

PRIORITY RUN

by

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Buckle up...

A BLACK SCREEN

Silent. Peaceful. But not for long...

SMASH TO:

INT. PRISON - C-UNIT TIER - DAY

ROWS OF INMATES. Locked in CELLS. Broken mugs pressed against plexiglass. SCREAMING a barrage of insults at the --

FIVE CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS (CO's) marching down the tier... Boots clicking. Keys jingling. Radios chattering. They look like riot police or some type of low-budget Gridiron team.

Quick glimpses of: helmets, protective visors, shank-proof vests, elbow pads, zip-lock cuffs, batons and pepper spray.

The CO who leads them, walks with the purposeful gait of a military man. A short buzz-cut frames his steely face. Frosty eyes glare back at us. This is --

LIEUTENANT CHARLES HOLT (56), twenty-year corrections vet, by-the-book, absolute ball breaker. Still enjoys the trench warfare and everyday ruckus, despite his age.

HOLT
(into shoulder mic)
Quad three, this is Watch
Commander. Be advised, we are en-
route to extraction, over.

A short hiss of static...

RADIO VOICE
(filtered)
Copy that.

AT THE END OF THE TIER

They stack up outside the LAST CELL, where someone inside is going completely berserk. SMASHING. BANGING. HOWLING...

Holt peers through the cell's plexiglass window slit.

HOLT
Step back and face the wall. Put
your hands together. DO IT NOW!

BOOM! A BLOODIED FIST pounds against it -- Holt snaps back. Unsheathes his baton, turns to his men.

HOLT
Form on me.

They shuffle into a line. Batons drawn, braced for combat.
Make no mistake, this is about to get ugly.

HOLT (CONT'D)
On my lead... OPEN CELL!

A BUZZ rings out -- the cell door slides back with a METALLIC
CLANG -- the CO's storm into the --

INT. CRAMPED CELL - SAME

-- rushing the FRENZIED INMATE -- BOOM! -- colliding into a
six-foot wall of NAKED muscle and bad attitude.

The CO's SCREAM at him to submit. BATONS pelting with rapid
precision -- WHACK! WHACK! WHACK!

HOLT
Down! Down! Down!

The inmate FIGHTS back with vehement ferocity. Shredded
knuckles clocking jackhammer speed...

One connects -- an iron right hook -- sends a CO head first
into the cell wall with a sickening CRACK! His protective
VISOR snaps off -- separates from his helmet --

The inmate LUNGES for his exposed face -- RIP! -- tears half
his CHEEK off with one, vicious bite.

The CO's gargled SCREAM echoes off the concrete walls. He
drops cold, flat on his ass. The brawl rages on...

They trade big hits, neither side giving up. But it's four
against one here. The inmate begins to weaken...

The CO's up their assault, brutally forcing him into a corner
-- WHACK! WHACK! WHACK! Pounding him into submission --

Finally, the inmate drops... The CO's pile on top... Muffled
screams. Wrangling. Wrestling. Slipping in blood...

Holt unholsters his can of PEPPER SPRAY. Fires point blank
into the inmate's eyes -- AN AGONIZING WAIL rings out.

HOLT
Hold him. Hold him.

Pinned with a knee against his spine, the inmate can't move. He sluggishly moans. Eyes leaking like a sieve. Holt slaps his wrists together and CUFFS them.

HOLT
WHERE WOULD YOU RATHER BE THAN
RIGHT HERE, HUH? YOU MAGGOT FUCK!

The inmate spits out a defiant cackle from his bloody mouth. Down for the count, but not out.

HOLT
Back it up. Give him some room.

They back it up, and for the first time, we catch this battered hulk in all its glory. Meet --

WILLIAM McBRIDE (42), triple-digit lifer, shiv-scarred face, built like a brick shithouse, stenciled in jailhouse TATTOOS. A man with the rationale of a pitbull on crack.

He lays shuddering in a fetal position... Muscles slick with sweat and blood. Huge tattooed chest, wheezing hard.

Holt takes a minute to recover. Sucks it up. Certainly feeling his age right now.

The remaining CO's are also spent. They lean against the wall. Parched mouths, sucking wind. Drowned in sweat. Just another day at the office.

Two more CO's rush in with GURNEYS... Blood everywhere. Looks a homicide scene. One of them attends to the wounded CO.

HOLT
Infirmary, ASAP.

They lift *wounded* onto a gurney and beeline him out of there. He moans in pain, clenching the remains of his jawl.

In the background, inmates ERUPT with a victory cheer as they spot him being wheeled out. Holt follows them out to --

INT. C-UNIT TIER - SAME

-- sheathes his baton, exchanging exhausted looks with another CO. Flicks his visor up, breathes out a deep sigh.

HOLT
Come on, move it people. I want him
out of here, yesterday.

McBride is hoisted onto the other gurney, strapped down tight with an array of restraints. He's going nowhere fast.

Inmates now SCREAM bloody murder as the CO's rush McBride out of the cell, and down the tier... Our POV trailing behind with frantic urgency...

SMASH HARD TO BLACK:

Where there's a beat of welcome SILENCE, before we --

FADE INTO:

EXT. DESERT - JUST BEFORE DAWN

ZOOMING FAST over this barren landscape... Our destination: a cluster of modern civilization, shimmering in the distance.

SUPER: Albuquerque, New Mexico.
One month later.

INT. CITY LIMITS - SAME - CONTINUOUS

A lone FEMALE jogs along a dusty fire-track...

Her slim physique, accentuated by a black skintight tracksuit, powers up a steep hill with ease...

She's early 30's, naturally attractive, with an authoritative disposition. Her eyes reveal a focused intensity, the same you might glimpse in battle hardened cops or soldiers. A darker understanding of the world. Beyond her years.

Her name is ANNA WILSON.

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!

She checks her digital watch:

6:00 am

AT THE TOP OF THE HILL

She takes a breather... Hands on hips, soaked in sweat, chest heaving, sucking up the crisp air. She scans the CITY below, watching the first rays of sunlight break over the horizon.

INT. ANNA'S KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING - LATER

DIANE WILSON (64), sincere, bookish, frumpy, not completely grey but getting there, butters toast on a cutting board.

AT THE KITCHEN TABLE

EMILY WILSON (8), ruffled locks of hair, freckled cheeks, undeniably adorable, sits in her pajamas, crunching on a bowl of multi-colored cereal.

The back laundry door opens... Anna enters with a fresh carton of milk and the morning paper. She grabs a towel, wipes the sweat from her neck, and enters the kitchen...

DIANE
Morning, sweetheart.

ANNA
Hey.

EMILY
Mommy.

Anna puts down the milk, and hurries over to Emily, bombarding her neck with kisses. Emily shrieks with delight.

EMILY
Don't it tickles.

Diane turns to face them.

DIANE
How about a quick bite?

ANNA
I'll grab something on my break.

DIANE
Em, how many?

EMILY
Two please Grandma.

Anna opens the fridge and pulls out a large bottle of Gatorade. She uncaps it and takes a mammoth gulp...

Diane shoots her a pensive look. Anna catches it.

ANNA
What?

DIANE
You should eat something.

ANNA
I'm not hungry. Mom, you worry too much. I'm fine.

DIANE
Anna, it's my job to worry.

ANNA
Thanks, but there's no need to.

Anna gives her mother a quick peck on the cheek...

ANNA (CONT'D)
I can take care of myself.

DIANE
(smiling)
I know you can. That's what worries me.

...then heads for the stairs.

ANNA
Eat quick, Em. Last day, don't wanna be late.

EXT. ANNA'S STREET - EARLY MORNING - LATER

Power lines droop over blue-collar row-houses and shabby mobile homes. American flags dangle on nearly every porch. It's not much, but to the people who live here, it's home.

EXT. ANNA'S HOUSE - SAME - CONTINUOUS

The front door opens, a giggling Emily comes bounding out... Sponge-Bob backpack slung over her shoulder. Anna follows, chasing her down the porch stairs...

ANNA
Hey, that's not fair. You had a head start.

Anna catches up... Drapes an arm over Emily's shoulders.

ANNA
Guess what? Today's my last day too.

EMILY
Cool.

ANNA

So we've both got two weeks to hang out. Any ideas?

Emily thinks hard...

EMILY

Oh, there's that new pizza place in town?

ANNA

Sounds like a plan. Maybe after we grab a bite, you can help me pick out something nice for Aunt Jackie. It's her birthday next week.

Emily scrunches up her nose.

EMILY

She smells.

ANNA

(shocked laugh)

Emily... That's not very nice. She thinks the world of you.

EMILY

But she does. I dunno, like old flowers or something.

Anna cracks up laughing... Hunches down close next to Emily.

ANNA

Just between you and me, it's all that cheap perfume she wears.

They both giggle.

AT THE END OF THE STREET

A small group of Hispanic parents wait with their kids for the school bus. Anna acknowledges them. They smile back.

The SCHOOL BUS pulls in...

Emily gets in line with the other kids... Anna kisses her goodbye and steps back, watches her board the bus...

ANNA

Love you. Be good.

Emily waves at her mom, and jumps up. The doors snap shut, the bus chugs off down the street...

Off Anna watching the bus depart -- CUT TO --

EXT. ANNA'S FRONT PORCH - EARLY MORNING - LATER

Anna exits her house, shutting the front door... SHE WEARS A CORRECTIONAL OFFICER'S UNIFORM. Immaculate. Very little make-up. Hair clipped into a bun. 110% professional.

She wobbles the DOOR KNOB, checking it's locked properly. The wire-screen door creaks shut behind her.

Anna's big old HOUND, lays on a tattered mattress next to her. His tail lazily slaps the porch as she walks past him.

ANNA (O.S.)
Guard the fort, big fella.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - EARLY MORNING - LATER

GLIDING behind Anna's SUV as it cruises along a ribbon of highway... We break off the chase, cresting a huge, rugged mountain range... Over we go... And in the distance --

EXT. PRISON - ESTABLISHING - SAME

A sprawling mass of sterile concrete, electric fencing and razor-sharp wire. Bland and depressing. That's the idea.

SUPER: New Mexico State Correctional Facility.
Male Inmate Population: 974.
Medium to Maximum Security.

INT. PRISON - SALLY-PORT - CONTINUOUS

BZZZT! An ADMIN OFFICER glances up from his paperwork to see Anna on the other side of the sally-port.

The SECURITY DOOR POPS... Anna walks through, giving the officer a wave. She whips out her I.D. CARD, skims it across a metal sensor... A GREEN LIGHT clicks on...

Another door POPS. She enters, makes her way down a long corridor, greeting some passing admin staff and CO's...

INT. PRISON - A-UNIT - LATER - CONTINUOUS

RADIO CHATTER crackles through on the MIC clipped to Anna's shoulder, which is also attached to a WALKIE-TALKIE on her belt. She is let through another door by a young CO, into --

A-UNIT DORM ENTRYWAY

Here she waits for the OK from the custody unit supervisor, who sits in the elevated COMMAND MODULE across from her. We can hear muffled NOISE emanating from inside the dorm.

The ACCESS DOOR POPS. She enters --

INT. PRISON - A-UNIT DORM - SAME - CONTINUOUS

AN OCTAGON SHAPED PRISON WING, rimmed with cramped CELLS, and a cluster of REC TABLES in the middle. Everything is either stainless steel or moulded concrete.

It's NOISY as all hell. INMATES mill around their own gangs and racial groups. Backs to the wall, playing cards, watching TV, talking bullshit. Anything to pass the time.

Anna heads over to the PROCESS DESK, at the opposite end of the dorm. A CO coming off the night shift greets her halfway. Understandably, he's anxious to finish up.

CO

Hey.

ANNA

How we doin'?

CO

(scribbling in folder)

Long night. Coupla' cells on ice. 205 and 217. They'll need permission to exit. And I think Lozano's been cooking up some ink in 212?

ANNA

I'll keep an eye on him. What about Grazer?

CO

Never heard a peep all night.

ANNA

You're kidding?

CO

Found out the smell was from a pipe leakage, not his new celly. Now he's going to, get this, sue the Department of Corrections for lack of maintenance.

They share an easy going laugh.

ANNA
Never a dull moment.

CO
Got that straight.

Anna scans the dorm...

ANNA
What's my count?

The CO hands her the folder.

CO
Thirty three.

He clips off the dorm CUFF KEYS and a FLASHLIGHT from his belt. Anna takes them.

CO
We good?

ANNA
We're good. I'll see you out.

They walk over to access door. She unlocks it. He exits...

CO
Have a good one.

ANNA
You too.

The door shuts. She wobbles the HANDLE, checking it's locked.

Now she's in here with thirty three, cop killing, meth jacking, cut throat, dog raping lowlifes.

ANNA
HEY, KEEP IT DOWN! YOU GUYS ARE WAY
TOO LOUD!

Background sniggers. It quiets down a little.

Anna scribbles something in her folder, then sets off to do her rounds for the day...

QUICK SHOTS OF ANNA'S DAY --

-- Checking a locked fire exit.

-- Filling out paperwork.

-- Chatting to a group of CO's, while inmates chow down lunch in the mess hall.

-- Watching inmates, with other CO's, as they file out into the yard for rec time.

-- Walking along an elevated tier, firing quick glances into every locked cell, performing a mental head-count.

INT. PRISON - LOCKER ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Close on a PHOTO of Anna and Emily, stuck to the inside of Anna's locker door. On vacation. Sun shining. All smiles.

A FEMALE CO wanders in and spots Anna packing gear into her duffel bag. She can't get out of here quick enough.

FEMALE CO
Officer Wilson?

ANNA
Yup!

FEMALE CO
Abramovich wants you in his office,
ASAP.

ANNA
He say what for?

FEMALE CO
(shrugs)
Something about your roster.

ANNA
Ah, crap... Thanks.

The female CO heads off to her own locker...

Anna closes hers, zips up her duffel and exits to --

INT. ABRAMOVICH'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

ANNA (O.S.)
Captain?

CAPTAIN JIM ABRAMOVICH (58) glances up from his cramped desk. Crumpled uniform, over-worked, married to the job, tired eyes, moulded from decades of nicotine and stress.

ABRAMOVICH
(gesturing to chair)
Come in.

Anna takes a seat. Abramovich takes off his glasses and rubs his eyes.

ABRAMOVICH
Coffee?

ANNA
No thanks.

He hops out of his chair to a small kitchenette behind his desk. A pot of fresh coffee simmers. A beat while he pours into his mug...

ABRAMOVICH
Tell me, do you know Officer Davis?

ANNA
From C-Unit?

ABRAMOVICH
Yeah.

ANNA
We've met on occasion. How's he holding up?

ABRAMOVICH
Barely. His wife called in today, looks like he's going to need more facial surgery.

ANNA
Ugh. Poor kid. He was only a year on the job too.

ABRAMOVICH
Yep. Damn lucky to be alive.

Anna straightens in her chair. Not quite sure what he's getting at here.

ANNA
Captain, officer Pollack said you
wanted to see me about my roster.
Is there a problem?

Abramovich takes a thoughtful sip of his mug, then sits back
down. Starts shuffling through some files...

ABRAMOVICH
I got a chain bus heading out to
Beaumont tomorrow morning. Crack of
dawn. Priority run. Last one for
the month... Davis was meant to be
on that bus.

Anna's face drops.

ANNA
Captain, I'm two weeks out from
today. It's a done deal.

Abramovich raises both his hands in an effort to calm Anna.

ABRAMOVICH
You'd only be taking them to a
gurney unit in Bonham. Another bus
would--

ANNA
That's still an overnight trip.
Union regs state I need at least
twelve hours between shifts.

ABRAMOVICH
Last minute transfers take
precedence over any of that.

ANNA
Not the last time I looked.

ABRAMOVICH
No less than a four man crew,
otherwise we don't roll.

ANNA
Yeah, and I'm sorry, but that's not
my problem.

ABRAMOVICH
Cut me some slack here will you.

ANNA

Captain, with all due respect, his shift should've been plugged weeks ago. Not my problem.

Abramovich leans forward, eyes searing into Anna's.

ABRAMOVICH

Oh come on, it was a mishap with admin. An oversight. These things happen. You know that.

ANNA

Regardless, I shouldn't have to wear it. I'm sorry, you'll just have to find someone else.

Anna moves to get up from her seat--

ABRAMOVICH

There is no one else. You're it.

Abramovich looks down, unable to meet her gaze.

ABRAMOVICH (CONT'D)

Warden's already okayed the run.

Anna's expression turns from annoyance to disbelief.

ANNA

You know I took days specifically because of my daughter--

ABRAMOVICH

And I apologize for springing it on you like this, I really do. But my hands are tied. I need someone capable.

Anna scoffs, shakes her head.

ABRAMOVICH

Look, I'll gladly put you down for extra time off when you get back.

ANNA

Which would be when?

Abramovich leans back into his chair, coffee mug resting on his bloated belly.

ABRAMOVICH

First thing Friday morning.

