

CUTTHROAT

"Pilot"

Written by

Michele Fazekas
&
Tara Butters

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CUTTHROAT"PILOT"ACT ONE

FADE IN

EXT. CHELSEA ACADEMY - DAY

A Spanish Mission-style building, surrounded by an acre of beautiful landscaping. A group of fourth-graders in uniform run up the steps to the door -- the boys in navy slacks and white oxfords, the girls in plaid jumpers.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

Of course, after the New York Times article, admissions became much more competitive.

The sign outside reads *Chelsea Academy - Est. 1891*.

INT. CHELSEA ACADEMY - ADMISSIONS OFFICE -DAY

CLOSE ON A WOMAN'S FACE

This is LACEY ANDREWS. Thirties, beautiful, a horrible bitch. She talks directly to camera.

LACEY

There are some who question our rigorous application process. I point to our graduates. Nobel Prize winners. Senators. A Poet Laureate. And two Vice Presidential candidates. Our record speaks for itself.

She glances down at an application on her desk.

LACEY (CONT'D)

You should know that at the kindergarten level alone, there are three hundred candidates for twenty-five slots. Your son will be required to participate in a supervised playdate, where we'll determine if he's Chelsea material.

(with a smile)

But remember -- we're not just judging him. We're judging you, too.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

REVERSE on NINA CABRERA -- 30s, Latina, drop dead gorgeous and trying very hard to hide the fact that she can't stand this woman. She forces a smile.

NINA

Great.

Lacey flips through the application in front of her.

LACEY

How do you pronounce your last name?

NINA

Cabrera.

LACEY

That's Spanish?

NINA

Yes. My father was Mexican.

LACEY

Your English is excellent.

Nina blinks. It's pretty obvious she was born and raised in the States. She swallows a sarcastic reply and simply says:

NINA

Thank you.

LACEY

So that's your maiden name. You're not married?

NINA

My husband passed away five years ago.

LACEY

I'm sorry. How did he die?

ON Nina for a beat. She's thinking about how to answer. Then suddenly we're:

EXT. STREET - DAY - FLASHBACK

A quick shot of a handsome man getting in a sedan, turning the ignition key, and then BOOM! The car EXPLODES.

INT. CHELSEA ACADEMY - ADMISSIONS OFFICE - DAY

Back to Nina. Her expression betrays nothing.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NINA
Car accident.

LACEY
How tragic. So you're raising three children alone?

NINA
My mother lives with us.

LACEY
That must be a big help.

NINA
It really is.

CUT TO:

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Nina's mother is SANDY, Caucasian, 60s and a former Miss California. But right now she's teaching five-year-old ALEX how to pour three fingers of scotch.

INT. CHELSEA ACADEMY - ADMISSIONS OFFICE - DAY

Back to Nina.

NINA
We also have a nanny. Who is great.

Lacey peruses the application. The silence stretches.

NINA (CONT'D)
(prompting)
Alex has been taking piano since he
turned four. We're particularly
interested in your music program.

*
*
*

LACEY
(not looking up)
Of course you are. Forty percent of
our music students go on to attend the
Juilliard School.

*

She closes Nina's file, pushes it away. She smiles.

*

LACEY (CONT'D)
I'm going to be honest with you, Miss
Cabrera. Most Chelsea moms don't work.

*
*
*

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NINA *
 Okay..? *

LACEY *
 That way they can be invested in their *
 children's education. Active. Involved. *

NINA *
 That's not an issue. I am very *
 involved. My children are my priority. *

LACEY *
 You work. It's a problem. *

She's so matter-of-fact about it you'd like to punch her. *
 Nina purses her lips. She does not lose her cool. *

NINA *
 Do you have single dads here? *

LACEY *
 (confused beat) *
 Yes. *

NINA *
 And they work, I imagine? The dads. *

LACEY *
 Well, yes, but I'm not sure how that -- *

NINA *
 So the problem isn't that I work. It's *
 that I'm a **woman** who works. *
 (thinks) *
 What is the word for that sort of... *
 policy? *

Nina smiles, perfectly charming. Lacey, for the first time, *
 grows uncomfortable and starts pushing papers around, really *
 wanting to change the subject. *

LACEY *
 Well, of course, everyone is different, *
 and of course we consider the... uh... *
 extenuating, uh... in any event, I'm *
 sure we could find ways to keep you *
 involved. *

NINA *
 I'm so happy. *

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

LACEY

Good. Good. What is it, exactly, that
you do for a living?

*
*
*

PUSH IN on Nina. This one is the hardest question to answer. Then, in quick succession, we see a barrage of images:

-- A STACK OF HUNDREDS, quickly SHRINK-WRAPPED in plastic with a THONK.

*
*

-- The money JAMMED into a crate of other BRICKS of hundreds. The crate SLAMMED shut. On the lid, a colorful illustration of hands with polished nails, words in both Korean and English: *SUPERSEXY POLISH -- Deserving for You in Desirable Hand Nails!*

*
*
*
*
*

-- The crate loaded into the back of a MOVING TRUCK, filled with dozens of SIMILAR CRATES. Two men holding SUBMACHINE GUNS roll the gate shut. As the truck drives away, reveal NINA, making notations on her tablet computer.

*
*
*
*

INT. CHELSEA ACADEMY - ADMISSIONS OFFICE - DAY

RESUME Nina. Totally innocent.

NINA

I'm in business.

INT. KAJU NAIL TOWN - DAY

A hole-in-the-wall nail salon in the middle of Koreatown. No customers save for one, FRANKIE, 20s and stylish. He's Nina's cousin. He's at a manicure station while two cute Korean girls buff his nails and dote on him. Another woman delivers Frankie a cup of tea.

FRANKIE

(taking tea)

Thank you, Soon-bok.

(to manicurist)

That's looking good. Can you get at the cuticles too?

Nina enters. The girls greet her in Korean.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Hey cuz.

NINA

I just have to get the present and then
we can go.

*
*

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Frankie plucks the buffer out of the manicurist's hand.

FRANKIE
I'll finish up. Thank you, ladies.

Nina heads toward the back door, followed by Frankie.

INSERT: Nina's hand entering a code on a digital KEYPAD.

INSERT: Multiple locks on the door CLICKING open.

This is much more security than you'd expect in a nail salon.

INT. KAJU NAIL TOWN - BACK ROOM - DAY

Frankie and Nina enter. At first we only see the typical nail salon supplies -- polish and acetone. We hear MACHINES running O.S.

FRANKIE
Hey, how'd the school interview go?

NINA
(with venom)
Bitch.

FRANKIE
Damn, it was a girl? That's too bad.
Girls don't like you.
(off Nina's look)
I like you.

As they walk and talk, REVEAL the rest of the room -- which is a DIFFERENT WORLD. It's huge -- five times the size of the salon. And presently, it is filled with about a dozen YOUNG ASIAN MEN, each at their own small desk.

Some of the men have COUNTING MACHINES and are blazing through thousands of dollars in cash and bundling them up. Others are checking serial numbers and testing for counterfeits. It's an efficient money laundering operation, a combination of a sweatshop and an accountant's office.

NINA
It's my own fault. I let her get to me.
Like I was in high school all over
again, being bullied by Margot Willings.

FRANKIE
Hey, stop all that. Look at you --
rich. Gorgeous. Successful. What's
Margot whatserface doing now?

*
*
*
*
*
*

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NINA
I think she's dead, actually. Cancer.

FRANKIE
See, that's gotta feel good.

Nina approaches the side of the room, where large PALATES of SHRINK WRAPPED MONEY are stacked. She does a quick count, makes a few notes on her iPhone. Calls over her shoulder to an ASIAN MAN.

NINA
Eugene, this needs to be dispensed today, alright?

ASIAN MAN
Of course, Mrs. Cabrera. Today.

Nina starts walking towards an office off the main room.

NINA
(to Frankie)
Doesn't matter anyway. I just have to put up with it until Alex gets in.

FRANKIE
Screw them. There are other schools.

NINA
Chelsea's music program is the best. I can deal with a Beverly Hills bitch. I can **be** a Beverly Hills bitch.

FRANKIE
True.

They enter --

INT. KAJU NAIL TOWN - NINA'S OFFICE - DAY

Nina opens a tall shipping box that sits on her desk.

FRANKIE
You ready for this?

NINA
The party? I think so. It'll be nice to see everyone again.

FRANKIE
Get excited for lots of strippers and pythons. You know Luis.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NINA

Yes I do.

She pulls the box away, revealing a very large jade obelisk. Unmistakably phallic. Nina and Frankie stare for a beat.

