

OPERACIÓN 8888

EPISODE #1: THE ESCAPE

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. DESERT - U.S./MEXICO BORDER (NEW MEXICO) - NIGHT

A flashlight reveals rocky desert. ILLEGALS - an old man, a boy, a pregnant woman and her husband - are led to the barbed-wire fence by a COYOTE. A scene we've seen in dozens of serious *Latino* dramas. The Coyote clips the wire, they start forward--but he suddenly he puts a gun to the woman's head.

COYOTE (IN SPANISH)
Your money! All of it! Now!

The woman starts praying out loud, he moves the gun onto her huge stomach. The others pull out money - he grabs all of it.

COYOTE (IN SPANISH) (CONT'D)
God won't help you. There's no one out here but Devils.

He walks away into the darkness but stops suddenly as his flashlight reveals the dark silhouette of a MAN IN UNIFORM.

COYOTE (IN SPANISH) (CONT'D)
Mierda! La pinche Migra! (Shit! fuckin' Border Patrol!)

He fires at the stranger's head. The uniformed man staggers but doesn't fall. Instead, suddenly he RUNS AT the Coyote -

The flashlight reveals a bloody MEXICAN S.W.A.T. POLICEMAN - with the HORRIFYING FACE OF A ZOMBIE.

The Coyote fires again and again -- then the Zombie leaps on him, and rips open the Coyote's throat - FREEZE FRAME

MAIN TITLE: NARCOS vs. ZOMBIES

INT. HIGH-SECURITY WING - LOMAS ALTAS PRISON - DAY

A PRISON INMATE in a jumpsuit carries a tray with an elaborate birthday cake on it.

The inmate puts THE CAKE on a table. It is decorated with the FACE of a man who could be a visionary CEO or a charismatic movie star. "HAPPY BIRTHDAY DA VINCI".

The candles are blown out by **ALONSO MARROQUÍN** -- the man whose face adorns the cake: Marroquín is a crime kingpin whose intelligence and creativity earned him the nickname Da Vinci. He wears a Mexican prison jumpsuit -

He's in LOMAS ALTAS, Mexico's highest-security prison. The birthday guests include a dozen other PRISONERS, and CESAR

CONTRERAS, the Prison Director, an elegant man with political ambitions who is Marroquín's cousin.

Tequila shot glasses are next to the cake. Contreras lifts one - everyone else does the same. The only man who doesn't drink is the tough PRISON GUARD who stands watch at the door.

CONTRERAS

We're going to miss you, Don Alonso.

MARROQUÍN

I'll miss you more. The place the gringos are taking me will make this shithole seem like heaven.

(lifts his glass, a toast)

One day we're going to have to build a wall to keep the gringos out! I know this sounds like a cliché but México's got the best women in the world, the best tequila, the best prisons, you know we've got the best fucking drugs -

(everyone laughs)

- the best weather and the smartest, slipperiest politicians -
(winks at Contreras)

To México! Gringos don't get it but we're all hermanos and we're all Mexicanos! Be proud of who you are!

People cheer, it's a speech for a Presidential candidate. Marroquín shakes hands and exchanges hugs but sees Contreras is nervous. He pulls the Director aside, they speak quietly--

MARROQUÍN (CONT'D)

I hear my good friends Los Apóstoles have a going-away present for me.

CONTRERAS

They wouldn't dare try anything --

MARROQUÍN

-- unless they had your permission.

CONTRERAS

I'm not for sale, Alonso. And I never sell out family.

MARROQUÍN

Thank you, cousin.

Marroquín notices the Guard staring. He grabs two tequilas - He carries them across the room, and offers one to the guard.

MARROQUÍN (CONT'D)
Come on, brother. Drink with us.

The guard hesitates, then takes the glass and chugs the shot.

MARROQUÍN (CONT'D)
You were in the army, weren't you?

GUARD
Infantería de Marina. How did you know?

MARROQUÍN
How you hold yourself. Even with no gun, you look like a soldier.

GUARD
Guns aren't allowed in this wing of the prison.

MARROQUÍN
And not having a gun is kind of like being dickless, am I right?

The Guard grins, a thin, edgy smile. He watches Marroquín move away, and stop at a reinforced, barred window --

MARROQUÍN'S POV LOOKING OUT AT LOMAS ALTAS PRISON: ugly, fortified buildings, this is a place no one escapes from.

MARROQUÍN'S GAZE moves over to the prison GATE - he SEES the gate OPEN - then he SEES a DOZEN S.W.A.T. COPS enter. They wear black body armor, black helmets, face masks. A PIGEON flies over their heads and lands on a window ledge.

INT. WAITING AREA - LOMAS ALTAS PRISON - DAY

The Cops - Grupo Elite of the Policía Nacional - are led by COMANDANTE **RAFA BECERRIL**, a modern Samurai. He nods to his #2, SUBCOMANDANTE **ELISA CRUZ**. She gives a piercing whistle.

SUBCOMANDANTE CRUZ
Weapons check.

The S.W.A.T. Cops carry handguns, grenades, Beretta Assault Rifles. They obey Cruz and begin checking their weapons.

There is a LOGO PATCH on every uniform: a SKULL in a Helmet, with the words: "We are already Dead".

Becerril's eyes meet Cruz's for a fraction of a second, then he exits, stepping into a HALLWAY - which leads to RESTROOMS -

INT. MENS' RESTROOM - VISITORS WING - LOMAS ALTAS - DAY

Becerril enters the MENS' ROOM. Urinals line one wall, on the opposite wall are toilet STALLS separated by partitions. He moves to a urinal, studies his reflection in the mirror as he pees. He whispers at his reflection --

BECERRIL

You. Are. Already. Dead.