ANNA

Jesus--

ABRAMOVICH

Best I can do.

A tense beat... Anna's livid, but she knows this is her job. Her career. Her livelihood. Her duty.

ANNA

You'll owe me.

ABRAMOVICH

I know.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Bigtime.

ABRAMOVICH

Hey, whatever you want.

Anna plunks back down. Breathes out a deep SIGH.

ANNA

Okay... So what's the bad news?

Abramovich leans over, handing her a THICK FILE.

ABRAMOVICH

C-Unit. Six inmates. All permanent transfers...

Anna thumbs through pages of data on the inmates. Mugshots. Drivers licenses. Tattoos. Rap sheets. Gang affiliations...

ABRAMOVICH (CONT'D)

One high security.

She flicks the page -- only to be greeted by the official mugshot of William H. McBride.

ANNA (O.S.)

So the warden finally got his wish, huh?

Abramovich pulls out a cigarette from his top pocket, lights it, draws deep...

ABRAMOVICH

That whole extraction was a colossal fuck up. Warden's hoping now with McBride gone, things might finally settle down in
(more)

ABRAMOVICH (CONT'D)
segregation... Although, I highly
doubt that.

Anna flicks through more info...

ANNA
So I take it there's no
programming at Beaumont?

Thick smoke plumes from Abramovich's nostrils...

ABRAMOVICH
He's in a cell for the next three
centuries. It's not like we can
just stop the clock and hope for
the best.

Anna snickers, snaps the folder shut, hands it back.

ANNA
What about my crew?

Abramovich puts his glasses back on, double-clicks his mouse,
opening a spreadsheet file on his computer screen.

ABRAMOVICH
Holt, Keppler, and a rook from D-
Unit. Calloway.

ANNA
Any pick-ups or drop-offs?

ABRAMOVICH
Zilch. There and back again.

Anna grabs her duffel bag...

ANNA
Departure time?

ABRAMOVICH
Holt's running the show, so that's
an 0-five-hundred, sharp.

...gets up, and heads for the door.

ANNA
I'll be there.

ABRAMOVICH (O.S)
Anna --

She turns to face him.

Abramovich leans forward. Stale smoke swirling around him.

ABRAMOVICH (CONT'D)

Thank you.

A thin smile spreads across Anna's mouth.

ANNA

See you Friday, Captain.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - NEXT DAY - PREDAWN

The room is dark. The door creaks open ajar... Dressed in uniform, Anna quietly enters...

Emily sleeps peacefully. The hallway LIGHT casts a warm glow on her face.

Anna studies her daughters beauty. Nothing in the world right now is more precious. She kisses her index finger, gently placing it on Emily's cheek, then turns to walk out.

EMILY (O.S.)

(sleepy)

Mom?

ANNA

Ssshhh, baby. Go back to sleep, it's too early.

EMILY

Where are you going?

ANNA

I've got work today, Em. I'll be away overnight.

Emily props herself up.

EMILY

But you said we were gonna hang out today.

ANNA

I know baby, I'm so sorry.

A beat of silence...

EMILY

Will you be back?

ANNA
Of course I will. I'll be back
Friday morning.

Emily looks distant. Sad almost.

ANNA (O.S.)
Em... Sweetie, what's wrong?

EMILY
I'm just scared you won't come back
one day, and then I'll have to grow
up all alone.

ANNA
Em, that's not true. You'd never be
alone.

Emily doesn't look convinced. Anna gently raises her chin.

ANNA
Honey, look at me...
(meets her gaze)
That's nonsense. And I don't want
you to ever think like that,
because you will never be alone--

EMILY
But--

ANNA (O.S.)
Ever!

EMILY
Promise.

Anna smiles softly, gently moving a strand of hair away from
Emily's eyes.

ANNA
I promise.

They hug each other tightly...

EXT. PRISON - DAWN - LATER

GLIDING over that bleak shit-hole of a fortress... We soar over it, pushing in towards --

EXT. PRISON - RECEIVE AND RELEASE YARD - CONTINUOUS

Magic hour. CO's everywhere. Aviator glasses. Loaded shotguns. Chewing gum. Swapping war stories...

Anna waits for the inmates to be processed so she can board. We spot a .357 REMINGTON holstered to her hip.

Standing next to Anna is --

TREY CALLOWAY (24), African American, clean-cut, fresh-faced, eager. By definition a rookie, but there's a professional sheen about him that suggests otherwise.

BZZZT! The SALLY-PORT GATE starts to slide open...

All the CO's snap their gaze towards --

THE PRISON BUS

Rolling through the gates: an eighteen ton diesel mammoth. Faded exterior. Fortified windows and doors. Split cage interior construction. This ain't no fucking school bus.

Anna watches it HISS to a stop...

The front/side accordion door folds back... HOLT steps down. SHOTGUN in one hand. Duffel bag in the other.

HOLT
Officer Wilson? Good to have you on board.

They shake hands.

ANNA
Likewise, Lieutenant.
(re: bus)
Amazing she's still in service.

Holt turns and takes a second to admire the bus.

HOLT
Yeah... Racked up quite a few miles over the years. Still some kick in her yet, though.

The bus' driver now exits --

SERGEANT RAYMOND KEPPLER (43), balding, dimples, over-weight, wears thick spectacles, but don't let appearances fool you, he's been driving chain buses for over ten years.

KEPPLER
Officer Wilson, right?

Anna nods, shakes his burly hand. As big as your face.

KEPPLER (CONT'D)
Sergeant Keppler. I'll be your driver.

ANNA
Glad to meet you, Sergeant.

KEPPLER
Call me Ray.

ANNA
(re: bus)
So you can also vouch for this heap?

KEPPLER
Sure can. May not look like it, but I guarantee, you get her on a good straight, she'll chug like a steam train.

Tracking along the bus' EXTERIOR. A zoo cage on wheels...

KEPPLER (V.O.)
Just had a major upgrade too. GPS navigation, custom built chassis, sixteen-gauge galvanized skirts. Even has a spare cannister of gas.

Back with Keppler.

KEPPLER (CONT'D)
She's now escape proof and impenetrable. Nobody's gettin' in or out, unless we allow 'em to.

Anna nods at Keppler. Satisfied.

HOLT
Abramovich tells me good things, officer Wilson.

ANNA
I certainly hope so.

HOLT

Also tells me the inmates over in A-
Unit like to call you "Medusa."

Anna smiles to herself. She already likes this crew.

ANNA

Believe me, it's a term of
endearment. I usually get called a
lot worse.

Keppler erupts with a HUGE belly laugh. Calloway timidly
chuckles. Something that resembles a smile cracks out across
Holt's face. It fades quickly.

HOLT

What do you know about our main
attraction?

ANNA

I know what he's capable of.

KEPPLER

There's a good place to start.

HOLT

We'll house him in the shu for
the duration of the trip. I'll be
riding shotgun. If you need to
communicate with me, you do it
via cell or two-way. Crystal?

ANNA

Yes sir!

HOLT

Good. We roll these assholes outta
here in twenty.

INT. PRISON - C-SEG TIER - SAME

McBride is led down a cell-rimmed tier by three CO's...
ORANGE JUMP-SUIT. BLACK SPIT HOOD. BELLY CHAIN attached to
SHACKLED wrists. Looks like something out of Gitmo...

...also sounds like a prison riot. Inmates CHEER and BARK
like dogs from inside their cells. It's a final farewell.

INT. PRISON - ADMINISTRATIVE SEGREGATION - SAME

BZZZT! The door pops. The CO's steer McBride into a --

INT. HOLDING CELL - SAME

Time for cavity search 101. CO #1 rips the spit hood off. McBride squints from the harsh light.

CO #2 unshackles him. Cuffs and chains drop to the ground with a heavy CLUNK.

CO #1
Strip! Full Monty!

McBride glares at him... CO #1 gets in closer -- places his BATON underneath McBride's chin.

CO #1 (CONT'D)
I said strip, dickhead. NOW!

He strips off... Ink stained muscles ripple under the cells dank florescent light. Amongst all that ugly ink, we spot the words: TIME WILL TELL, scrawled across his chest...

Plus there's still plenty of BRUISING from that cell extraction we witnessed earlier too.

CO #2 (O.S.)
(whistles)
Holt's boys touched you up real good, huh?

CO #3
Step forward. Arms up. Palms facing me.

He obeys. Wearing latex gloves, CO #3 frisks his arms.

CO #3
Back at your sides.

He puts them back.

CO #3
Open your mouth. Lift up your tongue.

He opens his mouth. CO #3 shines a light down his throat.

CO #3
Lift up your balls.

He obeys. CO #3 pans the light around his crotch.

CO #3
Turn around. Face the wall.

He does. Slowly. He knows what's coming.

CO #3
Spread your cheeks. Squat.

McBride parts them and squats.

CO #3
Cough, twice.

McBride coughs twice. CO #2 hovers a METAL DETECTOR underneath his ass crack. BEEP! All clear.

CO #3
Back up.

WHACK! CO #1 drives the tip of his BATON into McBride's left thigh, giving him the ultimate dead-leg. He wails in pain and collapses. The CO's snicker and chuckle.

CO #1
One for the road, asswipe.

Teeth grit hard, McBride's face fumes with anger.

CO #1
Back on your feet, spunk bubble!

EXT. PRISON - RECEIVE AND RELEASE YARD - DAWN - CONTINUOUS

IN A GUARD TOWER, overlooking the yards entrance, TWO CO's keep their GAS RIFLES trained on --

FIVE INMATES. Shackled together. Huddling awkwardly. Single file. Wearing orange jump-suits and canvas sneakers...

OUTSIDE THE BUS

The five inmates are lined up alongside the bus' hull, ready to board. They look about as thrilled as you'd expect.

Holt inspects the line of cons, eyeing them aggressively. He twirls his BATON, just itching for an excuse to knee-cap someone. And they know it. None of them meet his gaze.

Calloway moves down the line next to him, carefully matching up mugshots and ticking off names in his folder...

It's time to meet our unsavory passengers:

First off is --

FELIX SCHAEFER (46), ghoulish, greasy thin hair, looks like it's been combed with brake fluid. Beady-eyes probe behind coke-bottled rims. Textbook definition of the word "creep."

Then there's --

JEBB CARMICHAEL (28), hardcore tweaker, meth-eroded teeth, sunken cheeks, pocked with welts. Would rape and kill anything with a shadow, then call it consensual.

Moving along to --

JAMAKE' BENJAMIN (34), Half-caste Cherokee, horse-shoe moustache, gung-ho, volatile, blessed with a grizzled mug only a mother could love. Definitely born for this ride.

Not to forget --

JUAN GONZALEZ (26), cold-hard Sureño banger, shifty eyes, bare skull, full-facial gang tats, grill full of cheap gold. This Vato would open your neck for the price of a Taco.

And last, but not least --

FREDDY GLOVER (42), patchy hair, pale glaze, unassuming, yet there's something lopsided. It's that lobotomized stare, and behind it ticks a calculating menace.

Calloway reaches Glover, scribbles in his folder, then signals the "OK" to Holt.

HOLT
ALRIGHT, LET'S LOCK 'EM IN!

Anna and Keppler board the bus first. Everything's clicking with military precision. Just the way Holt likes it.

INT. BUS - SAME - CONTINUOUS

Keppler tosses his overnight bag behind the drivers seat, plunks down, wiggling to get his pudgy frame comfortable.

Calloway jumps up, carrying a cooler full of water bottles, sack lunches, and freeze-dried dinners for the inmates.

Anna unlocks the PRIMARY CAGE and walks along the aisle, inspecting each row like a stewardess would on a flight.

At the back of the bus, there's two separate toilets (one has no doors), and the SECURED HOUSING UNIT (SHU).

Inmates begin to file in... Schaefer's first. Anna directs him to the back row. He sits. It's one man per seat.

SCHAEFER (O.S.)
Thank you, officer.

She meets Schaefer's violating gaze. His lips part, forming a smile. Phlegm glistens over his nicotine stained teeth.

Anna maintains her composure, tries hard not to recoil.

ANNA
Don't mention it.

Carmichael and Gonzalez are next, she directs them to sit.

Calloway works the other end of the line, seating Benjamin and Glover...

BACK UP FRONT

Keppler unzips his duffel and pulls out an ELVIS BOBBLEHEAD (the one from Jailhouse Rock) -- sticks it on the dash. Aramovich's VOICE crackles on the dash-mounted CB RADIO.

ABRAMOVICH (O.S.)
(filtered)
*Transport 392, this is dispatch
481. Do you copy, over?*

Keppler grabs the CB MIC.

KEPPLER
(into mic)
Copy, 481. Go ahead.

INT. PRISON - OPERATIONS/DISPATCH ROOM - SAME

Abramovich wears a headset and nurses a mug of coffee. In-front of him: three RADIO DISPATCHERS monitor various transfer buses around the region.

ABRAMOVICH
(into head-set)
You're the last transpo' out there
today 392, so drive safely. We'll
await your next check, over.

A hiss of static...

KEPPLER (O.S.)
(filtered)
Copy that, 481. Talk to you soon.

EXT. PRISON - RECEIVE AND RELEASE YARD - SAME - CONTINUOUS

BZZZT! A security door opens... McBride appears. Shackled. Limping. Led out by Holt and those three prick CO's. Each officer carries a SHOTGUN.

Tight on McBride: simmering with nihilistic rage. His stone-cold gaze locked on --

THE BUS

Where some of the inmates stare in awe from behind their barred windows. In this barbaric world, McBride's the closest thing these cons have to a certified rock star.

Anna watches intently with Calloway...

McBride spots Anna. Smirks, gives her a kiss.

Anna doesn't flinch.

Holt leads McBride around to the back of the bus. He snaps open the BACK-DOOR, which leads directly into the SHU cage.

HOLT

Welcome to the rest of your life.
Watch your step now.

McBride awkwardly hoists himself up. Holt follows him in, then -- SNAP! The back door shuts, and we're in --

INT. BUS - SAME

THE SHU

Which is nothing but a tiny cage with a seat, and a barred window. Barely enough room to stand, let alone sit.

Hinges moan as Holt swings back the CAGE DOOR. He motions for McBride to sit. He does. Slowly. Holt then shackles his leg-irons to the floor.

Holt gets back up with a callous smirk. SLAMS the SHU cage shut with an extra loud CLANG. They lock eyes.

HOLT

Enjoy the ride, cupcake.

McBride sniggers, then turns away to face his window.

Holt sits in the SWING-SEAT, just outside the SHU. He plunks down, belts himself in, then clips his shotgun to a wall-mounted holster. Just like he's done a hundred times before.

AT THE FRONT OF THE BUS

Anna sits in a TWO-SEATER outside of the primary cage. She belts herself in. Calloway sits directly opposite her.

CALLOWAY

Twenty minute intervals. I'll do first round.

ANNA

Sounds good. This your first run?

CALLOWAY

Can you tell?

ANNA

(smiles)

You'll be fine. We just baby-sit them to Bonham, then they become somebody else's headache.

INSIDE THE PRIMARY CAGE

The inmates are now locked in for the ride. Faces sullen with the inevitability of their destination.

UP FRONT

Keppler shifts her into gear... Hydraulic brakes HISS and MOAN in protest. And we're off...

EXT. PRISON - RECEIVE AND RELEASE YARD - SAME

The bus chuffs out a plume of BLACK DIESEL. Slowly rolling out of the SALLY-PORT GATES, towards the long road ahead...

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY - LATER

A SERIES OF DISSOLVES --

-- THE BUS. Roaring down a busy highway. MOUNTAINS frame the distance. A convoy of RIGS blare past in the opposite lane...

-- THE BUS. Rolling down the main street of a small, one horse town. Festive SPANISH ART frames the street...

-- THE BUS. Chugging up a winding, mountain-side road...

INT. BUS - LATE AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS

IN THE PRIMARY CAGE

Stinking hot. Our POV dollies backwards along the aisle...

Glover stares at nothing... Benjamin sleeps... Gonzalez watches the desert... Carmichael picks a welt on his cheek... Schaefer wears a diabolical smirk, looking dead ahead at --

Anna. Lost in thought.

CALLOWAY (O.S.)

You got any kids, Officer Wilson?

Back to reality.

ANNA

I was just thinking about her
actually. I have an eight year old.
You?

Calloway's face lights up.

CALLOWAY

Baby girl. In the oven as we speak.

ANNA

Hey, congratulations.

CALLOWAY

Thanks... Yeah, I'm pretty excited.
But you know, pretty scared too.

ANNA

Oh, don't be. There's lots of good
times ahead. Precious times.

Calloway nods in agreement... Takes a deep breath, then looks away. Thoughts firing. This stuff has been weighing on him.

CALLOWAY

My wife... She's so close now.
Kinda makes me wonder what the hell
I'm doing out here.

Anna smiles warmly. Knows exactly how he feels.

ANNA

That makes two of us.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATE AFTERNOON - LATER

Still hot as hell. RIPPLES of heat shimmer across frame...

