

NETWORK DRAFT

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## NEW YORK UNDERCOVER

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NETWORK DRAFT

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TEASER

MUSIC UP: Extended intro of "NEEDED ME" by Rihanna.

[NOTE: Each episode of NY Undercover will open with a cinematic, visually arresting, music-driven sequence. These openings will feel very much like a music video, but will include key elements to set up the story of the episode.]

INT. SUNLIT BEDROOM - DAY

QUICK FLASHES: Skin on skin. Bodies intertwined. Connected. Moving. A WOMAN and A MAN. In sync.

INTERCUT WITH: The woman getting ready. Beautiful, fierce eyes. Toned body slipping into clothes. Hair. Make-up. Jewelry.

Snippets of the man watching. In love. In awe.

The light is always perfect. Almost ethereal.

Final touch - the gun. She picks up a tiny, but cold-blooded Ruger LCRx .38 Special, and slips it into an SOB holster.

Now we get our first full view of the woman. Her name is LEXY. Late 20's. Buorica. Certified intensity, but with an easy smile. Thrill seeker. She kisses the man and walks out.

The MUSIC REALLY KICKS IN as...

EXT. BROOKLYN STREET - DAY

A sleek Mercedes glides down a mostly deserted waterfront street, passes a shuttered food truck, pulls into a warehouse. Two Range Rovers with blacked-out windows follow seconds later. A DOMINICAN MAN in fashionably torn denim closes the roller door, and the bass kicks in as we CUT TO:

INT. BROOKLYN WATERFRONT WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Series of quick cuts/dissolves/beauty shots/epic CU's. We play with time here... The warehouse's waterside door is wide open, so we get a fantastic view of the Manhattan skyline as we watch a deal go down...

QUICK CUTS to establish the players:

1 - OCHO DEBAJO - Mostly Dominican crew. Lexy and YOUNG HEAVY, (strictly muscle), get out of the first Range.

BETO (40's, gangster with a scarred face), steps out of the driver's side of the second Range. He nods to Lexy and Young Heavy. The passenger door opens. MANNY (30's, cold-blooded shot-caller, long hair and beard) eases out. We catch a look of surprise on Lexy's face. She whispers to Young Heavy.

LEXY

Is that Manny?

YOUNG HEAVY

Yep. That's the man.

Manny doesn't even acknowledge them. He's staring at...

2 - LIVE OAK CREW - Brooklyn-based gang, with a stronghold in Fort Greene. FELIX (30's, shot-caller with plenty of drip) leans against his car. He's flanked by his protege, MALIK (20's), and CHAUNCEY (30's), a beefy Black dude there to do the same thing as Young Heavy - look rough and ready.

The shot-callers greet each other, talk guns and money. We don't hear any words. We just hear the music bang as...

EXT. STREET / INT. FOOD TRUCK - DAY

That shuttered food truck, parked halfway down the block... It's not empty.

Now we see the third wheel on this date... COPS. Start on NAT GILMORE (Late 20's, charismatic, easy smile, quick fuse). He listens to a speaker set on the work counter. He writes every name and pertinent detail he hears: "Felix, Malik, Beto?, Lexy?, ???, Ochos?" "2 pt ship." "Mil grade."

LISA KIM (30's, athletic, ambitious, climber), focuses binoculars on the warehouse entrance, camera ready. MOSES HERNANDEZ (20's, eager beaver with a hero complex), doodles.

INT. BROOKLYN WATERFRONT WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The Range Rover tailgates rise in unison.

CLICK. CLICK. CLICK. Metal cases open and we see GUNS. Lots of them. Felix samples the hardware, dick hard. Pretends to shoot imaginary targets.

TIGHT ON: Felix's phone. Bank portal for a wire transfer. He hands it to Lexy. She inputs account numbers. They pass the phone back and forth, entering numbers and authorizations. It's all familiar territory until...

Manny gets a text. We don't see from who. He whispers to Beto and then signals for Lexy to stop the transaction. Felix perks up, looks to Manny, waiting for an explanation. Manny looks at Felix, but points to Chauncey.

MANNY

That one. How well do you know him?

Everybody knows what he's really asking. Lexy's heart races. Felix stands. Coiled intensity.

FELIX

You fact-checking my boy?

That moment was all Beto needed to get close to Chauncey, put a gun to his head. Young Heavy grabs him and pulls up his shirt. We're all surprised to see a tell-tale wire taped to Chauncey's chest.

There's a beat here where nobody moves. We bang through quick CU's. They're all stunned. But outside...

EXT. BROOKLYN STREET - SAME

Nat, Moses and Lisa are in a full, desperate sprint, headed for the warehouse... Nat screaming into his radio...

INT. BROOKLYN WATERFRONT WAREHOUSE - SAME

PANDEMONIUM. Everyone scared for their lives. Guns come out. Everything happens at once.

Chauncey knocks the gun from Beto's hand, lands two quick strikes to loosen Young Heavy's grip... and runs for the door. He's almost there when BANG BANG! Manny guns him down.

Malik and Felix dump on anything Ocho. Young Heavy returns fire. Lexy scrambles for cover and whips out her .38. She comes up firing, forcing Malik to jump into the back seat of the Merc... Manny racks an AA-12 shotgun with bloodthirsty zeal, blasts six shots through the back door of the Merc. Malik is shredded.

Beto jumps in a Rover, pulls up hot next to Manny. Loose guns spill from the tailgate as they swerve out and...

The cops rush in.

MOSES

POLICE! NYPD!

Young Heavy gets a bead on Nat, but Moses fires first. Drops him. Felix sprints for the Merc and dives into the driver's seat. Lisa lights up the car from 20 yards away.

Lexy heads for the remaining Rover. She rounds the bumper and sees Moses, back to her. Easy shot, but she hesitates. Moses spins, drops, fires. Lexy dives behind the car. Nat scans the warehouse for--

NAT

Noooo!!!

He runs to Chauncey, who's bleeding out. He rips open Chauncey's shirt, hoping against hope...

Felix gasses the Merc and rockets out of the warehouse.

Lexy runs for a side door, her last chance to escape, but...

LISA

STOP OR I SHOOT!

Lexy stops in her tracks. Lisa and Moses take her down. Lexy's face pressed against the concrete. She has a view of the back door, the Manhattan skyline... and Nat.

He cradles Chauncey in his arms. Chauncey looks up, eyes full of fear. Nat begs him to hold on. It's not enough.

Chauncey takes his last breath as we CUT TO...

END TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. NATALIE'S - EVENING

Iconic Harlem night club. Still here. Looking better than ever. A well dressed MYSTERY MAN (50's, Black, bald head) sits at the bar, enjoys the music and a drink. Back to us.

The club owner, ALICIA (40's, NuSoul vibe), taps his shoulder, whispers in his ear. She hands him a house phone.

MYSTERY MAN

Hey, Cap... What? When?

(beat)

On my way.

He pulls on a full-length cashmere overcoat, and heads out. We never see his face.

INT. 4TH PRECINCT - INTERVIEW ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lexy's cuffed to a metal table. Arms scraped. Dried blood on her cheek. She's still surging with adrenaline and fear, but her eyes are ice cold.

INT. 4TH PRECINCT - SQUAD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

This is the bullpen for the Special Investigations unit. Six detective's desks, admin, case boards. On the perimeter, two interview rooms, a briefing room, and two offices.

The room is buzzing. Cops swirling in the fallout of the shooting. We bounce from one hurried moment to the next--

Moses hands a paper to a clerk.

MOSES

Two Black Ranges. Late model.

Here's the tags...

Lisa gets in a BIG COP'S ass.

LISA

I don't want you calling. I want you to get your ass in a car and go see for yourself if Felix shows up.

Big cop rushes out. Moses is at the white board. He transposes Nat's notes: "Felix, Malik, Beto?, Woman?, ???, Ochos?" "2 pt ship." "Mil grade"

MOSES

These are the people we know were there. We need answers for all these question marks.

LISA

Who called the hospital? What's the status on Malik?

SAROYA (40's, vice detective) pipes up.

SAROYA

Just got off with the Duty Nurse. Malik Ramsey was D.O.A.

LISA

Shit! Where are the guns we got, we need to get those serials to ATF...

As she moves off, we zero in on the only person not moving. Nat sits at his desk. It's meticulous (especially for a detective). Nothing in sight that would give you a clue as to who might sit there. Only that they're "Type A".

On the other hand, the desk next to his is full of personality, and plenty of photos. Most of them include "Chauncey", the cop we saw get shot. His real name was Charles Dixon. We follow Nat's focus to a photo of Charles, smiling wide, with his wife and their two sons. That almost cracks Nat. He looks toward the interview room, rage building. He grabs the photo of Charles and his family and...

