

THE CHAIN

"Day One"

Written By

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ACT ONE

INT. HIGH-TECH LAB - DAY

Open on cords being RIPPED from hard drives, tools and tablets SHOVED into backpacks, and binders YANKED off shelves - a group of SCIENTISTS race to dismantle their lab, taking everything they can, as FAST as they can. **No time to spare.**

The high-pitched SQUEAL of a drill as DR. KENSINGTON PRICE (60s, male) unscrews the last bolt holding a complicated piece of TECH to the floor. FIVE BLACK DUFFEL BAGS nearby hold the other components of this elaborate MACHINE.

Dr. Price looks over at DR. KARA CHANG (late 30s, Asian-American, intense overachiever) searching through drawers.

DR. PRICE

Dr. Chang.

KARA

The camera -

DR. PRICE

Leave it! There's no time!

KARA

We need the memory card!

She finds the video camera, thrusts it into the closest duffel. The scientists grab the bags and rush out the door. We see the door placard as they exit - **PROJECT SKYLIGHT.**

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Dr. Price, Kara, and the others walk briskly, trying to look natural with everything they're carrying.

SFX: Alarm Sounds. Shit. They start to run. Two SECURITY GUYS appear at the end of the corridor.

SECURITY GUY #1

Dr. Price! Stop!

DR. PRICE

This way!

They turn quickly into another corridor. **The chase is on.**

By the time the security guys round the corner, the last scientist has disappeared through a doorway. The security guys rush forward and try the door - **locked!**

SECURITY GUY #2
(into his walkie)
They're in the simulation room.

WALKIE VOICE (V.O.)
They're headed for the roof.

EXT. ROOF - DAY

The scientists rush across the roof toward a waiting helicopter, its beating propeller adding to the chaos.

DR. PRICE
Looks like our friend came through.

He smiles at his team. They're almost in the clear. Until -

Two gunshots rip through his chest from behind! Kara screams. They all turn - more security guys have appeared on the roof.

One of the scientists quickly hits the switch in his hand. A line of small explosives DETONATE in front of the security team, holding them back for now.

Kara rushes to their fallen leader.

KARA
Dr. Price!

DR. PRICE
Take it...save us all...

He's talking about the black duffel bag by his side. Kara shakes her head - she can't leave him.

DR. PRICE (CONT'D)
Go!

Kara is devastated, but knows what's at stake. She grabs his bag and runs to the helicopter, the last to climb in. More GUNFIRE as additional security guys spill onto the roof.

The helicopter lifts up, undaunted. As it flies away, we see a familiar SYMBOL on the helipad -

A blue circle with a red splash and white letters -

NASA.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: THE CHAIN

FADE IN:

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CHYRON: One Week Later.

Murmurs. Tense chatter. We wander through a crowd of CAMPAIGN WORKERS in suits, shoulder to shoulder. Everyone is waiting. The sound of cable news -

CNN NEWS ANCHOR (O.C.)
 ...with two hundred and twelve
 electoral votes as the polls are
 just seconds away from closing on
 the west coast.

A "shush" circulates through the crowd as we land on the TV. An elaborate BREAKING NEWS animation fills the screen featuring the face of PRESIDENT ANDERSON (60s, Caucasian).

CNN NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)
 CNN can now project that President
 James Anderson will be elected for
 a second term -

Cheers and whoops erupt! Clearly this is the winning team.

CNN NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)
 - joined by Senator Paul Bankston
 in his first term as Vice-President
 of the United States.

Campaign manager HENRY WILSON (50s, Caucasian, slick political shark) pops a cork.

HENRY
 That's our boy! Vice-President
 Elect!

Congratulations all around as Henry pours his way through the revelry. We briefly settle on another TV, which shows a cheering crowd of supporters at the victory rally.

CNN NEWS ANCHOR
 ...President Anderson and Vice-
 President Elect Paul Bankston are
 expected to address supporters at
 the Ronald Reagan Building in
 Washington DC...

Henry walks up to Secret Service agent RAJIV SMITH (40s, South Asian, serious and intense).

HENRY
Leaving in five.

Rajiv nods and speaks into his sleeve. Henry grabs a fresh bottle and heads for the bedroom...

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

PAUL BANKSTON (50s, Caucasian, privileged silver fox) stares at his wife RENEE BANKSTON (40s, Caucasian, poised but emotional). He is absolutely shell shocked.

RENEE
The timing...I'm sorry.

PAUL
When were you going to tell me our marriage is over?

Behind Paul, Henry bursts in. Renee turns away as he pops the cork on the champagne.

HENRY
Thank you, Virginia! Someone at Five Thirty-Eight is getting fired -

Paul holds up his hand for Henry to wait, not breaking his look to Renee.

PAUL
Is there someone else?

Henry quickly understands what's going on - and they don't have the time for it.

HENRY
Paul, the President is waiting.

Duty calls. Paul extends his hand to Renee, but she just walks by him. Off Paul, his world upended...

INT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE OFFICE - NIGHT

On another TV screen, President Anderson and the FIRST LADY wave to the crowd as they walk onstage at the victory rally, followed by Paul and Renee, wearing their politician smiles.

MALE NEWS COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
And here they come!

FEMALE NEWS COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
Lot of emotions on that stage.

The camera zeroes in on the tears behind Paul's smiling eyes. If you didn't know, you'd think they were tears of joy.

FEMALE NEWS COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

It's been a long road for Senator Bankston.

MALE NEWS COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

Relatively unknown when President Anderson chose him as his new running mate after now former Vice-President Skinner's sex scandal and resignation.

PULL OUT TO REVEAL SHARONDA JACKSON (40s, African-American, intelligent, bookish) leaning against her desk, eyes on the TV, while GINGER (30s, pretty) nuzzles Sharonda's neck.

SHARONDA

Unbelievable.

GINGER

Why thank you -

SHARONDA

Less than three years experience on the national level and people think he's ready to be Vice-President?

GINGER

Come on, are we having election night sex in your office or what?

Ginger kisses her, shrugging off her jacket. Sharonda breaks the kiss and looks at her watch.

SHARONDA

Oh baby, I can't. I need to go home and pack.

Ginger makes a whining sound as Sharonda untangles herself.

GINGER

You're going away for two weeks. You gotta give me something.

SHARONDA

Can you hand me that book?

Ginger straightens her clothing as she reluctantly fetches the book from where Sharonda is pointing.

GINGER
 (sulking)
 Why did I even come here tonight?

She hands Sharonda the book, petulant. Sharonda grabs her hand and pulls her in for a long, deep kiss.

SHARONDA
 Will that tide you over?

GINGER
 Not even close.

Ginger leans in for another kiss, but is interrupted by a KNOCK on the door. Sharonda literally PUSHES Ginger away as PROFESSOR GLEASON (60s, Caucasian male) pokes his head in.

PROFESSOR GLEASON
 Hey Sharonda. Ginger. So, what do you think?
 (off Sharonda's blank look)
 The election.

SHARONDA
 (recovering quickly)
 Oh. Four more years of red.

PROFESSOR GLEASON
 Not surprised. With the country on the brink of war -

SHARONDA
 We're not on the brink -

PROFESSOR GLEASON
 If Congress passes that resolution tomorrow, how do you think the Qumaris are going to react?

SHARONDA
 They can't pass it. There's no real evidence they were behind the embassy bombing.

PROFESSOR GLEASON
 We've done a lot more damage with a lot less intel. You know that.

Ginger grabs her jacket.

GINGER
 I'm gonna go.

SHARONDA
Ginger, wait.

PROFESSOR GLEASON
I'm out too. Enjoy the conference.
And don't forget - deep dish at Lou
Malnati's. Best in Chicago.

SHARONDA
Thanks, Professor.

PROFESSOR GLEASON
Good night ladies!

Professor Gleason leaves. Sharonda turns to Ginger, who continues packing up her things.

SHARONDA
It's just...you're my student...
It's nobody's business.

GINGER
What does that make me?

Sharonda doesn't know what to say. Wrong answer.

GINGER (CONT'D)
Have fun in Chicago.

Ginger walks out. Off Sharonda, feeling pretty lousy...

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The election night hoopla is over - campaign staffers are gone, HOTEL STAFF clear empty champagne bottles and glasses.