NINA (CONT'D)

For instance, I know he likes things that look like large penises.

FRANKIE

Wow. Happy Birthday.

EXT. NINA'S HOUSE - DAY

A Beverly Hills Tudor, big but not ostentatious, surrounded by old shady trees. Nina pulls her car into the driveway, followed by Frankie in his car.

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nina's mother, Sandy, watches the local news on television.

ANCHOR

(on TV)

...in another gruesome find south of the border, a Tijuana drug cartel is suspected in the murder and dismemberment of a man who had been abducted earlier this week...

The video shows a crowd gathered around something awful on the ground. The image is digitally blurred.

ANCHOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(on TV)

... in a particularly grisly twist, the man's face was skinned and sewn onto a soccer ball, and left in front of a Tijuana police department...

Sandy shakes her head, disgusted. Behind her, Nina and Frankie enter.

NINA

I'm home. Where is everybody?

SANDY

(distracted)

I let them sleep in. It's summer.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NINA
Mom, it's noon!

SANDY
(re: television)
Did you hear about this?

Nina stops, glances at the television, which shows more scenes of blurred violence, dead bodies.

ANCHOR (V.O.)
(on TV)
... the latest in a string of violence in Tijuana that has left fifteen dead in the past two weeks...

Nina just waves it off, heads upstairs.

NINA
Mom, I'm going out of town, please do not let them sleep all day.

Sandy shoots a look to Frankie, then follows Nina.

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - IVAN'S ROOM - DAY

The door to the darkened room opens. The floor is entirely covered by clothing. IVAN, Nina's 16-year-old stepson, is somewhere beneath the covers.

NINA
Get up. Ivan!

IVAN'S VOICE
(muffled)
I'm up.

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - LILY'S ROOM - DAY

LILY, 12, is in her pjs, looking in the mirror and putting on very RED lipstick. The door bursts open.

NINA
Get dressed.
(then)
Is that mine?

LILY
No.
(off Nina's glare)
Yes.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NINA

Put it back.
(points)
I want your summer science project
started before I get back.

And Nina's gone.

LILY

Whatever!

NINA'S VOICE (O.S.)

Don't whatever.

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - ALEX'S ROOM - DAY

Nina opens the door, revealing Alex, 5, who is dressed. Kind of. Here's the outfit: cowboy boots. Underpants pulled over regular pants. Tinfoil wrapped around his torso. Bra hat. He's brandishing a plastic lightsabre.

A beat.

NINA

What's this now?

ALEX

Robot.

NINA
(considers)

Okay.

She leaves him to do his thing.

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Nina enters, starts stripping off her clothes, in a hurry.
Sandy follows her *inside*.

NINA

I'll be on the last flight out of
Tijuana tonight, but I won't be back
till late.

Nina walks into her closet.

SANDY

I think you shouldn't go.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NINA'S VOICE (O.S.)

It's Luis's birthday. He'll be
insulted if I don't. Like it or not
he's my boss now.

*
*
*

SANDY

Tell him you're sick. Tell him I'm sick.

*

NINA'S VOICE (O.S.)

I'm kind of looking forward to it. I
haven't been down there in over a year.

*
*
*

Nina steps out of the closet -- and she looks like a different person. In a clingy, beautiful designer cocktail dress, showing off her insane body. She goes to her dresser to hunt for jewelry.

SANDY

It's not safe. Those people are dangerous.

*
*

NINA

'Those people?' Mom -- you sort of
married one of 'those people.'

*
*
*

SANDY

Your father wasn't like that. Things
have changed. They're ugly. Awful.

*
*
*

NINA

Is this about the news? Luis didn't do that.

*
*

SANDY

How do you know?

*
*

NINA

Because I know. He's crazy, but he's
not a psycho. Dad trusted him.

*
*
*

Nina sits on the bed to put on shoes. Sandy sits next to her.

*

SANDY

Do you know why your father chose Luis
to run the business instead of you?

*
*
*

NINA

Well, first of all, I'm a girl.
Secondly, I didn't want it --

*
*
*

SANDY

Because Luis is **brutal**. Always has been.

*
*

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

NINA

Exactly. And I'm not. Which means I'm
not a threat to anybody.

SANDY

The last time you saw any of them was
at your father's funeral. You don't
have his protection anymore. It's
going to be different, Nina.

Nina stands and puts her arms out.

NINA

(re: outfit)
What do you think?

Sandy fixes an errant strand of hair, straightens the dress.

SANDY

You look so beautiful it makes me want
to kill you a little.

(then)

Please be careful.

FRANKIE'S VOICE (O.S.)

Nina, we gotta go!

NINA

Nothing's going to happen, mom. I'm
outside all of that. I'm the money
person -- no one cares about me.

(then)

I'll kiss the ring and leave. I'll be
fine. Okay?

She gives Sandy a quick kiss before rushing out.

EXT. SANDOVAL'S BEACH HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

In the middle of urban decay. The place is still under
construction, but nearly complete. Looking at it from the
street, it is a fortress -- three stories above ground level,
high white walls, razor wire and armed guards. Behind it the
sun sets over the ocean. The only things that hint at a
party are the sounds of a Mariachi band, laughter, and the
top of a BOUNCY HOUSE, jiggling just above the wall.

INT. SANDOVAL'S BEACH HOUSE - TERRACE - LATE AFTERNOON

A sprawling terrace off the back of the house, about 200
guests mill about.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

It is a pretentious, hilariously gaudy affair. Fire
breathers, men on stilts, strippers dance on platforms and
jump in the bouncy house. And indeed, many columns and
pillars that phallically reach for the sky. *

Frankie and Nina appear in the doorway leading out to the
terrace -- a few women stop Nina and hug her before moving
on. Nina and Frankie take in the scene for a beat. *

NINA
Well this is... tasteful. *

FRANKIE
Looks like a circus blew up on a
whorehouse.
(re: columns) *
A whorehouse full of giant penises. *

Nina giggles and punches Frankie as they push through the
crowd. Animal trainers hold various wild creatures on
leashes -- a lion, a jaguar, an orangutan -- the looks on the
trainers faces tell it all -- this is really unsafe. *

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Nina!

They turn to see a couple men in their 50s -- STEFAN, Nina's
uncle, and FRANCISCO, Nina's father's cousin. They smile and
beckon Nina over. *

STEFAN
(in Spanish)
Hello beautiful. What are you, too good
to come down and see your old uncle? *

Nina kisses Stefan and Francisco. She takes Stefan's arm and
they walk. Note -- unless otherwise indicated, dialogue
proceeds in English. *

NINA
I'm sorry. Things have been so busy.
And after dad died... it was hard to
think about coming here. *

STEFAN
We miss him. *

Francisco makes a little derisive snort. *

FRANCISCO
You don't know how much. *

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

FRANKIE
Everything okay down here?

Stefan and Francisco exchange a look.

STEFAN
It's okay. It's good. Luis is... not
as elegant as your father was.

FRANCISCO
He's *demente*. Ruining everything. Too
much attention. All of this kidnapping
and torture. Disgusting. Sick.

NINA
Luis is involved in that?

STEFAN
Some. Not all. It's getting worse.
Every time Luis hits them, they hit us
harder.

They look down onto the beach below. There is a bonfire and
a crowd of people gathered around the man of the hour -- LUIS
SANDOVAL. About Nina's age, tall and muscular. He has a
tribal tattoo around his bicep and wears an Ed Hardy t-shirt.
He'd be attractive if he didn't look like he'd date rape you.

FRANCISCO
Why don't you go say hello to the
birthday boy.

Off Nina, watching Sandoval with growing apprehension --

EXT. SANDOVAL'S BEACH HOUSE - STAIRS TO BEACH - DAY

Nina makes her way down the steps from the terrace. She's
intercepted by MIGUEL -- 40s, husky. He's wearing a security
earpiece, an ASSAULT RIFLE is strapped around his shoulders.
He smiles wide when he sees Nina.

MIGUEL
Ninetta! Look at you! So beautiful!

She hugs him and he helps her down the stairs.

NINA
Miguel. It's good to see you. Are you
working for Luis?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MIGUEL

He offered me a job as head of security
after your father...

Miguel's eyes welling with tears. Nina pats his arm.

NINA

I know. I miss him too.

MIGUEL

I blame myself. I shoulda been there.
I coulda called a doctor. Something.

NINA

He had a heart attack. There wasn't
anything any of us could have done.

They reach the beach, Nina looks over at Sandoval.

NINA (CONT'D)

Luis is treating you well?

MIGUEL

I'm happy to have a job. But nobody is
your father.

