELLPHONES and a TERRIFIED MAN.

We know this man. It's MAURICIO, the street vendor taken by Bautista's men earlier that day.

Wayne hits Mauricio with pepperspray rounds. Mauricio collapses screaming. The SWAT team subdues him.

MAURICIO

Please, please, they have my
family! They'll kill them!

46 **EXT. IZTAPALAPA VECINDAD - NIGHT**

46

Now we're elsewhere in Iztapalapa. El Cocodrilo and the ten Sicarios enter a *vecindad*, a courtyarded tenement complex.

Waiting for them is a man in a suit jacket and cowboy boots, a **CAPO** from the *Federación Del Norte Cartel*. With him are his two BODYGUARDS.

EL COCODRILO

Apartment six. You confirm it's him.
We'll take him out when he exits.

THE CAPO

Just make it hurt.

The Capo and his Bodyguards enter the apartment. El Cocodrilo and his men take cover in an apartment across the courtyard.

All awaiting the arrival of Rafael Bautista.

47

INT. TIN-ROOF HOUSE - NIGHT

47

Mauricio is handcuffed on the ground, guarded by the SWAT team. The Tech has set up his equipment on the table. Wayne, Zoe and the Chief Inspector huddle.

WAYNE

Bautista's done this before. Finds a random guy. Someone no one will ever miss. Yanks him off the street. Terrorizes him into doing some dirty work.

Zoe shows the two phones, carrying identical text messages.

ZOE

He's been getting texts from Bautista on one phone, retyping them into the one we intercepted. It's called an "air gap." Keeps us from tracking Bautista directly.

CHIEF INSPECTOR

Relay system. Clever man, Bautista.

WAYNE

Only so many relays he can use. End of the line, it'll be him.

The Chief Inspector calls to his men:

CHIEF INSPECTOR

Órale! Let's make this Rafael Bautista's last night on earth!

48

INT. LALO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

48

Lalo and his wife are back at home, a relatively modest apartment in a beaux-art building. He's in bed. She's getting undressed.

YADIRA

...And Miguel might actually want me for the William Morgan project, you think that's a good idea?

Lalo's just sitting there. Thinking.

YADIRA (CONT'D)

Lalo? Something wrong?

LALO

No.

YADIRA

Okay.

(then)

Was it good to see Zoe?

LALO

Yes.

YADIRA

Great. I'm happy you connected.

LALO

...Right.

He's withdrawn. Something is wrong.

YADIRA

I just mean, she meant so much to you... It's good for you--

LALO

(sharp)

--You don't need to tell me what's good for me.

A long beat. She stands there, almost naked. We might expect her to snap back at him. But instead... she tears up.

YADIRA

What do I have to do? How many years--

LALO

--Stop.

YADIRA

I didn't do anything wrong.

LALO

Well, if you did nothing wrong,
then I have nothing to forgive you
for. So you can stop trying.

Yadira starts to cry. Lalo softens. A beat, then he rises.

He kisses her. She kisses back hungrily, takes off his
underwear. As he pushes her onto the bed...

49

INT. TIN-ROOF HOUSE - NIGHT

49

Zoe tries to comfort Mauricio, who's sitting on the ground,
handcuffed, almost catatonic.

ZOE

We get Bautista, we get your family
back. We're tracking his phone
right now.

The rest are looking at the laptop screen, as the Tech
triangulates the next relay phone. Excitement in the air.

TECHNICIAN

Okay, we got it! Signal's coming
from the west... near the
Periférico... Here we go...

A location comes up. And suddenly all the men's faces fall.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)

Oh, shit.

CHIEF INSPECTOR

Fuck.

ZOE

What? What happened?

CHIEF INSPECTOR

(to Wayne)

Sorry, amigo.

ZOE

What?

CHIEF INSPECTOR

Signal's coming from an army base.

Fuck. Wayne stands in silent rage.

ZOE

If it's Bautista--

CHIEF INSPECTOR

--It's not. It's another relay.