Paul stares at the victory rally footage replaying on the muted TV, fixated on images of him and Renee. He's half-listening as Henry talks fast, still pumped from their win.

HENRY
The press meet and greet should end
around ten, joint session starts at
noon. Everyone and their mistress
wants ten minutes in between.
Barbara Ramirez, no surprise.
Senator Bracken, Pratt -

PAUL
Do you remember when we found out
we got into Harvard?

HENRY

(with a wry smile)
Of course. We became the most
insufferable jerks at Exeter.

PAUL

I remember thinking the first step
of my plan is complete. I'm on my
way to the White House. Everything
fell into place after that.
Stanford Law. State Senate. The
Hill.

(then)

My wife leaving me on election
night wasn't part of the plan.

HENRY

Renee is leaving you?

PAUL

Not publicly, but she's done.

HENRY

I'm sure you guys will work it out.

(back to business)

Now, when the resolution passes,
the press will want a statement...

**The muted TV now shows a picture of Dr. Kensington Price, the
scientist who was shot in the opening scene.** Paul recognizes
him immediately.

PAUL

Huh. I know him.

Henry vaguely glances at the TV.

CHYRON on the TV: Dr. Kensington Price, NASA Scientist,
Killed in Mugging

PAUL (CONT'D)

Dr. Price. The President introduced
us a few months ago.

HENRY

Hmm, tragic. Okay...first meeting
with the transition team is
scheduled for Thursday morning...

As Henry prattles on, we go off the picture of Dr. Price,
knowing full well he wasn't killed in a mugging...

INT. MODEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sharonda sits up in bed, texting.

ECU on Sharonda's Phone: "Sorry about today. I'll miss you."

Send. THREE DOTS heralding Ginger's response appear, then disappear. Sharonda stares at her phone for a moment before giving up and setting it aside.

She turns off the light and settles back, looking up at the ceiling. She closes her eyes.

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Paul sets his phone on the round, decorative nightstand and lies back, glancing at the empty space beside him. He sighs and stares up at the ceiling. Finally, he closes his eyes.

FADE TO BLACK.

OVER BLACK - SFX: LOUD BANGING ON A DOOR

INT. MESSY APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Paul jolts awake at the sound, rolls over and hits his head on the edge of a chunky night stand. He touches the gash on his forehead, disoriented. How did that nightstand get there?

PAUL

What the...?

PULL OUT TO REVEAL a disorderly bedroom in a crappy apartment. Paul bolts upright in bed, taking in his surroundings. **This is NOT where he fell asleep.**

He hears the front door open, then a woman's voice.

ROSA

(in Spanish)

Why aren't you answering the door?

Where the hell are you?

ROSA (40s, Hispanic, sour-faced) appears in the doorway, annoyed. **Most of her dialogue is in Spanish, NOT subtitled.**

ROSA (CONT'D)

Still in bed. Unbelievable.

Paul doesn't understand a word.

PAUL
Excuse me?

ROSA
*Get up! Do you want Glenda to see
you like this?*

She walks away. He gets up and follows her into...

INT. MESSY APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...where she continues to talk in Spanish.

ROSA
*I sent Glenda to get breakfast
since I knew you wouldn't have
anything. Ugh, this place is a
mess. Not that I'm surprised.*

Paul looks around at the dumpy apartment.

PAUL
Where am I?

Rosa walks up and peers into his eyes.

ROSA
*Are you high? What's wrong with
you?*

Rosa reaches for his face. He dodges. She reaches again.

PAUL
(ducking)
Ma'am, please.

ROSA
(in English)
Who you calling ma'am?

PAUL
Oh good, you speak English.

Rosa SLAPS him.

ROSA
Of course I speak English, you son
of a bitch!
(back to Spanish)
*You asshole! You think you're
better than me because you're from
Puerto Rico? You live in a pig sty!*

Rosa kicks the coffee table, spilling a stack of newspapers and other junk. Paul picks one up as she storms away.

PAUL
(reading to himself)
Reading, Pennsylvania.
(to Rosa)
Okay. What is going on here?

ROSA
You're still taking Glenda for the week, right?

PAUL
I'm sorry, ma'am, I don't speak Spanish.

ROSA
Since when? And stop calling me ma'am!

PAUL
Why don't we just speak English.

ROSA
Fine. I said you're still taking Glenda for the week, right?

PAUL
I beg your pardon?

ROSA
Don't act like you don't know. We talked last week. You said you would do it.

PAUL
With all due respect, I don't know who you are.

Rosa SLAPS him again, even more angry than before.

ROSA
I'll tell you who I am, Ernie. I'm the one who can make your life a living hell if you don't take responsibility.

PAUL
(getting annoyed)
My name is not Ernie.

ROSA
Oh really? Who the hell are you
then?

PAUL
I don't know if you recognize me
but I'm Senator Paul Bankston, I
was just elected Vice-President of
the United States.

Rosa's eyes widen.

ROSA
*Oh my God, you're even more crazy
than I thought.*

PAUL
Wait, you said loco. Loco means
crazy. I'm not crazy.

ROSA
You think you're that guy and you
think you're not crazy?

She points at the muted TV in the corner, which is replaying
the now familiar footage of the victory rally.

ONSCREEN: Paul waves at the crowd with Renee by his side.

Paul looks at the footage of Renee, remembering their awful
conversation. But then Paul looks above the TV at a mirror on
the wall -

**PAUL'S POV - he's as surprised as we are to see ERNESTO
"ERNIE" GONZALEZ (40s, Hispanic) looking back at him.**

**Paul reels, absolutely shocked. He's trapped in someone
else's body!**

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. MESSY APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Vice-President Elect Paul Bankston is stuck in the body of Ernie Gonzalez.

Like the visual device on QUANTUM LEAP, the viewer sees the person whose soul is inside (Paul) while everyone in the show's world sees and hears the outer body (Ernie). Mirror reflections are the only time the viewer sees the outer body.

Paul stares at the reflection that's not his, his mind blown. **The gash on his forehead matches the gash on the forehead of Ernie's reflection in the mirror.** He touches it, instinctively. Then waves his hand through the air, watching **Ernie's reflection** match his movements.

PAUL

What the...?

He goes to the mirror and checks behind it, looking for the trick.

ROSA

You are not getting out of this, Ernie. You promised -

PAUL

How are you doing this?

He's really freaking out. He looks back at **Ernie's reflection in the mirror**, his mind reeling.

ROSA

Can you pull yourself together, please? Glenda will be here any second.

PAUL

Who?

ROSA

Our daughter!

PAUL

I don't have a daughter!

Rosa goes to slap him again, but this time Paul grabs her arm mid-swing.

PAUL (CONT'D)
That will be quite enough of that,
thank you.

She wrenches out of his grasp, enraged.

ROSA
*You son of a bitch! You think it's
easy raising Glenda on my own? Do
you?!*

Paul gives up on trying to talk to her and starts rummaging around the messy room, checking the sofa and arm chair.

ROSA (CONT'D)
What are you looking for?

PAUL
A phone.

He walks back into...

INT. MESSY APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul opens and closes drawers, tosses piles of dirty laundry.

ROSA (O.S.)
*I wish I'd never met you, you
stupid asshole!*

SFX: Front door opening and closing. Murmurs in Spanish.

Paul lifts a pillow on the bed and finds an OLD SCHOOL FLIP PHONE underneath. Yes! He opens it and dials a number from memory. As phone rings, we hear from the other room -

ROSA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I'm leaving!

SFX: The front door slams.

The voicemail he's calling picks up.

HENRY (V.O.)
You've reached Henry Wilson. Please
leave a -

He hangs up and dials again, walking back into...

INT. MESSY APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul stops when he sees GLENDA (12, Hispanic, nerdy old soul) standing alone in the living room, holding a brown paper bag.

PAUL
Who are you?

Glenda drops the paper bag onto the coffee table.

GLENDA
Hi Dad. I got you chilaquiles.

She wheels her rolling suitcase past Paul and goes into her room, slamming the door. Paul shakes his head - what is happening? He dials Henry's number again...

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - HENRY'S ROOM - DAY

A phone vibrates on the nightstand next to Henry, who sleeps with a silk sleep mask on his face. His arm shoots out to reject the call. After a beat, the phone vibrates again.