QUICK SHOTS OF --

-- TIRES spinning over baked asphalt. The bus' engine ROARING in defiance at the sweltering heat.

-- Plumes of DIESEL belching from the beat-to-shit exhaust.

INT. BUS - SAME - CONTINUOUS

IN THE SHU

McBride watches the desert wilderness zip by...

IN THE PRIMARY CAGE

Calloway walks slowly along the aisle, inspecting the bored inmates. Nothing out of the ordinary. Everything in order.

UP FRONT

Anna stands behind Keppler, watching the endless road zoom towards them. A couple of cars flash past in the opposite lane, but that's it. Nothing much else out here.

Anna watches Keppler lean over his steering wheel, and rub Elvis' head like it was a Genie lamp.

ANNA

OK, I'll bite. What's with Elvis?

KEPPLER

Used to drive rigs for a living.
Never lost my cargo once. All
thanks to The King here.

ANNA

What made you take this job?

Keppler takes a moment to answer...

KEPPLER

Certainly wasn't for the money. I
dunno... Guess I got bored haulin'
PVC piping and chicken eggs.

That gets a smile from Anna.

KEPPLER

So why'd you take this job?

ANNA

Well for one thing, the work is steady. And I enjoy the routine.

That wasn't the answer Keppler expected.

KEPPLER

Ah, I get it. Say no more. You're one of those pretty ladies who have a thing for bad men.

ANNA

If there were no bad men in the world, I'd be out of a job.

Keppler erupts with a HUGE belly laugh.

ANNA (CONT'D)

No, the truth is, I do it because I believe some inmates can still be rehabilitated... And I put strong emphasis on the word "some."

Keppler gives Anna a ruminative look.

KEPPLER

Don't think you're going to find any candidates on this bus.

ANNA

That's OK. I'm not looking for any.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT - LATER

Naked stars blaze over this deserted strip of asphalt. The MOON is fat and milky. There's nothing out here, except --

An approaching WALL OF HEADLIGHTS... They cast an eerie glow across the road. Racing towards us... VROOOOOOOM! The bus hammers past with a GIANT ROAR, rattling us in our seats...

INT. BUS - SAME

Anna stands behind Keppler, but the mood is no longer jovial. There's a considerable amount of concern on her face.

ANNA

Try it again.

Keppler grabs the dash-mounted CB RADIO.

KEEPLER
(into mic)
Dispatch, 481. This is Transport,
392. Do you copy, over?

Heavy static hisses back...

INT. PRISON - OPERATIONS/DISPATCH ROOM - SAME

Faint, garbled VOICES echo throughout the room. Almost unintelligible. Abramovich grabs his head-set.

ABRAMOVICH
(into head-set)
392. Sounding a bit hazy there. Say
again, over.

INT. BUS - NIGHT - SAME - CONTINUOUS

Abramovich's VOICE crackles through, but it's too faint and distorted to make out what he's saying.

ANNA
Ask if we can get an escort from
the next county.

KEPPLER
(into mic)
481. This is Transport 392.
Travelling... South-bound on 95.
Requesting a possible escort--

IN THE PRIMARY CAGE

Carmichael intently watches up front. Trying to hear what Anna's saying to Keppler.

CARMICHAEL
Something's up, man. They keep
playin' with that radio.

Carmichael's talking to Benjamin, but he's not listening. He sits there with his eyes shut.

CARMICHAEL (O.S.)
Hey, Tonto. You hear what I said?

Benjamin's eyes snap open. Turns to Carmichael.

BENJAMIN
The fuck you just call me?

CARMICHAEL

I said look at them up front.

BENJAMIN

Who gives a shit? You ain't goin' nowhere. None of us are.

SCHAEFER

Nah, he's right, man. I've been watchin' her. Something's goin' down.

BENJAMIN

Did I ask for your opinion?

SCHAEFER

Just sayin--

BENJAMIN

Man, both of you, shut the fuck up. Don't wanna hear yo shit.

Gonzalez pivots to Benjamin...

GONZALEZ

Tryin' to sleep here, fool.

Benjamin gives Gonzalez the finger... Gonzalez throws him a kiss back, grins wide with a mouth full of gold.

Glover calmly turns and faces Benjamin now. First time we've seen him move since we departed.

BENJAMIN

What the fuck you staring at?

Glover dribbles on himself, starts giggling like a twelve year-old kid who just heard a dirty joke.

CARMICHAEL (O.S.)

I think that means he likes you.

Calloway peers through the primary cage and taps his MAG-LIGHT against it. TING! TING!

CALLOWAY

Hey! Keep it down in there.

UP FRONT

Holt's GARBLED VOICE booms through on Anna's walkie-talkie, which is clipped to her belt. Can hardly make him out.

HOLT (O.S.)
(filtered)
Any luck?

Anna leans into the radio mic, attached to her shoulder.

ANNA
(into shoulder mic)
Nothing. Can't get a signal. Even
on short-range.

A static beat...

HOLT (O.S.)
(filtered)
*Then we ain't talking to anyone
'til we reach the next town.*

ANNA
(into shoulder mic)
Copy that.

Calloway notices Anna's worried look.

CALLOWAY
So we're completely cut off from
dispatch?

Anna sits back down next to him.

ANNA
Loss of signal. Happens
occasionally out here.

Calloway's not buying. His eyes swim to Anna. Underneath that professional exterior he's just a kid.

Anna gives him a forced smile. Hardly reassuring.

ANNA
Trust me. We're gonna be fine.

Anna casually peers back at the inmates, trying not to look concerned. She notices Schaefer GLARING straight at her.

Keppler's fingers stab the dash-mounted GPS console.

KEPPLER
GPS just died on me... The hell is
goin' on here?

Anna pulls out her CELL -- the SCREEN indicates: NO SIGNAL.

Frowning, she slips it back into her jacket.

INT. PRISON - OPERATIONS/DISPATCH ROOM - NIGHT

Abramovich doesn't look much better. His face is filled with grave concern. He paces behind the dispatchers...

RADIO DISPATCHER
Sir, they've gone completely--

ABRAMOVICH
I don't care. Try again.

Tight on Abramovich; takes a deep breath.

ABRAMOVICH (CONT'D)
And get me the Warden.

INT. BUS - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS - SAME

AT THE BACK OF THE BUS

Holt sits in his swing-seat watching McBride. He turns to glance outside his back window and notices --

That they're being tailed by TWO BLACK SUVs: Heavily tinted windows. Identical models. Driving in tight formation...

And keeping pace behind the SUVs: is a LARGE BLACK VAN. Also heavily tinted, with no visible brand or licence plate.

Holt's studies the suspicious convoy. Warning bells blaring off the hook like a Klaxon -- CUT TO --

EXT. UNKNOWN POV - SAME

Somewhere high above the highway, we're tracking the oncoming bus through A HOLOGRAPHIC SNIPER SCOPE...

INT. BUS - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS - SAME

Calloway notices Holt's tense expression as he exits the driver-side end of the primary cage, and zips past him...

UP FRONT

Holt reaches Anna and Keppler. Calloway also joins them.

HOLT
Heads up. We've got company.

Keppler peers into his left mirror --

His POV: the THREE VEHICLES keep their distance...

KEPPLER
Could be nothing.

HOLT
And if it's not, we're out here
with no way of calling for back-up.
Do the math.

KEPPLER
Ah, sssshit!

Anna watches the SUVs in Holt's side-mirror... Then wheels to Calloway, who's now looking more than a little worried. Beads of sweat already dotting his upper forehead.

ANNA
I need you to keep watch on these
inmates for me. They're first
priority. You got that?

Calloway gulps, then starts to unlock the primary cage -- fumbles with his keys. Holt shoulders him out of the way, unlocks it himself with his own set...

HOLT
Sometime this year, kid.

IN THE PRIMARY CAGE

Holt moves at a brisk pace down the aisle...

CARMICHAEL
Need to take a piss, boss.

Holt zips past, doesn't respond. Bigger fish to fry.

CARMICHAEL
(shocked)
You see that shit?

CALLOWAY
Just sit there. You can wait.

The inmates can see Calloway's nervous. Carmichael grins wide, exposing murky colored teeth.

CARMICHAEL
How 'bout it, rookie? I won't try
nothin'. You can even hold my hand.

CALLOWAY
Just give me a break, huh?

Carmichael gets up from his seat, holds out his cuffed hands as a plea for sympathy.

CARMICHAEL

Come on, man. Scouts honor.

Calloway moves forward, grips his BATON.

CALLOWAY

You need to take a piss, then take one. But you're not moving away from that seat.

Carmichael's smart-ass grin falters slightly. He slowly sits back down. The inmates snicker and chuckle.

EXT. UNKNOWN POV - SAME

The scope ZOOMS into one of the bus' FRONT TIRES -- PFFT!

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME

BANG! The TIRE explodes. Rubber shoots off the rim, louder than a shotgun blast --

INT. BUS - SAME

The bus JOLTS from impact. Keppler works the wheel...

KEPPLER

Sonova--

Anna holds on for dear life. In the background: the inmates CHEER and WHISTLE.

IN THE SHU

McBride jerks awake from all the commotion.

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME - CONTINUOUS

The TWO BLACK SUVs now SPEED UP -- skillfully accelerating alongside opposite sides of the bus...

INT. BUS - SAME

Anna spots the two SUVs closing in -- immediately unloads into her radio mic --

ANNA
(into shoulder mic)
This is prisoner transport, 392.
We are under attack. I repeat --

Keppler barks over his shoulder --

KEPPLER
Hold on. Gonna try and shake 'em.

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME - CONTINUOUS

The bus begins to CAREEN across the road, forcing the left SUV OFF-ROAD, barreling over the desert terrain...

TWO GUNMEN appear from rear windows: BLACK SKI-MASKS.
SILENCED HK's glinting in the moonlight. They unleash hell --
MUZZLE FLASHES strobe our eyes. BULLETS snap past our ears.

Our bus is now officially under attack.

More GUNMEN appear from the other SUV and also OPEN FIRE --

They've just created a lead sandwich. The bus is getting
POUNDED from both sides, bullets riddling the thick hull...

INT. BUS - SAME

UP FRONT

Anna drops to the floor, snaps into a fetal position.

Keppler ducks low, exploding glass everywhere -- steering
blindly through the fractured windshield. Bullets whizzing
past his head -- missing by inches.

IN THE PRIMARY CAGE

Calloway and the inmates stay down. Ears covered. Everyone
SCREAMING like babies. Rounds ricocheting off steel bars --

IN THE SHU

McBride keeps his head between his knees, covering his ears
as glass shatters all around him. Shards flying everywhere.

AT BACK OF THE BUS

Holt is SLAMMED into the opposite side of the wall. Shakes
the daze from his head. Grabs his shotgun off the floor --

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME - CONTINUOUS

One of the SUVs rapidly decelerates, and tucks in behind the BACK OF THE BUS... Almost bumper-to-bumper...

Gunmen appear from both side windows. Aiming through their TACTICAL SCOPES, about to unleash hell again --

CHCK-CHCK-BOOM!

HOLT suddenly appears out the BACK DOOR of the bus, BLASTING the SUV with his shotgun --

The SUVs entire WINDSHIELD spiderwebs -- STEAM plumes from the hood, riddled with buck-shot holes --

The SUVs driver takes evasive maneuvers -- SWERVES hard out of Holt's line of sight -- can't see shit -- drops back. Front passenger Gunman kicks out the windshield -- FIRES --

TWHUMP!

A bullet slams into Holt's right shoulder -- shatters it like chalk -- spins him like a bottle-top...

HEAVY GUNFIRE smashes the windows -- bullets ping off the galvanized bars. Holt KICKS the back door shut, just as a spray of bullets riddle it. Seconds from eating more lead.

HOLT
I'm hit! I'm hit!

BACK UP FRONT

Anna unlocks the PRIMARY CAGE, and hauls ass towards the back of the bus, keeping low...

She reaches the opposite end of the cage, opens it, grabs Holt underneath his armpits, and drags him away from the back-door. Holt WAILS in pain, clamping down on his weeping wound.

Outside; Anna spots the REAR-SUV swerve into view and SPEED towards them... Oh shit... BOOM!!! RAMS STRAIGHT INTO THEM --

Anna is FLUNG into the SHU cage -- WHAM!

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME

The bus LURCHES from IMPACT -- the rear-SUV drops back...

Now the RIGHT-SIDE SUV SPEEDS up to the front, keeping pace as the bus begins to SWERVE all over the road again...

A MASKED GUNMAN appears from the sun-roof, takes aim, and SHOOTs OUT the OTHER FRONT TIRE --

BANG! Shredded rubber BLOWs clean off the rim -- deflates with a deafening explosion --

INT. BUS - SAME

Keppler wrangles the wheel, doing everything in his power to stop the bus from rolling. Zero traction to work with --

KEPPLER
HOLD ON TO SOMETHING!!!

No time for seat belts. Anna braces for impact...

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME

Locking axles RING OUT as the bus begins to FISHTAIL... SPARKs showering the asphalt like it's the Fourth of July. Gravity finally wins the struggle. Keppler loses control.

THE BUS COMPLETELY FLIPS -- lifted clean off it's axis --

INT. BUS - SAME

Our POV is the inside of a washing machine. A bone-jarring mess of steel, glass and debris. Everything is topsy-turvy.

The inmates take a solid bashing... Our CO's are thrown in all directions. Screams echo throughout the chaos...

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME - CONTINUOUS

We tumble with the bus as it PLOWs through a guard rail like it was a strip of tin-foil... BARRELING down into a --

STEEP EMBANKMENT

Flattening scrub and snapping branches as it recklessly forges a path... CRASHING head-on into a high CLIFF FACE --

BOOM!

The dust slowly settles, revealing a buckled heap resting upright, but slightly lopsided against the cliff face.

BACK UP TOP

The pursuing SUVs viciously SKID to a halt... Gunmen pour out, taking up positions around the lip of the embankment.

INT. BUS - SAME - CONTINUOUS

Everything is skewed. Bodies lay motionless. We hear creaks, coughs and moans. We're not dead. Yet.

Battered and shaken, Anna collects herself. Nothing feels broken, but she does sport a gash on her forehead. She gingerly pulls herself up. Hurts like hell.

Holt lays crumpled on the floor. Sluggishly comes to...

ANNA
Lieutenant--

HOLT
Just check on the others. Hurry!

Anna leaves him. Peers into --

THE SHU

McBride is motionless. Riddled with cuts. His huge frame, skewed across his seat. He shifts, then coughs. He's alive.

Anna spots a METAL BOX resting amongst a pile of supplies. She unlocks it and pockets a SNUB-NOSED FLARE GUN.

She fumbles through her KEYS, breathing quickly. Almost panting. Manages to unlock the primary cage, but the door hinges are buckled. She jerks it back with a loud CRACK --

INSIDE THE PRIMARY CAGE

Anna cautiously moves down the aisle... Glass crunches under her boots. Emergency lights eerily strobe the interior.

Glover's conscious. He cradles a broken wrist. He painfully sits upright. A deep gash trails down his left cheek.

Schaefer's motionless. He moans softly. She moves on to --

Gonzalez; conscious, but in total shock. He stares at Anna. Face pale. Eyes bruised. Nose broken. Bloody gold teeth.

Anna watches Benjamin come to, groggy and confused. He sits up. Split lips. Tiny shards of glass pepper his forehead.

She moves on -- reaches Carmichael; bloody and battered. Laying on a bed of glass, flat on his back in his seat.

CARMICHAEL
You call that driving?

ANNA
Have you been shot? Can you feel
anything broken?

CARMICHAEL
Get the fuck away from me.

Anna ignores him and clips off the walkie attached to her belt. Starts fiddling with the knobs...

ANNA
(into shoulder mic)
Dispatch, 481. Come in...
(silence)
Come on. Work, Goddammit.
(back into mic)
Dispatch 481, if you can copy, we
need immediate assistance, over.

Nothing. Not even static. Damn thing is broken.

A BLURRY FORM RISES UP BEHIND HER. We focus. IT'S SCHAEFER!

Carmichael's eyes dart to Schaefer and widen.

Anna notices...

HOLT (O.S.)
ANNA! LOOK OUT!

...and spins. Too late.

Schaefer loops his manacled HANDS around Anna's throat, savagely wrenching her back towards him... Their momentum brings both of them crashing back into Schaefer's seat --

ON ANNA

One hand digs clumsily at the cuff chain around her neck.

The other fumbles for her REVOLVER...

Her legs flail and kick the air. She's literally fighting for dear life.

Carmichael eggs Schaefer's attack on with excitement.

CARMICHAEL
Kill her, man... Kill her!

Holt SCREAMS at Schaefer to release her. Wincing in pain as he desperately claws for his Shotgun.

IN THE SHU

McBride sits upright, flicking away tiny shards of glass from his face. He watches the attack with cold disregard.