It's the most she'll get out of him, but clearly Miguel
wishes things were different. He gives her a kiss and heads
off. Nina takes her heels off and makes her way across the
sand toward Sandoval.

EXT. BEACH - EVENING

The sun has just dipped below the horizon. Sandoval smokes a
big Cuban and holds court with a few of his LIEUTENANTS --
men who try hard to look and act like their boss. Scantly
clad women toast marshmallows on the bonfire. VASQUEZ, a
beefy guy who is smarter than he looks, sees Nina's approach,
leans in and whispers to Sandoval.

SANDOVAL

Nina!

He gets up and pulls Nina into a big bear hug.

NINA

Happy birthday, Luis. You look great.

SANDOVAL

The princess returns! I'm honored.
What do you think of all this? Do I
know how to throw a party or what?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NINA

It's... pretty unbelievable.

A few other men, including Stefan and Francisco, have come down to the beach. Nina looks around -- clearly a meeting is about to take place. Sandoval speaks in Spanish to the marshmallow girls, and they all get up and leave.

SANDOVAL

(to Nina)

Hey, have you had a chance to look at the house? I need to pick some tiles for the master bathroom. Could use a woman's touch.

NINA

Oh. Sure. I'll check it out before I leave.

An awkward beat. Nina is the only woman left on the beach.

VASQUEZ

We've got a little business to discuss down here, so...

Nina shoots a look at Vasquez. This is getting her annoyed.

NINA

Really? Interesting. I'm actually **in** this business, Chico.

Vasquez and Sandoval exchange a look. Sandoval is not pleased, but smiles wide.

SANDOVAL

It's okay. You stay. Wouldn't want to upset the princess.

A few of the lieutenants snicker -- though not all. As the scene progresses, we notice a definite divide between those who support Sandoval, and those who do not.

SANDOVAL (CONT'D)

Alright. My man has a solution to our little problem here.

VASQUEZ

The guy has a house in Phoenix. Found it on Google Earth. Parks his car in the driveway. Figure we get up there, little C-4 under the hood. Boom.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SANDOVAL *
 He'll be there next week when Congress *
 takes a break. *

Nina starts at that. *

NINA *
 (alarmed) *
 Congress? *

SANDOVAL *
 If we're lucky we'll get some of the *
 family too. I want headlines. *

NINA *
 (can't help herself) *
 I'm sorry... you're going to blow up a *
 congressman? A *U.S.* congressman? *

VASQUEZ *
 Martin, from Arizona. He's pushing for *
 a border wall. *

NINA *
 (panicking) *
 Wait a minute, wait a minute. You *
 can't kill a congressman. It doesn't *
 work that way. *

SANDOVAL *
 Works whatever way I want. *

NINA *
 You have to think about this, *Luis*. *
 The only reason you're able to do *
 business *in the States* is because the *
 violence stays here. Nobody cares if a *
 bunch of Mexicans are killing each *
 other. *

SANDOVAL *
 I'm gonna make them care. *They need to* *
be afraid of me. *

NINA *
They'll be afraid. And every Fed and *
CIA agent will have us in their sites. *

You can see some of the lieutenants (*including Stefan and* *
Francisco) are starting to be swayed by Nina's argument. One *
 of them, GONZALES, chimes in -- he's *closer to Stefan's age.* *

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

GONZALES

She's got a point. They leave us alone
now.

STEFAN

What do you think we should do, Nina?

A beat of silence as all eyes go to Nina. She swallows,
unprepared. But, as she speaks, she begins to gain
confidence. Actually starts to sound like she knows what
she's talking about.

NINA

Um... well... he's a politician, right?
We just need a scandal. If he doesn't
have a vice... we create one. Drugs.
Hooker. Underaged boy. All of the
above.

(shrugs)

He'll be too busy fixing his image to
build any wall.

More and more of the lieutenants are getting on board with
this. Sandoval is starting to grow very angry. Stefan
smiles, looking proud.

STEFAN

That's very elegant.

SANDOVAL

No. No. This guy is dead. Period.

NINA

Luis, please, this is stupid --

SANDOVAL

(explodes)

AM I THE BOSS OR ARE YOU THE BOSS? AM
I THE BOSS OR ARE YOU THE BOSS?

He is screaming in her face, the veins in his neck bulging.
He looks crazy. Sandoval kicks at the bonfire, sending
flaming logs sparking across the sand.

SANDOVAL (CONT'D)

You go back to counting money. I'll
run the real business.

He tromps off, followed by a few of his loyal lieutenants.
Off Nina, shaken, feeling like she's screwed up --

INT. BEACH HOUSE - FRONT ENTRY - NIGHT *

Nina finds Frankie. He can tell she's troubled. *

NINA *

Why don't you go get the car. *

FRANKIE *

Sure. Everything okay? *

NINA *

I'll tell you later. *

Frankie nods, heads off. Nina says goodbye to a few others. *

She sees Stefan and Gonzales approach. She kisses Stefan. *

NINA (CONT'D) *

I need to get back. *

(then) *

This isn't going to be good, Stefan. *

For any of us. *

GONZALES *

You think you could do all that? *

NINA *

All what? *

GONZALES *

With the congressman. You think you *

could discredit him like you said? *

NINA *

No, I'm not -- I don't do that. Luis *

isn't wrong -- I'm the money person. *

STEFAN *

But you're up there. You have the *

ability. If necessary... could you *

accomplish this? *

A long beat, as Nina contemplates taking this step. *

STEFAN (CONT'D) *

You said it yourself, Nina. If he *

kills that congressman, he will destroy *

everything. And we will all go down *

with him. *

Off Nina, feeling like she has little choice -- *

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nina is watching as Alex jumps from the couch, to the chair, to the other chair, to the ottoman, going around the room without touching the floor. *

NINA

Okay. Tell me again -- when some other boy wants to play with the truck you're playing with, what do you do?

ALEX

Share.

NINA

That's right. And you don't bite or hit or pull hair, right?

He steps onto a low table.

ALEX

Right!

He considers the curtains as his next move.

NINA

No you cannot swing on the curtains.

Alex instead makes a big leap across to a far chair. The chair almost tips over backwards.

NINA (CONT'D)

You know, I would like this more if you would just come stand over here.

ALEX

Can't.

NINA

Why?

ALEX

(isn't it obvious?)
The floor is made of lava.

He shimmies along the built-in bookcases.

NINA

That's good. They'll like that.
Imagination. You should do that.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ALEX

You can't touch the ground ever at all,
or else your legs will catch on fire
and melt and then you explode!

He jumps back onto the couch. Nina considers.

NINA

Yeah, that just makes you sound weird.
Maybe save that game for home.

(checks watch)

Get your shoes on, we're leaving in
five minutes.

Alex jumps down and races off as Nina heads into --

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Where we find KRISTEN, the nanny, 20s and cute.

NINA

Kristen, this should be done in an
hour, I'll need you to pick Alex up
afterwards, okay? Lily's at the
Bonaventure's house working on her
project, allegedly.

KRISTEN

Got it.

NINA

And I know it's not your job, but if
you could please *encourage* Ivan to
be... awake. That would be great.

KRISTEN

No problem. I'll wave the Playstation
under his nose.

Sandy enters. She's holding something behind her back.

SANDY

Morning.

Nina grabs her keys.

NINA

Alright, I won't be late.

(notices)

What is that?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Sandy makes sure Kristen is out of earshot, then shows Nina what she's been hiding behind her back -- a *Hustler* magazine.

NINA (CONT'D)

Mom! Put that away.

SANDY

Ernestina found this while vacuuming under your stepson's bed. He's sixteen. It's not a shock.

(then)

You've talked about sex with him, right?

NINA

Mom, yes. His father did.

SANDY

(pointed)

His father died five years ago. When Ivan was eleven.

Nina rubs her temple. Sandy idly starts to flip through the pages of the magazine.

NINA

It's just... I'm not his real mother, he barely tolerates me these days. I don't know what I can say to him that'll even sink in.

SANDY

(getting into the magazine)

Now this is ridiculous. In my day we didn't do this air brushing. Look at that wax job -- it's not natural --

Nina covers her ears walks away.

NINA

Not listening. I'm not listening.

EXT. CHELSEA ACADEMY - DAY

We're looking into a cheery play room filled with toys and activities. There are five boys and girls, including Alex, playing nicely under the watchful eye of two teachers.

Nina watches through a large window. She's whispering instructions under her breath.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NINA

(low)

Pick the book, pick the book...

Someone nearby chuckles -- it's another mom, SOPHIA.

SOPHIA

I've been coaching my son all morning.
Do you think teaching a five-year-old
the periodic table of elements is a
bridge too far?