He reaches down to zip his fly up but A PAIR OF HANDS GRABS HIS UNZIPPED CROTCH -

Cruz spins him around and pulls him into the TOILET STALL, still holding his crotch. They kiss with a quiet, savage, restrained passion. They talk in soft whispers -

COMANDANTE BECERRIL

You know what would happen if --

SUBCOMANDANTE CRUZ

Yes --

COMANDANTE BECERRIL

We'd be court-martialed --

SUBCOMANDANTE CRUZ

We'd be shot --

As their frantic secret love-making intensifies --

CUT TO:

INT. LABORATORY - FORT MOSBY ARMY BASE - DAY

The LABORATORY is a cold, clean, sterile environment. One section contains research "Specimens".

A large GLASS AQUARIUM houses a COLONY OF ARMY ANTS. We HEAR MUSIC - a aggro-tech EDM trance track from a Bluetooth Speaker

The ants kill a GRASSHOPPER, ripping it to pieces.

AUGUSTUS SNOWMAN holds the speaker. Early 30's, cynical, contradictory, intense, Snowman is also a certifiable genius.

He studies the Ants, then moves to metal CAGES which house MINI PIGS. Adorably cute tiny and intelligent MINI PIGS.

He pulls on plastic LAB GLOVES, picks up a sharp scalpel and then lifts a squirming MINI PIG with #6 written on its back -

MINI PIG POV: the animal sees Snowman's huge FACE and bulging EYES behind GLASSES - then it sees the Scalpel BLADE -

It struggles but cannot escape. Snowman SLICES into its leg. Then he quickly bandages the leg and places the animal into - ANOTHER CAGE - which contains 5 MINI PIGS. They are numbered #1 through #5; all have bloody gauze bandages.

Snowman opens a REFRIGERATOR filled with TEST TUBES containing greenish fluid. He finds a particular TEST TUBE.

He draws several milliliters of LIQUID into a hypodermic syringe. He returns to the cage with the wounded Mini Pigs.

SNOWMAN

It's one small step for Mini-Pigs
but a giant leap for homo sapiens.

The Mini Pigs panic. As he reaches for #1, it runs into the rear of the cage, filled with dirty straw, and disappears.

Snowman's EYES scan the cage until he SEES the EYES of the HIDING #1 peer out from its new hiding place.

SNOWMAN (CONT'D)

Evolution is such a bitch.

He turns away, apparently giving up, but suddenly whirls back - his GLOVED HAND grabs MINI PIG #1, lifting it from the cage as the song ENDS -- BUT a VOICE booms from the Bluetooth SPEAKER which doubles as an INTERCOM --

COLONEL MURDOCH (V.O./ON SPEAKER)

Dr. S! This is Murdoch!--

SNOWMAN

I'm in the middle of something -

COLONEL MURDOCH (V.O./ON SPEAKER)

--you know our visitor is arriving --
and we need to impress her --

SNOWMAN

I know that --

COLONEL MURDOCH (V.O./ON SPEAKER)

Did I say impress? Scratch that: we
need an out-of-the-park home run!

The speaker/intercom goes dead. Snowman frowns and checks the clock: not enough time. He's disappointed. He replaces the animal in the cage.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOMAS ALTAS PRISON - CHIHUAHUA, MEXICO - DAY

ILIA OLVERA makes notes on her iPad. A respected Mexican reporter, Ilia is focused on the task at hand. Her cameraman ALEXIS SANCHEZ takes fly-away portable production equipment, from their rental van, and sets up for a 'live video feed'. Ilia is having a cellphone argument with her EDITOR/BOSS:

ILIA

What do you mean, cancelled? How do you expect me to profile someone I can't even talk to? What do you mean, the sponsors said 'No'?!
(she turns on Alexis)
Where in God's name are my notes? I-

ALEXIS

We're going live in ten.

ILIA

Not without my damn notes!
(back into the phone)
Juancho, you're spineless!

ALEXIS

Five, four, three, two...

She cuts the iPhone and smiles to the camera, professional:

ILIA

I'm Ilia Olvera, in front of Lomas Altas prison where the most dangerous narcotraficante in Mexico is about to be extradited.

INTERCUT: LIVE TV FEEDS OF ILIA IN FRONT OF THE PRISON IN HER NETWORK'S STUDIO--and on DOZENS OF TV's in public places, in offices, in bars, in homes--ALL ACROSS MÉXICO--

ILIA (CONT'D)

Thirteen months ago, Alonso Marroquín, the so-called Da Vinci of crime, was captured eating dinner in Mexico's only 3-star Michelin restaurant, El Conejillo.

VIDEO FOOTAGE of Marroquín being escorted from an elegant restaurant by heavily armed and masked MEXICAN MARINES.

ILIA (CONT'D)

In one hour, he will be flown to the United States and transferred to a SuperMax Prison. Public Enemy #1 is a very private man. His wife,
(MORE)

ILIA (CONT'D)

Adriana Castañeda died of a rare bone disease and their son, Lucas, has not been seen for five years.

OLDER NEWSPAPER PHOTOS of a YOUNGER MARROQUÍN and his BRIDE. WE SEE NEWSPHOTOS of his arrest and ARCHIVAL VIDEO after his ESCAPE - Police with sniffing DOGS, Police ROADBLOCKS, etc.

ILIA (CONT'D)

Years before, he made a daring escape from another prison, disguising himself as a plumber hired to clean a blocked prison sewer. His quote, your shit can't stop me, went viral.

VIDEO CLIPS of YOUNG, SMILING POLITICAL CANDIDATE MARROQUÍN.

ILIA (CONT'D)

He's charming, brilliant and ruthless. He was once elected to Congress and some say he still dreams of running for President.

INT. REGIONAL DEA HEADQUARTERS - EL PASO, TEXAS - DAY

DEA AGENTS cluster around TV's playing CNN and MSNBC. A third TV plays Ilia's Mexican TV report, in Spanish,

ILIA (ON TV)

Many believe he runs his criminal empire from prison. His rivals, Los Apóstoles, want to kill him, so ironically, prison may be the safest place for him. But all of Mexico -

DEA Special Agent **JOEL TOFT** watches intently. His partner, misogynistic Agent **JIM BUSFIELD**, leers appreciatively at Ilia.