BACK ON SCHAEFER

Choking her like his life depended on it. Wild eyes. Grinning menacingly. Mouth corners foaming. Puffing hard.

SCHAEFER

Ssshhh, that's it. Let it come.

Anna's turning blue. Eyes rolling back into her skull.

Her HAND frantically unholsters her PISTOL, when --

BANG!

Schaefer slumps... BLOOD oozing from a dime-sized hole in his forehead. Chunks of brain matter paint the seat behind him.

A stunned beat. Even the inmates are speechless.

Anna loosens the cuff chain, flinging his hands away, violently GASPING for air. She looks up to see --

Calloway. Leaning against the cage, trembling while holding a smoking REVOLVER. He's worse for wear, but alive.

CALLOWAY

You OK?

Anna hoists herself up... Schaefer crumples to the floor...

ANNA

(coughing)

Yeah... I think so... Thank you.

(coughing)

What about Keppler?

Keppler limps up next to Calloway. The right side of his face is bloody. Glasses are missing. Blood stained shirt.

KEPPLER

Banged up, but I'll live.

Calloway stares at Schaefer. Face drained. Completely in shock. Anna puts a comforting hand on his shoulder.

That infuriates Carmichael.

CARMICHAEL

You stupid fucking pig--

ANNA
 First and last warning, Carmichael.
 (deep breath)
 Not in the mood.

CARMICHAEL
 Or what, bitch? Gonna have your boy
 over there shoot me too?

CRACK! Anna drives a crushing hook into Carmichael's jaw. He spits out some porcelain. That was one helluva punch.

Seething, Carmichael LUNGES for her, she CRACKS him with another right hook. He slumps back down into his seat.

ANNA
That's what!

Anna shakes the sting from her fist.

ANNA
 Any of you know who these guys are,
 and what they want, now would be a
 good time to fess up.

Benjamin sniggers.

BENJAMIN
 Ain't no one coming for my ass.
 (at Carmichael)
 And I seriously doubt anyone would
 be stupid enough to try and free
 this motherfucker.

Carmichael straightens up, massaging his jaw.

CAMICHAEL
 Fuck you.

KEPPLER
 This a couple of your pals tryin'
 to bust you out Carmichael?

CAMICHAEL
 Man, why you all pickin' on me for?
 I don't know shit.

BENJAMIN
 You really think this is a coupla'
 tweaked out rednecks?

GONZALEZ
 Homie is right. That's some crafty
 shit out there, ese'.
 (more)

GONZALEZ (CONT'D)

These fools ain't here to save
nobody. They here to throw down.

Anna turns to the SHU. McBride's fierce eyes bore through the
paint-chipped grill...

ANNA

Then we hole up in here
until we can call for help.

KEPPLER

That could be hours away.

ANNA

Then what do you suggest?

HOLT

She's right. There's no telling
how many of them are out there.

KEPPLER

Yeah, and how long you think we're
gonna last, sittin' around in here?

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT - SAME

GUNMEN stealthily fan out around the bus wreckage below.
Slithering down the treacherous terrain like black snakes...

Each man wears DARK MILITARY FATIGUES, and NIGHT-VISION
GOGGLES over their ski-masks. Judging from the serious
hardware they're packing, this definitely ain't amateur hour.

INT. BUS - SAME - CONTINUOUS

Anna is mulling over the odds, she turns to Holt.

ANNA

How long until we're declared AWOL?

HOLT

Since we lost radio contact.

CALLOWAY

So that means they'll have a search
team on the way, right?

HOLT

It's still gonna be hours before
anyone reaches us.

Anna's mind is churning... This is a nightmare that's quickly going from bad to worse.

ANNA

Then we have no choice but to defend our position.

Calloway absorbs the gravity of the situation.

CALLOWAY

But if we pop a flare, someone will spot us from the road. A truck or something. We can use their radio for help.

HOLT

Look where we are, kid. Besides, as long as these guys keep jamming any cell or radio signals, it won't make a lick of difference.

Anna scans the darkness outside for any sign of movement...

ANNA

We better get a plan. Real fast.

KEPPLER

I say we make a run for it.

HOLT

Where to? There's nothing out here.

ANNA

Sergeant, we have inmates. How fast do you think we'll be able to move?

KEPPLER

Then we ditch them.

ANNA

What?!

Benjamin and Gonzalez start protesting, CUSSING out Keppler.

CAMICHAEL

Naw man, good idea. We'll go look for help. Worth a shot, right?

HOLT

Shut your hole. Nobody's going anywhere. Not on my watch.

KEPPLER

Yeah, I'm sorry Lieutenant, I'm not getting myself killed over a couple of deadbeat cons.

Gonzalez snaps to Keppler. Lips curled.

GONZALEZ

You got some balls, puto. Talkin' that shit.

KEPPLER

Yeah, and unlike you I've got a family to get home to.

Now Benjamin arcs up from his lopsided seat. Fuming.

BENJAMIN

Hey fuck you, man! I got a family too. You think I wanna be stuck out here all night with your fat ass.

ANNA

Benjamin!

Keppler's about to blow a gasket.

KEPPLER

Open that mouth again.

Benjamin leans back into his seat with a smug grin. Rubs the bridge of his nose with his MIDDLE FINGER. A silent *fuck you*.

Keppler draws his BATON and rushes for Benjamin... Anna blocks him -- SHOVES him back -- grabs his arm.

ANNA

Take it down a notch, Sergeant.

HOLT

OK, knock it off. Both of you.

Benjamin turns to Carmichael and chuckles.

HOLT

Try that shit again Benjamin, and I'll baton both ya knee-caps.

Keppler shrugs Anna's arm away. Now she gets in real close --

ANNA

Just calm down.

Keppler's on the verge of losing his shit.

KEPPLER

No you don't understand. These guys mean business. We need to get out--

ANNA

Listen to me. Right now, we need to work this situation. All of us. So I'm going to shoot off a flare, and we're gonna keep low until help arrives. It's our only option, OK?

KEPPLER

I'm not going to die out here. I'm not. Not like this.

ANNA

You think any of us want to?

Anna glances over her shoulder. Speaks softer.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Like it or not, we've got men here who need attention. And you're no good to me unfocused. I need you to stay focused... Can you do that?

A beat... Keppler's eyes dart to Anna. He knows she's right.

ANNA

We're still professionals and we've got a job to do, right?

Keppler breathes a deep sigh. Nods in agreement. Focuses.

KEPPLER

I'll go up front. Try the radio again.

ANNA

Good... Calloway, see if you can find us a first aid kit.

CALLOWAY

On it.

Calloway moves past Anna towards the SHU, rummaging through overturned cases and supplies...

Anna watches Keppler limp towards the front of the bus...

Then moves back to where Holt sits. He hands her the shotgun with his good arm. His weathered face, pale from blood loss.

HOLT
I'm leakin' all over the place.

ANNA
Just keep pressure on it,
Lieutenant. You'll be fine.
(pulls flare gun)
I need you to hold this open.

Anna braces herself... Takes a series of quick, deep breaths,
then cracks open the bus' back door --

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BUS - SAME

-- she leans out... FIRES TWO SHOTS into the air --

POP! POP!

The flares EXPLODE -- an eerie RED GLOW illuminates the
entire area. They begin to drizzle back to the surface...

Through the flare's flickering glow, Anna spots:

SIX GUNMEN. Scattered around the bus. Nestled amongst scrub
and rock. Armed with HK's. Silently watching her.

Anna immediately HEAVES herself back inside the bus -- Holt
SLAMS it shut behind her. She lays sprawled out on the floor,
puffing hard, heart hammering through her chest...

ANNA
We're completely surrounded.

Holt winces as he slides up to a rear window -- peers through
the galvanized steel bars...

HOLT
How many?

ANNA
I don't know. Five. Six. Maybe
more.

Holt deflates. Sags back down on his butt.

HOLT
Sonovabitch.

Anna breathes a SIGH. Tilts her head back against the wall.

ANNA
Who the hell are these guys,
Lieutenant? What do they want?

Holt watches as she caresses her bruised neck.

HOLT

No idea. But I'm certain they're
not after any of the inmates.

On Anna; her mind processing, trying to comprehend...

ANNA

Then why would they attack a
transpo? Doesn't make any sense.

Off Holt, looking seriously grim...

INT. PRISON - OPERATIONS FOYER - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Abramovich marches briskly down a corridor... The front door
snaps open, and in strides --

WARDEN EGAN REILLY (60), staunch, Irish blood coursing, forty
years on the job. This man has dealt with the state's worst
offenders, and all the bullshit that comes with them.

ABRAMOVICH (O.S.)

Warden.

Reilly ignores the greeting and continues walking straight
past him, heading towards the operations room... Abramovich
hurries to catch up and fall in line.

REILLY

How long since you lost contact?

Our POV hovers behind them as they walk shoulder to shoulder
down the corridor...

ABRAMOVICH

Just over two hours. Last
transmission was somewhere on 95.

REILLY

Smack bang in the middle of
nowhere. Jesus H. Christ! Why
didn't someone contact me earlier?

ABRAMOVICH

There's always been dead radio
pockets along that route. I just
assumed--

REILLY

Jim, thirty years in this business has taught me never to assume anything. Now I've never lost a load and I don't intend to. Get me mobile, we're goin' out.

INT. BUS - LATER - CONTINUOUS

Anna hunches down next to Holt, talking low.

ANNA

This bus was built to keep people out as well as in, right?
(off Holt's sluggish nod)
So they're going to need something like a blow torch to cut through this cage.

HOLT

Not necessary.
(nods to roof)
All they gotta do is use the fire escape.

ANNA

I thought they were rendered unusable?

HOLT

Only from the inside. They still need to operate from the outside, in case of an emergency.

Anna shoots a glance at the fire escape, searching for any sign of movement... Nothing.

IN THE SHU

McBride scans the perimeter of his buckled cage. Looking for anything to exploit. Pointless. There's no escape.

ANNA (O.S.)

How you holding up?

McBride turns to face Anna, wears a shit-eating grin.

ANNA

Look, McBride... You see anything out there. You let me know, OK?

MCBRIDE

Then what're you gonna do?

Anna sizes him up. A pause before she responds...

ANNA
Whatever it takes.

McBride loses the grin. Now there's no emotion, whatsoever.

MCBRIDE
You're going to die tonight?

Anna grits her teeth.

ANNA
Night's not over yet.

IN THE PRIMARY CAGE

A mixture of boredom and terror. Glover's wrist is agitating him. He turns to Calloway, who's kneeling down next to him.

GLOVER
Could you unlock these for me,
officer. My wrist is hurting.

CALLOWAY
You know I can't do that.

GLOVER
Where am I going to run to?

Calloway sighs with exhaustion.

CALLOWAY
Just try to relax--

TWUMP!

Glover catches a bullet in the NECK -- his head SNAPS back from impact. BLOOD gushes heavily through his fingers as he instinctively clamps his throat...

AT THE BACK OF THE BUS

Anna and Holt spin to the commotion --

ON CALLOWAY

Frantic. Trying to help stop the scarlet river pouring from Glover's destroyed throat... It's a futile effort.

CALLOWAY
Help me -- Shit! Glover's -- Shit!

BACK ON GLOVER

Gulping for air like a fish out of water. Eyes wide with shock. It's a fatal wound. He dies confused.

ANNA (O.S.)
GET DOWN!!!

And on the word "down", A BARRAGE OF HEAVY GUNFIRE ERUPTS. Raining down on the bus like fire and brimstone from hell.

More laminated glass EXPLODES from windows. Ricochetting bullets ping and spark off the barred windows...

Carmichael scrambles to the floor. Benjamin dives off his seat, and skitters back under it.

But before Gonzalez can haul himself out of his seat --

He is baptized in a HAIL OF GUNFIRE. Turning his inked-up torso into a bloody slab of Swiss cheese. He spasms violently. Blood, and splinters of glass spraying everywhere.

Calloway's scurrying along the floor on his elbows, when a BULLET slices into his left leg. He SCREAMS, but keeps moving. Shock overwhelmed by sheer adrenaline...

POP! POP! POP! Bullet indentations riddle the bus' hull. Anna snaps into a fetal position, with Holt close to her.

IN THE SHU

McBride keeps down, covering his head.

UP FRONT

Shards of glass slicing the air -- Keppler dives off his chair -- hits the floor hard.

OUTSIDE A WINDOW: MUZZLE FLASHES everywhere... Then -- it stops dead. Darkness again. Nothing but complete SILENCE.

Calloway finally spots the FIRST AID KIT under a seat and painfully reaches for it... Fingers it closer, snatches it.

ANNA (O.S.)
Is anybody hit?

CALLOWAY
Yeah... My leg.

Anna spots Gonzalez slumped in a heap on the floor. She stays low as she races to him...

Nothing but a bullet pocked mess. DARK BLOOD, pooling. She checks for a pulse... Nothing. Gives Holt a knowing look.

Carmichael and Benjamin flick shards of glass from their hair... Carmichael frantically checks himself over.

CAMICHAEL

We gotta find a way to ditch this party, man.

BENJAMIN

I hear ya.

EXT. PRISON ROOF - HELIPAD - NIGHT

Accompanied by FOUR ARMED CO's, Reilly and Abramovich pace towards the TWO D.O.C. HELICOPTERS that wait for them.

AT THE NEAREST CHOPPER

They scoot low under the deafening ROTOR BLADES, both men hooded in parkas. Reilly carries a large HUNTING RIFLE.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

Close on Calloway's trembling bloody HANDS: zipping open the FIRST AID KIT. Contents sprawl out... Adhesive tape, dressing strips, gauze bandages, scissors, forceps, swabs.

AT THE BACK OF THE BUS

Anna attends to Holt's wound. He winces as she gently positions his arm into a make-shift sling.

Calloway's managed to tourniquet his leg. He nearly hits the roof when he yanks the knot tighter.

Keppler's on edge. Rocking back and forth. Scared shitless.

KEPPLER

Those fuckers are taking pot-shots.

Something STATIC fizzles in the background --

HOLT

(low)

Quiet!

ON THE RADIO up front: A MALE VOICE. Thick Mid-West accent. Dry and harsh. Like he's just gargled a mouthful of gravel.

VOICE (O.S.)
(filtered)
*...I repeat. Transport 392, do you
copy, over?*

Everyone snaps their attention to the front of the bus, and FREEZES. You could hear a pin drop a mile away.

VOICE (O.S.)
(filtered)
*Transport 392, I say again, do you
copy, over?*

ANNA
(motioning)
Everyone keep down.

Anna ducks, quickly moves to the front of the bus...

She checks her CELL -- still no signal. *How are they doing this?* She looks back at Holt. He nods. She grabs the CB RADIO. Her other hand grips the shotgun with white knuckles.

ANNA
(into mic)
Who is this?.

A beat of static...

VOICE (O.S.)
(filtered)
I trust I have your attention now.

ANNA
(into mic)
I warn you, we have police back-up
on the way.

VOICE (O.S.)
(filtered)
*Trying to bluff your way out will
not help the situation, officer
Wilson.*

Anna spins to Holt, confused.

ANNA
(into mic)
How do you know my name?

A beat of static...

VOICE (O.S.)
 (filtered)
*I'm going to make this very easy
 for you. Exit the bus and no one
 else dies. It's really that simple.*

ANNA
 (into mic)
 We can't do that, and you know it.

A beat of static...

VOICE (O.S.)
 (filtered)
*Then I will begin executing each of
 you, one by one.*

BENJAMIN
 Fuck's sake, just find out what
 they want and give it to 'em.

ANNA
 Shut up!

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)
 They're giving us a way out here.

ANNA
 I SAID SHUT UP!!!

VOICE (O.S.)
 (filtered)
*You should listen to your inmate,
 officer. Perhaps you might live
 long enough to see the night
 through.*

CALLOWAY
 They can hear us?

Anna's face curls into sheer rage.

ANNA
 (into mic)
 Who are you people?!
 (static)
 Answer me!

No response. Holt takes the MIC from her.

HOLT
 (into mic)
 This is Lieutenant Holt speaking.
 I'm commanding officer here.
 (more)

HOLT (CONT'D)
 What exactly is it you want? Tell
 us and we'll consider it.

A beat of static...

VOICE (O.S.)
 (filtered)
*I'm positive your driver can
 explain everything, Lieutenant. He
 knows exactly what we want. Isn't
 that right, Sergeant?*

Holt looks at Anna, then shoots a glance at Keppler -- who
 now looks whiter than the entire K.K.K.

HOLT
 (into mic)
 Why not just tell me now?
 (no answer)
 Do you copy? Hello?

Nothing but dead air. Anna and Holt turn to Keppler.

ANNA
 What the hell is he talking about,
 Sergeant?

KEPPLER
 How the hell should I know?

HOLT
 Anna, now just wait a second.

Keppler starts backing away from them, up the aisle...

KEPPLER
 You don't believe this guy?

ANNA
 Right now I'd believe anything.

KEPPLER
 This is bullshit. He's trying to
 turn us against each other. This is
 exactly what they want.