INT. 4TH PRECINCT - INTERVIEW ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lexy hasn't moved. She looks up when she hears the door rattle. Nat walks in. They lock eyes for a beat, neither giving an inch.

NAT

What's your name?

LEXY

Abogado.

NAT

I know you speak English.

LEXY

(beat)

Abogado.

Nat sits. He puts the photo of the cop and his family on the table in front of Lexy. She looks straight ahead.

NAT

His name was Charles Dixon. He was married to Jeanie Dixon. 12 years. Two kids. Both Boys. Look at them.

Lexy keeps her eyes straight ahead. Nat picks up the photo, shoves it in front of Lexy's face. Inches away.

NAT

Look at them! You took their father from them.

Lexy looks at the photo. Her expression doesn't change. Then she levels Nat with a cold stare.

LEXY

Abogado.

Nat leans in close, switches to Spanish.

NAT

(in Spanish)

*It's good you have no soul, because you're going to burn in hell.*

He walks out. Only then do we see a tremor in her expression.

EXT. 4TH PRECINCT - NIGHT

A super-clean Caprice Classic pulls up. Black with peanut butter details. The mystery man we saw earlier at Natalie's steps out. Two UNIFORMS nod. One holds the door open. We follow the man into...

INT. 4TH PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

Precinct's main floor. The looks of respect we see on the cops' faces tell us all we need to know about the man. As he gets to the top of the stairs, the whole squad room comes to attention. All that bustling comes to a halt.

Finally we get a look at his face and we see JC WILLIAMS (50's, commanding presence, wise eyes). Yes, the same JC that worked undercover in this unit 25 years ago.

Now he's in charge of the Special Investigations Unit. This is his team. His family. He sees the heartbreak in their faces and it brings tears to his eyes. He fights them back.

JC

I'm not going to ask how you're doing. I already know.

(MORE)



JC (CONT'D)

(beat)

And I won't ask you to pretend it didn't happen. I want you to feel it. I want you to mourn him. But it can't be here. And it can't be now. Right now, it's gotta be about catching who did this to Charles.

(beat)

We owe him that.

Every cop in that room nods, fire in their eyes.

JC

Somebody needs to tell Jeanie.

Silence. The thought triggers a new wave of grief and rage. Finally, Nat speaks up.

NAT

It should be me.

He grabs his jacket, starts out.

JC

Nat. Get cleaned up first.

Nat follows JC's eyes, looks down. He's still got Charles's blood on his clothes. He nods. Walks out. JC turns to Lisa.

JC

I hear we got hands on one of them?

LISA

She's in the interview room.

JC heads to the interview room. He looks through the window just before going in, and-- stops cold. Lisa and Moses share a look, not sure what's going on. JC backs away from the door and takes out his phone. He quickly scrolls through photos... lands on one, stricken.

MOSES

What's up L.T.?

JC doesn't answer. Instead he dials his phone and...

INT. NAT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nat's bloody clothes on the floor of a steam-filled bathroom. Shower running. Nat sitting on the shower floor, arms wrapped around his knees. The water pours over him, blending with his tears and drowning out his sobs.

INT. 4TH PRECINCT - SQUAD ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

NINA MORENO (50's, power suit, finely manicured, but with some street edge) walks in. We recognize her, too. She's another OG from the original NYUC. JC comes out of his office. Nina makes a beeline for him, anxious.

NINA  
JC, are you sure?

JC  
Enough that I had to call.

NINA  
And a cop got killed?

JC nods. The concern on Nina's face deepens.

JC  
Ready?

They head to the interview room. Nina peeks through the window and freezes. She braces herself, then walks into...

INT. 4TH PRECINCT - INTERVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nina walks in. Lexy looks up. They're both speechless until--

NINA  
Melissa?

Then, for the first time, we hear Lexy speak English, absolutely no accent. But we detect a bite of sarcasm as...

LEXY  
Hey, Mom.

And off that bombshell...

INT. DIXON HOME - NIGHT

Warmth. Light. Laughter. We're in the kitchen of a modest brownstone in Harlem. JEANIE DIXON (30's, glowing eyes of an eternal optimist), bakes with her boys QUIN and SETH (8 and 5). We saw them earlier in the photo from Charles's desk.

All three wear aprons covered with flour, and big smiles. Beignets sizzle in a deep fryer. Jeanie spoons them out when they're crispy and golden. Quin sprinkles sugar over them.

The DOORBELL RINGS. We follow Jeanie as she pulls off her apron and checks the peephole. She opens the door with a huge smile. Nat stands on the porch.

JEANIE

Hey, Nathaniel. You heard it was  
beignet night?

Nat can barely make eye contact. Jeanie picks up on the vibe, looks past him, doesn't see Charles. She looks back to Nat.

JEANIE

How bad is it?

But she already knows. Nat's silence confirms it. She crumbles to the ground. Nat tries to comfort her as...

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

JC sits across from "Lexy", who we now realize is actually MELISSA ORTIZ (MORENO). Nina paces, still in shock.

NINA

Does she have to be in cuffs? She's  
not a criminal, JC.

JC gives her a look. They don't know that.

NINA

You're not a criminal are you?

MELISSA

No.

JC

Then what the hell were you doing  
at that gun deal?

MELISSA

Working a case.

JC

For who?

MELISSA

NYPD.

NINA

What the hell are you talking  
about? You're a cop?

MELISSA

I've been undercover almost a year.

JC

Hold on. I heard you tried to sign on to the force--

NINA

But you washed out of the academy. I took you for drinks to cheer you up, you were so torn up.

MELISSA

They made it look like I got booted. I had to sell it.

JC

Who's they?

MELISSA

Bureau of Special Services.

NINA

BOSS program? Bullshit. That's been defunct for 30 years.

JC

Hold on. If you're blue why didn't you announce it the second we arrested you?

MELISSA

I had orders to maintain my cover no matter what. But when Nina walked in, I knew it was a wrap.

JC

Who gave you those orders?

MELISSA

Lieutenant April Freeman.

We can tell from JC's look, he knows exactly who that is.

INT. JC'S OFFICE - NIGHT

APRIL FREEMAN (40's, genius IQ, massive chip on her shoulder), sits across from JC.

APRIL

We're not talking about a vice cop moonlighting as a part time buy and bust UC. The BOSS program is long-term deep cover.

(MORE)

APRIL (CONT'D)

Getting arrested actually helps Melissa build her legend, but only if she sticks to her cover. The only thing that went wrong, is she wound up in the one precinct in New York with a cop who could recognize her.

JC

I had a detective killed today.

APRIL

That came out wrong. I'm sorry.

JC

Same old April. You always forget the part that matters - people.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - INTERCUT

Nina unlocks Melissa's cuffs. Melissa tries to the rub the feeling back in her hand.

NINA

Want something to drink?

MELISSA

I'm okay.

NINA

No, you're not. You saw a cop get killed. You can't be okay.

MELISSA

Well, I'm not thirsty.

Nina overlooks the attitude. Sits down.

NINA

You know, I was so happy when I thought you washed out. I didn't want a cop's life for you.

MELISSA

Why not? You were a cop. Your mother was a cop. Maybe it runs in the family.

NINA

If it's in the blood, I hope there's a cure.

(beat)

(MORE)

NINA (CONT'D)

Why do you think they chose you for BOSS?

INT. JC'S OFFICE - INTERCUT

APRIL

She's a prodigy, JC. Tests off the charts physically, intellectually. And psychologically, she's got all the markers of someone who can not only go undercover, but stay there. I was tracking every new recruit. Soon as her file hit my desk, I knew she'd be perfect.

(beat)

It doesn't hurt that she's adopted. People with identity issues tend to have a knack for assimilation.

JC

And you sent her undercover before she even finished the academy?

INT. 4TH PRECINCT - INTERVIEW ROOM - INTERCUT

MELISSA

The whole point was to recruit me before I had a chance to get "cop" in my DNA. April says it doesn't take long on the job before cops walk and talk and even look at people a certain way.

NINA

So what's your cover?

MELISSA

They know me as Lexy. Finance background with a specialty in virtual currency. I convinced the Ochos they were behind the times and they needed me to catch up.

INT. JC'S OFFICE - INTERCUT

April leans forward on JC's desk, animated and excited.

APRIL

She's already sniffing the inner circle of Ocho Debajo.

(MORE)

APRIL (CONT'D)

We've gotten more actionable intel in six months from her than the entire department's gotten in the eight years the Ochos have been on our radar. Think about that.

JC snaps at her, pissed.

JC

I think you and me judge success a little differently.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - INTERCUT

NINA

I know the rush that comes with undercover. Touching the flame. I spent 10 years in this very precinct doing just that. But trust me, there's another side to it. And it's not pretty.