ZOE

We get there, we track it to the next relay. We have time--

CHIEF INSPECTOR

--To do what? Bust in with men and guns? I'm not starting a civil war with the army. The State does not fuck with the State here.

(to Wayne)

Fucking tell this girl already.

WAYNE

(to Zoe)

It's over.

All the men start to pack up. Mauricio watches in horror.

ZOE

(re Mauricio)

What can we do for this guy?

Wayne's look turns even grimmer. He unholsters his pistol.

WAYNE

Uncuff him. I'm giving him my gun.

(to Mauricio)

You need to shoot yourself, right in this house. Bautista's gonna find out the *Policía* were here. In his mind, you failed. That's how he thinks.

The *Policía* exchange looks. Zoe's shocked.

ZOE

What the fuck? You don't know that.

WAYNE

I absolutely do. And shut up.

(back to Mauricio)

If you take yourself out, Bautista will look at it like you did your penance. He'll let your family go.

ZOE

I know I can't stop you but I swear I'll go to the COS.

He turns on her, seething:

WAYNE

You have no idea what's really going on here. Not in this country, not in this room.

ZOE

You think that'll convince me?

WAYNE

I don't have to convince you.

ZOE

(escalating)

You cannot put him in the position of choosing between his life and his family's--

WAYNE

--He's already in that position! It wasn't me who put him there!

ZOE

(to the Chief Inspector)

No. I'll hold you accountable.

WAYNE

This guy's life is over either way. We can save two people. We can save a baby.

Mauricio watches, wide-eyed. The Inspector turns to Wayne:

CHIEF INSPECTOR

Not my battle, *compadre*.

Wayne finally re-holsters his pistol and walks out the door.

Zoe gives a last hopeless look at Mauricio. Then she follows Wayne outside.

50

EXT. EL HOYO STREET - NIGHT

50

Wayne starts to walk away. Zoe catches up to him.

ZOE

Wayne. Come on. Get in the car.

WAYNE

Fuck off.

ZOE

Gringo walking at night round here, you're gonna get yourself killed.

WAYNE

I said fuck off.

Zoe hardens. She's had it.

ZOE

I want you to know... if you even survive tonight... I'm going to report you up the chain. I don't know what Bautista did to you, but... you're damaged. I'm not going to let you bring the whole Station down just because you don't care if you live or die.

Wayne whirls, looks at her. It looks like he might lash out. She braces...

But then his anger fades to... disappointment.

WAYNE

I thought you could help me.

Wayne turns and walks off into the night.

Zoe's shocked and confused... but also a little amazed.

Then a single GUNSHOT startles her. Behind her, the window of the house she just exited is momentarily LIT UP.

Zoe looks back. Knows what just happened. Her face falls.

She gets into the Jeep and drives off.

51 **EXT. VECINDAD COURTYARD - NIGHT**

51

In the darkness, we watch from above as Bautista finally arrives. He's accompanied only by his Lieutenant, the Man with the Powder Burn.

They cross the courtyard and enter the apartment where the *Federación* Capo waits.

52 **INT. VECINDAD APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS**

52

The Capo and Bodyguards rise as Bautista and Powder Burn enter. Bautista raises his hand in greeting. But the hand trembles. And there's a strange smile on his face.

Because "Bautista" is not Bautista. He's the HOMELESS MAN Mauricio argued on the street with earlier that day, his hair and beard now dyed black.

THE CAPO

No.

Powder Burn shoots the two Bodyguards in the forehead. He does the same to the Capo. And then to the Homeless Man.

53 **EXT. VECINDAD COURTYARD - SAME TIME**

53

El Cocodrilo and his ten Sicarios are taking tactical positions in the courtyard. They react to the shots.

A TRUCK suddenly pulls up to the entrance of the vecindad, trapping them inside. Then the courtyard LIGHTS are cut.

EL COCODRILLO

Fuck.

Half of Coco's head is BLOWN OFF off by a precision shot. The man next to him is KNOCKED off his feet by a fusillade.