Anna moves slowly towards Keppler...

KEPPLER
 Don't come any further.

ANNA
 You tell me who those guys are.

On Keppler; sweating like a priest in a brothel...

HOLT (O.S.)
Christ, Keppler. For the love of
god, tell me she's wrong here.

Suddenly -- Keppler LUNGES for Calloway, and violently
WRENCHES him back...

CALLOWAY
Hey! What are you doing?

...pulls his REVOLVER, puts it to Calloway's head.

KEPPLER
Stay the fuck back!

Carmichael and Benjamin urge Keppler to pull the trigger.

BENJAMIN
Do it, man. Do it!

HOLT
Everybody just calm down.

ANNA
Let him go, Sergeant.

Anna slowly puts down the shotgun, raises her hands.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Sergeant, please...
(not budging)
I'm on your side, but you have to
tell me what these guys want. If
you know--

Tears streaming down Keppler's pudgy cheeks...

KEPPLER
They're not going to stop until
they get in here. We're as good as
dead. ALL OF US! FUCKING DEAD!

HOLT
Just let the kid go. He's not the
enemy here.

Keppler's growing more frantic. Like a cornered animal. One
that's about to do something really stupid.

KEPPLER
It's not my fault. I never knew.

ANNA
What's not your fault? Ray...
Listen to me. Our names. How do
they know our names?

Gun muzzle pressing harder against Calloway's temple...

ANNA (O.S.)
Think about what you're doing here.
We need you. Please--

A tense beat... Keppler's terrified eyes soften into a distant glaze. He releases his grip around Calloway's throat. Calloway skitters away from him...

CALLOWAY
You crazy bastard.

Still gripping his handgun, Keppler slouches. Defeated.

KEPPLER
They double-crossed us.

HOLT
Who did?

No answer... Frustrated, Anna snatches her shotgun off the floor, and points it directly at Keppler.

ANNA
You better start spilling some
beans, Keppler. Pronto!
(cocks shotgun)
Now cut the shit!

KEPPLER
All I had to do was drive it to
Beaumont, then someone would take
care of the rest. But someone must
have tipped them off. Double-
crossed the original buyers. I
don't know. I swear to Christ.

HOLT
Drive what across state lines?

Anna lowers the shotgun.

ANNA
Sergeant, what are we carrying on
this bus?

Keppler shakes his head, sobbing heavily...

ANNA (O.S.)

KEPPLER!

KEPPLER

I'm sorry.

Keppler breathes out a deep sigh, and places his handgun underneath his chin --

KEPPLER

Tell my family, I'm so sorry.

ANNA

NO!!!!

BANG!

The gun drops. Keppler falls into a heap. Stone-cold DEAD.

ANNA

NO! KEPPLER!

Anna bolts to him -- but Carmichael is already there -- he SLAMS Anna out of the way and DIVES for Keppler's GUN --

Anna pivots and LUNGES, but Carmichael already has the GUN pulled on her -- inches from her face. Anna backs away...

CARMICHAEL

Yeah, that's right, bitch.

Carmichael edges back towards the primary cage door. Trembling as he holds the gun. Nerves twitched to shit.

CARMICHAEL

(cage door)

Open it.

HOLT

Put it down, Carmichael.

ANNA

Leave this bus, you're a dead man.

CARMICHAEL

I stay in here and I'm a dead man, too. Now open the fucking door!

(to Benjamin)

Yo, Tonto!

Benjamin gets up from his seat and moves behind Carmichael.

Anna opens the cage door -- pushes it open. Carmichael and Benjamin cautiously edge through it backwards...

Benjamin can see McBride watching them with ridicule.

BENJAMIN

Sorry, brother. Proximity issue.
Nothing personal.

MCBRIDE

What makes you think I'd join you
two dip-shits anyway?

Benjamin dismisses the remark with a venomous glare. A tiny smirk creeps into the left corner of his mouth.

BENJAMIN

Enjoy your stay, amigo.

Now both outside the cage -- Carmichael SLAMS the primary cage door shut again, still keeping the gun trained on Anna.

Benjamin hits the RELEASE BUTTON next to Kepler's seat --

The front-side accordion door is buckled. Gas HISSES as it tries to fold itself back, but it needs to be physically pried open. Benjamin gets to work -- CUT TO --

EXT. GUNMAN'S POV - SAME

Our INFRARED TACTICAL SCOPE whip-pans, finding Benjamin and Calloway fleeing the bus. Stumbling into the darkness...

INT. BUS - SAME

Anna and Calloway gingerly peer out through a shattered window, watching the two escapees disappear into the dark...

EXT. EMBANKMENT - SAME

Benjamin and Carmichael clumsily work their way up the embankment, near ecstatic at their new found freedom.

BENJAMIN

(whisper-shout)

Move your stanky ass, man.

Almost at the lip of the embankment... The long road to freedom awaits. Seemingly still undetected by our bad guys.

CARMICHAEL

We made it! We fucking made it!

PFFT!

Benjamin catches Carmichael SLUMP in front of him, but before he can grasp what just happened -- GUNFIRE lights up the embankment like a disco dance floor...

Benjamin DIVES behind a large BOULDER -- BULLETS cracking and splitting rock. He peers over at Carmichael's lifeless body --

Carmichael took a direct sniper shot to the HEAD. Massive trauma. Nothing left, except cartilage and chips of skull.

INT. BUS - SAME

Anna's losing it. All she can do is watch.

EXT. EMBANKMENT - SAME

Benjamin is pinned down. Rounds SPARKING rock... Fuck it. You only get one shot. He makes a quick dash for the highway...

He BOLTS up the slope in a zig-zag formation. Sure, he can run, but he can't outrun a bullet -- PFFT! He takes one in the back. Wheezing, he musters up the strength to continue --

PFFT! PFFT! PFFT! His body jolts from more GUNFIRE. His chest ruptured, torn wide open. Dead before he hits the ground --

The gunfire ceases.

INT. BUS - SAME

Silence again... Anna looks away. Her eyes filled with complete despair. Maybe McBride was right after all.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT - SECONDS LATER

Rotor blades DRONING. SEARCH LIGHTS flare as they rush towards us. WHUMMMM! The TWO CHOPPERS whizz past us...

INT. D.O.C. HELICOPTER - SAME

Abramovich and Reilly gaze out from their back windows, carefully scanning the desert landscape with INFRARED BINOCES.

INT. BUS - NIGHT - LATER

Anna marches back to where Holt sits. Hands him the shotgun, and starts scanning the bus...

ANNA

We need to find what they want.

Frustrated, Anna starts TOSSING supply cases... She pauses. Starts running her hands along the rim of the Primary Cage, searching for anything out of the ordinary...

IN THE SHU

McBride watches her with a mixture of cynicism and amusement.

INSIDE THE PRIMARY CAGE

Calloway helps her. Peering under seats. Running his hand along the floorboards...

Holt watches on. His face pale. Breathes in deep. We can tell there's something on his mind. Something bad. Really bad.

HOLT

(softly)

You're looking in the wrong spot.

No response from Anna. On a mission. She keeps searching...

Holt looks down at his lap. Disgusted with himself.

HOLT

I said you're looking in the wrong spot!

That stops her. She turns to Holt, breathing hard. Confused. Calloway now also stands behind her, equally perplexed.

ANNA

What are you talking about?

Holt sluggishly raises his head, meets her gaze.

HOLT

I know what they're after.

Holt slides across to the swing-seat on his butt... Blood smears. Anna spots something. Moves to where he was sitting --

-- and kneels down. Pulls a SWISS ARMY KNIFE from her belt, and starts wedging the tip of the blade around a SMALL FLOORBOARD TILE, that appears discolored from the rest.

Holt and Calloway watch on.

Anna manages to wedge the blade in deep enough... It's hollow underneath... She wiggles the TILE... IT POPS. Bingo!

Anna's POV: we can see the tip of TWO SQUARE PACKAGES. Wedged in tight. Wrapped in tape. Cushioned by white styrofoam.

Anna RIPS back more floor-board tiling -- CRACK -- revealing: PLASTIC-CLAD BRICKS. At least three rows deep of the stuff.

CALLOWAY

Drugs? We're holding drugs?

Holt doesn't respond. He just nods.

Anna sits back on her ass. Dumbfounded. Staring into space.

ANNA

How much of it are we carrying?

A beat.

HOLT

Close to half a ton.

ANNA

Jesus Christ.

CALLOWAY

Oh, man.

McBride starts billowing out a huge LAUGH.

MCBRIDE

Always knew you screws were
crooked motherfuckers, but this
tops the cake.

For once, Holt doesn't disagree -- CUT TO --

INT. BLACK VAN - NIGHT - SAME

We're tight on --

DEREK CROFT (54), steel-grey eyes, crows feet, sun-weathered tan, salt and pepper stubble, ex-Special Forces now gun for hire. Combat vet from a dozen wars you've never heard of.

Around him: SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT. High-end. Military grade. The kind of stuff most of us wouldn't know how to switch on.

Bathed in an electronic glow, Croft pours over streams of intel on his NOTEBOOK. The DRIVER-SIDE DOOR opens. In hops --

DOMINICK SINCLAIR (44), south-African, hard looking fuck, bodybuilder big, puffy eyes, cauliflower ears. A jagged SCAR trails across his scowled lips. Weapon of choice: HK-G36K.

Leaning forward from the BACK OF THE VAN, is another Merc, also armed to the teeth --

AZMANYET ZAKAEV (36), sports a BLACK SKULL on his neck. Could be Chechen, maybe Ukrainian, hard to tell. He looks sleepy-eyed, slow, inattentive. Don't kid yourself. He's not.

Sinclair checks his ammo clip.

SINCLAIR

Thought this was going to be a
simple smash and grab.

Croft ignores the question for a beat... Slaps shut his notebook, finally looks up at Sinclair. Ice cold.

CROFT

When I gave the order to bring down
the bus, I didn't mean crashing it
completely off the fucking highway.

Sinclair grits his teeth. Zakaev shoots him a taut look. The mood is intense. You could cut the air with a knife. No doubt Croft is their leader, but there's history between these two.

SINCLAIR

Well, we're not gaining any
progress down there. They're packed
in like sardines. We can't get
close enough.

CROFT

How many are left?

ZAKAEV

Four. Three guards. One inmate.

Croft checks his watch.

CROFT

Gentleman, our employers want a sit-
rep in less than one hour. We need
to breach that bus and acquire the
cargo. Won't be long before Tijuana
gets the drop and realizes they've
been jacked.

(more)

CROFT (CONT'D)

Last thing I want is a skirmish
match in broad daylight. Make it
happen! And make it quick!

Sinclair glares. Takes it on the chin. Exits the SUV --

Zakaev presses a finger to his WIRELESS EARPIECE, receiving a
message. His expression is dire.

ZAKAEV

We've got a problem.

CROFT

I'll take care of it. You two stay
with the bus.

INT. BUS - SAME

Anna is still shell-shocked. Pacing tensely.

ANNA

How many CO's are in on this?

Holt looks even worse than when we last saw him. Paler. Eyes
sleepy. Beads of sweat. Knows it's the end of the line.

HOLT

Not sure. The drug money runs deep.
From my understanding, Marvin and
Lorenzo were initially working with
connected inmates. They eventually
met with Cartel brass, and made a
deal to transport it from A to B.

ANNA

And Keppler is their main driver?

HOLT

Was.

Anna glares at Holt, both terrified and furious.

HOLT

Anna I wasn't part of it, OK. I was
never on the pay-roll.

ANNA

But you knew the whole time?

HOLT

Jesus, wake up will you. Something
like this could bring down the
entire department.
(more)

HOLT (CONT'D)

It would be like opening pandora's box. Everyone gets hurt. Everyone. CO's. Their families. Reputations. Everyday lives, Anna. So I turned a blind eye... A lot of us did.

ANNA

That's just as bad Lieutenant. Now look at us. People are dead. You fucked us real good.

Carmichael; trying to fit together this grim puzzle.

CALLOWAY

That still doesn't explain who those guys outside are, and how they know about the bus.

HOLT

I don't know the answer to that. They must have somehow gotten wind. Working for a rival cartel maybe. Decided they'd take a five finger discount. I don't know.

CALLOWAY

Then someone must have gotten to Marvin and Lorenzo. I mean how else would they know about the bus?

HOLT

If that's the case, they probably know everything. The route. How many officers. Which inmates. Radio checks. Response time. You name it. Probably had our air before we even left the yard this morning.

Calloway looks at Anna with pleading eyes.

CALLOWAY

So now what?

Off Anna; her mind churning...

ANNA

Now we try and gain some leverage.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT - SAME

A SHERIFF PATROL CAR cruises along the desolate highway. It's blue and red SIREN, flashing silently...

INT. SHERIFF'S VEHICLE - NIGHT - SAME

SHERIFF WILCOX (50's), desert tan, earnest gaze, soulful eyes, cowboy hat, your stereotypical small town Sheriff, fiddles with his CB RADIO. STATIC hisses back at him...

He scans the road ahead, searching for something. Stops his car, winds down his window, pulls his FLASHLIGHT and pans it over the guard-rail, inspecting... Drives on...

FURTHER UP AHEAD

TWO BLACK SUVs sit by the side of the highway. THREE GUNMEN casually stand beside them, mingling amongst themselves, talking and laughing. No sign of weapons or ski-masks.

SHERIFF'S POV: the men spot the approaching vehicle. One of them walks towards us, waves at the Sheriff. It's Croft.

INT/EXT. SHERIFF'S VEHICLE - SAME

Sheriff Wilcox leans out his driver-side window, suspicious. Notices the men are wearing military-style fatigues.

Croft approaches the window. All smiles.

CROFT
Evening officer.

SHERIFF WILCOX
You folks alright?

CROFT
Sure. Help you with somethin'?

SHERIFF WILCOX
I got a call from a truck driver, few hours back. Said he saw some flares being fired off around this location. Thought maybe there was an accident or something. Ya'll see anything like that?

Croft pauses, thinking hard. Shakes his head.

CROFT
Sorry, sir. Ain't seen anything
like that all night.

The Sheriff studies Croft. Something doesn't add up.

SHERIFF WILCOX
Uh, huh. Tell me, what ya'll doing
out here this time of night anyway?

CROFT
Oh, we've been hunting. Was
actually just gettin' ready to
drive back into town.

SHERIFF WILCOX
Hunting?

The Sheriff smiles at Croft. It's obvious this guy is full of
shit. He keeps a vigilant eye on the other men, who are all
watching the conversation very intensely.

SHERIFF WILCOX (CONT'D)
Son, there's a lot of empty road
between towns out here. Exactly
which town would you talking about?

A sinister smirk breaks out across Croft's face -- CUT TO --

INT. BUS - NIGHT - LATER

Anna and Calloway pull up BRICKS from the floorboards,
tossing them down the aisle. Some are damaged from gunfire
and the crash, spilling chunks of BROWN POWDER everywhere.

From behind the SHU cage, McBride eye-fucks the small
mountain of DRUGS already accumulating. There's serious
weight. Millions of dollars worth, right in front of him.

Calloway stops... Notices something... A BLUE AND RED
FLICKER. It fills the bus' interior with a soft glow.

Holt notices it too. So does McBride. Calloway nudges Anna.

CALLOWAY
Look!

Anna peers out the nearest window.

Her POV: above the crest of the embankment, there's the
unmistakable blue and red strobe of a POLICE SIREN.

Anna watches intently...

Her POV again: there's a FIGURE moving down the embankment towards them. Flashlight panning through the darkness...

Relief seeps into Anna's expression.

CALLOWAY (O.S.)
Oh, man, yes!

MCBRIDE (O.S.)
Fuck me. A cop when ya need one.

EXT. EMBANKMENT - SAME

The dark figure stops for a beat, accesses the scene below him. His face is obscured from us. Bathed in shadow.

SHERIFF WILCOX
Sheriff's county! I'm coming down.

He places one hand on his holstered REVOLVER -- and cautiously continues on...

INT. BUS - SAME

Calloway starts to peel open the bus' side accordion doors. Anna stops him. Eyes locked on the approaching figure...

CALLOWAY
Anna, he's a cop.

Anna sticks the muzzle of her shotgun through a gaping hole in the window.

ANNA
STOP! Don't come any further.

EXT. EMBANKMENT - SAME

The figure freezes. Hand still grips his holstered gun.

ANNA (O.S.)
Identify yourself!

SHERIFF WILCOX
(raises hands)
Names Wilcox... Here ya go.

The Sheriff clips off his DEPUTY BADGE. Holds it up. It glints in the moonlight.

INT. BUS - SAME

On Anna; still uncertain. Chews her bottom lip.

HOLT
He looks legit, Anna.

ANNA
I don't like it. They could still
be out there.

HOLT
I hardly think we're in a position
to decline any help.

ANNA
We still have a job to do. If it
means staying in here until help
arrives--

HOLT
You popped those flares. Help has
arrived.