ILIA (ON TV) (CONT'D)

- is wondering: does the Da Vinci of Crime have one final trick to play?

BUSFIELD

Don't understand a word she's sayin but that kitten sure can purr.

EXT. IN FRONT OF LOMAS ALTAS PRISON - DAY (SAME TIME)

As the 'live feed' ends, Ilia speed-dials her iPhone.

ILIA

Juancho! I WILL interview him. I'll find a way and you better be ready.

INT. REGIONAL DEA HEADQUARTERS - DAY (SAME TIME)

The Mexican TV feed has switched to SOCCER NEWS. Toft is in a bad mood. An ex-smoker, he extracts a cigarette, clamps it between his lips, but never lights it. He glares at Busfield.

TOFT

We're making a big mistake,
extraditing him. He's a cancer.
He's infected Mexico. Now he'll
infect us, too. The man is a --
(crushing his unsmoked
cigarette, he's obsessed)
--malignant growth. A malignancy
must be cut out before it spreads.

CUT TO:

EXT. FORT MOSEBY ARMY BASE - NEW MEXICO - DAY

This U.S. ARMY BASE is built inside a mountain. Outside, there is a barbed wired perimeter with warning signs and SECURITY KIOSK. An official black SUV drives past the kiosk, to an armored PORTAL in the side of the mountain. A SENTRY in-puts a code, the reinforced steel OPENS and the SUV drives in.

INT. FORT MOSEBY MILITARY BASE - TEXAS

A cavernous space with buildings and equipment. The SUV comes to a stop and disgorges SENATOR JAYNE LAPSLEY, 50's, a wily politician, and her taciturn aide, IVAN WARDEN.

COLONEL MURDOCH

Welcome back, Senator.

COLONEL GREGORY MURDOCH, early 40's, is a Wall Street Wolf in uniform. He always holds a can of Coke, his addiction. They shake hands. SERGEANT VICKY MARTINEZ accompanies the Colonel.

LAPSLEY

It always this hot inside the
mountain?

COLONEL MURDOCH

If you can't stand the heat, stay
out of the radioactive blast zone.

Lapsley laughs. Sgt. Martinez leads the way to one of the buildings, but when Lapsley reaches for the door -

SGT. MARTINEZ

Don't move, Senator!

A HUGE SCORPION is in the doorway, stinger in attack position.

Martinez grips the scorpion's tail below the stinger, carries the squirming arachnid away and gently puts it on the ground.

SGT. MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
Stay away from humans, big fella:
they're unpredictable.

The scorpion scurries away and disappears into the shadows.

LAPSLEY
Isn't that dangerous, picking it up?

SGT. MARTINEZ
No, Senator, they're more scared of us than we are of them. My Dad was a veterinarian so I've got a soft spot for bizarre beasties.

INT. LABORATORY - FORT MOSEBY - DAY

Snowman stands in front of the Ant Aquarium. Explaining -

SNOWMAN
...we sense pain through noci-
ceptors, pain receptors. In combat,
if we're wounded, the nociceptors
overload: that hurts! Thathurtsthat-
hurtsTHATHURTS! Eventually we run.
Or die. BUT insects aren't like us.

He uses the BIG BLACK ARMY ANTS to illustrate his points.
They are attacking and OTHER ANTS.

SNOWMAN (CONT'D)
They have no nociceptors. They feel
no pain. The red ants are getting
massacred, but they won't quit. To
us, that's suicidal. To them, just
another day at the office.
(points to the Army Ants)
This species exhibits Army Ant
Syndrome: always moving, whatever
they meet, they attack it, kill it
and move on. They are the most
successful fighting force on earth.

He opens the refrigerator and takes out the same SYRINGE.

SNOWMAN (CONT'D)
Imagine a drug which blocks all
nociceptors. You feel no pain. It
also gives you Army Ant aggression:
turns an ordinary soldier into an un-
(MORE)

SNOWMAN (CONT'D)
stoppable fighting machine. It could
forever alter the nature of warfare--

COLONEL MURDOCH
The Senator needs more than a sales
pitch. Let's show her what it does.

Snowman leads everyone over to the Mini Pig CAGES.

LAPSLEY
Are those -- pigs?

SNOWMAN
Mini-Pigs. Ninety per cent of pig
DNA is identical to homo sapiens.

In a cage, six Mini Pigs lie motionless. Blood has soaked
through their bandages. Snowman's plastic-gloved HAND
reaches in, and he lifts #1 out of the cage -

SNOWMAN (CONT'D)
These animals exhibit trauma, not
unlike combat wounds. Think of them
as small, exhausted soldiers.

He injects the green fluid into #1's rear leg. He places the
animal into a large glass cage. It twitches. It stands up
suddenly, alert. It seems like a miraculous recovery.

Lapsley and Warden react, impressed. But then -

The Mini Pig races to the back of the cage. It spins and
runs back, then it STOPS. It FALLS. Motionless. It's dead.

Lapsley reacts. She prods the Mini Pig with a pen - nothing.

SNOWMAN (CONT'D)
No, no, this is just a glitch --

LAPSLEY
A glitch? A GLITCH! If I bring the
subcommittee here and you show them
dead piglets, that's not a glitch!
It's a goddamn deal-breaker!

Lapsley turns and heads for the exit, her aide scurries with
her, Murdoch backpedals frantically to keep up with them.

LAPSLEY (CONT'D)
I put my neck out for you, Colonel,
if this is the best you can do -

The rest of their conversation is lost as they exit.
Martinez shoots Snowman a look, then she follows them out.

Snowman prods the animal with a scalpel. It doesn't move. He pushes the tip in. Nothing. He pushes deeper - it stirs -

It's alive! He reacts but then it twitches - bloody foam bubbles from its mouth, then it collapses. It's really dead.

The Lab door opens, Snowman looks up and sees Murdoch there. The Colonel is in a white-hot rage, losing control.