HENRY
Ungh...what...

He lifts the sleep mask and checks the caller ID - Unknown Number, Reading, PA. Henry rejects the call once more. After another beat, the phone vibrates again. Henry finally answers, half-awake but fully annoyed -

HENRY (CONT'D)
Hello?!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MESSY APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

PAUL
"Who knoweth if to die be but to live..."

HENRY
(by rote)
"And that called life by mortals be but death?"

Clearly this been a call and answer between them for years. Henry pulls off his mask and looks at his phone again.

HENRY (CONT'D)
What phone are you calling me from?

PAUL
Something happened.

HENRY
What's wrong with your voice? You
don't sound like yourself.

PAUL
I'm not myself! I'm someone else!

HENRY
What?

PAUL
I'm in someone else's body!

Henry sits up, trying to understand.

HENRY
Are you getting back at me for that
thing in Milwaukee?

PAUL
Henry, I know this sounds crazy,
but I'm in Reading, Pennsylvania
and when I look in the mirror, I
see someone else's reflection.

HENRY
So...you're not Paul. How did you
get this number?

Henry is doubting him. Paul lays it out -

PAUL
Your middle name is Wilfred, your
mother used to call you Willie
Will, and you missed your sophomore
Classics midterm because you had a
rash on your -

HENRY
Whoa! I get it!

PAUL
It's me, your best friend since
Exeter. And I need you to help me!

HENRY
What do you want me to do?

PAUL
Find out who is in my body!

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - BEDROOM - DAY

Sharonda rolls onto her back and blinks awake, stretching as she looks around, then closes her eyes again.

A second later, her eyes open. **Wide.** She sinks deeper into the bed, looking around at her surroundings with increasing fright.

Someone knocks on the door -

VOICE (O.S.)
Mr. Vice-President Elect? Would you
like some coffee?

WTF?! Sharonda stares at the door with furious silence.

VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Mr. Vice-President Elect?

SHARONDA
No thanks!

She recoils at the sound of her voice. (**We hear her, she's hearing Paul.**) Sharonda hops out of bed, yelping as she realizes she's wearing men's pajamas, and runs into the bathroom to hide.

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sharonda locks the door and steps away from it, breathing hard. Then she turns...and looks at the mirror.

SHARONDA'S POV - Paul Bankston staring back at her in the mirror reflection.

She staggers back against the shower doors, shock and panic colliding. She grabs a towel and uses it to muffle her SCREAMS. She turns her body, watching as **Paul's reflection** matches her actions.

After a second, she looks down into her pajama bottoms. (Yep, she has a penis.) She SCREAMS into the towel even harder...

Sharonda Jackson is stuck in the body of Vice-President Elect Paul Bankston.

INT. MESSY APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

News from the clock radio on the nightstand -

RADIO ANNOUNCER

...The Vice-President Elect canceled this morning's press conference, presumably to prepare for the joint session of Congress today at noon. On the agenda - whether to authorize the use of force in Qumar in response to the bombing of the US Embassy there last week...

A HAND switches the radio off. REVEAL Paul wearing one of Ernie's flannel shirts over a wrinkled t-shirt, still on the phone. A BANDAGE covers the gash on his forehead.

HENRY (V.O.)

You know you have to be there for the vote.

PAUL

If I leave now, I should be in DC by ten.

He finds a wallet on the dresser next to a bizarre-looking DRY POWDER INHALER and a framed photo of Ernie and Glenda. Flips it open and sees **Ernie's face on the driver's license.**

PAUL (CONT'D)

And Henry, please don't tell Renee.

Paul looks up at Ernie's reflection in the dresser mirror. His earlier disorientation has melted into determination. He's getting to the bottom of this.

HENRY (V.O.)

Trust me, I'm not telling anyone. Just get here.

Paul hangs up and pulls on a jacket.

GLENDA (O.S.)

We're going to DC?

Paul turns to find Glenda standing in the doorway, listening.

GLENDA (CONT'D)

I have school today, remember?

Paul pockets Ernie's wallet. As he exits -

PAUL

Excellent. You should go.

Glenda follows him into...

INT. MESSY APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

GLEENDA
You're just gonna leave me here?

PAUL
You just said you have school.

GLEENDA
Who's going to drive me?

PAUL
Take the bus. I'm sorry, I have to go.

He walks out the front door. Glenda runs to her room. Just as she returns with her rolling suitcase, Paul walks back in.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Please tell me I have a car.

EXT. READING STREETS - DAY

Paul walks briskly with Glenda following close behind.

PAUL
Blue Honda, Blue Honda...

GLEENDA
I'm ahead of everyone in my class.
I can miss a day.

PAUL
No, just stay here.

GLEENDA
Don't talk to me like I'm a dog.

Paul finds Ernie's clunker parked on the street. Glenda opens the trunk and tosses her suitcase in. Paul takes it back out.

GLEENDA (CONT'D)
I'm coming with you.

PAUL
I need to do this alone.

GLEENDA
You never let me do anything!

As the suitcase-shuffling argument continues, we go to...

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

SWITCH TO POV of a SNIPER RIFLE SCOPE, through which we see a birds-eye view of Paul and Glenda arguing on the sidewalk.
 REVEAL a BALD MAN (40s, military hard) taking aim at Paul. His targets keep moving around as they deal with Glenda's suitcase, but he's focused and determined.

The Bald Man adjusts his aim...and PULLS THE TRIGGER.

EXT. READING STREETS - DAY

SMASH! The bullet SHATTERS the rear windshield as Paul and Glenda hit the deck.

GLEENDA

Daddy!

PAUL

Get in the car!

Paul helps Glenda move to the passenger side doors. They crawl in as a SECOND SHOT breaks the driver side window. Glenda SCREAMS again.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Stay down!

He starts the car with his head still down. He twists the wheel, hitting the cars in front and behind him, eventually getting out and driving away.

INT. ERNIE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Paul drives fast, pulse racing, looking over his shoulder for anyone following. Glenda sobs in the back seat, terrified.

GLEENDA

Who's shooting at us?!

PAUL

I don't know.

But then Paul starts to have a hard time breathing. What's happening to him?

GLEENDA

Your asthma.

PAUL

Wh-what?

Paul has asthma now? Glenda crawls into the front seat and opens the glove box, pulls out a spare DRY POWDER INHALER, and hands it over. He fumbles with it, his breathing labored.

GLEENDA
No, like this.

She turns it around in his hand and guides his finger.

GLEENDA (CONT'D)
Push here.

Paul manages to inhale a puff. He starts to relax.

PAUL
Thanks, kid.

Glenda just looks at him, her sniffing subsiding. She pulls on her seat belt, thinking...

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - BEDROOM - DAY

Sharonda finds Paul's Smartphone on the nightstand, but it's passcode locked. Damn it. She picks up the hotel phone. Immediately -

DESK CLERK (V.O.)
Good morning, Mr. Vice-President
Elect. How can I help you?

Yipes. She hangs up.

She goes to the bedroom door and opens it slightly, looking out at the suite. She sees a stack of ANDERSON/BANKSTON election posters by the door. Is this really happening?

INT. ERNIE'S CAR - DAY

CLOSEUP on rear view mirror: Ernie's reflection.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL Paul at the wheel, on the highway now. Glenda is still watching him closely as he talks to Henry.

PAUL
(into phone)
Couldn't have been military. He missed. No, we're okay. About half-way there. Okay, bye.

As Paul tucks the flip phone back in his pocket -

GLEENDA
You shouldn't talk on your cell
phone while driving.

PAUL
You're right. I'm sorry.

Glenda purses her lips, making a decision.

GLEENDA
Do you remember that time you took
me to Disney World? And I got sick
from too much cotton candy?

PAUL
Uh, yeah. Sure.

GLEENDA
That was a trick question. You've
never taken me anywhere.

Paul looks at her. He's caught.

GLEENDA (CONT'D)
You're not my father. Who are you?!

Off Paul, realizing he has no choice but to tell her the
truth...

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sharonda looks around the suite. SFX: A key card unlocks the
suite front door. She quickly retreats into the bedroom.

Secret Service agent Rajiv enters, looking more tense than
usual. He walks to the closed bedroom door and knocks.

RAJIV
"I am a window, but not on a wall."

No answer. Strange. Rajiv knocks again.