Anna scoffs.

ANNA
We don't know that for sure.

HOLT
Calloway, open that door.

Calloway peels open the bus' accordion doors. Anna joins him.

OUTSIDE THE BUS

The SHERIFF comes into view... Just as we suspected --

IT'S CROFT.

CROFT
Damn, you folks alright?

CALLOWAY
We saw your siren.

ANNA
How'd you find us?

CROFT
Oh, I had a truck driver radio in,
an hour or so ago. Thought he saw
some flares around this location.
(more)

CROFT (CONT'D)

Just figured I'd drive up and take a gander. Luckily I spotted that busted guard rail.

CALLOWAY

Mister, you've got no idea how glad we are to see you.

ANNA

Do you have a working radio?

CROFT

Sure do.

ANNA

Good, because I need to use it.

CROFT

Not a problem.

Croft scans the length of the battered bus with his flashlight beam, illuminating the myriad of BULLET HOLES.

CROFT

Jeeezus. What happened here?
Gunfight at the O.K. Corral?
(to Anna)
How many of 'em were there?

ANNA

Not sure. Six maybe.

Croft shakes his head. He's putting on quite an act.

CROFT

Thought I was in for another quiet shift tonight. Guess not.

Anna motions to the embankment's crest.

ANNA

Did you pass any vehicles up there?

CROFT

(shakes no)
Haven't seen another soul all night, until now.

ANNA

Then we really should move. They could return any minute.

Croft scans the dark cliffs around him...

CROFT
I'll wait here while you round
everyone up.

Calloway and Anna hop back up into the bus... Croft studies them, incognito working overtime. He's got the bus clocked.

EXT. SOMEWHERE ABOVE THE HIGHWAY - SAME

Tight on Sinclair; nestled in behind rocks and rubble, LISTENING to Anna and Holt through his earpiece. He watches the bus through his 40x spotting scope.

HOLT (O.S.)
(filtered)
*Anna, I'm too weak. I need you and
Calloway to go with him. I can stay
here and hold the fort. Make sure
everything's Kosher until more help
arrives.*

Behind Sinclair -- a Gunman positions a small SATELLITE DISH. Next to him is an open HARDIGG CASE, revealing a high-powered LISTENING DEVICE cushioned in grey foam. Very high-end tech.

INT. BUS - SAME

Holt hands Anna the shotgun. She doesn't take it.

ANNA
Lieutenant.

HOLT
Exactly! I'm still commanding officer here. Now take this and my shu keys, and link McBride. You're gettin' the hell out of here.

ANNA
They'll storm the bus.

HOLT
I'm not asking, Anna.

ANNA
I don't understand, you can still make it.

HOLT
Christ, look at me. I'm finished.
Now just go. That's an order... GO!

Anna snatches the shotgun from Holt. Hands it over to Calloway. Takes Holt's keys, and approaches --

THE SHU

Where McBride smirks back with gleaming eyes.

ANNA

Looks like that new cell of yours
will have to wait a little longer.

MCBRIDE

I wouldn't open that if I were you.

ANNA

Here's the deal, McBride. You so
much as take a wrong step, I shoot
you dead. Understood?

He thoughtfully nods.

She unlocks the shu cage. Calloway moves in behind Anna --
shotgun levelled at McBride's head. Anna quickly bends down
and unshackles his ankles from the floor.

ANNA

Up. Nice and slow.

McBride stands, shards of glass tinkling off him. Anna steps
back out of the shu, making way for McBride.

ANNA

Let's go.

McBride limps out into the aisle... Anna looks back at Holt
laying there in a pool of dried blood, close to death.

They lock eyes. A silent acknowledgement. He nods.

EXT. BUS - NIGHT - MINUTES LATER

Anna hops down first. Flashlight in one hand, shotgun in the
other. McBride and Calloway trail behind her...

Anna walks over to Croft. She's not liking this. Something's
grating on her.

ANNA

How far to the nearest town or
hospital?

Croft takes off his cowboy hat and scratches his scalp.

CROFT

Nearest town, at least two hours away. Nearest hospital even further.

ANNA

Great. Maybe we should all stand by the side of the road, stick our thumbs out.

CROFT

Young lady, I'm doin' the best I can here. Now I've got a Deputy who can assist us. He's got a secured van we can use until your superiors arrive... Good enough for ya?

Anna takes this in. It's their best and only option.

ANNA

Let's move out.

Our convoy staggers up the embankment, towards the --

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Quiet as a tomb. The Sheriff's VEHICLE sits on the side of the road. Its SIREN strobes the asphalt...

Anna motions for Calloway and McBride to follow her.

They arrive at the vehicle. Croft opens the back-door for McBride to get in -- they lock eyes for a second --

As McBride goes to climb in, his eyes narrow. Spots some SMEARED BLOOD on the driver-side door --

Anna pans her flashlight over the ROCKY CLIFFS above...

Nothing but macabre rock formations and looming shadows. Suddenly -- SOMETHING SHIFTS -- A SHADOW -- A HUMAN FORM.

Anna's breath quickens as the horror registers on her face.

And at that very second: HEAVY GUNFIRE ERUPTS from above. Silenced weapons PUFFING... It's a killbox.

Croft wheels, brandishing his BERETTA -- OPENS FIRE --

Anna raises her shotgun at Croft -- CHK-CHK-BOOM -- dives behind the vehicle. Calloway joins her, pulls his revolver --

McBride dives into the vehicle -- via the driver-side door --

Croft slides down the lip of the embankment, still FIRING...

CROFT
(into wireless earpiece)
Sabre-one, take primary. I say
again, take primary. MOVE!

The vehicle is getting absolutely pulverized with lead. You can almost smell the cordite.

INSIDE THE SHERIFF'S VEHICLE

It's a hailstorm of flying glass. McBride RIPS out A PANEL near the ignition tumbler, exposing a rats nest of WIRES -- gets to work on hot-wiring -- CUT TO --

INT. EMBANKMENT - SAME

Zakaev and three Gunmen, move down the steep embankment, clocking the bus through their night-vision goggles. HK's, panning left-to-right -- CUT BACK TO --

EXT. OUTSIDE SHERIFF'S VEHICLE - HIGHWAY - SAME

Anna cocks her shotgun and -- CLICK -- no ammo. Fuck! She tosses it and whips out her REVOLVER -- fires off some blind shots over the hood of the car -- POP! POP! POP!

Calloway's paralyzed with fear. Can't move an inch. Bullets spark the asphalt next to his feet.

EXT. OUTSIDE BUS - SAME

Zakaev and his men reach the bus' front-door. He turns off his night-vision, looks back at his men, counts down with his fingers. 3...2...1... Wrenches the accordion door open...

INT. BUS - SAME

Zakaev hops up, sweeping the bus through his Tactical Scope... WHAM! He KICKS open the PRIMARY CAGE --

Tight on his ski-mask: EYES suddenly go wide.

IN THE PRIMARY CAGE

Croft is slouched in the middle of the aisle, SURROUNDED BY BRICKS -- all torn wide open. Chunks of "raw and pure" everywhere. There's also SHOTGUN SHELLS littered around him.

Each one cut open, with GUNPOWDER sprinkled over the drugs. And -- the spare GAS CANNISTER lays on its side. Empty.

Breathing heavy, Holt wearily looks up... Still has enough strength to wear a "fuck you" grin.

HOLT
Your mothers.

Holt unveils A LOADED FLARE-GUN from his Parka --

Zakaev stiffens his aim, but he doesn't have time to react, or realize he's standing in a pool of gas --

HOLT fires two shots into his DIY concoction of fuel and gunpowder -- PSSSSSSSSHHH -- a HUGE FLASH-FIRE erupts...

A SLITHER OF FLAME shoots to where Zakaev stands... ENGULFS HIM -- SCREAMS as he goes up like a Roman candle --

The other Gunmen haul ass out the bus... GUNPOWDER POPPING!

Holt watches with glee, as Zakaev collapses into a FLAMING heap of molten flesh...

Now the FIRE spreads... The whole bus is being gutted by flames... WHOOOOOOSH! It consumes Holt... Gone.

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME

Croft spins to see --

FLAMES roaring from the bus' windows. His retirement fund, disappearing before his very eyes...

Croft's expression is beyond anger. His eyes blaze with the force of a thousand suns. This shit just got personal.

EXT. OUTSIDE SHERIFF'S VEHICLE - HIGHWAY - SAME

Anna and Calloway are still locked into a messy fire-fight... Anna's getting low on ammo. One clip left.

INSIDE

Macro on McBride's tattooed FINGERS: delicately twisting wires together... The vehicle COUGHS and SPLUTTERS to life...

McBride pumps the gas -- VROOOOOOM! -- seconds from tearing away, when Anna opens the passenger-side door and dives in. Calloway throws himself into the back-seat --

ANNA
GET US OUT OF HERE!!!

McBride FLOORS it --

SCREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE! The Sheriff's vehicle speeds off, leaving a cloud of smoke and burnt rubber...

Croft watches the bullet-pocked vehicle ZIP past his position... He screams into his wireless earpiece --

CROFT
ALL TEAMS PURSUE! I WANT THEM
ALIVE! GO! GO! GO!

INT. SHERIFF'S VEHICLE - SAME

A well earned beat... Calloway and Anna breathe a sigh of relief, watching Croft's FIGURE shrink smaller and smaller...

Anna turns to McBride. Raises her gun at him.

ANNA
Your skills come in handy.

MCBRIDE
That part was easy. Driving with
cuffs on and a gun pointed at you -
that's a little harder.

A beat. Anna considers... But thinks better of it.

ANNA
Just keep heading south.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT - SAME

The Helicopter skims low, trailing along the highway...

INT. D.O.C. HELICOPTER - SAME

Abramovich is still scanning the terrain... Checks a HAND-HELD GPS device in his lap, then leans over to Reilly --

ABRAMOVICH
We should be coming up to their
last known transmission, very soon.

Reilly nods. Then picks up his RIFLE. Checks his ammo.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT - NOT LONG AFTER

Open road. The highway splits into FOUR opposite lanes. The Sheriff's vehicle passes a DINER SIGN. We're nearing a town.

INT. SHERIFF'S VEHICLE - SAME

IN THE BACK

Calloway stares out his shattered window, air blowing in his face -- he hears something -- pivots to the back windshield --

CALLOWAY

Oh, shit.

Anna wheels -- McBride shoots a tense look into his mirror --

TWO BLACK SUVs: racing towards them at FULL SPEED...

ANNA

McBride!

--keeps his eyes locked on the approaching SUVs.

MCBRIDE

Got two blown tires. Can't go any faster.

Calloway braces himself. The SUVs are now right on them...

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS - SAME

One of the SUVs ACCELERATES forward -- and BUMPS the Sheriff's rear-end, trying to nudge it into a tail spin...

The Sheriff's vehicle SQUEALS across both lanes -- swerving into an OFF-RAMP... Both SUVs mirror the evasive driving...

McBride quickly gains control again. Anna appears out her side window -- BLASTING at the nearest SUV --

Now they're on a different stretch of highway, travelling in a completely opposite direction...

An SUV closes in, bumper-to-bumper. This one is minus a windshield (Holt shot it out earlier) -- A GUNMAN emerges from the front passenger seat, crawls onto the hood --

-- and LEAPS onto the back trunk. Calloway SWEEPS his legs out from underneath him -- he topples, but manages to grab hold of the windshield frame -- starts to drag Calloway out with him... Not the idea Calloway had in mind.

WHAM! -- the other SUV side-swipes the Sheriff's vehicle --

The JOLT pushes the Gunman forward, enabling him to force his way into the back-seat with Calloway... He slides in, PULLS A LARGE BOWIE KNIFE -- grappling with Calloway...

Anna can't help Calloway because of the protective plexi-divider that separates the front from the back. Besides, she's got her own problems. The SUV RAMS again -- WHAM!

ON CALLOWAY

Struggling with the Gunman, who's much more powerful and agile than him. Both men are tossed around in the back seat.

The Gunman SLASHES Calloway with his knife -- Calloway blocks it with his arm -- he wails from the DEEP GASH -- the Gunman turns the knife on Calloway and PLUNGES it -- Calloway grabs his wrist, inches from his throat... This fucker is strong.

UP FRONT

McBride has the focus of a NASCAR driver on crank. He zeroes in on something --

FURTHER UP AHEAD

A HUGE SEMI-TRAILER cannons down the highway...

Track with this eighteen wheel, chrome behemoth. Lit up like a sci-fi Christmas tree. The cab mural is a stylized American flag. A side sticker says: "Without trucks, America stops!"

INT. TRUCK CAB - SAME

The soothing lyrics of Dan Seal's "Big Wheels in The Moonlight" kicks from the CD-PLAYER. Stark contrast to the approaching mayhem outside.

The truck's DRIVER (40's), hums along in unison... He's a huge Ox of a man. Scruffy ginger beard, greasy denim.

He takes a swig of his Red Bull, spots McBride SCREAMING up alongside him... He can see it's a cop car --

But the vehicle doesn't pass him, and there's a smashed windshield with... Bullet holes? What the hell?

Perplexed, the Trucker also spots the two SUVs, now trailing in behind... But they suddenly drop back, out of view --

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS - SAME

A SNIPER lays in a pocket of scrub and cacti, ground level to the side of the highway. Completely camouflaged in webbing.

SNIPER'S POV: the scope ZOOMS into the side of the rigs TANKER... We notice a FLAMMABLE LIQUID warning sign -- PFFT!

THUNK! The bullet penetrates the tanker. A hazy spray of BLACK LIQUID ejects from the bullet hole...

THE SHERIFF'S VEHICLE

Begins to SLIDE across the leaking liquid... An asphalt skating rink in the middle of the New Mexico desert.

IN THE BACK

Calloway is still pinned down. The KNIFE creeps closer to his throat... The vehicle SWERVES, throwing the Gunman off him -- buys Calloway about half a second -- he uses it -- draws his weapon -- BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! The Gunman slumps DEAD.

Speckled CRIMSON and puffing hard, Calloway collapses against his seat, exhausted. That was too close.

SNIPER'S POV AGAIN

The scope whip-pans to the TRAIL of liquid that now coats the highway -- PFFT! -- it sparks -- the trail IGNITES...

BOOOOM!

The RIGS TANKER erupts in a HUGE FIREBALL -- the force of the blast snaps the coupling between the tanker and the cab -- which is now skimming along the road, a flaming heap...

The highway is now a WALL OF FLAME.

McBride immediately reacts -- RIPS the wheel HARD LEFT.

The vehicle abruptly SPINS 180 degrees -- then FLIPS... SMASHING into the base of an OVERHEAD POWER LINE -- CRACK!!!

The vehicle snaps the pole in two -- A HUGE FLASH -- as WIRES are ripped from their transformers, flailing across the road like a runaway garden hose from hell. RAW VOLTAGE spewing...

INT. SHERIFF'S VEHICLE - MOMENTS LATER

Anna's eyes wearily blink open... Everything is upside down.

ANNA
(softly)
Calloway?

No answer. She turns to McBride... The driver-seat is EMPTY.

FSSSHH! A big FLASH outside, accompanied by a loud ELECTRICAL FIZZING sound. Anna reels, hears footsteps close to her...

Her POV: A rifle-butt races towards us -- CRACK! -- CUT TO --

EXT. DESERT SCRUB - SAME - CONTINUOUS

McBride tears ass through the desert like a heat-seeking ballistic... Suddenly -- SINCLAIR appears out of from behind a large boulder, and rifle-butts him in the face -- WHACK!

McBride's head snaps back -- hits the ground, hard. Shakes the daze from his head. Spits out chips of bloody teeth.

Sinclair calmly flicks up his Night-Vision goggles. Edges forward. A gun wielding predator, closing in on his prey.

McBride starts chuckling. Puts his hands up. Surrenders.

MCBRIDE
Just hang on a sec.

He gets to his knees, carefully places his hands behind his head. Battered and bloody, grinning back at his assailant.

MCBRIDE (CONT'D)
What say you put that gun down. Let
me throw some bones.

On Sinclair; about to squeeze the trigger...

MCBRIDE (O.S.)
The fuck you care? I got no dice.

Sinclair pauses... Considers... Relaxes his grip.

SINCLAIR
Why not?

Sinclair rips off his goggles. Clips off the MAG from his rifle, tosses everything aside. Cracks his neck.

McBride springs to his feet... Eyes lock. They start to circle each other... Two killers doing what they do best.

Sinclair pulls a small KNIFE from a wrist-sheath -- SPRINGS forward -- SLASHES -- misses by the width of a mouse hair.

McBride counters with an ELBOW to the jaw -- CRUNCH! Then brings his knee up -- RIBS CRACK! Sinclair gets the wind knocked out of him -- buckles over --

McBride rushes again -- Sinclair SWOOPS his legs out from underneath -- KICKS him off a LEDGE -- McBride grabs his leg, pulls him along for the ride -- they tumble over the lip...