COLONEL MURDOCH

Three years of research totally
fucked up in three minutes.

SNOWMAN

You're overreacting -

COLONEL MURDOCH

She's giving us a month to fix it,
if we don't, she'll pull the plug -

SNOWMAN

We can find other funding --

COLONEL MURDOCH

I'll be reassigned to some shithole
in North Dakota and you Mr. Alter-
the-nature-of-warfare, you'll be
black-listed: you'll end up making
Anthrax for the North Koreans.

(closing in, dangerous)

You need to fix this. Or our world
will end, and not with a whimper --

He unholsters his weapon, moves closer, only inches away now -

COLONEL MURDOCH (CONT'D)

-- but with a bang.

CUT TO:

INT. HIGH-SECURITY HOUSING BLOCK - LOMAS ALTAS PRISON - DAY

The area where dangerous prisoners are housed. The same Guard
who was at the birthday party patrols the corridor here.

INT. MARROQUÍN'S CELL - LOMAS ALTAS PRISON - DAY

A bed. A mirror. A toilet. A TV. A boombox. On the wall a
photo of a grinning Marroquín holding a SOCCER BALL. A CCTV
video camera pans back and forth. Ilia is ON TV:

ILIA (ON TV)

What kind of a man makes a fortune
selling illegal drugs but donates
(MORE)

ILIA (ON TV) (CONT'D)
 millions to build hospitals for towns
 that don't even have a doctor? What
 kind of a man eats a meal that costs
 your monthly salary, but crawls
 through human excrement to freedom?
 What kind of man is Alonso Marroquín?

Marroquín is impressed. He hears FOOTSTEPS, we see the Guard walk past. Marroquín steps to the boombox, which is outside the POV of the CCTV. He opens a compartment in the boombox and removes a BURNER SMARTPHONE. He speed-dials "REHAB Center".

WE INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. PARADISO REHAB CENTER - NEW MEXICO - DAY

PARADISO REHAB CENTER is bordered by rocky canyons and harsh desert. VANS and CARS are in front, loading patients and belongings. It's an exodus. WE FIND the Director, DR. HENRY DÁVILA, saying good-bye to some affluent PATIENTS/ADDICTS.

DÁVILA

I wish we could have given you more
 notice but we didn't find out till -

AFFLUENT ADDICT

These renovations -- exactly how
 long are they going to take?

DÁVILA

I'm afraid it could be months --
 (his smartphone rings)

Sorry, I need to take this. Have a
 safe trip!

(answers his smartphone)

Hola, cousin! Is the boss gonna give
 you that vacation you asked for?

MARROQUÍN

It's looking good. You still got a
 guest bedroom for me, cousin?

Dávila surveys the buildings of the Rehab Center.

DÁVILA

I think we got one, cousin. When is
 your vacation supposed to start?

Marroquín hears FOOTSTEPS, the guard is coming. He quickly hides the phone in the boombox and turns up the volume on "Gimme tha Power", the iconic Rap hit by Molotov:

MARROQUÍN (SINGING ALONG)
 Si nos pintan como a unos huevones/
 No lo somos ¡Viva México, cabrones!
 (They say we're losers but it's a
 lie! Viva México, assholes!)

The Guard looks in the cell but only sees Marroquín singing, the Narco waves at him. The guard is suspicious, he knows something is 'wrong' but can't identify it. Finally he walks away.

Dávila stares at his phone, he hears the rap from the boom-box: Gimme, gimme, gimme, the power! Then a sharp whisper -

MARROQUÍN (CONT'D)
Today.

AND WE CUT TO:

INT. LABORATORY - FORT MOSBY - DAY

Snowman removes a TEST TUBE from the refrigerator - inserts a needle into it, and fills a hypodermic syringe -

In a cage, a solitary Mini-Pig - **#12** - lies unmoving. It is bandaged and bloody. Snowman's gloved HAND lifts it up -

Snowman examines the motionless Mini Pig.

SNOWMAN
 I'm under a great deal of stress,
 and you're not helping.

#12 is motionless.

SNOWMAN (CONT'D)
 I can't get data if you just go and
 die on me!

#12 still doesn't move.

SNOWMAN (CONT'D)
 (misquoting Shakespeare
 ironically)
 The fault, dear Brutus, is not in
 our stars, but in our chemically-
 altered DNA.

#12 seems to be dead. Snowman sighs.

He lifts the animal by its tail, and turns - WE SEE a PILE OF DEAD MINI PIGS. He's about to drop #12 onto the pile but -

A HAND IN A PLASTIC GLOVE grabs his wrist, it belongs to Colonel Murdoch. Murdoch's hand TIGHTENS on Snowman's wrist--

SNOWMAN (CONT'D)

No need to get upset. This is merely
an unproductive experimental parameter--

COLONEL MURDOCH

THIS dead piggie is a smoking gun.
If the Senator ever saw this...

He SQUEEZES Snowman's hand until the scientist gasps in pain,
dropping the dead Mini-Pig onto the pile of bodies --

SNOWMAN

There's no way she ever will --

COLONEL MURDOCH

You're right about that. Martinez!

Sergeant Martinez arrives, he gestures at the dead Mini-Pigs.

COLONEL MURDOCH (CONT'D)

Get rid of them. Off the base.

SGT. MARTINEZ

Yes, sir.

But she has doubts about this order. Seeing the dead animals
has upset her deeply. Snowman gives Murdoch a withering look.

SNOWMAN

I can't concentrate with all this
interference.

Murdoch takes a Coke from the fridge, pops it. Takes a deep
chug. His tone seems conversational but his look intense --

COLONEL MURDOCH

Did you know Coke was invented by a
pharmacist looking for a headache
cure. Kola nuts and coca leaves. A
lucky accident. Your experimental
parameters aren't working, doctor.
We need a lucky accident. We --

Martinez is examining the dead Mini-Pigs, she reacts eagerly -

SGT. MARTINEZ

This one's still alive.