MELISSA

Don't worry. April's talked to me about that and how to avoid it.

Nina shakes her head with an irony-filled chuckle.

NINA

You don't avoid it. You survive it, if you're lucky. Either way, you lose something you never get back. If I had known the price, I would have left the force long before I actually retired.

(takes Melissa's hand)

I don't want you to find out after it's too late. I can already see something different in your eyes.

That triggers a flicker of emotion in Melissa. Then it's gone, replaced by a defiant glare. She pulls her hand back.

MELISSA

Please don't do that.

NINA

What?

MELISSA

Pretend you know me like that.

INT. JC'S OFFICE - INTERCUT

April looks at JC, taken aback.

APRIL

I don't understand where this animosity is coming from.

JC

My team thought they were doing surveillance on a meeting. If you had been sharing information, they would have known there was a gun deal going down. We would have had tactical support on hand. Charles might still be alive.

APRIL

Fine. If it makes you feel better to blame someone, I'll take it. Now can I get Melissa out of here? She's been through quite an ordeal.

JC

She can leave as soon as she tells me everything there is to know about who killed Charles.

INT. BRIEFING ROOM - LATER

The gravity of his moment with Jeanie still weighs on Nat when he walks in to find Moses and Lisa going through a file. JC's at the head of the table. Nat stops cold when he sees Melissa sitting alone on the other side of the table. Nat looks at her like she's Satan.

NAT

What the hell is she doing in here?

JC

Nat, this is officer Melissa Ortiz. She's one of us.

JC hands a copy of the file to Nat. A mugshot of a younger Manny is paper-clipped to the top.

JC

You're looking at Manuel "Manny" Vasquez. Melissa identified him as the shooter. Everything we know about him is in there. Last known addresses, family, friends, social profiles, phone, bank info.

(MORE)



JC (CONT'D)

We're going to chase every lead  
like it's our only lead. Questions?

Nat hasn't taken his eyes off Melissa.

NAT

You're a cop?

MELISSA

(nods)

Happy to fill in blanks if I can.

NAT

Oh, now you want to help?

LISA

Nat--

NAT

Don't "Nat" me.

(to Melissa)

You should have helped when they  
had guns on Charles, when he was  
fighting for his life.

MELISSA

If I had moved, we'd both be dead.

NAT

I'd rather move and die than watch  
them shoot another cop like a dog.

JC

Hey! You want to point fingers, do  
it after we catch Manny. Right now,  
we need all the help we can get.

NAT

We got her intel. What else do we  
need her for?

JC

The only people who know who  
Melissa really is, are in this  
room. Everybody else thinks "Lexy"  
was arrested. So she's going to get  
processed, arraigned and released  
on bail.

(beat)

Then she's going right back in with  
the Ochos.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. COURTROOM - MORNING

Open on Melissa's face. Exhausted. No makeup. Hair tangled. She's in shackles and a jumpsuit, standing before the JUDGE in a court packed with CRIMINALS, LAWYERS, CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES.

JUDGE

Alessandra Vega. You're charged with violating New York penal code 265.35, negligent discharge of a firearm. Do you wish to enter a plea?

A DEFENSE ATTORNEY (40's, Ronaldo hair cut, shiny watch), next to Melissa pipes up.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

Not guilty, your honor. Ms. Vega is gainfully employed and has family in the city. We request ROR.

D.A. MATLOF (30's, overworked) rolls her eyes.

D.A. MATLOF

Defendant was present when a New York police officer was shot and killed. The investigation is ongoing. State requests no bail.

The judge holds a quick beat. It's only a flash, but we see him spot April in the back of the gallery...

JUDGE

One hundred thousand. Next.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Melissa takes a deep breath, starts down the steps. An Audi R8 whips up to the curb. A man gets out. This is NANDO (30's, charming smile and soulful eyes). We saw him in the opening shots. He smiles, relieved, and comes for her.

INT. "LEXY'S" APARTMENT - DAY

Melissa soaks in a bathtub. Nando squeezes soapy water on her back and sponges her off. He tenderly touches the scrape on her cheek. Kisses it.

NANDO

If I'd known Manny was going to be there, I never would've let you go.

MELISSA

I thought you were friends?

NANDO

We are. Shit, I've known him since we were kids, running cigarettes by boat from Santo Domingo to Miami. He's always been a hothead. But lately... I see something else. He's too unpredictable.

MELISSA

Have you talked to him since, you know, the whole thing happened?

NANDO

No. But I fucking lit Beto up. Told him I don't want you near any mess.

He moves her hair and kisses the back of her neck.

NANDO

From now on, I keep you at home, with a phone and a laptop, and away from pill-heads with guns.

Melissa stiffens. She shrugs off his hand and abruptly gets out of the bath. She wraps herself in a towel and heads to...

INT. "LEXY'S" BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nando follows, confused...

NANDO

Hey, come here. What's wrong?

MELISSA

I don't like to be coddled.

She starts dressing. Nando steps in front, grabs her hands.

NANDO

I know you're tough, Lexy. But you don't have to be hard all the time.

He gives her a soft, tender kiss. Whispers...

NANDO

It's okay to let someone take care  
of you.

He kisses her again. This time she kisses him back. The  
moment builds. The robe drops and as it turns into more...

EXT. BROOKLYN DREDGE YARD - DAY

Piles of rubble and debris from the Gowanus Canal. In that  
forest of clutter, Nat peers through the window of what used  
to be a Range Rover--now reduced to a charred piece of scrap.

He steps back to see Lisa and Moses walking over.

NAT

Tell me you guys had better luck  
than me. Cause we aren't getting  
anything out of this car.

MOSES

Well I wouldn't consider myself  
lucky. We tracked the cell phone  
linked to Manny, but it went dead  
twenty minutes after the shootout.

LISA

And we hit all last known  
addresses. Not a whiff. But we do  
know where his wife is...

(Nat lights up)

On a flight to Santo Domingo.

Nat watches the murky water swirl in the inlet, frustrated.

NAT

What about the bank info we got  
from Lexy.... I mean Melissa?

LISA

We got account numbers, but they  
won't help. The money moved around  
anonymously, and fast.

MOSES

Nothing on the streets either.

NAT

Dammit! You're telling me we can't  
find one piece to work with?

LISA

Hey, you know how this works. Keep pushing until something breaks.

NAT

We're on a clock, Lisa. Manny's not going to sit around waiting. We need something we can move on!

He starts back towards his car as...

EXT./INT. MT. EDEN HOUSE - DAY

A corner house in party mode. "*TE FALTO EL VALOR*" by Natti Natasha, serenades the entire neighborhood.

Melissa walks in, popping head to toe. A memorial to Sergio Guerra, a.k.a Young Heavy (the Ocho Debajo soldier who was killed in the shootout), is set up in the front hall. Photos, money, jewelry and bottles of liquor adorn the table.

Melissa takes a moment to pay her respects. She leaves a photo of herself and Sergio laughing in better times, and a hundred dollar bill on the table.

EXT. BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Family and friends, Ochos (including Nando) and some of their wives and girlfriends, eat, drink, dance, and share memories of Young Heavy. A mix of Spanish and English being spoken.

They greet Melissa like she's family. True affection going both ways. Melissa gets to Sergio's mother, takes her hands.

MELISSA

My heart is broken for you and your family. God keep his soul.

They embrace. Beto catches her eye. He starts walking back towards the house and motions for her to follow.

As Lexy heads off, we see Nando with a group of men. He watches her go and we catch a flicker of concern in his eyes.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Melissa sits on the edge of the bed in an upstairs bedroom. Beto stands in front of her. Studies her with a skeptical eye. SANTI (30's, built, hype beast) stands near the door.

Bouncy music and laughter seeps under the door, but it's all tension in here. Melissa not sure if she'll get out.

BETO

They ask who the shooter was?  
(off her nod)  
And you said?

MELISSA

The truth. I'd never seen him  
before that day.

BETO

What else did you tell them?

MELISSA

Nothing.

BETO

Ah Lexy, that doesn't add up.

Beto sits next to Melissa. He smiles, but it's not warm.

BETO

You were there when a cop was shot,  
and they let you out the next day?

Melissa swallows hard. There's no playing it cool.

MELISSA

Lucky, I guess.

BETO

No. It's not lucky, it's a miracle.

He grabs her by the neck. Squeezes hard.

BETO

And miracles don't happen unless  
you talk. So tell me what you said.

Melissa's eyes tear up from the pain and her rage.

MELISSA

You idiot.

BETO

What did you say?

MELISSA

You're an idiot. If I had talked,  
you think you'd be here right now  
eating sancocho and telling your  
stories about Sergio?