...and land on the ground below with a heavy THUD. Dust billows around this tangled mass of brawn and bones. The knife is lost in a thicket of scrub.

Sinclair SLAMS McBride in the face with his fist... McBride flings him over the top of him, rolls onto his feet... It's a sickening school yard brawl, and we're loving every second.

Sinclair; now also back on his feet, staring down McBride. Seconds from launching another attack on each other, when --

PFFT! McBride catches a ROUND in the leg -- he drops.

MCBRIDE

Ahhh, you fuck--

A GUNMAN appears over McBride. Lowers his Silenced Beretta.

SINCLAIR

I was winning that.

GUNMAN

You can play later. Time to move.

On McBride; eyes filled with more venom than a Cobra. Grinning manically at his opponent. This is not over.

INT. UNKNOWN BASEMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Anna awakes to find herself CUFFED to a wooden beam. She pivots to gain some type of bearing...

MOONLIGHT shafts between wooden planks, illuminating cobwebs and rusty tools. We're in some type of dusty old basement.

ANNA

Where am I?

Floorboards creaking overhead. She begins to shiver with fear. Muffled sobs. Wounds still throbbing.

MCBRIDE (O.S.)
Might wanna save those tears.
You're gonna need them.

Anna peers through the darkness...

Across the room: She can just make out McBride. BOUND to an overhead beam. Rusty chain rattling as he dangles upright. Looks like he's had the living shit kicked out of him.

ANNA
Where's Calloway?

McBride ignores the question.

ANNA
Answer me, McBride!

MCBRIDE
I don't know. You and me is all
that's left.

Tears well in Anna's eyes. Calloway did not deserve this. Enraged, she furiously tries to free herself. Pointless.

MCBRIDE
Ain't this a bitch? Clock's about
to stop ticking and I don't even
get one last meal.

A beat... Anna composes herself. Shoots McBride a look.

ANNA
Then help me reset it?

MCBRIDE
What?

ANNA
You heard me.

MCBRIDE
You pigs got me into this mess. So
why the fuck would I help you?

ANNA
Because you've got nothing to
lose except time.

McBride scoffs. Turns to Anna with that perpetual smirk.

MCBRIDE

What do you think they're doing up there, preparing a baby shower? We're dead. Deal with it. I have.

ANNA

We're not dead yet. We can work together, McBride.

MCBRIDE

Even if I was to make it out of here, I'm straight back into a cell. I may as well just hang here.

ANNA

But what if you had one last shot at freedom. And I'm talking about real freedom.

McBride's eyes sear into Anna...

MCBRIDE

Just what are you sayin' exactly?

ANNA

You know exactly what I'm sayin'.

INT. D.O.C. HELICOPTER - NIGHT - SAME

Abramovich turns to Reilly and barks into his headphone MIC, pointing to something below...

ABRAMOVICH

(filtered)

Down there. Look!

Reilly edges over to Abramovich. Takes aim with his Binocs.

Reilly's POV: on a section of highway, punctuated with BLACK SKID-MARKS... The SEARCH-LIGHT BEAM follows a trail of debris that leads directly to the mangled HIGHWAY BARRIER.

REILLY (O.S.)

(filtered)

Pilot, take us down.

INT. BASEMENT - SAME

Anna can hear muffled VOICES outside, arguing... BOOM! Croft and three of his men barge into the room --

Two release McBride, while another keeps a gun trained on him. He drops to his knees, arms and legs numb. They nudge him to his feet, and follow him up the flight of stairs...

Croft watches them disappear, then turns to Anna.

Anna's breathing intensifies as he approaches...

ANNA

I have colleagues. They'll be
searching for me.

He casually unsheathes a LARGE BOWIE KNIFE, and begins to run it lightly down the outside of Anna's arm...

CROFT

I'm sure they will be.

ANNA

What are you, some type of
mercenary?

Croft glowers. Slowly circles her. Arms behind his back.

CROFT

Let's just say I'm an independent
contractor. Someone who is in the
business of retrieving valuable
goods.

ANNA

Then you're shit outta luck,
because that bus is now nothing but
scrap metal.

WHAM! Croft DRIVES his fist into Anna's ribs. She gasps for air, totally winded. Eyes bulging wide...

Croft grabs a patch of fringe, wrenches her head up to meet his furious gaze. She can feel his hot breath on her cheek.

CROFT

Do you have any idea how much
you've cost me? You destroyed an
extremely valuable shipment... Now,
someone has to cover the loss. Sure
ain't gonna be me.

Croft releases his vice-like grip. Anna's head drops. He puts his the TIP of his Knife against Anna's cheek.

CROFT (CONT'D)

I've been ordered to keep you alive
until we get you across the border.

Anna's face drains.

ANNA

No--

CROFT

I can assure you, I would have loved to have finished you myself, but I'm afraid my employers want you all to themselves.

(off Anna's horror)

I'd be scared too. These people specialize in making problems disappear. And right now, you're a pretty big fucking problem.

Anna's head drops, she breaks down with heavy SOBS...

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME - CONTINUOUS

Close on Abramovich's boots, walking meticulously along the road, crunching tiny splinters of glass and debris... Eventually stopping at some SHED TIRE RUBBER.

FOUR ARMED CO's from the other PARKED CHOPPER join Abramovich and Reilly at the broken HIGHWAY BARRIER. Clouded disbelief.

They pan their flashlights down the steep embankment, illuminating a trail of carnage... Until they reach:

THE SMOULDERING BUS. SMOKE plumes. Charred black.

REILLY (O.S.)

My god.

INT. FARM HOUSE - BASEMENT - SAME

Anna continues to sob. Croft gently strokes her hair...

CROFT

But you know what I find most upsetting about all of this?

Croft casually pulls out:

A SURVEILLANCE PHOTO OF EMILY: in a playground, smiling with other school kids. This was taken as recently as yesterday.

CROFT (V.O.)

The fact that you'll never see your daughter again.

He holds up the photo in front of Anna, allowing her to get a close-up view. AN ANGUISHED WAIL escapes her bloody lips...

CROFT

We had intel on every CO. You were a late edition, but we managed to acquire what we needed. Thanks to some of your fellow officers.

(studies the photo)

So innocent, isn't she.

Anna SPITS at Croft -- furious. He SLAPS her face, then grabs her by the cheeks. She tries to wrestle out of his grip --

EXT. BUS - NIGHT - SAME

Abramovich and Reilly carefully examine the smouldering bus with their flashlights... Small FLAMES still crackle inside.

ABRAMOVICH

We need to call this in.

REILLY

No. Not yet.

Abramovich turns to Reilly, confused.

ABRAMOVICH

We've got dead officers and inmates in there.

REILLY

I said not yet!

(to the other CO's)

Go back up top. Keep searching for any additional clues. I want to know what ran them off the road.

CO

Yes, sir.

Outraged, Abramovich watches the four CO's make their way back up the embankment...

ABRAMOVICH

What the hell are you doing?

REILLY

Look, I need to see what's in there first. If we can salvage something from this, no matter how small.

Reilly walks around to the back of the bus, takes a handkerchief from his pocket and opens the back-door --

ABRAMOVICH

Warden--

A wall of SMOKE greets them. They COUGH violently, eyes stinging. Reilly hoists himself up, covering his mouth.

INT. BUS - SAME

Littered with ash and annealed glass. We can hardly see past a few feet in front of us. Reilly's flashlight pans through the SMOKY GLOOM... He suddenly JUMPS with fright --

-- when his flashlight beam finds the gruesome remains of Holt. FRIED to a crisp. His entire body is charcoal black. Around him; we can also see the scorched piles of DRUGS.

Reilly cautiously moves further down the aisle... Discovering the charred remains of Keppler, Glover, Gonzalez, Schaefer. And what appears to be the odd one out -- Zakaev.

Tight on Reilly. He looks madder than hell.

REILLY

Captain, get in here!

Abramovich gingerly climbs in... Covers his mouth, gagging on the toxic air. Recoils at the sickening stench of Holt.

Abramovich scans the gutted interior, then realizes what he's actually standing in: scorched CLUMPS OF BLACKENED POWDER, and MELTED PLASTIC -- EVERYWHERE. He kneels down to inspect --

BANG!

Abramovich drops into a heap of melted plastic and ash. Gunshot wound to his arm. In total shock, he crawls backwards along the aisle towards the rear of the bus...

Reilly moves forward, raises his RIFLE at Abramovich -- grim determination coiled in his eyes. Anything to cover this up.

REILLY

I'm sorry, Jim. There's too much at stake here. Too many fuck ups.

Having heard the gunshot, a YOUNG CO climbs in behind Reilly, through the front-door. Peering through smoke. GUN drawn...

YOUNG CO

Sir?

Startled; Reilly spins -- his eyes off Abramovich for a split-second -- thinks better of it --

But Abramovich already has his REVOLVER out -- BAM! BAM!

Two shots to the abdominal region. Reilly's legs buckle -- he collapses onto the floor.

The young CO SCREAMS at Abramovich to drop his weapon -- but he can see that Abramovich has also been shot -- so he's not quite sure who the bad guy is, or who to aim his weapon at.

YOUNG CO

Ahhh--?

Nerves rattled, the young CO kicks Reilly's rifle away from him, and BARKS into his shoulder MIC --

YOUNG CO

(into mic)

Phelps! I need all men back at the bus! We've got a situation... Shit!

Abramovich is coughing hard. Musters up all his strength to get back onto his feet. Braces his wounded arm.

YOUNG CO

Hold it right there, Captain.

Abramovich ignores the young CO and moves over to Reilly, who's in bad shape. His breaths are short... He dies.

YOUNG CO

Oh... He's dead. You shot him.

ABRAMOVICH

Listen, I want you to call every available deputy in Lincoln county. We also need fire and ambulance.

(no reaction)

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?! MOVE IT!

Abramovich watches the young CO exit the bus, joining Phelps and the other men outside. He then painfully kneels back down and presses the muzzle of his gun into a CLUMP of powder...

Brings it up close to him. It's brown and sticky. TAR HEROIN.

INT. DECREPID FARM HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

A make-shift war room. LAPTOPS display surveillance images of the area. Stacks of open HARDIGG CASES. There's also a small DISH ARRAY by a window. This is their base of operations.

The THREE GUNMEN who pack up their gear, are unmasked. Each man looks militant. Thuggish. Hard.

McBride is now bound to a rickety STEEL CHAIR. Head slumped. Wrists cuffed. Naked chest. His bare feet sit inside a BUCKET of water. Blood drips from his chin. He looks up to see --

Sinclair towering over him. Wears a diabolical grin. He holds a HIGH-VOLT STUN-GUN. The tip CRACKLES with electricity...

MCBRIDE

I suppose a rematch is out of the question?

ZZZZAP! Sinclair drives the tip into McBride's ribs -- he violently convulses as 600,000 volts go postal through his body. Foam bubbles through his clenched teeth. Veins nearly popping through his skin... Sinclair finally pulls it away.

McBride PUKES all over himself. Spits blood and bile at Sinclair. Starts cackling at him.

MCBRIDE

A cattle prod? Don't tell me you guys are also taking budget cuts these days.

Sinclair starts LAUGHING along with McBride.... The rest of the men also join in. Now everyone is cracking up laughing...

SINCLAIR

How about I zap your balls? See how cheeky you are then.

Sinclair turns to one of the other men -- the stocky Asian fucker with DRAGON TATTOO across the back of his skull --

SINCLAIR

How you like your Dim Sims, man? Fried or steamed?

This is CHENG (40's), Chinese-American, ex-Spec-Ops, equally deadly with a blade, laser-thin eyes that see everything.

CHENG

Haw-fucking-haw.

The other men chuckle. Sinclair turns back to McBride.

SINCLAIR

How's the foot spa? Water warm enough?

McBride regains himself. Takes a deep breath. Braces himself.

MCBRIDE

You know what? I think I want my money back. Doesn't seem to be working properly.

Sinclair jams the tip into McBride's CROTCH -- He SCREAMS in pain -- spasms in his chair, volts surging. It's almost too painful to watch. Sinclair finally stops. Froth drips from McBride's mouth as he pleads for it all to end.

MCBRIDE

No more, no more... Please!

Cheng and the two other Gunmen leave the room, carrying cases and supplies. Cheng stops, grabs his HK, scowls at Sinclair.

CHENG

Stop fucking with this tweak and finish him. We've got work to do.

SINCLAIR

Fuck you, I'm having fun.

Cheng tosses some cables into a case. Clearly pissed.

CHENG

We cut for the border in ten minutes. We're not out of this yet.

Sinclair waits for Cheng and the two other Gunmen to disappear, then turns to McBride and smiles.

SINCLAIR

Talk about a bunch of killjoys.

EXT. EMBANKMENT - SAME

Abramovich is helped up the embankment by two CO's... He cradles his wounded arm. The young CO rushes down to assist.

YOUNG CO

Captain... Just got off the line with Sheriff's department. Said they've located a missing Deputy's vehicle, 'bout four miles from here...

(more)

YOUNG CO (CONT'D)

They got a truck that appears to have jack-knifed, caused a huge explosion. Sent the patrol car straight into a goddamn power line. But they've found no bodies in the wreckage. Nothin'. Zip.

ABRAMOVICH

Tell Bateman to fire up his chopper.

YOUNG CO

Sir, I've already got half the town on their way.

ABRAMOVICH

Then stay here and wait. I need to get back in the air. They're still out there.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

Sinclair grabs McBride's head, kneels down close, raises his chin. McBride's face is a pulpy, bloody mess.

MCBRIDE

You need to finish me. Please.

On Sinclair; debating whether he should honor McBride's plea. He checks his watch -- time to move soon anyhow. Fuck it.

Sinclair stands, whips his Beretta out -- but before he can aim, McBride LAUNCHES himself as a missile, chair attached --

OOFF! -- a battering ram that sends both of them flying backwards, plowing into furniture --

Sinclair's Beretta skitters across the floor...

INT. BASEMENT - SAME

Croft hears all the commotion upstairs --

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

McBride is on top -- repeatedly SMASHING his forehead into Sinclair's face, turning it into bloody mush -- he's out.

Wrist still cuffed, McBride rolls off Sinclair, and SNAPS the ties around his chest, loosening him from the chair.

INT. BASEMENT - SAME

Croft grabs his HK, and heads for the stairs...

Anna frantically looks around the room... Searching for anything nearby she can use to escape.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

McBride can hear Croft coming up the stairs -- grabs a HK off the dining table --

Croft appears -- raises his weapon -- but McBride squeezes off three shots first -- PFFT! PFFT! PFFT! They hit Croft's upper leg -- sends him barrelling back down the stairs...

Sinclair begins to moan, McBride pivots and FIRES -- riddling him with piping-hot lead. Dead in less than a second.

TWO MORE GUNMEN rush the room from outside -- bullet holes pound the wall next to McBride as he SPRAYS them with lead...

McBride stands there for a beat, accessing the shit-storm he's just unleashed. Notices something, bolts into the tiny --

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

[illegible]

INT. BASEMENT - SAME

Anna watches as Croft sluggishly tries to get back on his feet -- and falls back into a heap. Moaning in pain, he's BLEEDING heavily. She spots his HK a few feet from her.

INT/EXT. FRONT DOOR - SAME

McBride suddenly stops... It's his eyes. A moral storm rages inside them. He closes them. Takes a deep breath. Reconsiders. Shakes his head. Turns around and heads back...

INT. BASEMENT - SAME

Croft is flat on his stomach. We can't tell if he's still breathing or not.

Anna turns to see McBride at the base of the stairs. HK slung over his shoulder. Beretta pointed at Anna's head -- PFFT!

Anna's CUFF CHAIN snaps in two. She drops to the floor. Crawls back to her knees, only to find McBride still has his gun pointed directly at her.

A tense, uncertain beat... Despite the lingering mistrust, there's a mutual respect that's growing between them.

MCBRIDE

Slow me down. I leave you here.

McBride takes off back up the stairs... Anna grabs her BELT/KEYS and her PARKA, and quickly follows him...

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

Anna grabs a HK off one of the dead Gunmen.

ANNA

I'm not leaving Calloway.

MCBRIDE

I told you, the kid is gone.

ANNA

Then I guess I'll be seeing you.

McBride turns to Anna. Serious as cancer.

MCBRIDE

Not likely.

But before Anna can answer: bullets TEAR through the room. Wood and glass exploding. Anna and McBride dive into the --

INT. BATHROOM - SAME

Sliding across the tiled floor... Anna KICKS the door shut, just as a spray of bullets PEPPER it.

They both haul themselves into a CAST IRON BATHTUB, snapping into a spooned fetal position. Bullets ping off the tub with a dull thud -- DUN-DUN-DUN-DUN!

EXT. FRONT OF THE FARM HOUSE - SAME

The house is a WOOD-CHIPPED MESS. Cheng and the remaining Gunman check their ammo, and start making their way towards the bullet-riddled farm house. Cheng stops him, has an idea.