One animal, #7, moves feebly. But Murdoch takes it from her
with a gloved hand, and smashes it against the wall - CRUNCH.

COLONEL MURDOCH

No. I don't believe it is.

He drops #7 onto the pile of motionless tiny bodies.
Martinez represses a shudder as Murdoch gestures at them.

COLONEL MURDOCH (CONT'D)
Put them in a Pelican case.

SGT. MARTINEZ
Sir, those are only for weapons
transport -

COLONEL MURDOCH
Exactly. We don't want anyone
asking questions. Do we?

SGT. MARTINEZ
No, sir. We don't.

As she moves away, Snowman notices movement in the other cage: #6 is hiding beneath the straw. He edges in front of the cage, blocking it from Murdoch's view.

COLONEL MURDOCH
Find it. Before this house of cards
comes crashing down and buries us.

Snowman HEARS a faint sound -- #6 moving in the straw. He coughs loudly, to cover the sound. Murdoch's eyes narrow with suspicion. But the moment passes and he exits. Then -

Snowman moves to the cage where he has hidden #6. But he hears another SOUND - tiny FEET on a table - he spins back --

AND SEES #7, the Mini-Pig which Murdoch just 'killed', is getting to its feet again. It wobbles, then falls.

SNOWMAN
(a demented grin)
My lucky furry little accident.

He checks to make sure Sgt. Martinez isn't watching, then takes a tiny bottle from his pocket, ALLERGY RELIEF 24/7. He slides a tiny spoon in, fills it with cocaine, snorts it.

He shudders with pleasure as the intense, euphoric high hits.

He retrieves the test tube and drops a spoonful of cocaine in. Shakes it like a bartender. He takes a fresh needle and fills the syringe with the new coke-infused formula.

SNOWMAN (CONT'D)
Now all we need are the Kola nuts.

He walks to the table. #7 is now motionless again. He injects the altered formula into #7. He waits...

Martinez returns, carrying a military grade PELICAN CASE.
Both of them now watch #7 together -

At first nothing happens. Then #7 RACES for the edge of the
table. Snowman makes a frantic grab but misses and #7 -

RUNS RIGHT OFF THE EDGE OF THE TABLE --

It FALLS and hits the ground with a sickening THUD.

Martinez gently scoops up #7 and puts it in the Pelican case.
She puts the other Mini-Pigs on top of #7. She closes it.

SGT. MARTINEZ

I'm truly sorry about this.

She goes out. Snowman shakes more cocaine into the test
tube. He fills a new syringe. He snorts more coke and
starts an Aggrotech TRACK on Google Play Music --

SNOWMAN

If at first you don't succeed...try
a larger dose.

He moves toward #6. The Mini-Pig is frozen, staring back at
him like a condemned man facing the firing squad.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOMAS ALTAS PRISON - CHIHUAHUA, MEXICO - DAY

Thick walls, barbed wire, gun towers: escape seems impossible.

INT. WAITING ROOM - LOMAS ALTAS PRISON - CHIHUAHUA, MEXICO

The S.W.A.T. COPS have finished the weapons check. Becerril
and Cruz are back with them. She checks her watch.

SUBCOMANDANTE CRUZ

T minus thirty.

COMANDANTE BECERRIL

Men.

He doesn't raise his voice but everyone focuses on him.

COMANDANTE BECERRIL (CONT'D)

The prisoner we are going to
transport is the most dangerous
criminal in México. Smart men are
afraid of him. Are you scared?

S.W.A.T. TEAM

No, Sir!

COMANDANTE BECERRIL
What?! I can't hear you. I asked
you a question: are you scared?!

S.W.A.T. TEAM
NO! SIR!

COMANDANTE BECERRIL
WHY NOT? WHY AREN'T YOU SCARED?

S.W.A.T. TEAM
BECAUSE WE ARE ALREADY DEAD, SIR!!!

With each word, they pound themselves on the Skull ("We Are Already Dead") patch. Becerril and Cruz share a secret look.

CUT TO:

EXT. DRY ARROYO - CHIHUAHUA DESERT NEAR BORDER - DAY

A Camo HUMMER drives slowly over the rocky terrain, coming to a stop at the edge of a parched ARROYO SECO (dry riverbed).

Sgt. Martinez exits the Hummer, carrying the Pelican case. She descends into the arroyo.

The riverbed is dry except for a tiny dirty brown STREAM, a trickle really, which runs along it. She scans the arroyo: the dry arroyo slopes down and the stream feeds into the mouth of a rusted metal pipe. But she doesn't see the pipe --

She's looking UP IN THE SKY at an enormous circling VULTURE.

She removes Mini-Pig bodies with her plastic gloved hands, and places them in the dirt of the arroyo floor.

SGT. MARTINEZ
(calling to the vulture)
Your lucky day. *Cochinito relleno!*
But I forgot the cheese - sorry!

She reaches for the very last Mini-Pig body and freezes when she sees: it is moving. It's MINI-PIG #7 --

The one Col. Murdoch tried to kill. The one that leaped off the table to its apparent death. It's still alive.

She smiles as she lifts it, letting it sit on her two hands --

#7's NOSE twitches as it sniffs the desert air.

Its HEAD swivels back and forth.

Then it looks straight at her.

SGT. MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
You're a fighter, a tiny Chicharito.
You just won't quit, will you?

She strokes it with her plastic gloved finger. It rubs itself against her hand. She can't help smiling as she pets it.

SGT. MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
Think you can survive out here?
(scanning the harsh desert
landscape)
There's coyotes. Snakes. Scorpions.
What do you think? Can you make it?

It keeps staring at her, its tiny eyes gleaming.

SGT. MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
Okay, then, Chicharito.

She sets #7 down on the ground. It looks up at her.

SGT. MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
Good thing my boss isn't here, he'd
probably shoot you. But you know
what? People who kill small furry
animals are the real animals.

She leans down, scratches #7 between the ears one last time.