HENRY (O.S.)
What are you doing?

Rajiv turns to see Henry has entered the suite.

RAJIV
I wanted to get the Vice-President
Elect's breakfast order.

HENRY
I'll take care of that. Thank you.

Rajiv nods and exits, **leaving us wondering what that was all about**. Once he's gone, Henry goes to the bedroom and knocks.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Hello? It's Henry Wilson.

Henry hears sound inside the bedroom and tries to open the door. It's locked.

HENRY (CONT'D)
I just want to talk.

Henry tries the door again. Still locked. Henry walks over and picks up the living room phone.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Yes, can you please send a
locksmith to the Federal Suite?

INT. ERNIE'S CAR - DAY

Still driving, Paul glances expectantly at a wide-eyed Glenda after explaining his side of the story. Finally, she speaks -

GLEENDA
So...you're the new Vice-President.
Is that why someone tried to shoot
you?

PAUL
That would be my guess.

GLEENDA
Where's my dad?

PAUL
He must be inside my body. At
least, that's usually how these
things happen in the movies.
(realizing)
I can't believe I just said that.

GLEENDA
Well, I'm Glenda. Glenda Gonzalez.

She extends her hand. He shakes it, amused by her formality.

PAUL
It's nice to meet you, Glenda.
You're taking this surprisingly
well.

GLEENDA

Mom always said I was resilient. I had to be after the divorce...

(then)

What are we gonna do in DC? Are we going to the White House?

PAUL

I am going to meet my friend Henry and then we'll figure out how to get you home.

GLEENDA

Home? Mom's in Vegas.

PAUL

Do you have an aunt or an uncle who can watch you?

GLEENDA

You're watching me.

PAUL

I have more important matters to attend to -

GLEENDA

Yeah, like figuring out how this happened. And how you switch back. Or if this happened to anyone else.

PAUL

That's not -

GLEENDA

We have to figure this out so we can find my dad!

Paul doesn't push it further. Glenda looks out the window.

GLEENDA (CONT'D)

I have to go.

PAUL

Go where?

GLEENDA

I have to **go**.

Paul looks at the gas gauge - the needle is at E anyway. They have to stop.

INT. GAS STATION MINI MART - DAY

Glenda runs inside to find a bathroom. Paul walks in behind her, smiling at the CASHIER (70s, South Asian). As he strolls toward the beverage cases in the back, the Cashier watches him closely. Very closely.

Paul grabs a bottle of Perrier and walks up to the checkout, followed by a BURLY CUSTOMER (Caucasian).

PAUL
Twenty dollars on pump seven,
please?

The Cashier rings him up as Paul opens Ernie's wallet. Damn, no credit cards, just three dollars cash.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Ahh...I seem to be low on funds.

CASHIER
You have no money?

PAUL
I don't suppose there's a way you
could invoice me later?

BURLY CUSTOMER
(to Paul)
Hey José, can you hurry it up?

PAUL
Just a moment -

CASHIER
No money. No gas.

PAUL
No, I have money. Just not with me.

Burly Customer steps in front of Paul.

BURLY CUSTOMER
Gimme a pack of Marlboros.

PAUL
Excuse me, I wasn't finished with
my transaction.

BURLY CUSTOMER
You need money for a transaction.
That's how it works in America.
Comprend-ay?

PAUL
There's no need to be rude.

BURLY CUSTOMER
Oh yeah? You wanna start something?

PAUL
No, I just -

CASHIER
Both of you! Get out!

A POLICEMAN walks in.

BURLY CUSTOMER
Hey, I'm a paying customer!

POLICEMAN
What seems to be the problem here?

BURLY CUSTOMER
José here's trying to get his gas
for free.

PAUL
That is not my name. And that's not
the situation -

POLICEMAN
Come on, let's go buddy.

Paul realizes the cop is talking to him. He's appalled.

PAUL
You're asking me to leave?

POLICEMAN
You have any money or not?

Glenda suddenly appears and throws the Cashier a twenty
dollar bill.

GLEENDA
Here.

She grabs Paul's sleeve.

GLEENDA (CONT'D)
Let's go, Dad.

INT. ERNIE'S CAR - DAY

After pumping gas, Paul gets back in the car. The Cashier and Policeman watch them from the window of the mini mart.

PAUL
That policeman will be hearing from
my office.

GLEENDA
It's not a big deal.

PAUL
His behavior was completely
uncalled for.

GLEENDA
Have you forgotten what you look
like?

Paul looks at Ernie's reflection in his rearview mirror. Oh. He had forgotten.

GLEENDA (CONT'D)
Welcome to my world.

Paul takes a moment, unsettled by this new reality.

PAUL
Let's just get to DC and get to the
bottom of this.

GLEENDA
Do you think my dad's there?

PAUL
Wherever he is, we'll find him.

Off the bond already starting to form between them...

EXT. ROADSIDE GAS STATION - DAY

As Ernie's car pulls out -

REVEAL the Bald Man sitting in his car across the street, watching them! His expression is calm, but focused.

Paul turns onto the road. Bald Man pulls out to follow...

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. THE HAY-ADAMS - DAY

Ernie's clunker pulls up to the uniformed VALET, who looks down his nose at the car's shattered windows. He leans in immediately, taking care not to touch the dirty car door.

VALET

I'm sorry, the maintenance entrance
is in the back.

PAUL

We have a meeting with Henry Wilson
in the Federal Suite.

VALET

(yeah right)
Are you a guest at this hotel?

Paul is prepared to argue his case, but Glenda interrupts -

GLEENDA

We'll go around back. Thank you.

She turns to Paul.

GLEENDA (CONT'D)

Trust me.

As they pull away, someone standing on the sidewalk and bundled in a winter coat notices them. She removes her sunglasses for a better look, REVEALING **Dr. Kara Chang, the scientist from the opening**. She's stunned to see them.

KARA

(to herself)
Ernie?

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - BEDROOM - DAY

SFX: A toilet flushing.

Sharonda walks out of the bathroom looking more than a little traumatized. (Yep, she just peed standing up.)

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The LOCKSMITH successfully unlocks the door. Henry hands him a wad of cash.

HENRY

Thank you.

After the Locksmith leaves, Henry opens the door, which immediately bumps against a haphazard STACK OF FURNITURE blocking the door.

HENRY (CONT'D)

(frustrated)

I don't know who you are, but I know you're not Paul Bankston. You can't hide in that room forever.

He pushes at the door. Sharonda pushes against the furniture in the opposite direction.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Let me in. I just want to help.

SHARONDA

Why should I believe you?!

Henry stops pushing, taken aback by the fear in her voice.

Sharonda listens to the silence - what is he doing out there? Then - Paul's Smartphone rings on the nightstand.

HENRY

Answer it.

Sharonda moves to the phone - it's a FaceTime call from Henry. With trepidation, she answers it.

ECU on Henry's phone, on which we see Sharonda's face, looking scared. **Henry reacts - he's seeing Paul's face.**

SHARONDA

I know I look like him, but I'm not him!

Henry looks uncertain, but continues.

HENRY

Okay. What's your name?

SHARONDA

Sharonda.

HENRY

(whoa)
You're a woman?

SHARONDA

I don't know what happened. I just woke up here. I didn't do this, I swear!

HENRY

I know you're scared. The real Paul is on his way back to DC. We will get this straightened out.

SHARONDA

How do I know I can trust you?

HENRY

Paul is my best friend. Right now, I'm the only one you can trust.

As Sharonda thinks about this...

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - KITCHEN - DAY

Paul and Glenda enter through the maintenance entrance.

PAUL

I can't believe no one stopped us.

GLEENDA

Why would they?

She feels right at home among the Hispanic kitchen staff. Paul not so much. He sees something behind her.

PAUL

Oh good. They're here.

Glenda turns to see two stern SECRET SERVICE AGENTS walking towards them. She instinctively backs up in fear.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Don't worry, Henry sent them to meet us.

Paul steps in front of Glenda and holds out his hand.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Good morning, gentlemen -

But then, the first Secret Service Agent throws Paul against the wall, pinning his arms behind his back.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Hey!

The second Agent grabs Glenda, lifting her as he places a hand over her screaming mouth.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Let her go!

SECRET SERVICE AGENT #1

(into his sleeve)

We've got them.