Santi steps up, ready to fire on Melissa, but Beto suddenly smiles, then laughs. He lets Melissa go.

BETO

I knew you were fire.

He stands while Melissa coughs. He motions to Santi, who pulls out a fat wad of cash. Beto hands the money to Melissa.

BETO

For the bail. Here, take it.

She takes the cash. He pats her back and walks out.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Mostly WOMEN, cooking and talking. An OLD MAN sits at a small table, expertly rolling the tightest marijuana cigarettes you've ever seen. And Nando's there, waiting for a plate.

Melissa walks in. She savors the aroma of the stew.

MELISSA

Mmm. Makes me miss home.

OLGA, (60's, gossipy, ringleader) smiles as she stirs a big pot of sancocho.

OLGA

You grew up in the DR?

MELISSA

Until I was six. But I miss it every day. If I had my way, I'd be there now.

OLGA

Yeah. We all say we're going back after we make some money. But most of us look up at the end and we're still here.

She dishes out bowls of stew.

MELISSA

Not me. I'll go back one day. I promise you that.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

(in Spanish)

*Nando! Your play man!*

Nando grabs a beer with his plate and heads out. Melissa sidles up next to Olga at the stove.

MELISSA

You think Manny went back?

OLGA

Well, he can't stay here. Not after shooting a cop.

(beat)

But I don't worry about him. He chose his path. I worry about him leaving his son behind.

MELISSA

Son? I thought his wife couldn't have kids.

Olga nods conspiratorially.

OLGA

It's not by Shanti. Only a few people know, but Manny got a little three-year-old named Tito. He worships his dad, and Manny tries to see him whenever he can.

And off Melissa's look...

INT. SQUAD ROOM - DAY

Nat's got his phone to his ear.

MELISSA (ON PHONE)

The baby mama's name is Iris MacKenzie. She's got a walk-up in the East Village...

Nat pulls on his jacket, headed for the door. He motions for Lisa and Moses to follow, and breaks into a run as--

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Nat bangs on an apartment door. Lisa and Moses flank him.

NAT

POLICE. OPEN UP!

The door opens a crack, chain still on, to reveal the exhausted eyes of IRIS (30's, day drinker). Nat holds a warrant up.



IRIS  
What do you want!

NAT  
You gonna open this door or you  
want me to kick it in?

Iris reluctantly unchains the door.

INT. IRIS'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The apartment is half "bad girl", half "tiger mom". A bottle of wine and a glass sit on the coffee table, next to kids books and toys. Baby Mozart plays through a speaker. And on the couch, TITO, a three-year-old, sleeps in oblivion.

Moses and Lisa get to clearing the apartment. Nat zeroes in on Iris. She's all attitude.

NAT  
Where is he?

IRIS  
I don't know. It's been a few  
years.

Moses and Lisa walk in from the bathroom.

MOSES  
Yo Nat! You should see this. Looks  
like our boy had a makeover.

Moses hands Nat the bathroom trash can. It's filled with hair that clearly isn't Iris's. Iris stares at it, defiant. Nat steps to her, fury building... threatening.

NAT  
I'm going to ask you one more time.

IRIS  
I don't have to tell you anything.  
I know my rights asshole.

She picks up her phone and starts dialing. Nat explodes. He grabs her phone and throws it against the wall. He presses her into the wall, inches from her face.

NAT  
Your rights? Manny killed a cop!  
You think I won't lock your ass up,  
you bum bitch?

The yelling wakes Tito. He cries, but Iris is afraid to move.

LISA  
Nat! Stop it!

Lisa steps between them. Moses guides Nat away to cool off. Lisa picks up the pieces of the phone. Iris rushes to Tito.

IRIS  
Shh. It's okay. It's okay.

LISA  
Sorry about that. We're all dealing with a lot right now. The department will pay for this. And if you want to make a call, here.

She holds out her phone. Iris hesitates, then takes it.

LISA  
What's your boy's name?

IRIS  
Tito.

LISA  
After Trinidad?

Iris nods, surprised Lisa knows the reference.

IRIS  
His dad loves boxing. But Tito's gonna be a doctor, and he's not gonna hurt anyone.

LISA  
Iris... I want to make sure nothing happens to you or Tito, but if you don't help us, I can't help you.  
(points to trash can)  
That hair is Manny's, we all know it. So the first thing that's going to happen, is you're going to jail, because we can prove you aided and abetted a fugitive.

Iris snaps her head around. Lisa has her attention.

LISA  
Then, Child Protective Services will come for Tito. They're going to put him with a foster family.  
(beat)  
Is that what you want?

Tears stream down Iris's face. She shakes her head.

LISA

Then tell me about Manny. When's the last time you saw him?

IRIS

(defeated)

Last night. We cut his hair. He grabbed some clothes and left out. I don't know where to.

LISA

(dials her phone)

Okay. Look, I'll try to make sure Tito ends up with a good caregiver.

IRIS

What are you doing?

LISA

Sorry, Iris, but I know you're holding out...

IRIS

Wait! I don't know where he is, but I know he's still in town. Said he can't leave until he sells these guns he got. That's all I know.

Lisa nods, ends her call. She looks to Nat, and off that...

EXT. WASHINGTON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

A MAN with close-cropped hair and a clean-shaven face walks out of a bodega, carrying two bags. It takes us a second to realize this is Manny. He looks radically different.

He walks with one hand in his pocket, his eyes scanning.

He passes Hobby Land, a small toy store. He stops a few seconds to admire a toy plane. Then ducks down an alley. He walks up a flight of dark stairs and into...

INT. RUNDOWN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Table. Two chairs. Mattress on the floor. Manny sits. He takes a bottle of vodka, a sandwich and chips out of one bag. A burner phone from the other. Behind him is a wall of guns.

Manny unwraps his sandwich but doesn't eat. First, he pops open a pill bottle and washes down three desoxyn with vodka.

INT. NATALIE'S - NIGHT

The joint is jumping. JC and Nat share a secluded corner table, lost in the crowd. On stage, JANELLE MONAE sings an updated version of Nancy Wilson's "GUESS WHO I SAW TODAY."

Alicia walks over with four shot glasses and a bottle of 30 year-old Balvenie. She pours the shots with great ceremony, then raises a glass. She nods to the untouched shot, still on the table, tears welling up.

ALICIA  
To Charles.

They toast, and down their shots.

NAT  
Thanks, Alicia.

ALICIA  
You tell Jeanie, she's family here.  
Always.

She leaves the bottle and walks off. JC pours another round.

JC  
How you holding up, Nat?  
(off Nat's shrug)  
I heard how you went after that lady. You're making people worry.

NAT  
Be fine soon as we catch Manny.

JC  
You think justice is going to be enough. It won't be.

NAT  
Well I can't get Charles back, so what else is there?

JC  
You gotta deal with losing him.

Nat pours himself another shot.

NAT  
I don't see that happening.

JC  
I know the feeling. I lost my partner. My brother.

NAT  
Eddie Torres?

JC  
Best man I ever knew.  
(beat)  
Didn't think there was a way to  
move past it, but I did. By leaning  
on family and friends. The people  
who loved me, who were still here.

NAT  
My family wants nothing to do with  
me. And I had one friend like that.

He looks to the untouched shot. JC touches his shoulder.

JC  
Then lean on me, Nat. I ain't going  
nowhere.

Melissa cuts through the crowd, spots the bottle of whiskey.

MELISSA  
30 year-old Balvenie? Damn, that's  
a thousand dollar bottle. Who's  
moonlighting?

NAT  
It was on the house. Lot of people  
had love for Charles.

Awkward. Melissa squeezes into the booth.

MELISSA  
Yeah. I hear he was a real one.

JC  
He was. That's why we need to make  
sure we get Manny. But he's smart,  
and he's disciplined. We're wasting  
our time looking for him.

Alicia walks over, smiles at Melissa.

ALICIA  
Y'all need another glass?

NAT  
No.

Melissa and Nat share a look. He can barely hide his  
contempt. Alicia senses the frost, moves on.

MELISSA

You didn't call me here to tell me you're giving up. So what is it?

JC

If we can't find Manny, we need to lure him out. Iris said he's not going anywhere until he unloads those guns. Meaning he needs a buyer.

(beat)

We're going to give him Nat.

Melissa shoots a look at Nat. Measures him.

JC

The only way this works is if the Ochos get a referral from somebody they trust. That's you.

MELISSA

You have any idea how paranoid they are right now?

JC

I can only imagine.

MELISSA

If he slips up and I'm the one who made the intro... The first person they'll kill is me.

JC

We know. That's why this decision is yours and yours alone.