#7 turns in a circle, sees the dead bodies of the other Mini Pigs. It stares at them. Then it looks back at her.

Then it darts away between rocks, disappearing from view.

SGT. MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
¡Órale! Go get 'em, Chicharito!

She walks back up the arroyo. A beat later, the Hummer drives off. WE PULL BACK TO -

ANGLE ON MINI-PIG #7, it watches her leave. Then it looks UP INTO THE SKY where the deadly Vulture circles, coming closer.

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL TEXAS HIGHWAY - DAY

A MOTORCADE of armored SUV's, with government plates, drives along. Many with the D.E.A. LOGO. COME IN close on one SUV -

INT. SUV (MOVING) - DAY

Special Agents Toft and Busfield sit in back. Toft wears his trademark frown, he's lost in thought. Busfield watches him.

BUSFIELD

Hey. Hey. What you were saying about Marroquín - you're still ticked off, aren't you? 'Cause of Las Cruces. Isn't that right?

(Toft reacts, this is a sore spot, Busfield goes on)

Way I heard it, you'd tracked him down, you had him, but you fucked up: you went in without backup.

TOFT

Las Cruces was a long time ago.

BUSFIELD

Why? Why no goddamn back-up?

TOFT

Because, Jim, if you go in with back-up, you're obliged to read the perp his rights. But my way...

He touches the gun in the shoulder holster, inside his coat.

CUT TO:

A MODEST BATHROOM INSIDE A SMALL TIENDA

A Mexican woman wraps a REBOZO, a long woven shawl, around her head and face and shoulders. She looks like a worn-down Madonna - finally we see her FACE: it's Ilia.

She is almost unrecognizable, she looks 20 years older. As she checks herself in the mirror, Alexis attaches a small electronic antenna booster to her tiny handheld VIDEO CAMERA.

ALEXIS

When you start video, this will boost your signal.

EXT. TIENDA/ABARROTES - ACROSS FROM LOMAS ALTAS PRISON - DAY

Ilia emerges from a small Tienda/Market/Café across from the Prison. Their Rental Van is parked nearby. She sees a small LINE of visitors waiting at the Prison entrance.

STREET VENDORS walk by, one selling nuts, another fruit, a third is a TOY VENDOR, with an enormous selection of toys.

Ilia intercepts the Toy Vendor and pulls out money -

ILIA

I'd like one of those -- for my grandson.

It's a realistic TOY SQUIRT GUN, a fake Beretta. She quickly fills it from a water bottle and hides it inside her straw shoulder bag. She gives a thumbs-up to Alexis, who's sitting at a Café table, laptop open. She crosses the Plaza.

EXT. FRONT OF LOMAS ALTAS PRISON - DAY

VISITORS - wives, children, parents - wait patiently. Most carry food, to bring to their loved-ones inside the prison.

Ilia gets in the line. She fingers the wooden beads of a rosary, and mumbles prayers in Spanish.

The MAN in front of her is short and fat, he's reading the sports pages. He carries a jacket draped over one arm. The line slowly moves forward, into -

INT. VISITOR PROCESSING AREA - LOMAS ALTAS PRISON - DAY

The line leads to a desk manned by two bored CLERKS. PRISON GUARDS, with AR-15 Assault rifles, surveil the scene.

Ilia edges closer to the short, fat man - and slips the TOY BERETTA inside a pocket of his jacket.

The line inches forwards. As the short man reaches the desk, Ilia goes "into character", becoming a scared woman -

ILIA

He's got a gun! In his jacket!

A guard tries to snatch the jacket, but the man won't let go, as they tug on it, the toy Beretta falls out, people start screaming. Guards tackle the fat man, it's total CHAOS -

No one notices when Ilia quickly walks through the now unguarded far door, entering the prison.

INT. WAITING AREA - LOMAS ALTAS PRISON - DAY

Becerril checks his watch, gives Cruz a look, nods. She claps her hands loudly, getting the Squad's attention.

SUBCOMANDANTE CRUZ

T minus ten.

The S.W.A.T. Team prepares to move. Holstering weapons, picking up assault rifles, a tense, silent preparation.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A SMARTPHONE SCREEN

As a 2-word message arrives: IT'S TIME.

Contreras reacts. Puts the phone away. He's sweating.

ANOTHER SMARTPHONE

Goes into the pocket of the Guard we've seen before. He is tense. He pushes up his shirt sleeve to scratch his arm and we see his TATTOO: "Los Apóstoles". He's in --

INT. CORRIDOR LEADING TO HIGH-SECURITY WING - DAY

The corridor outside the high security wing where Marroquín's cell is. FOOTSTEPS sound, the guard turns as Contreras approaches, he glances up at a stationary CCTV camera --

CCTV CAMERA POV SHOWS: A VERTICAL ANGLE AS:

Contreras and the guard pass each other, neither man looks at the other, Contreras moves somewhere the CCTV can't "see" -

INT. ALCOVE IN CORRIDOR - DAY

Contreras waits in an alcove. Then the Guard arrives. Contreras pulls a cloth-wrapped object from his jacket, hands it to the guard who unwraps it: a 9mm BERETTA HANDGUN and a cylindrical SILENCER. The Guard gives the cloth back to Contreras - who hands him a small ELECTRONIC KEY/DEVICE.

CONTRERAS

This will open his cell door.
You've got maybe seven minutes.

GUARD

The cameras?

CONTRERAS

I'll turn them off in two minutes.

GUARD

You'd fucking well better.

Contreras ignores this threat and exits without another word.

INT. MARROQUÍN'S CELL - SAME TIME

Marroquín checks his diamond-encrusted WATCH (Production note: we will be using Pablo Escobar's real watch for this!)

He looks up, watching the ceiling-mounted CCTV CAMERA, its RED LIGHT ON, panning back and forth, back and forth.