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The Secret Service Agents lead Paul and Glenda in to meet a waiting Henry.

HENRY

(to the Secret Service)

I'll take it from here. Thank you.

The Agents exit. Paul lets out a sigh of relief as he goes to man-hug Henry -

PAUL

I have never been happier to see you.

Henry recoils instinctively, looking dubiously at Paul.

HENRY

This is crazy. I have no reason to believe it's really you in there.

PAUL

Okay, you lost your virginity senior year of Exeter to a hooker you met at Star Market.

HENRY

Oh!

GLEENDA

Jesus! I'm twelve, remember?!

PAUL

It's me, Henry.

HENRY

What I was going to say is, I wasn't sure until someone else convinced me it was true.

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - BEDROOM - DAY

Henry leads Paul and Glenda into the bedroom to meet Sharonda, now dressed in Paul's clothes, looking uncomfortable. In the reflection of the floor length mirror nearby, we see Ernie walking in to meet Paul, reminding us of their outer appearances.

Paul takes a moment to adjust to looking at himself.

PAUL

Wow. This is weird.

SHARONDA

You don't know the half of it.

GLEENDA

(tentatively)

Daddy?

Sharonda looks at Henry.

SHARONDA

You didn't tell him?

HENRY

I thought it best to do it in person.

PAUL

Tell me what?

SHARONDA

I'm not you. I mean, I'm not whoever...My name is Sharonda Jackson. I'm a history teacher at Adams Community College in West Virginia.

PAUL

You're a woman?

Paul breathes faster as this twist hits him. Just when he thought the craziness had ended...

GLEENDA

So where's my dad?

As they all silently acknowledge this simple but enormous question...

SHARONDA
Is there something I don't know?
Tell me.

PAUL
You don't have the clearance.

SHARONDA
If you want me to be you, I need to
know everything you know.

PAUL
You're not going to be me!

HENRY
Which is why you need to resign
before the joint session of
Congress.

PAUL
That's premature. We could
straighten this all out in a day.

HENRY
How?

Paul takes a beat. He has no answer. All he knows is -

PAUL
I'm not resigning. What's the
alternative?

HENRY
We prep him to go into the joint
session and vote as you.

SHARONDA
(correcting)
Her.

PAUL
Fine. But I go with him.

SHARONDA
Wait -

HENRY
You know I can't get you on the
floor.

PAUL
He can't go in blind.

HENRY

We'll prep him. What to say, what to do -

SHARONDA

HEY!

The men turn to Sharonda.

SHARONDA (CONT'D)

First of all, I am a woman and I would appreciate being acknowledged as such. Secondly, you haven't even asked me if I'm willing to do this.

HENRY

You have to.

SHARONDA

I don't have to do anything except get out of here and go back to West Virginia.

PAUL

What are you talking about?

SHARONDA

I need to find out who's in my body. He or she could be doing damage to my life and career.

HENRY

With all due respect, I think preserving the office of the Vice-President of the United States is more important.

SHARONDA

Stop with all due respecting me. And why is my life not as important as yours? Is it because I'm black?

PAUL

Wait, you're black?

A quick knock at the door. It opens to reveal Rajiv.

RAJIV

Your breakfast is here, sir.

PAUL

Let's take a break. I'm starving...

Paul walks out -

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

- and heads straight for the silver cloche on the breakfast cart. The ROOM SERVICE ATTENDANT leans forward quickly.

ROOM SERVICE ATTENDANT
I'm sorry, this is for Senator
Bankston.

Paul retreats, remembering again the body he's in. Henry and Sharonda enter, observing the awkwardness.

SHARONDA
Go ahead. I'm not hungry.

Paul helps himself as Henry tips the Room Service Attendant. As Glenda crosses to the room service cart too, Rajiv discretely sidles up to Sharonda.

RAJIV
(whispering)
"I am a window, but not on a wall."

Sharonda just looks at him, confused.

SHARONDA
I'm sorry, what?

Rajiv backs away -

RAJIV
Never mind.

- his wheels turning fast **as he adjusts to her lack of recognition of the catchphrase.** As he leaves, Renee walks in from the other bedroom, already dressed and looking fabulous.

RENEE
Good morning.

Everyone freezes. Renee moves to pour orange juice from the room service cart.

SHARONDA
(involuntarily)
Wow. You're beautiful.

Renee looks at Sharonda strangely as Paul shoots Sharonda a hard look. Henry steps in -

HENRY
Renee, this is...uh...

GLEENDA
Ernesto Gonzalez.

HENRY
Yes, and -

GLEENDA
His daughter Glenda.

HENRY
They're...consultants we just
hired. For the transition.

Renee looks at Glenda and Paul in Ernie's wrinkled clothing -
o-kay.

RENEE
Paul, can I have a word alone,
please?

She heads for his bedroom.

SHARONDA
Uhh...

HENRY
We're kind of in the middle of -

RENEE
(to Sharonda)
Paul.

Sharonda looks at her, then at Henry and Paul, who looks
absolutely stricken. No one knows what to do. Finally -

SHARONDA
I should probably get ready anyway,
right?

Paul and Sharonda share a panicked look as she walks into the
bedroom and closes the door.

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sharonda quickly moves to the closet, hiding her anxious
expression.

RENEE
I wanted to apologize. I shouldn't
have told you last night.

SHARONDA
Okay.

RENEE

I thought we could finish our talk.

SHARONDA

Yeah, sure. You go first.

RENEE

I said all I needed to say last night. Don't you have anything to say to me?

Sharonda is silent - she doesn't want to say the wrong thing. (But of course, saying nothing is the wrong thing.)

Renee finally nods, resigned and hurt. She heads for the door, turning back to add -

RENEE (CONT'D)

To answer your question - yes. There is someone else.

She walks out as Sharonda realizes what this conversation was really about. And boy, did she screw up...

EXT. THE HAY-ADAMS - HALLWAY - DAY

Rajiv paces tensely with his phone pressed to his ear. Someone finally picks up.

RAJIV

Where have you been, I've been trying to call you!

(beat)

Something's wrong. It didn't work.

(beat)

It's not him inside the Vice-President!

Rajiv knows what happened! He's in on it!

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - BEDROOM - DAY

Glenda sits on the bed watching the adults argue. Like she's watching a tennis match.

PAUL

You can't just walk out of here and go to West Virginia -

SHARONDA

This was a free country the last time I checked!

PAUL

You look like me!

SHARONDA

I don't care!

HENRY

We're not going to let you leave.

SHARONDA

Oh, so I'm a prisoner now?

PAUL

You have to do this. We don't know what happened and I need more time to figure things out!

They all start shouting. Glenda stands and WHISTLES loudly.

GLEENDA

Stop it! The only way we'll get through this is to work together.

(to Paul)

If she helps you with this vote, you need to figure out what's happening with her body in West Virginia. Deal?

Paul and Henry look at each other, then -

PAUL

Fine. Deal.

GLEENDA

Good. You can't listen with your mouth open, you know.

She sits, satisfied by her mediation skills.

HENRY

I'll contact the FBI office in West Virginia. They can send someone.

SHARONDA

Thank you.

PAUL

No, thank you. I know we're asking a lot, but the best way to keep us all safe is to make sure no one finds out what happened. And I need to appear in Congress today.

Sharonda looks at the mirror on the wall, taking in Paul's reflection. She takes a breath, steeling herself.

SHARONDA

Okay. What do I need to know?

CUT TO:

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A Secret Service Agent approaches the closed bedroom door and knocks.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

Mr. Vice-President Elect? Your car is here.

PAUL (O.S.)

Thank you. We'll be right there.

The Agent pauses, puzzled, as murmurs come from inside. Then -

SHARONDA (O.S.)

We'll be right there!

That sounds more like the Vice-President Elect. He walks away.

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - BEDROOM - DAY

Sharonda, now dressed in a tailored suit, struggles to tie her necktie as Paul bombards her with details.

PAUL

Bracken is sneaky. One second you're chatting about the weather, the next you're defending your stance on natural gas.

Glenda hovers nearby, referencing her phone like a reporter's notebook.

GLEENDA
When is your birthday?

SHARONDA
Mine?

GLEENDA
Yeah.

SHARONDA
December twelfth.

PAUL
Can we stay on task, please?