Melissa gets up from the table, looks Nat dead in the eyes.

MELISSA

I'm in.

She walks out and off Nat...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. TATTOO SHOP - DAY

Nando lies face down on a table. CHE (30's, inked and studded tattoo artist) works on him: a RIP tat for "Young Heavy". We see a half dozen names of dead Ochos already on Nando's back.

He sips whiskey through a straw. Grimaces. Melissa sips from her own drink. She's back in "Lexy" mode. Loud. Happy.

MELISSA

You know you're not supposed to drink before tattoos right? It makes your blood thinner.

NANDO

That's a myth.

CHE

No it's not.

NANDO

Oh well.

(to Melissa)

You better stop then, because you're next. I want you to get a big "Nando" on your ass.

MELISSA

Never.

CHE

Names jinx it, son. You can do a nickname though.

NANDO

There you go, get my nickname.

MELISSA

Nando is your nickname.

NANDO

They used to call me "Thumper" when I was a kid.

MELISSA

Thumper?

NANDO

I was kind of hyper. My mom said I was like the rabbit in Bambi.

MELISSA

Okay, that's kind of cute, but I am not putting anybody's name on my body. Nickname or not.

NANDO

Damn. That's cold, Lex.

MELISSA

Sorry, baby, but honesty is the foundation of any relationship.

NANDO

Oh, it's honesty hour? Then let me ask you a real question. When you were talking about moving back to the DR, were you serious?

MELISSA

Yeah, I was. Why?

NANDO

I think about that too. A lot.

They stay in that moment until... his phone RINGS on a nearby table. Melissa checks it.

MELISSA

It's Beto again. Want it?

Ché perks up at the name, stops the gun.

CHE

I'll give you some space. I need a refill anyway.

He goes to a work table. Nando looks at the phone.

NANDO

Beto calling every 10 minutes. Can you text him I'm in the chair?

MELISSA

What's he so riled about, the guns?  
(off Nando's look)

Come on baby, Manny's gotta be looking for a buyer. He can't exactly travel light with that luggage and he needs money, right?

NANDO

Yeah. And he acts like finding a buyer is as easy as posting an ad on Craig'slist.



MELISSA

So no prospects?

NANDO

There's a crew out of Boston that's sniffing around, but nothing solid.

MELISSA

If you're pressed, I know a guy who's always in the market.

NANDO

How do you know somebody who'd be looking for that kind of firepower?

MELISSA

I did some work for him a few years back. I know for a fact, he's shopping.

Nando looks at her, surprised. A little suspicious.

NANDO

Give him my number, tell him to reach out.

MELISSA

He's the paranoid type on a good day, and he heard what happened on the waterfront, so he's jumpy. He won't meet if I'm not involved.

NANDO

Fine. I'll hit Beto, let him know you got a lead. What's his name?

MELISSA

They call him Junior. Junior G.

INT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS - MONTAGE

MUSIC: A mostly instrumental version of "DREAMS AND NIGHTMARES" by Meek Mill kicks in under VO and images as Nat revives the legend (undercover ID) called "Junior G."

NAT (V.O.)

*He's a mid-level hustler from Philly, who's brokering for a street gang looking to buy enough firepower to turn the tide in a bloody turf war...*

- TIGHT ON Pennsylvania driver's license with Nat's picture and the name "Robert Gill, Jr."

NAT (V.O.)

*He did two years in VA on a weapons trafficking charge, and he's got warrants in New Jersey and Georgia.*

- SQUAD ROOM: Computer monitor shows manufactured MUGSHOTS and a RAP SHEET for Junior G.

NAT (V.O.)

*Junior G opted out of the gang life, because he likes to work solo and he hates to share his money. He lives high maintenance and that means he's always on the hustle.*

- BEDROOM: Stepping into.... Crisp jeans. Stud belt. Dr. J throwback Converse All-Stars. Phillies hat. Fat princess cut stud earrings. Rose gold Rolex from evidence lock-up.

- HARLEM BARBER SHOP: Nat walks in with a noticeably different style and body language. He gets cleaned and edged. Razor cut goatee.

NAT (V.O.)

*He met Lexy when she helped him wash 80k from a gun deal. He got dollar for dollar return and they've been friends ever since.*

- NYPD IMPOUND GARAGE: Walks the rows of cars. Points to a dust-covered burgundy Tahoe.

- HARLEM CHOP SHOP: Switching wheels to double-deuce two-tone rims, burgundy and chrome.

INT. NAT'S APARTMENT - DAY

Nat and Melissa sit in his sparsely-decorated living room. He finishes his breakdown. All business. The tension still high between them.

NAT

*Born in Oakmont, but bred in Philly. Both parents dead. One OD'd, the other from a car crash. No siblings.*

*(beat)*

*Can you keep all that straight?*

She shoots him a look and heads for the door.

MELISSA

Worry about you, papi.

NAT

Hey. Why'd you agree to do this?

Melissa stops, caught off guard. Not sure what to say.  
Decides to go with the truth.

MELISSA

A lot of reasons, but the main one  
is what you said about me not  
helping Charles.

(beat)

I don't think I could've saved him,  
but I'll never know. And that's  
gonna haunt me. Guess this is as  
close as I can get to making  
amends.

NAT

I know I came at you wrong. It  
was... I took it too far. But you  
doing this means a lot.

Melissa nods, accepts the half apology.

MELISSA

Alright, I got a question for you.  
(off his nod)

Everybody knows good legends are  
more truth than fiction. So how  
much of yours is true?

NAT

Bits and pieces. I went to college  
in Philly, so I can speak firsthand  
on that. And I'm named after my  
dad, so everybody called me  
"Junior" coming up.

MELISSA

Are your parents really dead?

Nat's turn to be caught off guard. Not sure if he wants to  
answer. But then...

NAT

Might as well be. They basically  
disowned me when I decided to  
become what they would call "an  
instrument of the prison industrial  
complex."

MELISSA

What?

NAT

Moms is an organizer. Pops is a professor. But they're both activists above all. They think the whole system's designed to brutalize black, brown, and poor people. And every day there's a new clip on YouTube that proves them right. So you can imagine how it went down when little Nat came home and said he wanted to be a cop.

(beat)

We don't talk.

MELISSA

My folks aren't too happy either. I mean not that extreme, but they don't let a week go by without trying to "talk sense" into me.

NAT

But your mom was a cop. She has to get it, right?

MELISSA

Nina's my birth mother.

(beat)

And no. She doesn't get it. She won't say it, but I can tell she thinks I'm too fragile.

Before Nat can pull at that thread, her phone CHIMES. A text from Nando. She looks at Nat.

MELISSA

Game on.

EXT./INT. MALECON RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Nat pulls the Tahoe up in front of a bustling Dominican restaurant, and heads inside. Now we get to see Nat play somebody else. Junior G's a fast talker, who goes on tangents, and has a habit of cutting people off. SANTI (Beto's muscle), quickly but effectively frisks him as they greet each other like G's. On the break, Santi takes a long look at Nat, then points him to a back table.

Melissa, Beto and Nando are at the table. They all greet Nat. He spots Santi studying him, as he picks up a menu.

NAT

What kind of food y'all burning in here. I hope it ain't too spicy.

BETO

We already ordered for the table. Something for everybody. And it's--

NAT

Okay, and where is *everybody*? I thought Manny was gonna be here. No disrespect, but I came to chop game with the big dog. I know he's the one with the I-95 connect.

(to Melissa)

That's what we talked about right?

BETO

You meet Manny when we agree to--

NAT

Who's that big Rottweiler-looking dude that checked me on the way in?

MELISSA

Who, Santi?

NAT

Santi? Name doesn't ring a bell, but I feel like I met him before.

Melissa's blood runs cold. It's a signal.

NANDO

So, Junior, Melissa told you what this is going to run you right?

NAT

She gave me a ballpark, but I need to know exactly what I'm buying before we talk price.

BETO

Fair enough.

(gets up)

Follow me.

They head for the kitchen. Soon as they get through the door, Melissa heads to the bar. She squeezes between a couple of customers, gets the bartender's attention.

MELISSA

Can I get a vodka fizz?

The bartender starts mixing. Melissa leans close to the woman next to her.

MELISSA

Nat thinks he has history with the  
guy at the door.

The woman turns and we see it's Lisa. She checks out Santi.

LISA

Oh. He's cute.  
(smiles)  
We'll get rid of him.

INT. BACKROOM - SAME

Nando and Nat wait in an office just off the kitchen.

NANDO

How long have you known Lexy?

NAT

She did some work for me a couple  
years back.

NANDO

So just through business?

Nat picks up on the energy, smiles.

NAT

Are you asking if I hit that?