(Nina laughs)

Probably. Which one's yours?

NINA

(points)

Alex. Blue dinosaur shirt.

(double takes)

Is he wearing two different shoes?

SOPHIA

Mine is in the red t-shirt. William.

(then)

I think I've seen you before. You
were on the tour back in May?

NINA

Yes -- I'm sorry, I don't remember you.

SOPHIA

That's okay. I just remember you were
one of the few single moms. My husband
couldn't stop staring at you.

NINA

(taken aback)

Oh. Uh... sorry about that --

SOPHIA

Don't be. You're very beautiful, and
he's extremely unfaithful.

*

Nina just blinks. A long beat as Sophia just smiles weirdly.
And then she suddenly bursts into tears.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

(crying)

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

Nina is at a total loss.

NINA

Um...

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SOPHIA

(crying)

I'm so embarrassed. Ignore me. I'll stop in a minute.

Nina guides Sophia to a more secluded area (we can still see the window to the play room over Nina's head). She digs through her purse for a kleenex.

NINA

(checks the tissue)

There might be gum on this... it's fine. Here.

Sophia grabs it and wipes her eyes. Over Nina's head, we see the kids in the play room bouncing around -- evidently Alex is teaching them The Floor is Made of Lava.

SOPHIA

He's leaving me for his secretary. Which is bad enough. But he won't move out of the house! The bastard is divorcing me and refuses to leave until he finds 'the right place.' It's been four months! I'm living in the master bedroom and he's got the run of the rest of the house!

NINA

That's terrible --

SOPHIA

And I'm sure he's hiding our assets. He emptied our bank account already.

*

NINA

That's illegal. Your lawyer should be able to stop this.

SOPHIA

(tearful)

I don't have the money for a good lawyer. I don't even know if I can afford to send William to this school.

Nina considers Sophia for a beat. Then, she takes out a pen and a piece of paper, starts writing a list for Sophia.

NINA

Here's what you need to get your hands on: his tax returns for the past five years. Get his 1099s, and his 5452 filings.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

NINA (CONT'D)

Look for any bank statements from other countries... also look for big expenses that seem unusual. Oil drilling equipment for instance...

Nina is scribbling fast. Sophia is amazed.

SOPHIA

Are you in finance or something?

NINA

Um... yeah. Pretty much. *

SOPHIA

So you'll help me?

Nina stops, taken aback.

NINA

Oh -- no, you misunderstand --

SOPHIA

Because that would be **so** amazing!
You're the first bit of hope I've had in months. Please say you'll help. I can't do this by myself.

Nina closes her eyes briefly. She shouldn't... but how can she say no?

NINA

Okay. Yes, okay. I'll look over the documents.

SOPHIA

That's great! But... I don't actually have them. Ron took everything to his office.

NINA

(sighs)

I can get my hands on them. I know some people -- just tell me where he works. And get me a recent photo.

SOPHIA

Thank you. Thank you so much.

(thinks)

I don't even know your name. I'm Sophia.

NINA

Nina.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (4)

They shake and Sophia smiles gratefully. Over Nina's head we get a glimpse through the playdate window as Alex dives on another kid, and a five-year-old brawl seems to break out.

INT. KAJU NAIL TOWN - NINA'S OFFICE - DAY

The office is located just off the back counting room. Frankie finds Nina at her desk.

FRANKIE

So listen -- this congressman thing. *
I've got an idea -- I know this chick -- *

NINA

It's handled. I took care of it. *

FRANKIE

You did? How? *

Off Nina, cut to QUICK SHOTS of:

-- Nina handing an ATTRACTIVE ESCORT a large amount of CASH.

-- A dinner party. The Escort makes eye contact with a GRAY-HAIRED MAN in a suit. He smiles.

-- A hotel room. Empty bottles of champagne. Clothes strewn everywhere. The Gray-Haired Man is now naked, laughing as he snorts a line of white powder off the Escort's ass.

-- A VIDEO CAMERA in the next room. A short MEXICAN MAN tapes the encounter.

-- An office. A television showing the footage. The Gray Haired Man hangs his head and cries like a baby.

BACK TO NINA

NINA

He'll be changing his tune on the *
border wall legislation presently.

FRANKIE

Wow. Really. You did that. *

Nina is just a little bit giddy here -- she didn't know she *
had it in her. *

NINA

I know, right? *

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

FRANKIE *
I'm amazed. Where did you find a hooker? *

NINA *
Craigslist! *

FRANKIE *
You're your father's daughter. You've *
got a real aptitude for this. *

NINA *
Yeah, well, first and last time. I'm *
perfectly happy hiding money. *

FRANKIE *
(joking) *
I don't know. Pretty soon you're not *
gonna need me around anymore. Badass. *

NINA *
Actually... there is something. *
There's woman at the school, another *
mom. Her husband's fucking her around *
in the divorce. *

FRANKIE
(big smile)
You made a friend?

NINA
No --

FRANKIE
You made a friend! Aw, I'm so happy
for you right now. You got another
girl to like you.

NINA
She doesn't have anybody in her corner,
and this is easy for us to fix.

FRANKIE
Absolutely. This is good, Nina. Life
isn't all work. This is a step in the
right direction.

NINA
I'm glad you approve. Because I need
you to rob her husband.

EXT. CULVER CITY STREET - NIGHT

CLOSE on a photo of Sophia's husband, RON, in shorts and holding a spatula by the backyard grill. Frankie holds the photo. He sits in his car, parked in front of a one-story office building.

The passenger side door opens, and HECTOR, 20s, gets in. He's a friend and business associate from Mexico, speaks with a slight accent. He's carrying a 7-11 bag.

FRANKIE
He hasn't left yet.

HECTOR
(re: photo)
You know who that is. Ron Petersen.
Movie producer.

FRANKIE
Yeah? What movies?

HECTOR
Science fiction and fantasy mostly.
They're pretty good.

FRANKIE
Never heard of him.

Hector opens his 7-11 bag. He pulls out a pudding snack cup and a plastic spoon.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
You can't eat pudding in my car.

HECTOR
You want one? I have an extra.

FRANKIE
Not in the car.

HECTOR
But I'm hypoglycemic. If I don't eat
every two hours I can faint.

Frankie shakes his head.

FRANKIE
Jeez. Eat your damn pudding.

A long beat.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Give me the other one.

Hector hands him the extra pudding and spoon. Outside, we see RON exiting the office with a YOUNG WOMAN, holding hands.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Hey, Ronnie and his piece of ass. Hope she's worth it you deadbeat scumbag.

INT. CULVER CITY OFFICE - NIGHT

Dark and empty, a small outfit -- a couple cubicles and a copy machine. The walls are covered with framed direct-to-video movie posters. We hear the doorknob jiggling for a moment, then the door opens -- Hector gets up from his knees, pockets his lock picking tools. Frankie carries a file box.

Frankie turns on the desk lamp and starts pulling open drawers, Hector starts going through a filing cabinet.

HECTOR

Dude.

FRANKIE

What?

He holds up a script.

HECTOR

'Raptor Moon.' It was about raptors... taking over the moon. So dope.

(off Frankie's glare)

I'm gonna keep looking.

Frankie checks the credenza behind him, finding several hanging file folders. He flips through them.

FRANKIE

Hold it... this is it. Taxes, bank ledger. We got everything.

He starts filling the file box with the documents, then hefts it and heads for the door.

HECTOR

Wait.

(Frankie stops)

If you take that, the cops are gonna know the wife is involved. They'll know it's because of the divorce.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Frankie thinks a beat.

FRANKIE
Damn. You're right.

He looks around, points to the flat screen on the wall.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Take the flattie. And any other
electronics. We'll make it look like a
regular robbery.

HECTOR
That's good.

Hector helps Frankie rip the flat screen off the wall. They set it on the desk and Hector goes after the DVD player. Frankie looks around.

FRANKIE
Ooo, Herman Miller chair. I need that.

Frankie rolls it over and they put the TV, the other electronics, and the file box on top of it. Hector also nabs the script, rolls it up and puts it in his back pocket. Frankie points to the wall.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
What about the poster?

Hector looks at the "Raptor Moon" poster. He wants it bad.

HECTOR
You think?

FRANKIE
Why not? It's a nice frame.

Hector takes that down too. He's very happy. Frankie surveys their work -- the place looks ransacked.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Perfect.

They roll awkwardly out.

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Nina comes in from work -- Alex and Lily are having dinner with Kristen. Lily is wearing a LOT of makeup.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NINA

Hey. What's for dinner?

ALEX

Fish sticks and broccoli.

LILY

I'm having a salad. No dressing.