Paul hands his phone to Sharonda and moves to tie her necktie for her. **In the mirror, we see Ernie tying Paul's tie.**

PAUL (CONT'D)
Passcode is seventeen seventy-six.
I'll text you from Henry's iPad if
necessary.

SHARONDA
You can text in Congress?

PAUL
It gets boring.

GLEENDA
Where were you born?

PAUL
Remember, Bracken is on your right,
Jameson is on your left. Got it?

SHARONDA
Detroit.

PAUL
What?

SHARONDA
I was born in Detroit.

GLEENDA
What year?

PAUL
(to Glenda)
Can we do twenty questions later?

GLEENDA

I'm trying to find a connection between you two. It might explain why you were pulled into the chain. That's what I'm calling it -

Henry knocks and enters.

HENRY

It's almost eleven thirty. We need to hustle.

SHARONDA

I just need to use the bathroom before we go.

She ducks away, taking Paul's phone with her. Paul takes a deep breath, moving over to Henry.

PAUL

What can you tell me about her?

HENRY

Clean record. Parents died when she was attending the community college where she now teaches. And she's a registered Democrat.

PAUL

(not great)
That's just great.

HENRY

Are you sure she can she do this?

PAUL

She'll have to.

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - BATHROOM - DAY

Sharonda texts on Paul's phone. ECU: A text message pops up from a number with area code 304 - "Sorry you lost your phone. And about last night. How's the conference?"

Ginger. Sharonda breathes a sigh of relief and texts back - "More stressful than I ever could have imagined."

A moment later, Ginger replies - "There's no one more deserving to be in the spotlight than you. Knock 'em dead." Just what Sharonda needed to hear.

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sharonda reviews last-minute notes in her padfolio with Paul.

SHARONDA

I can't believe you're voting yes.

PAUL

You're standing in for me, so technically you're voting yes.

SHARONDA

My brother was in Iraq for two pointless tours. We don't need more military action overseas. We need less.

PAUL

Does your brother agree with this point of view?

SHARONDA

He was killed in action last year.

PAUL

I'm sorry for your loss. But this vote - it's important.

SHARONDA

I respectfully disagree, Mr. Vice-President Elect.

Henry approaches.

HENRY

Time to go.

GLEENDA

Wait, I have more questions -

PAUL

Just follow the outline and don't say anything more than you have to. If you need anything, text me.

SHARONDA

Got it.

GLEENDA

I can ask them in the limo -

PAUL

(snapping)
Not now, Glenda! Please!

Glenda turns angrily and returns to the bedroom, slamming the door. Paul shakes his head - he'll deal with it later.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Come on, let's go.

They all walk out -

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

- joining their Secret Service escort. Paul walks closely with Sharonda as Henry and Rajiv lead the way.

PAUL
Are you left-handed?

SHARONDA
No, why?

PAUL
I'm left-handed.

SHARONDA
Jesus. Am I going to have to sign anything today?

PAUL
I hope not.

SHARONDA
What are you going to do about your wife?

Paul doesn't answer. They reach the waiting elevator at the end of the hallway.

PAUL
You're doing a great thing for your country today. Good luck.

SHARONDA
You too. You're going to need it when you apologize to your daughter.

PAUL
She's not my...

But Sharonda's already on the elevator with Henry. Paul watches as the doors close, leaving him alone in the hallway.

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - BEDROOM - DAY

Paul walks back in, catching a glimpse of Ernie's reflection in the mirror and frowning at his appearance. He pulls off Ernie's flannel shirt and drops it into the trash can. He moves to the closet as Glenda comes out of the bathroom.

GLEENDA

Oh. You're back.

She sees her father's shirt in the trash can and moves to retrieve it. Paul tries pulling on one of the dress shirts he knows so well, but it's way too big.

PAUL

I'm sorry.

GLEENDA

Sorry for what?

PAUL

Uh...

GLEENDA

You don't even know what you're apologizing for.

PAUL

Look, I'm a little off my game if you haven't noticed.

GLEENDA

You told me you'd help me find my father. But you're busy now. So it's up to me, I guess.

Paul realizes that she's holding her father's shirt. She misses him. What can he possibly do for her?

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - LOADING DOCK - DAY

As soon as Sharonda walks out, she's hit with a wall of chaos. PHOTOGRAPHERS snap photos as a crowd of PROTESTERS shake signs - "NO WAR IN QUMAR" and "WAR IS NOT THE ANSWER!"

Sharonda is taken aback, but Henry pushes her forward.

HENRY

Just smile and wave.

She does so, moving toward the limo, until she sees an AFRICAN-AMERICAN VETERAN in a wheelchair holding a "VOTE FOR PEACE" sign. Damn, that gets to her. The Secret Service opens the limo door for her - she gives one last smile and gets in.

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - FEDERAL SUITE - BEDROOM - DAY

Paul, now dressed in a sharp but slightly baggy suit, leans onto his knees as he watches the joint session on C-SPAN on TV. The proceedings plod along.

ONSCREEN: We see Sharonda sitting in Congress, eyes wide.

Paul picks up Henry's iPad. Types a message - "Relax."

Onscreen Sharonda looks at her phone. She takes a deep breath and types something back. Henry's iPad chimes.

ECU on Text: "You weren't kidding. This IS boring."

RENEE (O.S.)
You're wearing his clothes.

Renee stands in the doorway. Paul rises immediately, smoothing his shirt as best he can.

PAUL
Yes, your husband generously lent them to me. Until I can get my own.

RENEE
What kind of consultant are you exactly?

PAUL
Cultural.

RENEE
(in Spanish)
What country are you from originally?

Paul can't help but smile, charmed by her intelligence.

PAUL
I forgot that you speak Spanish.

RENEE
How would you know that?

PAUL
I read it. Somewhere...
(changing the subject)
(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)
I'm going to be around for the whole transition period, so you should feel free to talk to me about anything.

Renee just smiles politely - he's a stranger to her.

RENEE
That's kind of you to offer. Thank you.

Paul shifts, unsettled by the divide between them.

RENEE (CONT'D)
How old is your daughter?

PAUL
Twelve.

RENEE
She seems like a handful.

PAUL
You have no idea.

RENEE
Where is she right now?

PAUL
She's...

Paul looks around - oh crap, where is she?!

PAUL (CONT'D)
Excuse me.

Paul rushes out of the room.

PAUL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Glenda?!

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Paul steps out and sees a Secret Service Agent by the door.

PAUL
Where is that young girl?

The agent just stares at him.

PAUL (CONT'D)
The girl who was with me?

SECRET SERVICE AGENT
She went to find something to eat.

PAUL
And you just let her go?!

SECRET SERVICE AGENT
My job is to protect Ms. Bankston -

Paul doesn't stay to hear the rest of his excuse. He dashes toward the elevator.

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - LOBBY - DAY

Paul exits the elevator and rushes across the lobby. A now tipsy Kara sees him and hastily throws down some cash for her two vodka tonics before following him out the door.

INT. DINER - DAY

Glenda sits at the counter eating a cheeseburger. Outside, Paul runs past, looking into the windows. He sees Glenda and goes inside.

PAUL
What do you think you're doing?

GLEENDA
I was hungry and the room service cheeseburger was thirty dollars.

PAUL
We can't be out here in the open.

GLEENDA
Why? No one knows who you are.

He relents and sits for a moment.

PAUL
Just hurry up. We need to get back.

He looks up at the TVs in the diner playing a game show.

PAUL (CONT'D)
(to waitstaff)
Is there any way we can switch these to C-SPAN?

Kara walks in and slides into a booth near the door, watching Paul and Glenda.

GLEENDA

So is your wife going to leave you?

Paul gives her an incredulous look.

GLEENDA (CONT'D)

My parents split up, remember? With them, it was mom's fault. But in your case, I think it's you.

PAUL

Thanks for that.

GLEENDA

You're probably not giving her what she needs.

PAUL

My wife is an intelligent, capable woman. She's never needed anything from me that she couldn't give herself.

GLEENDA

That's dumb. Everyone needs someone.

Paul thinks about this as Glenda continues eating...

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - DAY

Sharonda straightens in her seat. Finally, it's time.

CHAIR (O.S.)

...a recorded vote is ordered.
Members record their vote by
electronic device. This is a five
minute vote.