DRUNK MAN (PRE-LAP)

Where's Claude? I know he's here. I  
just want to see him.

INT. MALECON RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

COMMOTION at the front door. Santi's manhandling a drunk and  
it's escalating. But it's not a drunk, it's Moses.

SANTI

You need to take it outside.

MOSES

Why? I pay taxes like anybody else.

He tries to blow by Santi. The big man catches him and rides  
him right out the front door...

EXT. MALECON RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Moses stumbles onto the sidewalk. Then tries to rush back in. Santi grabs him, smacks him.

SANTI

I got heavy hands, bro.

Moses looks up with a big smile. Eyes clear, suddenly sober.

MOSES

That's all I needed.

And it's on. Santi's much bigger, but Moses is a born fighter. He weathers a few heavy blows and then takes Santi apart with vicious precision, until... an NYPD cruiser pulls up hot. TWO COPS jump out, they move in on Santi and Moses.

Moses looks to the restaurant. Lisa stands near the door. She smiles and heads back to the bar as...

INT. BACKROOM - SAME

Beto has guns spread on the table. Nando hands Nat a list of the inventory. Nat marvels over a Barrett M82A1 (.50 Cal).

NAT

Damn. M82A1? Full auto? This'll shoot through concrete. Where'd you get this?

BETO

Tooth fairy.

NANDO

We're not doing this piecemeal. So if you want one, you want them all.

Nat picks up a Glock 18 with an extended magazine.

NAT

I do want them all. I want every single one of these heaters. Yes please, thank you very much.

BETO

Junior, are you brokering for West Philly Boys or TruHittaz?

NAT

Tooth fairy.

Beto smiles, but then takes the Glock from Nat.

BETO

Nice meeting you.

NAT

Hold on. Easy. It's none of your business, but I'll tell you I'm selling to both. You know the best businesses create the demand and provide the supply. So now let's talk dollars and sense.

NANDO

The whole load goes for 270. We need a deposit of 50 cash.

NAT

I bring you 50 racks, I want to meet the big dog.

BETO

Manny will be there. I promise you. And if you don't hold up your side, I promise you're a dead man.

NAT

We got us a deal.

INT. CAPTAIN IDO'S OFFICE - DAY

CAPTAIN IDO (60's, lifer), sits at his desk. JC and Nat stand in front of it.

IDO

When have you ever run an undercover op where the cap on a buy was more than 10 thousand?  
(silence)  
So why would you promise that?

NAT

They made the terms. If I countered at 10k they'd know I was blue.

JC

And this isn't just an op, Captain Ido. We're talking about a cop killer who has single-handedly put thousands of guns on the streets. You can't get Division to make an exception?



IDO

I tried. I went all the way to Park Row with the request. It's a no.

NAT

This is bullshit. We're getting ready to bury a man who gave his life for this city. I guarantee if Charles was white, the brass would approve the money in a heartbeat.

IDO

Watch your tone, Detective.

JC

He's right, Cap. And if Manny was sitting on a shipment of opioids about to flood Westchester County, instead of guns headed to Bed Stuy, we'd get a 100 grand for a buy if we needed it.

IDO

Here's what I know. I asked for the money, no-- Let me rephrase that. I begged for that money. They didn't give it to me. I'm not going to debate the reason. I'm just going to deal with that reality.

JC

You understand if we don't make good on Nat's promise, he and Melissa will both be at risk.

IDO

I do. That's why you're going to pull them.

NAT

What?

IDO

We already lost one cop. I'm not risking two more.

(to JC)

Keep looking for Vasquez until you find him, but the undercover piece of this investigation is over.

OFF Nat and JC, seething...

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. PROSPECT PARK - MORNING

Nat and Melissa sit on the hood of the Tahoe. Sip coffee.

MELISSA

A year and a half of my life, to  
get this deep into Ocho Debajo, and  
that's it? I don't understand.

NAT

Penny wise. Pound foolish.  
(beat)  
But I promised Charles's wife I  
would get his killer. I'm not  
walking away until I have Manny.

MELISSA

He'll never come out of the shadows  
unless you have the money.

NAT

I know. And I might have a way to  
get it. But it won't be out of the  
detective's manual.

Melissa looks at him, knows exactly what he means.

MELISSA

I'm not worried about rules. I want  
Manny and the guns off the streets.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

TIGHT ON: Felix (the shot-caller from Live Oak, we met in the  
teaser). He paces in front of a sound board, shakes his head.

FELIX

Now how would that look, me giving  
50 racks to a muthafucka who's  
devoted to putting me behind bars?

He turns, and now we see Nat in a chair behind the mixing  
board. Blood trickles from his nose. TWO LIVE OAK SOLDIERS  
flank him. One has a pistol pressed to his temple.

FELIX

I mean, that's like me paying  
somebody to whoop my ass.

(MORE)

FELIX (CONT'D)

I'm freaky but that's not how I get down, Mister Po-lice. Why would I be that stupid?

NAT

Think about it. Manny got your money. You didn't get his guns. And he bodied your right hand man. You telling me you don't want him?

FELIX

Oh, I want him. And sooner or later I'm going to get him.

NAT

Not without me. I'm not asking you to give me the money, I'm saying let me hold it. I promise you'll get it back, and I will put Manny behind bars. What happens to him after that...

(he shrugs)

I know what kind of reach you got.

A beat. He's got Felix thinking. He studies Nat.

FELIX

This ain't on the up and up, so what got you playing outside the lines?

NAT

That cop Manny shot. The one you knew as "Chauncey"? He was my partner.

(beat)

I wanna even the score. But I need your help.

OFF Felix's look we CUT TO:

INT. ROOSEVELT TRAM - DAY

A lightly populated tram car makes its way to Manhattan. Nat discretely shows Melissa a backpack full of money.

MELISSA

JC know about this?

NAT

No. Just you. If he found out, he'd have to shut it down.

(off her look)

(MORE)

NAT (CONT'D)

You knew we had to do this on the sly, Melissa.

MELISSA

I know, but now I'm thinking. If he's in the dark on this, we're not going to have support when it's time to take Manny down.

NAT

I thought about that. But we don't need to take Manny down at the meet if we can tag the money with trackers. We could just wait for him to take it back to his hide-out, and then we call NYPD, DEA, ATF and the National Guard for back-up if we want.

MELISSA

That's perfect. You got the trackers?

NAT

I'm still working on that piece. If I go to the department, JC finds out the minute I put in a request.

MELISSA

You got the money. Let me see if I can get the trackers.

INT. CAPITAL SECURITY PARTNERS - DAY

Melissa walks with Nina as they make their way through the offices of CSP, a corporate security and investigation firm.

MELISSA

I'm talking thin, dime-sized, but they have to be self-powered.

NINA

I know what micro GPS tags are. I'm wondering why you're asking me for them.

INT. NINA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Melissa follows Nina in.

NINA

Does JC know about this?

(beat)

Jesus, Melissa. What are you into? You shouldn't even be in the field right now, but not only are you working, you're making moves you can't share with your commanding officer. How many signs do you need to know that it's time to take a break?

MELISSA

I'm doing fine, Nina.

NINA

You might think that, but I know what it's like to be undercover. It's easy to lose track of the lies. And the ones that kill you, are the ones you tell yourself.

That hits Melissa deep. She starts to leave, frustrated.

MELISSA

I knew I shouldn't have come here.

NINA

No. Don't push me away. I just want what's best for--

MELISSA

I told you stop doing that! You didn't raise me. How would you know what's best for me "mom"?

NINA

That's a cheap trick. How long are you going to guilt-trip me for giving you up for adoption?

MELISSA

As long as you want to pretend to have some sort of parental rights. We're acquaintances. At best.

A soul crusher. But this time Nina fires back.

NINA

I was sixteen. I gave you up because I wanted you to have a better shot at life than I could give you.

(MORE)

NINA (CONT'D)

But you're still my baby, and I've done all I can to build a relationship with you. If we're not closer, it's because you won't let me in.

They stand there face-to-face for a beat. Melissa close to cracking. Nina eases up.

NINA

Melissa, I'm going to give you the trackers because I know you're going to do whatever you're into regardless of whether I help. But I got one condition. Give me a real chance to be something more for you. It doesn't have to be a mom. But at least a friend.

Off Melissa's look--

INT. "LEXY'S" APARTMENT - KITCHEN - LATER

Exacto knives. Glue. GPS micro trackers. Money. Nat and Melissa place trackers into money bands.

MELISSA

Hold on, so you don't tell people you're a cop?

NAT

Only when I'm arresting them.

MELISSA

So you ashamed of it then?

NAT

Hell nah, but people jump to conclusions soon as they hear it. Once I get to know you, fine. But if we just met? I'm a plumber.