CHENG

I'll go around back. You flush them
out to me.

INT. BATHROOM - SAME

Anna and McBride; coated in dust and chips of tiles. McBride gets to his feet, uses the butt of his gun to knock out jagged shards from the window frame. Then slides out...

Anna can hear approaching FOOTSTEPS, slowly creaking. She quickly follows McBride out the window -- CUT TO --

EXT. BACK OF FARM HOUSE - SAME

Anna and McBride bolt along the side of the house, towards the BACK SHED. Half-ass staggers, stumbling, sucking wind.

A volley of bullets kick up dirt, inches from their feet.

MCBRIDE

Go! Go! Go!

Anna takes off, doesn't look back...

McBride spins around and gets on one knee. Steadies himself, raises his HK... Keeps it locked on --

THE GUNMAN

Who sweeps out the back door, HK panning in every direction.

But McBride already has him clocked in his scope. Seconds tick by in slow motion -- PFFT!

The Gunman's head EXPLODES like busted watermelon. His body drops into a crumpled heap.

McBride smirks, then continues towards the shed...

INT. SHED - SAME - CONTINUOUS

McBride edges through a crack in the door... Rays of moonlight illuminate --

A mish-mash of wood and corrugated iron. Cobwebs cling to rolls of wire fencing. Spent farming machinery rims the walls. Rusty hooks dangle from overhead beams. There's also plastic cartons of TRACTOR FUEL and OIL DRUMS

Anna seeps out from a dark corner. A GLOVED HAND covers her mouth. Cheng has his Beretta against her temple.

McBride locks eyes with Anna... Drops his HK. Slowly raises his hands.

CHENG

Where'd you learn to aim like that?

A beat.

MCBRIDE

Alaska.

CHENG

Nice place.

McBride nods in agreement.

MCBRIDE

Especially this time of year.

CHENG

Too bad you'll never see it again.
Get on your knees, convict... Don't
worry, you won't feel a thing.

INT. BASEMENT - SAME

Croft begins to stir... He's still alive.

INT. SHED - SAME - CONTINUOUS

McBride slowly gets down on his knees, eyes locked on Cheng.
Looking for the slightest opportunity to attack.

CHENG

That's it... All that time behind
bars, you should be used to getting
on your knees by now.

Suddenly -- CROFT'S VOICE crackles on Cheng's radio --

CROFT

(filtered)

Cheng, Sinclair. You copy?

Quicker than a flash -- McBride whips out a Beretta from the
back of his jump-suit pants -- CLICK! CLICK! CLICK! Empty.

Cheng SWATS Anna away like a pesky insect, and FIRES --

McBride dives behind a rusty old lathe -- spots an old AXE resting up against the wall.

Cheng spins to Anna, but she's already vanished.

McBride appears -- FLINGS the axe at Cheng...

It whizzes through the air, VHUM-VHUM-VHUM... THUNK! Embeds itself into a sheet of corrugated iron next to his head.

McBride rushes -- Cheng KUNG-FU KICKS him in the chest. Sends him barrelling into a pile of steel pipes. Out cold.

ON ANNA

Hiding in the shadows. Hand over her mouth. Watching the whole thing unfold.

Her POV: Cheng turns, scans the room. Knows she's hiding somewhere. He starts moving towards her position...

He spots the axe, rips it out from the wall.

CHENG

I know you're in here.

Anna quietly weaves her way towards the back of the shed, finds a rusted DOOR with buckled hinges, and crawls into --

INT. MEAT LOCKER - SAME - CONTINUOUS

Pitch black.

We hear Anna gag. Something really stinks. OOFF! Anna hits something dangling and wet... OOFF! Another one... OOFF! Another... Swarms of flies BUZZING.

Cheng enters. Cuts the LIGHTS on. Revealing --

ROTTING CATTLE CARCASES. Some wrapped in plastic. Dangling from hooks. Clumps of MAGGOTS squirm over their wet hides.

Anna covers her mouth, nearly pukes.

So does Cheng.

She stealthily edges behind some gently swaying carcasses.

Anna's hand-held POV: Cheng slowly enters the room... To the right of him: a blood-stained, wooden CARVING BENCH.

Dangling next to it: is SHERIFF WILCOX'S lifeless corpse...

Anna covers her mouth, gagging on her revulsion. She hears a soft GASP above her... She looks up... And to her sheer horror, hanging amongst the cattle carcasses --

IS CALLOWAY. HE STARES BACK DOWN AT HER. HE'S STILL ALIVE.

Blinking slowly. Shallow gasps. Clinging onto whatever life is left in him. We spot a TEAR trickle down his left cheek...

CALLOWAY
(softly)
H-H-Help... me--

Tears also stream from Anna's eyes. She puts a finger to her quivering mouth. "Ssshhh. He'll hear you."

And he does. Cheng snaps to Calloway's whimpers.

ON ANNA

Terrified, she backs away from Calloway... Still with her finger to her lips. Calloway's moaning increases... BOOM!

Cheng LUNGES for Anna. She ducks, avoiding his clutch. Manages to skitter under some carcasses, when --

He SNATCHES her by the hair, wrenches her back... Anna screams -- her WILD EYES stare up in horror --

Anna's POV: a shaky, upside down view of Cheng as he drags her across the greasy floor... Anna fights with all her strength, kicking and grabbing anything within reach...

He HEAVES Anna onto the work bench -- slamming her back first. Knocks the wind right out of her.

On Anna's arm: stretched out, fumbling blindly for something, anything she can use as a weapon...

Her body writhes, but Cheng is too strong. Pins her down with one arm. Fingers wrapped firmly around her throat. Anna gasps for air, face turning beetroot red.

His other hand raises the AXE above his head. Time for some chop-suey. Anna sees it and SCREAMS...

Her HAND finds a RUSTY HOOK --

THUKKKK!

Cheng freezes. He drops the axe, staggers back... BLOOD GUSHES FROM THE HOOK EMBEDDED IN HIS THROAT. He plows into the floor. Stone cold dead.

On Anna; stunned. Panting heavy. Can't fucking believe it.

Anna peels herself off the table, bolts over to Calloway...

She grabs his legs. He lets out an agonized MOAN. She tries to hoist him off the hook, but it's no use. That hook is wedged in too deep, and her efforts only wedge it deeper.

Anna rolls Cheng's corpse over with the tip of her boot -- grabs his Beretta, raises it, aims -- POP! POP! POP!

Shoots the CHAIN pivot connected to the ceiling. Calloway drops to the floor. Anna rushes over to him...

ON CALLOWAY

Teetering on the verge of death. Massive blood loss. She rolls him over... Delicately tries to pry out the hook from his back. He SCREAMS. It's definitely in deep. Too deep.

ANNA

You'll thank me for this one day.

RIIIIP! She TEARS the hook out. Calloway's body jolts in pain. She tosses it away, grabs Calloway, scoops her head underneath his left armpit.

ANNA

Time to go home.

And hoists him onto his feet. Calloway moans. He can't walk. Those limbs ain't moving. She begins to drag him...

INT. SHED - SAME - CONTINUOUS

She exits the meat locker, looking for McBride --

But he's disappeared again.

A stunned beat while Anna scans the shed... Nothing. Was only a matter of time before he'd make a break for it.

EXT. BACK OF FARM HOUSE - SAME

Our POV hovers behind Anna. Shaky. Hand-held. Anna drags Calloway along the dirt... It's hard work. She struggles to keep him upright. Staggering, tiring fast. She spots --

One of the BLACK SUVs -- parked at the front of the house.

Now puffing harder, Anna's eyes burn with a new found determination. They're both gonna make it out of here.

ANNA

Nearly there. Just hold on.

A FLASH whizzes across Anna's face -- CRACK! Knocking her and Calloway to the ground. She rolls over to find --

CROFT

Towering over her. Chest heaving. Eyes blazing with vengeance. Bloody mouth smiling. Clasping his wound.

CROFT

Now, where were we?

Anna reaches for her Beretta -- WHACK! Croft BOOTS her in the ribs, sends her tumbling...

Grimacing through the pain, Anna claws again for her weapon... Inches away... Croft STOMPS on her fingers -- CRUNCH! Anna SCREAMS in agony.

Croft bends down... Flips her over, grabs her by the neck, pulls her in close to him...

CROFT

You know what? Fuck those cactus monkey's. I want you all to myself!

Anna gives him a ball-busting KNEE to the groin. Croft doubles over, Anna scoots out from underneath him... Makes for her Beretta again -- CRRRRRACK!

Anna absorbs a massive BLOW to the head. Now she's sprawled out, flat on her back. Spits blood. Her eyes swim, unable to focus, totally disorientated.

Croft stands at Anna's feet, snickering, watching with macabre amusement as she sluggishly crawls away from him, heading towards Calloway...

He doesn't follow. He calmly smacks a fresh clip into the butt of his own Beretta, cocks it. Takes aim...

Anna continues to slither through the dirt... Croft stiffens his aim.

CROFT

I'll be sure to explain how you died...

A millisecond from pulling the trigger --

CROFT (CONT'D)

When I pay your daughter a visit.

KA-BOOOOOOOOOOM!!!

THE ENTIRE FARM HOUSE DISAPPEARS IN A MASSIVE FIREBALL...

Anna recoils from the explosion.

Croft is FLUNG off his feet by the intense shockwave... His flaccid body tumbles across the dirt like a rag-doll...

Flaming WOOD and DEBRIS, rains down over the entire scene...

INT. D.O.C. HELICOPTER - SAME

Abramovich notices the tiny EXPLOSION that billows in the distance, over the stark desert horizon...

EXT. BACK OF FARM HOUSE - SAME - CONTINUOUS

Anna is still. Pockets of fire and shrub burn around her. She slowly rolls onto her back. Oddly, she starts laughing. Although, it doesn't last long --

Croft LEAPS onto her like a crazed predator -- LETS OUT A RABID WAR CRY -- unsheathes his BOWIE KNIFE -- raises it for the final death blow... Anna lets out a DEAFENING WAIL, THAT CLIMAXES INTO A GUT-WRENCHING CRESCENDO --

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Croft's expression turns from rage to a blank stare. Blood trickles from his mouth. He slumps on top of Anna -- DEAD.

Anna rolls Croft's limp body off her, only to find --

MCBRIDE

Standing there. Half dead. Beretta in hand. He's no longer wearing his jump-suit, but a mixture of Gunmen's clothing.

A beat between them... Anna doesn't move or say anything. They lock eyes. Nothing needs to be said.

She CLIPS OFF A CUFF KEY from her belt, and TOSSES it at McBride's feet.

McBride stares at it before picking it up off the ground. He hears something approaching, and wearily looks up --

In the distance, over the roaring flames: we hear the faint, yet distinct WHIR OF APPROACHING ROTOR BLADES...

McBride gives Anna one final look, then takes off...

Anna watches him disappear into the darkness...

She crawls over to Calloway... Gently turns him over. Rips open his shirt, checks for a heartbeat. It's there, but faint. She begins to do CPR on him, pumping his chest...

ANNA

Come on, come on. Don't
give up on me. Not now.

Anna starts THUMPING his chest harder... Calloway sputters up some blood... Anna continues to massage his chest.

His eyes open faintly... He gasps for air.

Anna's eyes well with tears of joy. Exhausted beyond comprehension, she collapses onto her back, staring up at --

The D.O.C. HELICOPTER, as it hovers over --

The DESTROYED farm house. FLAMES belch. SMOKE billows and swirls. We pan up skyward, as DAWN breaks over the horizon...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING - DAYS LATER

Sterile. Serene. Rays of sunlight shaft through the blinds. Anna lays in bed, arm attached to a DRIP. A heart monitor BEEPS next to her...

Her eyes slowly open... Squinting at the sunlight. Her face is almost black. Split lips. Patches of gauze stretched across her cheek. A riddled mess of cuts and bruises.

A FEMALE NURSE enters the room, holding a SMALL GIFT BOX.

FEMALE NURSE

How are we today?

Anna slowly props herself up on one elbow...

ANNA

A little stronger.

FEMALE NURSE

That's great... This just came for
you.

THE NURSE delicately places the box down on Anna's side-table, next to an impressive collection of flowers.

FEMALE NURSE
(admiring)
Beautiful aren't they.

ANNA
Any more and I'm gonna need a
bigger room.

The nurse checks the drip and tinkers with the electronic
equipment next to Anna's bed.

FEMALE NURSE
I'll be back later to check on you.
Try and keep your fluids up this
morning, okay.

ANNA
Okay.

The nurse gives Anna a warm smile, then exits...

Anna admires her collection of well wishes and beautiful
floral arrangements. She smiles and reaches over, grabs the
small gift box --

Which is wrapped in plain butchers paper. No post stamp. She
tears it open -- lifts the lid -- revealing:

THE CUFF KEY

Caked with dry blood. Anna stares in amazement at the grizzly
trinket. A stark reminder of her time spent with McBride. She
shoves the box into her side table, just as --

ABRAMOVICH walks in. One arm in a SLING. The other, holding
another bouquet of FLOWERS.

ABRAMOVICH
How you doin?

A little embarrassed, Abramovich looks around for somewhere
to put his bouquet...

ABRAMOVICH
Something from the guys in A-Unit.

ANNA
Just put it there. Thanks.

He awkwardly slides them in amongst Anna's collection.

ABRAMOVICH
Feeling any better?

ANNA

Getting there. Slowly but surely.
How about you?

Abramovich admires his wounded arm.

ABRAMOVICH

The Doctor said it was a mere flesh
wound... Sure didn't feel like it.

ANNA

Any news on Calloway?

Abramovich approaches her bed.

ABRAMOVICH

He's in a stable condition. But the
jury's still out, I'm afraid. Kid
lost a lot of blood.

A beat of silence... Abramovich moves closer to the bed.

ABRAMOVICH

Anna, we need to talk.

ANNA

Save it, Captain. I've had enough
interrogation to last a lifetime.

ABRAMOVICH

And you might want to prepare for a
whole lot more. We just lost a very
dangerous fugitive out there.

ANNA

Jesus, who's side are you on here?

ABRAMOVICH

I'm on yours. Believe me, I am. But
I've got people asking all kinds of
questions, none of which I have any
answers to. There's DEA and Feds
all over the facility, probing CO's
and inmates. Everyone's a suspect.
We're all over the news with
McBride's apparent Houdini act. Now
lets be totally honest, there's not
a lot to go on here.

ANNA

That's because I blew the place to
shreds!

Anna turns away, facing her window... Blurred visions of her ordeal returning to haunt her.

ANNA (CONT'D)
I already told you, I don't know
what happened to McBride.

ABRAMOVICH
So he just vanished into thin air?

ANNA
Captain, that blast was hot enough
to melt steel.

ABRAMOVICH
Or, maybe he got away... Mexican
border is not that far, you know.

ANNA
Maybe.

Abramovich shakes his head, breathes out a sigh.

ANNA
Croft and his men. Who were they?

ABRAMOVICH
Ex-special forces and security
contractors, I'm told. Decided
there was a lot more money to be
made working for the Juárez cartel.
Croft and his men could operate
freely on US soil, doing any dirty
work that was needed.

ANNA
Holt thought they were trying to
rip off a rival cartel.

ABRAMOVICH
He was right. They'd been tracking
the shipment ever since it started
moving. Way before it got to us.
They met with Marvin and Lorenzo,
who gave up everything on you.

ANNA
Has anyone located Marvin and
Lorenzo?

ABRAMOVICH
In a motel room, three miles
outside of Santa Fe. Both shot
dead.

Anna turns back to face her window.

ABRAMOVICH
He was an extremely dangerous man,
Anna. You're lucky to be laying
here talking to me.

A beat.

ANNA
I know.

ABRAMOVICH
Might wanna buy a lottery ticket as
soon as you're discharged.

Anna snickers.

ABRAMOVICH
Look... I want you to know, we're
all here for you. And if there's
anything you need, just call me. I
can walk you through any questions.

ANNA
Thank you.

Abramovich looks down, can't meet her eyes...

ABRAMOVICH
It's good to have you back in one
piece, Anna. I really mean that.
And... I'm sorry for sending you
out in the first place.

ANNA
You were doing your job, Captain.

ABRAMOVICH
I know. But I wanted to say that.

ANNA
Apology accepted.

He gives an appreciative nod, goes to exit the room...

ANNA (O.S.)
Captain.

He turns back to face her...

ANNA (O.S.)
About that time off you promised.

A smile spreads across Abramovich's mouth.

ABRAMOVICH
Take as long as you need.

He exits the room, but is nearly barrelled over by EMILY, who bursts in, excited beyond words to see her mother.

EMILY
Mommy! Mommy!

Anna begins to fight back tears... DIANE also enters the room, smiling.

Close on Anna, hugging Emily tightly, TEARS trickling down her cheeks... Pull closer and closer on Anna, until we --

SMASH TO BLACK.

Silent. Peaceful. But not for long...

THE END