REVEAL: six of Bautista's GUNMEN have set up atop the vecindad's roof. They're wearing body armor and using night-vision scopes. They open up.

The *Federación's* Sicarios panic, shooting helplessly towards the roof as they run for cover.

But they're cut to pieces by gunfire.

54 **EXT. US EMBASSY - NIGHT**

54

Zoe, at the wheel of the Jeep, is at the Embassy's parking entrance. Exhausted and miserable.

A MARINE GUARD is looking at her ID, surprised.

MARINE GUARD

We expected you thirteen hours ago.

55 **INT. CIA STATION -- NIGHT**

55

Zoe's at her cubicle in the CIA Station, on a secure computer. Typing: *C/O Alfaro deeply regrets having to send this cable, but the actions of D/COS Addison--*

She notices that she's received a email on the internal system. It's from her fiance. The subject heading is: "All I could find," then it simply lists a number of dates and places, including "Guat. 1992-5" and "B.A. 2000-2003."

Zoe stares at the email... Something coming to her...

56 **INT. WAYNE'S SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT**

56

Wayne, looking like shit, opens his door. Zoe's in the hall.

ZOE

You've been running game on me.
Eight months now.

A beat. Then he walks inside, leaving the door open.

57 **INT. WAYNE'S SAFE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

57

Wayne's on the sofa, Alka-Selzer in hand. Zoe stands.

ZOE

I think you're crazy. But I have high confidence you'd wouldn't be DCOS if you're as crazy as you seemed today. I think you were putting me through a stress test.

(beat)

And yeah, I shouldn't be here, cause of my stepdad. Someone pulled big strings to make an exception.

(beat)

You did a tour in Guatemala in 1992 and one in Buenos Aires in 2000. Both times directly under Faustino Walsh. The man who convinced me to switch to operations.

(beat)

I have high confidence you conspired with him. Got me plucked from the Directorate of Analysis and sent through training. All to get me here. A big, complicated op you illegally ran on an Agency employee. So the question is: why?

WAYNE

You know why.

ZOE

...Lalo.

58 **EXT. WAYNE'S SAFE HOUSE - ROOF - NIGHT**

58

Wayne and Zoe are on the roof of the apartment complex. Wayne removes a false masonry block from the parapet. He grabs a watertight pouch.

Inside is a LAPTOP. He boots it up, opens up a video file.

ON THE VIDEO

Wayne is in a safehouse with a nervous El Cocodrilo. A timestamp puts this at TEN MONTHS before the present day.

EL COCODRILO

Swear you're not taping this?

WAYNE

Jesus, Coco, what kind of asshole you think I am?

EL COCODRILO

(relaxing a little)

Okay. You know *El Enano*, Bautista's Lieutenant? Big motherfucker, burn on his face? Two years ago, we close a deal. We sample our merchandise, get super wasted. He lets me in on this big secret, says no one knows about. Says he'll kill me, I tell anyone. He said Bautista's untouchable, cause he owns the next President of Mexico.

WAYNE

"Owns"? Like bought him off?

EL COCODRILO

No, man. That's smalltime shit. Way he put it, Bautista made him. Picked him out as a kid. Trained him. Cleared the path. Like crazy fucking shit.

WAYNE

Who is it?

EL COCODRILO

Fuck if I know. And I ain't gonna ask, seeing how he'd chop off my--

BACK TO SCENE

Wayne ends the video. Zoe's stunned.

ZOE

There are three parties... Lalo hasn't even declared his candidacy...

WAYNE

He's the only one that fits. He had the family name and the family money. The looks. The charisma. Then, every step of the way, he lucks out. His first run for Senate, he's about to lose, and hey, guess what?

Wayne shows Zoe a CRIME-SCENE PHOTO on the laptop: a *DEAD MAN lying on a city sidewalk.*

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Frontrunner's "mugged" while walking his dog. Then Lalo's run for Mayor? Anonymous leak, bribery scandal takes out his opponent. Bautista clearing the path.