NINA

First of all, this is not a restaurant.
There is one dinner only. Kristen
doesn't have to prepare special meals.

(notices)

Excuse me. Are you wearing **my makeup again?** *

LILY

(hiding her face)

No.

NINA

Lily, don't you know how beautiful you
are? You don't need all that.

(kisses her head)

Now take it off or I'm taking it off
for you.

Lily gets up and stomps upstairs.

LILY

This house is terrible!

Nina shakes her head, gives Alex a kiss.

NINA

This house **is** terrible. Where's Ivan?

KRISTEN

He said he wasn't feeling well.

Nina looks upstairs, a little concerned.

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nina stands at Ivan's door, and knocks softly.

NINA

I? You okay?

From inside, we hear whispers, the sound of somebody falling
out of the bed.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

IVAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Just a minute!

Then we hear a GIRL GIGGLING. Nina opens the door. Inside: Ivan in the bed, naked, holding a sheet to cover himself.

NINA

What the hell is this? Who is in here?

After a beat, the blonde head of a 16-year-old girl, RENEE, pops up from the other side of the bed. She's holding a t-shirt over her chest.

IVAN

We weren't doing anything --

NINA

(yelling)

I know what you were doing!

Nina stops herself. Takes a breath. Wills calm.

NINA (CONT'D)

Just get dressed. Both of you. Meet me downstairs.

Nina exits. Ivan and Renee exchange a look -- shit.

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT

Nina sits at her desk and waits, preparing herself. She wants to be cool about this. Through the doors we see Ivan and Renee slink downstairs. She gives him a kiss goodbye and walks out the front door.

Ivan enters the study and drops himself in the chair across from Nina. He stares at his feet, ready to get screamed at.

NINA

I'm not mad.

Ivan looks up. He didn't expect that.

IVAN

You're not?

NINA

I'm not happy. But believe it or not, I understand a little about what you're going through. You probably have a lot of feelings you don't understand...

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Ivan groans, super uncomfortable. Nina holds up her hands.

NINA (CONT'D)

... which we don't have to talk about right now. Or ever.

(matter-of-fact)

Look. I know whatever I tell you isn't going to make much difference. You're going to do what you want no matter how I feel about it.

IVAN

(beat)

I guess.

NINA

Fine. That being the case. If you want to be treated like an adult, you have to act like one. That means: using protection when you have sex. Not lying to me about where you are or who you're with.

(points)

And not doing it ten yards away from your younger brother and sister. Is that all clear?

IVAN

Uh, yeah. It's clear.

NINA

I want to trust you. And I want you to trust me. Let's see if we can work that out. Okay?

IVAN

Okay.

Ivan rises, starts to leave, then turns around.

IVAN (CONT'D)

Thanks. For being cool about this.

He exits. Nina smiles to herself -- that went great. So much better than she'd expected. She stands, shuts off the desk lamp. The room goes dark -- and now we can see, out the window to the backyard -- something small GLOWING outside.

Nina goes to the window. It's the burning ember of a cigar. *

EXT. NINA'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Nina comes out the back door. Sandoval is sitting on a chaise lounge, smoking and staring at the pool.

NINA

Luis, what are you doing? How long
have you been here? *

SANDOVAL

Long enough to see your son sneak in
his little hottie through the window. *

He laughs a little. His mood is weird, thoughtful. Nina is
wary. She's got a pretty good guess as to why he's here.
But she's surprised when he opens with: *

SANDOVAL (CONT'D)

You got an MBA from Stanford, right? *

NINA

(a little thrown)
Um... yeah. *

SANDOVAL

Good school.
(then)
So how come you stayed in the drug business? *

NINA

I know why you're here, Luis. *

SANDOVAL

I get that you grew up in it and
everything. But after your dad died --
why not go legit? *

NINA

Look. The congressman is handled.
Maybe not in the way you'd like... but
it's taken care of. He won't be a
problem. *

Sandoval walks toward her, getting uncomfortably close. He
looks her up and down, leering and creepy. *

SANDOVAL

I got a theory. See, this is a rough
business. Sometimes, people gotta die.
People gotta be made examples. But you
-- the princess -- you're above all
that. Don't want any part of it. Too
ugly for you. Right? *

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SANDOVAL (CONT'D)

(then)

Thing is, I know girls like you. You say you don't want to get your hands dirty. But part of you likes getting dirty. You get off on it. *That's why you're still down in the mud with me.*

*
*

NINA

If you don't want to talk, I'm going back inside.

*
*

She turns away, but Sandoval grabs her arm. Hard.

*

SANDOVAL

You screwed me, Nina.

NINA

(angry)

No. I did you a favor. You have a problem, Luis. People aren't happy. They asked me to fix this. So get your own house in order before you come sneaking around mine.

*
*
*
*
*
*

SANDOVAL

Or what? You'll take over? You're not your father.

*
*
*

NINA

Neither are you.

*
*

SANDOVAL

He was a relic. It was his time to go. Understand that, or end up like him.

*
*
*

A beat as his statement sinks in with Nina.

*

NINA

What are you talking about? My father had a heart attack.

*
*

SANDOVAL

Yeah. That's what they said. But you need to understand, nobody is untouchable. And I'm not afraid to do what I have to do.

*
*
*
*
*

(looks around)

Nice place.

*
*

He throws his cigar into her pool and walks away. Off Nina, *contemplating what she's just heard --*

*
*END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - DAY

A few parents sit on the sidelines, watching the kids warm up before a game. Nina is among them, standing away from the rest of the parents. On the field, five- and six-year-old boys do practice drills with soccer balls.

NINA
(calling)
Good job, Alex. Good dribbling.

Frankie approaches behind Nina.

FRANKIE
(calling)
Get in there, man, dominate that kid!

NINA
They're on the same team.

FRANKIE
Yeah. Mostly I don't get soccer.
(then)
Sandoval's still in town. At the
Beverly Hills Hotel until tomorrow. *

NINA *

What's his favorite car? *

FRANKIE
That new Mercedes with the gull-wing
doors is pretty sweet.

NINA *

Call the broker. I want it there *

today. He's furious about the *

congressman thing. Hopefully that'll *

put me back in his good graces. *

(then) *

He wants me to believe he had something *

to do with my father's death. *

FRANKIE *

You think he did? *

NINA *

I don't know yet. *

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

The soccer coach calls the boys to the sidelines for a break. Alex runs over and grabs some water and orange slices. Nina and Frankie join him.

FRANKIE

Looking good out there, squirt. What position do you play?

ALEX

Alternate!

Alex is having more fun using the orange peel to make teeth than anything else. Nina gives him a kiss.

NINA

Kristen will be here to pick you up after the game, okay?

ALEX

(running back on the field)

Okay, bye mom!

Frankie and Nina start walking back to their cars.

FRANKIE

You don't stay to see him play?

NINA

He says I make him too nervous. Also... he doesn't actually play much.

(sighs)

I also have to deal with Sophia's husband.

*
*
*

FRANKIE

The movie guy?

NINA

He's not hiding the money. He's spent it. All of it. The only thing they've got that's worth anything is that house. Which he won't leave.

*

*

She's looking a little overwhelmed.

*

FRANKIE

Why don't I pay him a visit?

(smiles)

I can be very persuasive.

*
*
*

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

NINA

No. The man thinks below the waist.
I'll handle this one.

*
*
*

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Nina enters, throws her keys on the table. She thinks a moment, then takes out her cell and dials.

*
*

MIGUEL (V.O.)

(phone filter; in
Spanish)

This is Miguel. Leave a message.

*
*
*
*

NINA

(into phone)

Hey, Miguel. It's Nina. I need to ask you something. It's about the day my Dad died. Give me a call.

*
*
*
*
*

Nina clicks off, heads upstairs.

*

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Nina opens the door to her bedroom.

IVAN'S VOICE

Wait --!

Nina freezes in the doorway. Ivan and Renee are naked and in her bed. They pull the sheets over their heads.

NINA

Ivan!

IVAN

(from under the
covers)

What are you doing home?!

Nina loses her shit.

NINA

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING? Get out of my bed!

IVAN

We didn't know! We thought you were working!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Nina is picking up the clothing strewn about the floor and firing it at the teenagers.

NINA

Get out! Get out of my bed! I cannot believe you!

Ivan and Renee start throwing clothes on. Renee's got a lot of attitude.

RENEE

Oh my god! You're crazy!

NINA

That's right! Get out!

IVAN

We used protection like you said!

Nina could throttle him.

RENEE

You are so lame!

NINA

You wanna know how lame I am? I'm calling your mother, sweetheart. Right now.