The second hand on his watch has one minute to go before the minute hand will reach the hour -

Marroquín tenses, holding his breath, waiting for something -

INT. CONTROL/SURVEILLANCE ROOM - SAME TIME

Banks of MONITORS show VIDEO from different CCTV's inside the PRISON. The bored VIDEO GUARD monitoring them looks up as Contreras enters, he immediately tries to straighten up -

CONTRERAS

Take a cigarette break.

The video guard nods gratefully, stands and exits. Once he's gone, Contreras KEYS IN numbers on the control keyboard -

The CENTRAL MONITOR switches to MARROQUÍN'S CELL, panning back and forth, with Marroquín looking up into the camera -

Contreras keys another COMMAND and THE IMAGE GOES OUT as --

INT. MARROQUÍN'S CELL - SAME TIME

-- the second hand of the watch reaches the hour, the Red Light GOES OUT, the Videocam STOPS MOVING.

Marroquín lets his breath out. He quickly walks to the toilet in the rear alcove of his cell. He listens. He can't hear anything.

INT. WALKWAY IN THE HIGH-SECURITY WING - DAY

The Guard screws the silencer onto the gun barrel. He tries slides the safety switch off - it makes an audible CLICK -

INT. MARROQUÍN'S CELL - SAME TIME

Marroquín hears the click and knows what it means. He moves back to his bed, he pulls something from beneath the bed -

INT. WALKWAY IN THE HIGH-SECURITY WING - SAME TIME

Moving quietly, the guard reaches Marroquín's cell. He clicks the electronic key/device -- the cell door slides open --

INT. MARROQUÍN'S CELL - SAME TIME

The guard sees a FORM in bed with the covers pulled over it. He fires repeatedly at the head - it seems to collapse -

He yanks the covers back and SEES the 'head' is a SOCCER BALL - the ball Marroquín is holding, in the photo on the wall. The 'body' is a jacket + pillow. There's a SOUND behind him -

Marroquín attacks, using the boombox as a weapon to smash the guard's hand, knocking the gun free, it slides away from them.

Marroquín and the guard fight, the guard whips out a KNIFE -

He slices Marroquín's shoulder, then kicks Marroquín's legs out from under him - Marroquín falls, partly under his bed.

The guard moves in with the knife but Marroquín pulls a sharpened metal slat (a deadly homemade weapon) from under the bed frame -- he dodges a deadly knife thrust --

And then stabs the guard through the neck.

The guard collapses, takes a final breath, then goes limp.

Marroquín pulls his rolled-up jacket from the bed - where it simulated his body - he rips off a sleeve and ties it around his bleeding arm in a makeshift bandage.

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR / STAIRWELL - SAME TIME

Ilia flattens herself behind a corner, waits for a guard to pass. Then she runs DOWN the stairs as WE GO TO -

INT. GROUND FLOOR - SECURITY WING - SAME TIME

The S.W.A.T. Team reaches an elevator, the elevator doors slide open, the Grupo Elite enters. Cruz looks at Becerril.

SUBCOMANDANTE CRUZ
Basement, sir?

He nods. She presses the button, the doors slide closed.

INT. MARROQUÍN'S CELL - SAME TIME

Marroquín retrieves the Beretta with the silencer. Then he hears a SOUND. Coming from the toilet. He moves to it and listens. A faint MUFFLED SOUND is coming from beneath.

He bends and literally LIFTS UP the entire Toilet (it's no longer attached by bolts) -

Just as the CONCRETE FLOOR beneath is smashed through by a filthy NARCO TUNNELER wearing a respirator/face mask -

Time seems to freeze as he and Marroquín stare at one another.

INT. BASEMENT CORRIDOR - HIGH SECURITY WING - SAME TIME

Ilia reaches the basement. The corridor's empty. She tosses her rebozo, wipes off the old lady makeup, takes out the tiny VIDEOCAM, and presses [REC] starting her "LIVE VIDEO FEED":

ILIA
This is Ilia Olvera, I'm in the
security wing of Lomas Altas
(MORE)

ILIA (CONT'D)
Prison, I'm about to interview
Alonso Marroquín.

She runs down the corridor, VIDEOING everything she sees.

INT. MARROQUÍN'S CELL - SAME TIME

The Tunneler gestures for Marroquín to follow him. Marroquín runs back to his bed and plugs the boombox in. One of its speakers is damaged but the other is fine. He presses PLAY -

Molotov's rap song, Gimme tha Power, begins. He cranks the VOLUME LOUD and sings along as he returns to the toilet -

MOLOTOV/MARROQUÍN
*Si le das mas poder al poder
Mas duro te van a venir a coger!*
(If you give Big Brother too much
power, he'll just screw you over!)

He lowers himself into hole, going down, then pulling the toilet back into place where it perfectly covers the hole.

INT. BASEMENT - SECURITY WING - LOMAS ALTAS - DAY

The elevator doors open -

The S.W.A.T. Grupo Elite march out, Becerril in front, Cruz in the rear. They walk quickly, heading down the walkway. They HEAR the song playing as they near Marroquín's cell -

MOLOTOV
*Si nos pintan como a unos huevones
No lo somos ¡Viva México, cabrones!*
(They say we're losers but it's a
lie! Viva México, assholes!)

They see the cell door is WIDE OPEN.

BECERRIL
What the fuck.

He raises his assault rifle, Cruz and the other S.W.A.T. Cops do the same. They advance cautiously and then they SEE -

The body of the guard lying near the bed. The metal bed strut still in his throat.

Becerril and Cruz react, this is a disaster, he gestures and -

INT. MARROQUÍN'S CELL - SAME TIME

The S.W.A.T. team run in, led by Becerril and Cruz, checking everywhere - the toilet appears totally normal - but --

Alonso Marroquín has disappeared.

COMANDANTE BECERRIL
Where the fuck has he gone?!

Becerril has never panicked. But right now he is close to losing it. He exchanges a look with Cruz - she runs back to --

INT. WALKWAY IN THE HIGH-SECURITY WING - SAME TIME

There is an ALARM BOX on the wall. She yanks down the lever and SIRENS AND ALARMS BEGIN TO SOUND AND BLARE.