KNOCK. KNOCK. They both tense up. Melissa goes to the door.

MELISSA

Who is it?

NANDO (O.S.)

It's me. I need to talk to you.

She motions for Nat to clear out. He quickly stuffs the money and supplies into the backpack.

MELISSA

Why didn't you call?

NANDO (O.S.)

Because I have to ask something,  
and I want to see your face when  
you answer.

Nando knocks harder. Melissa rushes Nat. He jumps into the front closet. Melissa opens the door. Nando can feel the energy soon as he walks in.

NANDO

Why are you acting weird?

MELISSA

I don't like surprises. You know  
that.

Nando plays it cool, but he's definitely looking and listening as he walks through. He starts for the kitchen. Melissa sees Nat's phone sitting on the counter.

From the closet, Nat sees it too. He takes out his pistol. Just when we think Nando's going to see it... Melissa grabs his arm, turns him around.

MELISSA

Hey, I'm sorry, it's just been a  
day. Honestly, I've been tripping  
ever since the whole thing...

Nando eases up, understanding. Kisses her forehead.

NANDO

I get it. It's okay.

MELISSA

What'd you wanna ask me?

NANDO

(lights up)

First look at these. Santo Domingo.  
Punta Playa. You like them?

Nando puts some photos on the coffee table. Glossy shots of picturesque coastal houses. Nat peeks through a crack.

MELISSA

They're beautiful.

NANDO

Okay, here's the question. If I got us a place like this, and take care of us so we could live comfortably, would you come with me, Lexy?

MELISSA

Why are you asking me this?

NANDO

I don't know, I just-- Look, I used to be all about get up and get rich. Stay on the hustle. Not because I wanted to, but I just didn't see another angle for me.

(beat)

But you got me thinking about things like kids laughing and playing. "Honey do" lists. Waking up next to the same person every day. I know it's stupid, regular-type shit, but it's like... it's hard to get.

Melissa can't help but smile at what he's saying.

NANDO

I love you, Lexy. And I just want to know, if I could set us up like that, would you come with me?

MELISSA

I would.

She looks into his eyes, full of love. He gives her a sensuous kiss, then leaves.

Nat walks out of the closet. He saw it all. The chemistry. The familiar way they talk and touch. The promise. The kiss.

MELISSA

It's not-- I mean, I know it's not right, but it's not--

NAT

He's a ranking member of the Ochos.

MELISSA

All he really does is wash money for them. And you heard him, he doesn't even want this life anymore... Look, I know how to keep real life separate from my cover.



NAT

Do you love him in real life?

Beat. Melissa won't say it out loud.

MELISSA

It doesn't matter. I would never let what's happening between us get in the way of this case.

Beat. Nat zips up the bag, heads for the door.

MELISSA

I would never expose you. I'm taking a bigger risk than you.

NAT

I'm not worried about you outing me. I'm worried about when it's time to take Nando down. What would you do?

MELISSA

My job.

NAT

I wish I could believe that.

INT. RUNDOWN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Manny hasn't slept for days, but he's wide awake. Jumpy and amped on drugs, he struggles to wrap something in "Happy Birthday" paper. There's a knock on the door.

He grips a gun and lets Beto in. Then goes back to wrapping. We see it's the toy plane from the hobby shop.

BETO

Philly boy has the cash.

MANNY

What about the O'Leary's?

BETO

All squared away.

MANNY

Good. Very good. Can you do me a favor? Hand me a piece of tape.

He nods towards some scotch tape. Beto rips a piece.

EXT. WASHINGTON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Nat pulls the Tahoe behind Beto's car. Beto and a STOCKY OCHO come back to the SUV. Nat opens the passenger side door, shows Beto the money. Beto nods, and heads back to his car.

INT. "LEXY'S" APARTMENT - SAME

Melissa's in the shower. Nando knocks and enters.

NANDO

Baby girl, I'm out. But I need you to do me a favor. I left a paper with account numbers on the nightstand. I need you to verify funds of 300k soon as you get out.

MELISSA

Okay, what's it for?

NANDO

We got another buyer for the guns.

Melissa pokes her head out.

MELISSA

What do you mean? What about the deal with Junior?

NANDO

That's still going down. In fact, they're probably meeting right now. Except Junior won't be getting the guns, he'll just be paying for them. Soon as you get out, okay?

He gives her a quick kiss and rushes out. Melissa hops out of the shower, wraps in a towel, and runs to her bedroom.

INT. MALECON RESTAURANT - DAY

Nat's upstairs, in a loft-style office. And he's finally face-to-face with Manny. He watches the sleep-deprived maniac count the money. Sure enough, Manny transfers the cash to another bag as he counts. Beto and the OCHO THUG watch Nat.

He gets a call from Melissa, declines it. She calls again. Beto perks up. Nat answers.

NAT

I'm in the middle of something.

MELISSA (ON PHONE)

Manny's going to kill you.

Nat's blood runs cold, but somehow he manages to keep a calm demeanor. Beto watches him closely. Nat hesitates, trying to figure out a way to speak in code. Then...

NAT

Okay. So it's supposed to rain?

MELISSA

Why didn't you tell me you were meeting? Where are you?

NAT

Same hotel as last time. Is it too late to pick up some rain gear?

MELISSA

I'll never make it in time. Can you run?

NAT

No way. I'd get soaked.

MANNY

Important call?

MELISSA (ON PHONE)

You have to get out of there!

NAT

(to Manny)

My girl's freaking out. We're headed to the islands for a weekend fling and she just found out it's gonna be storming the whole time.

MANNY

When I go on a weekend fling I never leave the room.

Beto and the Soldier laugh. Manny goes back to counting.

MELISSA (ON PHONE)

Wait. Are you near the south wall?

NAT

Yeah, I know where that is.

MELISSA (ON PHONE)

There used to be a big window there.

(MORE)

MELISSA (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Manny made them take it out about a month ago. It's just plaster and paint now.

Nat peeks over. We follow his eyes and see the faint outlines of the remodel.

BETO

Enough.

NAT

Hey, I gotta go.

MELISSA (ON PHONE)

Nat? Don't die.

NAT

Oh, you got jokes? Later.

He hangs up and takes stock. We already know Manny's a killer. Beto and the thug are armed and ready too. Manny finishes counting, zips his bag. Nat watches his hands, knows he's got to move, but needs to pick the right time.

NAT

We straight?

MANNY

(smiles, points to guns)  
There's your first batch.

Nat goes to the table, inspects two cases of guns. He knows as soon as he turns his back, he's a dead man. He picks up a case, but instead of turning, he smashes it into the thug's face and takes off for the patch in the south wall.

Manny and Beto start SHOOTING. Nat uses the case to protect his face as he runs headlong into the wall and...

EXT. MALECON RESTAURANT - ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Nat falls through the air. He lands hard on a stack of pallets below, but he's up quick. He rolls to the ground and hugs the wall as he runs.

Manny and Beto unload but can't get a clean shot. Nat bends the corner, jumps in the Tahoe and peels out...

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. SQUAD ROOM - DAY

JC fights to keep from losing it. Moses and Lisa surround Nat. He's bruised and battered. Nobody's feeling sorry for him. They're pissed.

MOSES

We're a team, Nat. We gotta roll like one.

NAT

I know but--

LISA

But you go after Manny lone wolf? That's crazy. You're lucky we're not planning two funerals.

NAT

I wasn't going to let a chance to take Manny down, slip away. If I'd told anyone the plan, JC would've called it off.

(to JC)

Am I right?

Before JC can answer...

MOSES

Guess what playa? Manny's gone. And he's got the guns and the money.

NAT

Yeah, but he--

JC

Where did you even get the money?

NAT

It's better if you don't know.

LISA

At least tell us why Melissa wasn't there?

Beat. Then Nat points to a photo of Nando on the case board.

NAT

She's in love with that guy.

JC

Wait, are you saying she's--

NAT

No. She's not working for them. In fact, if she hadn't tipped me off, I wouldn't be here right now. But I just wasn't sure I could trust her.

JC

So she's in a relationship with him?

(Nat nods)

Okay. You're both sidelined.

NAT

But Loo, I'm--

JC

Goddamit Nat! I tried to give you some room, because Charles was your partner, but you took it too far.

(to Moses and Lisa)

You two go get Melissa. Bring her in. Then we'll get back to hunting Manny and those guns, if he's even still around.

Lisa and Moses start out, but--

NAT

I know where Manny is. That's what I'm trying to tell you.

(beat)

The money I gave him is tagged with GPS trackers. All we have to do is follow this.

He pulls up a locator on his tablet. JC takes the tablet, looks to Lisa and Moses.