Renee looks like she was just slapped.

RENEE

Well I'm pregnant!

Silence. Nina's jaw drops.

NINA

What?

Ivan turns to Renee.

IVAN

What?

RENEE

(slightly less attitude)

Well I might be pregnant...

A shocked beat. Without any further explanation, Nina grabs both their arms and drags them out of the room.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

RENEE (CONT'D)
Where are we going?

HARD CUT TO: *

INT. RITE AID - DAY

CLOSE ON a display of pregnancy tests. A hand GRABS one off the rack.

CLOSE ON the cash register ringing up the total.

CLOSE ON Nina's Platinum card as it's SLAMMED onto the counter.

Nina snatches up the pregnancy test. Smiles at the Clerk. Ivan and Renee sulk behind Nina.

NINA
(to Clerk)
Do you have a restroom?

INT. RITE AID - BACK OF THE STORE - DAY

Ivan leans against the wall next to the door that has the blue and white women's room symbol. He's sullen and unrepentant.

NINA
Let me just explain to you what's going to happen if that girl ends up pregnant. Remember how you thought you were gonna go away to college, maybe get a baseball scholarship? Forget it. Take a year off before college and bum around Europe? Never gonna happen.

IVAN
So?

NINA
So? Do you think you're even going to be able to graduate from high school, or are you going to join the rest of the burnouts and get your GED?

That lands a little harder. Ivan squirms, looks away.

NINA (CONT'D)
Yeah. That's gonna be your life, smart guy.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NINA (CONT'D)

Every minute of every day, every cent you make, for the next eighteen years, will go to that child. So you better start praying right now, Ivan.

It's sinking in for Ivan. He's looking nervous as the bathroom door opens. Renee comes out. The attitude is back.

RENEE

It's negative.

Ivan unclenches, blows out a sigh.

NINA

I want to see the stick.

RENEE

(makes a face)

Ew. It's got pee on it.

NINA

It's your pee. Get it.

Renee stomps back into the bathroom. Nina still glares.

NINA (CONT'D)

My bed?

IVAN

(shrugs)

It had clean sheets.

Nina shakes her head. Renee returns, holding the stick with a paper towel as if it's radioactive. Nina grabs Renee's **wrist** and brings **the stick** over so she can see the readout. *

NINA

Congratulations. You managed not to ruin your lives.

Nina walks off.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL BUNGALOW - DAY

A brand new silver 2010 Mercedes SLS AMG is parked in front of the bungalow, its gull wing doors open. It's impressive as hell. Vasquez (whom we'll recognize as one of the lieutenants from the birthday party) circles the car, worshipping it.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

VASQUEZ

Are you kidding me? How she get her hands on this? The waiting list is sick.

*

VASQUEZ (CONT'D)

Yo. What's wrong with you?

Without a word, Sandoval exits the bungalow, immediately comes out holding a NINE IRON. And proceeds to beat the living shit out of the car. Breaks all the windows, dents the hood and doors. He's a madman. After a long time, he stops, out of breath.

SANDOVAL

I'm not some whore you can buy off with trinkets! She can't manipulate me!

Vasquez just looks at the car, almost as if he could cry. Sandoval throws the golf club through the broken windows.

SANDOVAL (CONT'D)

I know what to do. We're gonna get her attention.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

*

The place is busy. FIND Nina alone at a table. She's dressed to kill, revealing a bit more cleavage than normal, and wearing high, strappy heels. She sips from a martini.

RON PETERSEN enters the restaurant. Consummate Hollywood douchebag. Nina waves at him -- Ron spots her and his whole demeanor changes. You know exactly what he's thinking -- I am so gonna hit that. He sleazes over to Nina's table.

NINA

Ron? I'm Nina Cabrera. Thanks for meeting me.

RON

Wow. Just... wow. You are *incredibly* hot. Is it okay if I say that?

*

NINA

(smiles)

I think I'll get over it.

Ron sits, looks Nina over.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

RON

You've got this like, smoldering,
 Latina, like... sexy tigress thing.
 (a little too loud)
Caliente! I love it! Did you ever
 consider being an actress?

NINA

Oh, I'm not really cut out for that.
 (then)

As I explained to your assistant, my
 company is interested in investing in
 feature films --

*
*
*

RON

Fantastic. Straight-to-DVD is like a
 license to print money. We just
 completed principle photography on
Gator Shark. I'll send you a cut.
 (then)

Here's an idea. You. Me. In my
 Ferrari. Driving up the coast.

NINA

Unfortunately I'll have to pass --

He moves closer, puts his hand on the seat of her chair.

RON

You can't say no. I won't let you.

NINA

You'll have to let me, Mr. Petersen.
 (then)
 I'm a friend of Sophia's.

A beat. Ron sits back.

*

RON

(deflates)
 Aw, man. God dammit. Are you kidding me?

NINA

I have a proposal for you. I will take
 your movie to my board and we'll
 consider making an investment... and in
 turn, you move out of the house.

*

RON

You know what? You tell that bitch
 I'll move out when I'm good and ready.

*

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

NINA

Mr. Petersen, it's important to look at the big picture here --

RON

Screw you, lady. I don't have to do dick for you or anybody. Shame, too. Never banged a Mexican. And you would've looked nice bent over my desk.

Nina narrows her eyes. She leans forward, close to Ron's face. Her blouse shifts, giving Ron a glimpse down her shirt. She takes a sip from her drink and licks her lips.

NINA

Do you like my shoes?

RON

What?

NINA

Do you like my shoes? I just bought them.

She brings her leg out from under the table, modeling for Ron. He is now totally disarmed.

RON

Uh... yeah. They're nice.

NINA

My favorite thing about them is the soles. They're red.

She brings her foot closer to Ron. Trails a toe up his calf. Her foot disappears in his lap. Ron is into this, smiling.

NINA (CONT'D)

That means they don't show blood.

Ron's eyes suddenly BUG OUT OF HIS HEAD. He chokes.

RON

Gaggaahgghh --

He is writhing in pain -- she is quite obviously crushing his nuts under her shoe. Nina takes his hand, speaks gently.

NINA

Shhh, Ron. Don't struggle. Let me tell you what I've learned. That Ferrari? Is about to be repossessed. You're three months behind on rent for your office.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

NINA (CONT'D)

But the most interesting part? By my calculations, over the past five years you've cheated the IRS out of about eight hundred thousand dollars in taxes.

RON

(dying)

Please... stop...

NINA

That's a lot of money, Ron. That's prison. You don't want to go to prison, do you?

RON

No --

NINA

No, you don't.

(softer)

And if the people I work with get involved, Ron, you're gonna wish for prison. Beg for it. Am I clear?

RON

Yes... god yes...

NINA

I'm so happy we understand each other.

She pulls her foot away and stands, straightens her skirt and walks away. Ron can only fold into a ball and moan.

EXT. VALET PARKING - DAY

*

Nina walks toward her waiting car and answers her cell.

*

NINA

(into phone)

Hello.

(listens)

Miguel -- hi. I have a strange question about something you said. The day my father died... why weren't you there? He never went anywhere without you.

INTERCUT WITH:

*

INT. MIGUEL'S APARTMENT - DAY

MIGUEL

Mr. Sandoval sent me on an errand. I had to go to Cabo to pick up a delivery. Took all day.

NINA

I see. Did Mr. Sandoval send you on errands a lot?

MIGUEL

Back then? Not really. I think his guy was sick or something. I kick myself about it every day, Nina. You have to believe me.

NINA

(beat)

I know, Miguel. Thank you. You're a good man.

She clicks off and gets in her car.

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - DAY

The game is still being played -- tiny kids following the soccer ball around the field like a swarm of bees. Alex watches from the bench, holding a juicebox and cheering.

One tough kid on the field starts shoving an opposing team member, and the two start fighting. The coaches and a few other adults rush in to break it up. Alex stands too. But he's stopped by --

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Yo, Alex!

Alex turns. REVEAL Vasquez -- standing by his BMW in the parking lot and beckoning Alex over. Alex clearly knows him, and is unafraid. He smiles and waves.

HIGH over the field, as Alex runs away from the game and toward Vasquez and his waiting car.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - FRONT ENTRY - DAY

Nina enters to absolute panic. Kristen is crying.

KRISTEN
We can't find Alex.

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Ivan and Lily are on cell phones.

LILY
(into cell)
...Hi Mrs. Downey, did Alex come home
with Josh today?

Ivan clicks off his cell, calls out to the room.

IVAN
Not at the Coopers. I'm calling the
karate studio...

Sandy is on the kitchen phone.