Ilia appears at the end of the hall behind her.

The two women trade startled glances, Cruz trying to process if this intruder is a threat, Ilia realizing something major has just gone down --

Then Cruz runs back into the cell.

Ilia follows her, still FILMING with her tiny VIDEOCAM, but comes to a stop as she reaches the cell - sees the S.W.A.T. Team still inside - but no prisoner. She videos herself--

ILIA
This is Ilia Olvera: the man they
call Da Vinci has done it again!

She moves her VIDEOCAM back and forth, FILMING everything -

EXT. IN FRONT OF TIENDA/ABARROTES - SAME TIME

Ilia's "Live" VIDEO fills the screen of Alexis's laptop -- it's being broadcast on her Network: blinking red letters at the bottom of the screen tell us this is a LIVE TRANSMISSION.

INT. MARROQUÍN'S CELL - SAME TIME

The ALARMS still sound but the boombox keeps blasting out -

MOLOTOV
*Que nos llevan por donde les conviene
Y es nuestro sudor lo que los
mantiene (They take us anywhere they
want, they live off of our sweat)*

Becerril's hand presses STOP, silencing the song.

All around him is chaos but Becerril seems an island of calm in the middle of a storm.

His head swivels back and forth, his eyes scan every single square inch of the cell.

His nostrils seem to open, he is actually sniffing the air.

Cruz notices a plate with an uneaten portion of the birthday cake with Marroquín's face. She SMASHES her fist down, destroying Marroquín's cake face.

SUBCOMANDANTE CRUZ
A man can't vanish in thin air.

COMANDANTE BECERRIL
They're going to blame us.

SUBCOMANDANTE CRUZ
We're gonna find the son of a bitch -

COMANDANTE BECERRIL
- and when we do -

COMANDANTE BECERRIL (CONT'D)
- he won't have a chance --

Their eyes are locked. Their words low but intense --

BECERRIL & CRUZ
Because we're already dead.

The SOUNDS OF RUNNING FEET AND MENS' VOICES AS --

INT. WALKWAY IN THE HIGH-SECURITY WING - SAME TIME

Contreras and ARMED GUARDS run up to the cell -- he sees Ilia, using her tiny handheld VIDEOCAM to RECORD everything.

EXT. PLAZA IN FRONT OF THE PRISON - SAME TIME

The RENTAL VAN is open, in back Alexis manipulates Ilia's "LIVE" VIDEO FEED on his LAPTOP which is cabled to the SATELLITE DISH atop the van. Blinking words: Satellite Uplink in Progress - and on the Laptop SCREEN we SEE ---

LIVE VIDEO as Contreras tries to snatch the VIDEOCAM from Ilia but fails, it keeps recording as she taunts him --

ILIA
Too late.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBTERRANEAN TUNNEL SHAFT - SAME TIME

A narrow VERTICAL SHAFT intersects with a larger HORIZONTAL TUNNEL which has been dug through rock and dirt, reinforced with timber. The tunnel stretches into the distance, as far as we can see, illuminated by faint, tiny LED lights.

The grimy Narco Tunneler clammers down a swinging rope ladder, followed by Marroquín.

A 2nd NARCO TUNNELER is waiting for them. He offers Marroquín the breathing filter/face mask that they both wear.

There is clothing. Marroquín puts on a clean shirt. There is also a pair of expensive NIKE RUNNING SHOES. He pulls off his cheap prison-made tennis shoes and laces the Nikes on.

He looks up the dark vertical shaft which he just climbed down - and softly sings two more lines from Molotov's song -

MARROQUÍN

¡Que se sienta el power mexicano!
¡Que se sienta! todos juntos como
hermanos (Feel that Mexican power!
All of us together like brothers)

He laughs quietly to himself, then pulls his face mask on -

MARROQUÍN (CONT'D)

There'll be songs about what we
just did, and videos, and a movie!

The tunnelers laugh with him, then they all jog away down the long tunnel. Getting farther away till they disappear.

EXT. DRY ARROYO - CHIHUAHUA DESERT NEAR BORDER - DAY

We're in the desert. In a rocky ARROYO, a dry riverbed. A crushed Coors beer can lets us know we are in the U.S.

HEAR the BREATHING of an animal. PAWS move through the sand and rock. A large NOSE sniffs. The animal is -

A hungry WILD DOG. Suddenly the dog catches a scent. It follows the odor, through rocks, to a small animal -

It is MINI PIG #7, which Sgt. Martinez released into the desert. But now it seems sick. It trembles.

The dog moves closer. It hesitates, staring as -

#7 FALLS down. Its FURRY LEGS shake. Its tiny HAIRLESS HOOVES quiver, then are STILL. GREEN FOAM trickles from its MOUTH. Its DARK EYES CLOSE. One last quiver -

Then it lies still. Apparently dead.

The dog edges closer. It's hungry. But suddenly -

#7 jerks up - its EYES SNAP OPEN. They have turned a horrible YELLOW-GREEN. It growls, we glimpse its SHARP TEETH -

#7 has become a ZOMBIE MINI PIG.

The dog growls in fear and backs away from the tiny deadly beast - but SOUNDS coming from behind it make the dog stop. It slowly turns around and SEES -

WILD DOG POV: The other 12 "dead" Mini Pigs have 'revived' - the dog is surrounded by a dozen horrifying ZOMBIE MINI PIGS.

They still look like cute cuddly Mini Pigs - which have become frightening little monsters, piranhas with fur.

The dog snarls and whines - there's no way it can escape.

#7 is clearly the 'leader' of the group, it growls more loudly--

The other zombie Mini Pigs join in - it's literally a hellish high-pitched nightmarish bestial chorus and then -

POV AS: SUDDENLY the monsters RUSH STRAIGHT AT US and - we FREEZE FRAME - because that's

THE END

But of course it's really only **The BEGINNING ...**