The Chair bangs a gavel. Sharonda inspects the electronic voting device, staring at the YEA and NAY buttons. **Will she vote as Paul directed? Or follow her own heart?**

She locks in her vote - we don't see what it is yet - and leans back, letting out the breath she's been holding...

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

Sharonda walks out of the chamber doorway and finds Henry.

SHARONDA

Henry, it wasn't -

HENRY

What the hell happened in there? Do you realize what you've done?

SENATOR WILCOX (70s, Caucasian, snake oil salesman) approaches. This man never stops smiling, despite his venom.

SENATOR WILCOX

Congratulations, my boy. Or should I say Vice-President Elect?

HENRY

Senator Wilcox, we were just leaving -

Henry's phone rings. He looks at it, reacting.

SENATOR WILCOX

I think you better get that, Henry.

As Henry steps away to answer his phone -

SENATOR WILCOX (CONT'D)

Damn shame the resolution didn't pass, don't you think?

SHARONDA

Yes...

Sharonda nods generically, willing Henry to return.

SENATOR WILCOX

Seems to me you should be more concerned about that, seeing as how you guaranteed me a war in exchange for the Vice-Presidency.

WHAT? Senator Wilcox claps a hand on Sharonda's shoulder.

SENATOR WILCOX (CONT'D)

Have your office set something up with my office. As soon as possible.

As Senator Wilcox walks away, Henry finally returns.

HENRY

We've been summoned to the White House.

SHARONDA

What? Why?

HENRY

The President wants to know what happened with the vote.

SHARONDA

But -

HENRY

When the President asks for you, you go immediately. We'll call Paul on the way.

For a black woman, Sharonda looks mighty pale...

INT. DINER - DAY

Kara's still watching from her booth by the door, nursing her afternoon hangover with a cup of coffee. ANGLE ON a WAITRESS delivering the check to Glenda. Paul looks at the total.

PAUL

Do you have enough to cover this?

GLENDA

I used my last twenty dollars at the gas station.

PAUL

How are you planning to pay?

GLENDA

I'm gonna ditch.

PAUL

You're not serious, are you?

Glenda hops off her stool.

GLENDA

It's no big deal. I'm 'going to the bathroom.' Count to ten and go out the front. I'll meet you on the corner.

Unbelievable. Glenda walks away. Paul stands, trying hard not to look conspicuous. Kara stands too, heading for him. Until -

The Bald Man suddenly appears in front of Paul.

BALD MAN

Not so fast.

Kara retreats back into her booth quickly. Now wearing a suit, Bald Man looks more like a bureaucrat than a sniper. Paul thinks he's been caught by the restaurant manager.

PAUL

I'm sorry. This was my daughter's idea -

BALD MAN

You mean Glenda?

Paul shifts at the sound of Glenda's name.

BALD MAN (CONT'D)

You're a long way from Reading, Ernesto.

Bald Man throws a twenty on the counter and grabs Paul by the arm, leading him outside.

BALD MAN (CONT'D)

Let's go find your daughter.

Kara ducks further into her booth as they walk past...

EXT. DINER - DAY

Paul and Bald Man exit the diner. Paul quickly looks around and locks eyes with Glenda on the corner. Then -

Paul elbows Bald Man in the face! (He's no James Bond, but it works.)

PAUL

RUN!

Glenda runs. Paul runs in the opposite direction. Bald Man chases him.

EXT. WASHINGTON DC STREETS - DAY

As Paul runs past store windows, we see flashes of Ernie's reflection running down the sidewalk.

Paul turns down an alley just as an ASTHMA ATTACK slows him down. He staggers, steadying himself against the wall as he scrambles to pull his INHALER out of his pocket and manages a puff. He starts to regain his breath -

Until Bald Man TAZES him from behind - Paul goes DOWN.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Sharonda walks down the hallway with Henry, surrounded by Secret Service agents. She's sweating profusely, teetering on the edge of panic.

HENRY

Whatever he says, just nod and agree. Turn every question back to him or someone else in the room.

Sharonda nods, gathering her strength. Her phone buzzes - she looks quickly.

ECU: Text from Ginger - "You never checked in for your flight. Where the hell are you?!"

That's not helping...

EXT. WASHINGTON DC STREETS - DAY

Paul stirs and comes to. He's still sitting in the alley - Bald Man stands at a distance, waiting patiently for him to wake up.

BALD MAN

You didn't have to run, Ernie. I just want to talk.

Paul shifts and sits up.

PAUL

The sniper in Reading. That was you?

(then)

You missed.

BALD MAN

I don't miss. I wanted to see where you would go. But now, I'm getting impatient.

PAUL

What do you want?

BALD MAN

Where is Project Skylight?

Paul's expression says he has no idea.

BALD MAN (CONT'D)

We know you've been helping them. We just want the machine back.

PAUL
I don't know what you're talking
about.

BALD MAN
Maybe Glenda does. She's a smart
girl. She's going to be a top notch
hacker like you someday.

Ernie's a computer hacker?!

PAUL
Leave her out of this. She's just -

SFX: Severe tinnitus ringing.

Paul suddenly grabs his head, crying out in pain! Bald Man
steps back, confused.

At the same time -

INT. WHITE HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

SFX: Severe tinnitus ringing continues.

Sharonda suddenly falls to the floor, holding her head and
crying out. **She's experiencing the same thing as Paul!**

HENRY
Paul? Paul!
(to the agents)
Call the doctor!

Off Sharonda's body curled on the floor, as other Secret
Service agents rush to her aid...

EXT. WASHINGTON DC STREETS - DAY

Paul has fallen onto his back, screaming and writhing in
pain.

What is happening to them?!

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. WASHINGTON DC STREETS - DAY

Paul continues to suffer from the intense, unseen pain. Bald Man leans over him, tazer still in hand, concerned.

Suddenly, **the ringing STOPS**. Paul gasps, looking around.

PAUL
I'm still here...

WHACK! Glenda HITS Bald Man's leg with a piece of wood from behind. As he spins on Glenda, Paul takes advantage of the distraction and grabs Bald Man's hand, forcing him to TAZE HIMSELF. Bald Man drops to the ground.

GLEENDA
Daddy!

Glenda rushes to Paul and throws her arms around him. He awkwardly hugs her back, still getting his bearings.

PAUL
Did you put that inhaler in my pocket?

GLEENDA
Of course I did.

PAUL
Thanks kid.
(then)
Come on, let's go.

GLEENDA
Wait -

Glenda goes to the Bald Man and reaches into his pockets.

PAUL
Glenda, what are you -

GLEENDA
Don't you wanna know who he is?

She pulls out his wallet and opens it.

GLEENDA (CONT'D)
(reading)
Howard Mackenzie...NASA?

She shows the NASA ID badge to Paul, who stares at it in disbelief. **None of this makes sense.** His flip phone rings.

PAUL

It's Henry. Come on.

As they run away, we go off the Bald Man and his NASA badge lying on the ground...

INT. WALTER REED NATIONAL MILITARY MEDICAL CENTER - ROOM - NIGHT

Sharonda sits up in the hospital bed, with Paul and Glenda sitting nearby. They all watch Henry on his phone.

HENRY

Yes, I will tell him as soon as he wakes up. Thank you, Mr. President.

(hanging up)

He is not happy.

PAUL

Why didn't you vote yes like we told you to?

SHARONDA

Why are you assuming I didn't?

PAUL

You did?

SHARONDA

Yes. I voted yes. God knows I didn't want to, but I told you I would. And I honor my word.

GLEENDA

So someone else flip flopped? Who?

PAUL

We won't know until the Congressional record comes out.

HENRY

We'll get into that later. For now, what happened with you two?

PAUL

No idea. I was hoping it was everyone snapping back to their own bodies, but no such luck.

HENRY

We'll have to come up with a statement for the press to explain what that was.

PAUL

As if we needed more scrutiny.

Through the window, they see Renee approaching the room.

HENRY

I'll go talk to her.

Henry exits and meets Renee. Paul watches them as they talk, standing close to one another.

GLEENDA

So who is this Howard Mackenzie?
And what does NASA have to do with all of this?

SHARONDA

And why is Senator Wilcox claiming you owe him a war?

GLEENDA

We're good at collecting questions.
We need more answers.