SANDY
(into phone)
... brown hair, brown eyes... about
three foot, five inches... he's wearing
a soccer uniform. Red.
(listens)
He has a birthmark on his left leg... *

A HAND reaches into frame and takes the phone away from
Sandy. It's Nina -- she's on autopilot.

SANDY (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

NINA
(into phone)
We're sorry to bother you. We know
where he is. *

She hangs up. Lily is near tears.

LILY
Mom?

Nina strokes Lily's cheek.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NINA
It's okay, baby.

She walks to --

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

Nina sits, **shaking**. She dials her cell. We hear -- *

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
(phone filter)
Thank you for calling the Beverly Hills
Hotel, how may I direct your call? *

NINA
Put me through to Luis Sandoval.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
(phone filter)
I'm sorry, Mr. Sandoval checked out
this morning. Is there anything --

Nina clicks off, her terror rising. She dials another
number.

VASQUEZ'S VOICE (V.O.)
(phone filter)
Yeah.

NINA
If he is hurt... if anything happens...

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. N.D. ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE on Vasquez. We can't tell where he is.

VASQUEZ
Don't even trip about that. He's okay.
But you gotta start playing nice.

NINA
I want to talk to my son --

VASQUEZ
This can be fixed, Nina. You got one
shot. Sandoval wants to bump up his
cut five points. And he wants a
million down payment.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NINA
You son of a bitch.

VASQUEZ
It's just money. You got no choice. *
You know him, Nina. *

Nina grows calm. *

NINA
Yes, I do. *

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

CLOSE ON a SLEDGEHAMMER. Presently being carried down the hall by Nina, who marches toward her bedroom, resolute. Frankie comes up the stairs. He's carrying a duffel bag.

FRANKIE
Nina, Nina, wait a second --

NINA
How much did you bring?

FRANKIE
Four-fifty -- Nina, you gotta think *
about this.

They enter --

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nina goes to the closet, immediately starts pulling clothes off the rack and dumping them onto the floor.

FRANKIE
If you do this, it will never stop,
okay? Sandoval will always use your
family to get to you. You know that.

NINA
He has my son. I don't have a choice.

She lifts the sledgehammer and winds up -- SMASHING the back wall of the closet. Once, twice. She drops to her knees, starts ripping back the plasterboard. Inside the wall, stacked between the studs -- BUNDLES OF SHRINK-WRAPPED HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS. She yanks out a suitcase and starts throwing the money inside.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

FRANKIE

Yes, you do. I've already talked to some people. **A few phone calls and we can take care of this. Permanently.**

*
*

NINA

No. I can't risk it.

FRANKIE

Nina -- it's too late to go back to how things were. You've been pretending that you're just like all these other women up here -- you've got a nanny and your kids go to private school and you... whatever, shop at Whole Foods. But you're not like them. You were never like them. You're in a dirty, dangerous, messed up business. You think you're just the money person? Every murder, every payoff, every drug shipment is financed by what we do. You need to embrace that now. You need to be dangerous. Or you and your family are gonna get devoured by it.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

Nina zips the suitcase and stands.

NINA

You're right. A hundred percent right. But **he killed my father. He'll kill Alex too.** I'm getting my son back.

*
*

And she's gone, pulling the suitcase behind her.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS STREET - DAY

A beautiful, sunny day. Palm trees line the streets. It's that movie shot that makes Beverly Hills look perfect.

Nina drives, looking frantic. Her cell phone rings. She looks down at the screen -- it's Sandoval. Steeling herself, Nina puts her cell to her ear and answers.

NINA

(into cell)

Yes.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CORPORATE JET - FLYING - CONTINUOUS

Sandoval is on the airplane phone. He is so happy with himself.

SANDOVAL

Hey, princess. You got my money?

NINA

Yes.

SANDOVAL

That's good. I hope you and I can move forward after this. No hard feelings.

Nina clenches her jaw. If she could choke him through the phone, she would.

NINA

I know you killed my father. *

SANDOVAL *

Well, you're a smart girl. And I hope you're smart enough to understand how serious I am. *

NINA *

I understand everything. *

SANDOVAL *

Good. Your dad underestimated me, Nina. But I can see now that you don't. Smart girl. *

He hangs up. Nina puts her cell down, processing. Then we hear the unmistakable BOOP of a police siren. *

IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR

We see a MOTORCYCLE COP flashing his lights and motioning Nina to pull over.

NINA

No no no no no...

Nina finds a spot and stops the car. She grips the steering wheel, on the verge of losing it.

The cop s-l-o-w-l-y gets off his bike, talking into his shoulder mic. He stops, looks at the back of Nina's car. For what seems like a long time. Then goes to Nina's window.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MOTORCYCLE COP
License and registration, please?

Nina fishes them out of her bag, shaking a little. He looks over her documents through his sunglasses.

MOTORCYCLE COP (CONT'D)
Do you know why I pulled you over?

And that's it -- Nina suddenly BURSTS into tears. Hard, angry, messy sobbing. She holds her face in her hands, heaving -- every stress, every emotion she's been holding back is released all at once.

The cop looks distressed.

MOTORCYCLE COP (CONT'D)
Ma'am... it's just a cell phone violation. You have to use a hands free device. First offense is a twenty dollar fine. No big deal.

Nina reigns in her sobs as this sinks in.

NINA
Oh. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. It's just been a rough week. I'm very embarrassed...

MOTORCYCLE COP
Don't be. This is the least weird thing to happen to me today.

She smiles at him, grateful. He's a nice man.

MOTORCYCLE COP (CONT'D)
Is there anything I can do to help? If you need someone to talk to...

NINA
(considers)
That is a lovely offer. I wish I could take you up on it.
(then)
I'm fine. Thank you.

He rips her citation off his pad and hands it to her, along with her license and registration.

MOTORCYCLE COP
You take care of yourself Mrs. Cabrera.

*

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

NINA

I will. I absolutely will.

He smiles and heads back to his motorcycle. PUSH IN on Nina. She wipes away her tears. She's made a decision. She picks up her cell and dials it. The motorcycle cop waves as he drives away. She waves back.

NINA (CONT'D)

(into cell)

Do it.

Off Nina's new determination --

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. EL SEGUNDO HOUSE - DAY

A small bungalow in a working class neighborhood. Vasquez's BMW is parked in the driveway. All the curtains are drawn.

INT. EL SEGUNDO HOUSE - DAY

Alex is in front of the television, playing a videogame, happy as a clam. Vasquez keeps one eye on him, one eye out the window. He reaches inside his coat, feels the pistol in the shoulder holster underneath.

Nina's car pulls up to the curb. She exits, goes to the trunk and hauls out the suitcase. Vasquez opens the door and lets Nina in.

VASQUEZ

Afternoon.

Nina is wound tight. She sees Alex, keeps her emotions in check.

NINA

Hey baby.

ALEX

(not looking up)

Hey mom.

VASQUEZ

(re: suitcase)

That for me?

NINA

I'm not staying while you count it.

VASQUEZ

It's cool. I trust you.

NINA

Alex we gotta go.

ALEX

Let me finish this game.

NINA

(sharp)

Alex! Now.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Alex makes a face, sets down the controller and slouches toward the door.

VASQUEZ

So we're all good. And maybe you understand who's boss now.

Nina smiles.

NINA

Definitely.

She guides Alex out and to the car. Vasquez watches through the open door until they've pulled away. He grabs the suitcase and shuts the door.

He turns -- and there is a Desert Eagle .50 cal PISTOL in his face. Frankie is on the other end of it.

FRANKIE

Me too.

BLAM! On the killing shot, we CUT TO:

EXT. TIJUANA STREET - NIGHT

MUSIC comes up as we see TWO MEN exit a club and climb in their sportscar. We might recognize them from Sandoval's birthday party. They start up the car. It EXPLODES.

EXT. SANDOVAL'S BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT

Sandoval and two of his LIEUTENANTS drink beer on the veranda. From over the wall, FOUR MASKED MEN appear, all in black. Stealthing toward the men.

A GIRL appears from the house -- she sees the men, freezes. Before she can yell, one of them CUTS HER THROAT.

EXT. EL SEGUNDO HOUSE - NIGHT

Frankie exits, pulling the suitcase behind him. He looks around. All is quiet. Heads to his car and drives away.

EXT. SANDOVAL'S BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT

One of Sandoval's lieutenants turns and catches a glimpse of the masked gunmen. He shouts, pulls his weapon -- and so does everyone -- they all start shooting.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

The lieutenants go down, dead, as does one of the gunmen. Sandoval is on the ground, wounded, crawling toward the stairs that lead to the beach.