ZOE

Lalo's the cleanest politician in the country.

WAYNE

That's the best evidence he's dirty.

(then)

There's something off about him, too. No real friends. And I got no idea what that marriage is about. No one really close to him... Not since you.

Zoe doesn't want to believe this.

ZOE

The boy I knew was a slightly spoiled art student. He had some problems. But he'd never, never be involved in murdering anyone.

WAYNE

Would the boy you know have ever become Mayor of Mexico City?

(off her silence)

You don't know him, Zoe.

She can't deny that.

ZOE

Chief of Station been read in?

WAYNE

She knows what she needs to know.
She doesn't know I brought you
here.

ZOE

So I'm a Case Officer in name only.
I'm really an access agent you're
running to prove your theory. I'm
bait.

WAYNE

What you are is maybe the one
person who can save this country.
Isn't that what you're here for?

OFF Zoe, considering...

59

INT. PRIESTESS'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

59

The Santa Muerte Priestess is sleeping under Little Mermaid
sheets. A hand shakes her gently awake.

Rafael Bautista stands by her bedside. She smiles.

PRIESTESS

I hope you filled their fucking
mouths with dirt.

BAUTISTA

Thank you for telling me.

PRIESTESS

You never need to thank me. You are
sainted, Rafael. You will lead us
out of the darkness.

Bautista gets on his knees.

BAUTISTA

Will you bless me, Priestess?

She rises and begins another prayer to Santa Muerte...

60

INT. CIA STATION - DAWN (DAY 2)

60

Zoe comes back to her workstation. She pulls up the draft of
her cable denouncing Wayne.

She studies it for a moment. Then she deletes it. She needs
to know the truth.

She starts to leave. Her desk phone rings.

ZOE

Hello?

61 **INT. WAYNE'S SAFE HOUSE - DAWN - INTERCUT**

61

Wayne is watching a TV news report.

WAYNE

Turn on the TV.

ZOE

What channel?

WAYNE

Any.

Zoe finds a TV monitor, flips it on.

ON THE TV: A local REPORTER stands in a public square, unprofessionally emotional.

LOCAL NEWS REPORTER

...police have blocked off the scene, but... Can we bring up those photos?

62 **START MONTAGE**

62

While the news report continues, we **INTERCUT**:

-- Zoe, in the Station, watches the TV with shock...

-- At his luxurious house, the narcobanker Pedro checks a stock ticker and beams. The peso is plunging; his short sale is making him millions...

-- In the El Hoyo shack, a team of CRIME TECHS and Mexico City COPS crowd around the body of Mauricio, gunshot wound to his head, pistol in his hand...

-- Wayne, in his living room, watches the TV news report, his look unreadable....

-- On a side street in Iztapalapa, a van pulls to a stop. The back doors open. Mauricio's **WIFE** and **SON** are pushed out. Blindfolded but alive. Just as Wayne predicted.

LOCAL NEWS REPORTER

...what is most -- and I don't think I'm exaggerating -- terrifying is the location of the *narcomanta and the bodies*: hung somehow off the balcony of the Palacio de Bellas Artes. The most iconic building in Mexico City, where the Mayor himself was only hours before.

ON THE TV: we see the *narcomanta*. It's hanging alongside a DOZEN BULLET-RIDDEN BODIES whose clothes mark them as El Cocodrilo and his Sicarios. The skin's been flayed completely off their faces.

LOCAL NEWS REPORTER (CONT'D)

This is what it says, in full: "You thought you were taking the fight to us. We are taking it to you."

And we end on Lalo, being escorted by the Mexico City CHIEF OF POLICE into the crime scene, now cut off from public view by a barrier. Lalo stares at the corpses, the *narcomanta*...

LOCAL NEWS REPORTER (V.O.)

Whatever else this means, *El Narco* has finally come. With a knife to the heart of Mexico City.

OFF Lalo's face, contorting with anger, we:

- END PILOT -