But Paul is fixated on Henry and Renee, **observing their body language, as if for the first time.** We see the heartbreaking truth hit him - **Henry is the other man.**

SHARONDA

Paul? Is everything okay?

PAUL

Yeah...I mean, yes...
(recovering)
Did your dad ever talk about something named Project Skylight?

GLEENDA

Not that I remember.

PAUL

Why didn't you tell me he was a computer hacker?

GLEENDA

What, you assumed he was a janitor or something?

Sharonda notices Rajiv standing at his post outside the door.

SHARONDA
A skylight. That's it!

PAUL
What?

SHARONDA
(pointing)
That Secret Service agent. The
Indian one. He said something to me
earlier about being a window but
not on a wall.

The realization hits Paul too.

PAUL
A window that's not on a wall. A
skylight.

SHARONDA
He must know what's going on.

GLEENDA
Maybe we should talk to him?

PAUL
No. Not until we know more about
what's happening. At least we have
somewhere to start.

The door opens and three MEN IN BLACK enter. BRUCE MANIKAS
(60s, intimidating and stern) walks in. Paul is surprised,
but covers.

BRUCE
Good evening, Paul.

GLEENDA
Who are you?

PAUL
Glenda, this is Bruce Manikas, the
Chairman of NASA.

Glenda grabs onto Paul's arm at the mention of NASA.

BRUCE
If you'll excuse us, we have some
business with the Vice-President
Elect.

Paul takes Glenda's hand and leads her out. Bruce addresses
Sharonda with a sincere smile that is just a touch sinister.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

We're sorry to disturb you in the hospital, but you need to be briefed on something right away.

One of Bruce's men hands Sharonda a file. The cover says PROJECT SKYLIGHT. Sharonda's eyes widen - she's about to get some answers.

INT. WALTER REED NATIONAL MILITARY MEDICAL CENTER - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Paul and Glenda try to gauge what's going on in the room, but one of Bruce's men closes the blinds.

Paul turns...and sees **Howard Mackenzie standing at the end of the hallway!** He immediately pulls Glenda behind a crash cart.

GLEENDA

What? What is it?

PAUL

Shhh...

Howard starts to walk toward Sharonda's room. Paul looks around for a place to hide when he hears -

KARA (O.S.)

(loud whisper)

Ernie!

They turn to see Kara gesturing from the stairwell door.

KARA (CONT'D)

This way!

Paul and Glenda duck away before Howard sees them.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Once the door is closed behind them -

KARA

What are you doing in DC? And why did you bring your daughter?

(off Paul's look)

What is it?

How to say this...

PAUL

Who are you?

Kara looks at him carefully.

KARA
(in Spanish)
You know who I am.

No recognition from Paul. The realization hits Kara.

KARA (CONT'D)
You're not Ernie. It did work.

GLEENDA
What worked? Do you know how this happened? Who are you?

KARA
(to Paul)
The question is who are you?

She turns, not waiting for his answer.

KARA (CONT'D)
Come on -

PAUL
No. We're not going anywhere until you tell us what's going on. What happened to me? What is Project Skylight?

KARA
I'll tell you, but we have to get out of here. I'm terrible at this spy stuff.

She continues down the stairs. Paul and Glenda follow.

INT. WALTER REED NATIONAL MILITARY MEDICAL CENTER - ROOM - DAY

Sharonda shuffles through the pictures in the file, including pictures of **Dr. Kensington Price** and **Dr. Kara Chang**.

BRUCE
Dr. Price assembled the team himself, promising us the best of the best. He delivered.

SHARONDA
What were they working on?

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

KARA

A device that could initiate and maintain a state of neuro-cognizance transference.

GLEENDA

(translating)

Body swapping.

KARA

NASA told us it was going to be used for scientific missions on the International Space Station. It wasn't until we completed the device that we realized they lied.

INT. WALTER REED NATIONAL MILITARY MEDICAL CENTER - ROOM - NIGHT

BRUCE

The team betrayed their country. They stole the machine and killed two of my men in the process.

SHARONDA

Where are they now?

BRUCE

Dr. Price was unfortunately killed during his escape attempt. The rest of his team is still at large. We consider them enemies of the state.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

KARA

They tried to kill us. To get the device. We couldn't let that happen, so we went underground.

They reach the ground floor.

KARA (CONT'D)

Where is Ernie anyway?

GLEENDA

We don't know.

KARA

Well, where is your body?

Paul doesn't answer. He just pushes the door open for her.

EXT. WALTER REED NATIONAL MILITARY MEDICAL CENTER -
CONTINUOUS

Kara exits and walks toward the parking lot without checking her surroundings.

KARA
My car is over there.

HOWARD (O.S.)
Dr. Chang! STOP!

Kara turns to see Howard and other Men in Black running toward her. Paul pulls Glenda back behind a bush, unseen.

Kara throws her arm out to the right and runs in the opposite direction, but gets captured.

KARA
No! Let me go!

Paul and Glenda stay hidden as the men take Kara away. When the coast is clear, Glenda runs forward, scanning the ground.

PAUL
What are you doing?

GLENDA
She threw something down before
they took her.

Glenda stoops and picks something up, handing it to Paul.

ECU: An SD card in a plastic case.

GLENDA (CONT'D)
What do you think's on it?

Paul turns the card case over in his hand, hoping what's on it are answers...

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. THE HAY-ADAMS - STANDARD ROOM - NIGHT

Henry opens the door for Paul, who carries a sleeping Glenda in his arms. He places her gently into one of the beds as Henry leaves the key cards on the desk.

HENRY

Your keys. I already brought down your laptop and her suitcase too.

PAUL

She's had a long day.

HENRY

(laughs miserably)
We all have. We'll start fresh in the morning. Good night.

As Henry moves to the door -

PAUL

Thank you, Henry. For everything.
What would I do without you?

Paul looks directly at Henry, challenging him to come clean about Renee. But he just smiles back and walks out.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

- Paul pulls the covers over Glenda. He looks up at **Ernie's reflection** in the mirror opposite the bed. How long is this reality going to last?
- Sharonda looks at **Paul's reflection** in the bathroom mirror, feeling shaken and humbled by the events of the day.
- Paul loads **the SD Card from Kara** into his laptop. There are several video files. He clicks the first one open and starts to watch.

ONSCREEN: The camera finds Dr. Kensington Price tinkering with an instrument panel. He turns and smiles at the lens. The view widens until we see the **Project Skylight device, fully assembled**. It's enormous and intimidating.

- Renee walks through the suite living room as Paul's phone buzzes on the side table. She can't help but look down at it.

ECU: A picture message from that 304 area code - Ginger.

Shocked, Renee picks up the phone and clicks on the image. We don't see it, but we get from her reaction that it's of a sexual nature. And it infuriates her.

- Sharonda lays her head back onto the pillow, a different woman than when she woke up. She closes her eyes.

- Paul lays his head back onto the pillow. No way he's getting any rest tonight.

There's a knock on Paul's door...

INT. FBI BUILDING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Paul and Henry walk down the hallway.

HENRY

We had the FBI in West Virginia visit Sharonda Jackson.

PAUL

Under what pretense?

HENRY

That she was a person of interest in a private investigation. She became violent, so they brought her in.

PAUL

Is it Ernie Gonzalez?

HENRY

You'll see...

INT. FBI BUILDING - VIEWING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They walk into the viewing room, where Sharonda is already staring through the see-through mirror in shock. Paul looks through the mirror too.

PAUL

Is that you?

Sharonda nods, dumbfounded. Camera now moves into -

INT. FBI BUILDING - INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

In the reflection of the two-way mirror, we see Sharonda pacing, annoyed as an FBI AGENT attempts to calm her down.

FBI AGENT
We just want to talk to you.

And we finally swing around to REVEAL - JOLENE VANDELINDER
(30s, Caucasian, white trash, drug addict skinny).

JOLENE
You can't keep me here! This is
violating my rights!

FBI AGENT
Ms. Jackson, if you could please -

JOLENE
My name isn't Jackson. It's Jolene
Vandelinder!

Jolene Vandelinder is stuck in the body of Sharonda Jackson.

INT. FBI BUILDING - VIEWING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Back to Paul, realizing this nightmare is just beginning...

THE CHAIN continues. But how far does it extend?

And where is the real Ernie?

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

END OF PILOT