Another Gunman walks up to him. Fires three times. Then kicks Sandoval's dead body onto the sand.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. NINA'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Late. Nina is cuddled in bed with Alex and Lily. The kids are asleep. Nina is wide awake. The television is on with no sound.

Ivan comes to the doorway, knocks softly but hangs back.

IVAN

I put the trash cans out.

NINA

Thanks, Ivan.

(beat)

Trash day was two days ago, though.

IVAN

Oh.

NINA

But it was a nice thought.

She means it. Ivan comes further inside.

IVAN

He okay?

Nina looks down at Alex, drooling on her sleeve.

NINA

Got to eat pizza and play videogames for five hours. Best day of his life.

IVAN

That was pretty scary.

Nina considers Ivan a beat.

NINA

You have to know, I'd die to protect any of you.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

IVAN

I know.

NINA

You're not a kid. You know what I do.
 You know how we can afford the life we
 have. I'm sorry about what happened to
 Alex. About what happened to your dad.

(beat)

But *no matter what happens in the future,*
this family will always come first for
me. Nothing will ever change that.

*
*
*

IVAN

(sober)

Okay.

NINA

You look like your dad right now.

(then)

I love you, Ivan. You know that.

Ivan squirms, mumbles something that might be "I love you,"
 but you never know. Nina moves over, makes room on the bed.

NINA (CONT'D)

You want in on this? *Ghostbusters* is
 starting.

*

IVAN

Actually, I was going to ask, there's
 this party at this kid's house..?

NINA

(beat)

Did I forget to ground you for having
 sex with your girlfriend in my bed?

IVAN

Um... yes.

NINA

Huh. Well I just remembered.

Ivan tries to build an argument, gives up and sulks away.
 Off Nina, who smiles --

INT. KAJU NAIL TOWN - DAY

*

*Nina sits at a station, reading a letter with one hand as a
 Korean girl buffs the nails of her other hand. Nina looks
 unhappy. Frankie approaches.*

*
*
*

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

FRANKIE
 Everything's ready.
 (re: nails)
 Ooo, that's a good color.

NINA
 (to manicurist)
 Thanks. Looks great.

The manicurist moves off. Nina hands Frankie the letter.

NINA (CONT'D)
 Alex didn't get in to Chelsea. We were
 wait listed.

FRANKIE
 Oh. Sorry. You okay?

Nina's clearly disappointed, almost profoundly so.

NINA
 Alex doesn't remember his father. He
 was too little when Rick died.
 (beat)
 You remember how amazing Rick was at
 playing the guitar? Never took any
 lessons. I think Alex is like that.
 Chelsea would've really fostered his
 musical ability. I guess I thought it
 was a way for him to have some
 connection with his dad.
 (then)
 It sounds silly. There are other
 schools...

But Frankie has been moved by Nina's plight.

FRANKIE
 No. No. You want to get him into that
 school? Then let's do that.

NINA
 I can't, Frankie. It's over. I did
 everything I could.

FRANKIE
 Nina. In the past week, you
 discredited a U.S. Congressman, rescued
 a kidnapped boy and took out a major
 drug kingpin. Don't even tell me you
 can't figure out a way to get your kid
 into some little private school.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

Nina half-smiles. *

NINA *

You're right. I did do all that. *

(steels herself) *

I'm ready. *

Frankie opens the door to the back room and Nina follows. *

Revealing -- *

INT. KAJU NAIL TOWN - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS *

Gone are all the Asian men and counting machines; instead, *
there are twenty lieutenants waiting for Nina. They all stop *
their conversations as she enters. *

NINA *

Thank you for coming all the way up *
here, gentlemen. There've been a lot *
of... changes recently. And many of *
you are uncertain. I am not. *

(smiles) *

But you should know, more changes are *
coming. I'm prepared today to widen *
our base. Take the business into new *
directions. We need to diversify. *
Explore different avenues of income *
that assume less risk. We've been *
beholden to the old way of doing *
things. Not anymore. We have the *
distribution channels already set up... *
we can move any product we want. We *
just need to be creative. *

She's clearly piqued their interest. And she's as confident *
as we've ever seen her. Off Nina -- *

EXT. CHELSEA ACADEMY - QUAD - DAY

Another day. CLOSE on a banner strung across the lawn, which
reads WELCOME NEW CHELSEA FAMILIES! It's a lovely catered
affair. Happy parents drink wine and eat passed hors
d'oeuvres, kids play off to the side. FIND Nina, watching
Alex kick a soccer ball around with a couple other boys.

Sophia makes her way through the crowd, surprised when she
sees Nina.

SOPHIA

Nina? You made it in? That's great!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

She hugs Nina, then stops a passing WAITER and grabs two glasses of champagne.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

You believe this thing? This is what they call a picnic.

(points)

They have live lobsters.

NINA

Our tuition money at work.

(then)

So... how are things?

SOPHIA

So great. Ron moved out. His lawyer called me and said he was giving me the house, free and clear. And he'd pay off the rest of the mortgage. Do you believe that? I guess I won't be needing your help after all.

NINA

That's good, Sophia. He should do all that and more.

SOPHIA

I know I should be upset that he blew the rest of our money... but I just don't care right now.

(then)

Hey, can I ask you a kind of nosy question?

Nina's wary of this -- she doesn't like answering questions.

NINA

Sure.

SOPHIA

My friend is on the admissions committee. I'd heard you were on the waiting list. What happened? No one gets off the waiting list.

NINA

Oh. Apparently some people dropped out at the last minute.

PUSH IN on Nina, looking innocent, then CUT TO:

-- The Admissions Office at night -- Frankie breaks in. Rifles through files.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

-- INSERT on the waiting list -- the name CABRERA is listed at number 3.

-- LARGE SUMS OF CASH exchange hands. Twice.

-- **Nina** with a BEL AIR COUPLE. Looking happy at their good fortune. They shake hands. *

*
*

FATHER

Never liked that school anyway.

BACK TO NINA

NINA

Guess we just got lucky.

(changing the
subject)

So, you're a single woman. What will you do now?

SOPHIA

Get a job. Never actually had to work before. Pathetic.

Nina considers this.

NINA

You know... I'm taking on some new responsibilities at work. I may have something for you. If you're interested.

Off Sophia, intrigued --

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SANDOVAL'S BEACH HOUSE - DAY

The place is now crawling with Mexican law enforcement. Three bodies are on the terrace, covered now. Blood stains the whitewashed wood.

A man wearing a DEA windbreaker exits from the house. He flashes his badge to an officer.

VAAS

Erik Vaas. Where's Morales?

The officer points in the direction of the beach. Vaas walks, following the trail of blood down the steps.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Down on the sand, a MEDICAL EXAMINER is inspecting Sandoval's dead body. Next to him is DIEGO MORALES, an investigator with the Mexican Federal Police. Vaas joins them.

VAAS

Hey, Diego.

MORALES

Erik.

(re: body)

Luis Sandoval, head of the Veracruz Cartel for the past year. Responsible for the murders of at least ten law enforcement officers. *

*
*

VAAS

I know him well. Can't say I'm surprised.

(looks around)

Cameras catch anything?

Indeed, there are security cameras mounted everywhere.

MORALES

Hard drive was ripped out of the security system. We got nothing.

VAAS

Guess somebody new is running the Veracruz cartel. And he's even more brutal than Sandoval.

Off the crime scene, PRELAP:

NINA'S VOICE (V.O.)

LET'S GO! RIGHT NOW!

EXT. NINA'S HOUSE - DAY

Morning madness. Nina is trying to get everybody out of the house. Ivan is lagging behind.

NINA

(pushing Ivan)

Faster, we're late, it's the first day of school and we're late!

Alex and Lily pile in the back seat.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

IVAN

Let's stop for coffee.

ALEX

I want a donut!

NINA

If you wanted coffee you should've been ready fifteen minutes ago.

Nina buckles Alex into his booster seat, Ivan gets in the front seat. The front door opens and Sandy exits, holding a big paper mache GLOBE.

SANDY

Almost left without this.

LILY

My project!

Nina takes the globe, Sandy heads back toward the house. *

NINA

Thanks mom. Lily, nice job, please remember your things.

ALEX

I dropped my apple.

Nina sets the globe on top of the car, finds Alex's apple, then rounds to the driver's side and gets in. A deep breath.

NINA

Okay. We've got everything? We're good? Great. Let's go.

She throws the car into gear and pulls away from the curb.

WE STAY on Nina's house for a beat. The paper mache globe slowly rolls back into frame, settling in the middle of the street in front of the house.

Another passing car speeds by, instantly CRUSHING IT.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF PILOT