JC

Gear up.

(to Nat)

You stay right here.

NAT

Come on, JC, please! I got us this far, let me--

JC

You're lucky you're alive, but you're definitely not thinking straight.

(MORE)

JC (CONT'D)

And if you think I'm letting you put more cops at risk, you got the wrong one.

They rush out, leaving Nat, and we CUT TO:

EXT. NYC STREETS / INT. SUV - DAY

JC and team weave through traffic, closing in on their moving target. We can see their progress on the tablet. A TACTICAL TEAM rides in the SUV right behind them...

INT. PAPA JUAN'S CIGAR ROOM - INTERCUT

The hot red glow of a cigar tip. Melissa sits with Nando. He takes the cigar and passes it to Melissa. She takes a drag. A SERVER walks over with two glasses and a bottle of Dom.

MELISSA

What's the occasion?

He puts two plane tickets to Santo Domingo on the table. Smiles big. Melissa's stunned.

MELISSA

Oh my God.

NANDO

We fly out today. I told Manny, look, you gotta run either way, so no point in saving a reputation you know?

MELISSA

So it was your idea to do more than one deal for the guns?

NANDO

(nods proudly)

Manny promised me a cut of any deal I could make. I found the O'Leary's and you found Junior G. And now we're gonna have the cash to get a nice place in Puerto Plata.

He kisses her. Melissa's even more surprised when Manny and Beto walk in. They catch the end of the kiss. Manny looks at her weird, winks at Nando.

MANNY

Bring enough for the whole class?

Melissa secretly texts Nat as...

JC (PRE-LAP)  
150 feet...

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE / INT. SUV - INTERCUT

JC's got the tablet. The tension's building as they close in. The traffic ahead of them parts. JC and team zero in on a Mercedes SUV with tinted windows. He points.

JC  
White Mercedes. That's gotta be it.

Lisa hits the gas, passes the Mercedes. She waits for the tactical team's vehicle to get in position... then zooms in front and slams on the brakes. The Mercedes screeches, but can't avoid bumping the lead SUV. The tactical team presses from behind until the Merc is wedged in.

Moses is first out. He screams at the driver.

MOSES  
Turn off the vehicle! Stick both hands out the window. Do it now!

Seconds later, the car's surrounded. The engine turns off and the driver side window slides down. We see Iris, terrified.

LISA  
Iris! Tell Manny to get out!

IRIS  
He's not in here.

MOSES  
Tell him now, before we light this whole shit up!

IRIS  
No!! It's just me and my baby!

JC and team rush over. Lisa opens the door. We see Tito in his car seat, crying, clutching the toy plane we saw in Manny's apartment. The backpack of cash is on the seat next to him...

EXT. PAPA JUAN'S CIGAR ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Nat pulls up hot. Stops half a block from the cigar room. He sees Beto's SUV down the block. He picks up his police radio.



NAT

This is Detective Nat Gilmore, 4th precinct. Requesting support for a fugitive apprehension. Papa Juan's Cigar Room. 886 Gerard Ave.

DISPATCH (ON RADIO)

10-4. Standby for status.

Nat waits. Seconds later, Nando, Manny, Beto and Melissa walk out.

NAT

Dammit.

(into radio)

This is Detective Gilmore. Subject is on the move!

DISPATCH

Standby for status...

Nat quickly does the math. He's got one last chance to take Manny down, and this is it. Nat jumps out of his car, gun drawn. Using parked cars for cover he closes the gap until...

NAT

MANNY!

The whole group turns to see Nat with his gun and badge.

NAT

Didn't figure seeing me again did you, bitch ass--

It all happens in a flash. Beto draws. Nat shoots him. Manny runs for the car. Nat chases. Manny turns to shoot. Nat tackles him. Slams him. He slaps on cuffs and then... BANG! Nat gets winged. He drops his gun. Before he can scramble for it, Nando fills the gap with more gunfire. Nat retreats.

He takes cover behind a car. Nando runs over, ready to end it. Just as he gets Nat in his sights...

MELISSA

NO!

Nat is frozen. Nando's gun pointed at his head.

MELISSA

Nando, don't do it.

NANDO

I have to Lexy. It's the only way  
for us to start a life together.  
Isn't that what you want?

Nat looks at Melissa. He can see she is genuinely torn.

MELISSA

Yes.

Nat thinks it's over, but then... CLACK. We hear the rack of  
a pistol. Nando turns to see Melissa pointing a gun at him.

MELISSA

But not this way. Let him go.

NANDO

What?

MELISSA

I'm a cop, Nando.

Nando still has the gun on Nat. He is reeling.

NANDO

You're what? So all this time--  
You've been lying to me? How?  
(beat)  
You said you loved me. You said  
you'd-- You bitch. YOU LIED TO ME!

MELISSA

No, no, baby. It wasn't all a lie.  
I do love you. I swear to God.  
Please, put the gun down. So we can  
talk about it. I don't want you to  
get hurt.

Beat. Nando suddenly out of rage. Out of everything.

NANDO

Lexy, if I don't have you, I might  
as well be dead... And I can't be  
with you unless he's gone.

He turns back to Nat, starts to pull the trigger, and...  
BANG! BANG! Melissa puts two in his chest. Nando drops.  
Melissa runs over. Kneels next to him. Nando looks up, the  
light in his eyes fading.

MELISSA

Hey... Baby. Hold on. Jesus.

NANDO

Lexy... You said you loved me...  
Was that real?

Tears flow as Melissa looks into his eyes. She nods.

MELISSA

Yes, Nando. It was real.

Nando seems to take some comfort in that. He squeezes her hand, then he takes his last breath.

Nat wraps an arm around Melissa, pulls her away. Off sirens wailing in the distance...

INT. NATALIE'S - NIGHT

Janelle Monae is on stage singing an original. April joins JC at his table. She sees a drink already there for her.

APRIL

Ah. You remembered. We toasting your amazing takedown of New York's most prolific gun-running cop killer?

JC

Hard to celebrate when I'm going to a funeral tomorrow.

APRIL

(holds up her glass)  
Still, nice job. If you talk to Captain Ido, maybe you can put in a good word. Let him know how instrumental Melissa's intel was in catching Vasquez.

JC

You never needed help with PR.

APRIL

He's not trying to hear from me right now. They've suspended BOSS indefinitely, until they review the whole "incident". That's why I wanted to talk with--

JC

(holds up a hand)  
You can stop now. You don't want me telling them what I think of BOSS.

APRIL

I need to find a good, *temporary* home for Melissa. And I know you'd take good care of her, because if you don't, Nina'll kill you.

INT./EXT. NINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Nina answers her front door. Melissa's standing there. Wrecked. Nina steps outside, closes the door behind her.

NINA

You okay?

Melissa just shakes her head. Nina doesn't press for answers. She takes her daughter in her arms and holds her tight as...

EXT. POLICE MEMORIAL WALL - DAY

A granite wall with hundreds of names carved in stone. A gaggle of bigwig POLITICIANS and NYPD BRASS. A podium and a cluster of microphones. A handful of MEDIA TYPES. MAYOR CAMPBELL steps up to open the press conference, but we focus on... Captain Ido and JC, standing off to the side.

IDO

It looks great on paper, Williams, but we both know the parts that aren't in the report are enough to get a detective fired, if not brought up on charges.

JC

They're good cops, Cap. We need them. Because now that Manny's been dealt with, I need an answer to the question that's been haunting me since the day Charles was killed. How did Manny know he was a cop?

(beat)

Manny might have pulled the trigger, but whoever tipped him off is the real killer.

Ido nods, he knows JC's right, but--

IDO

Thinnest of ice, Williams. Not just them. You too.

He leaves that warning hanging over JC's head.

INT. TATTOO SHOP - NIGHT

Dark, except for a single overhead light in the back.

Empty, except for Melissa and Che. He puts the finishing touches on a simple, but beautiful script tattoo inside her left arm: "Thumper"

EXT. TATTOO SHOP - NIGHT

Melissa exits the shop. Starts down the deserted street. As she approaches her car, she sees a familiar Tahoe, and a man standing next to it. It's Nat.

He can read the question in her eyes.

NAT

One of those trackers might have made it into your bag.

He holds up the same bottle of Balvenie whiskey he wouldn't share at Natalie's.

NAT

Somebody I trust said times like these, you need to lean on friends.

MELISSA

Is that what we are?

NAT

That's how I see it.

He pulls out two dixie cups.

MELISSA

Fancy, huh?

NAT

Don't judge me, woman.

He hands her a cup, then pours for himself. He raises his up.

NAT

Here's to Charles.

(beat)

And Nando.

Melissa smiles, tears in her eyes. And they toast as...

END OF PILOT