

Ops

"Blood and Oil" (Pilot)

written by

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FADE IN:

WE ARE FLYING

along a remote desert road, scrub brush and trash flanking each side of the narrow path.

MUSIC is pounding, intense, built with layers of exotic instruments: flute-like zamrs, spike-fiddles and hand-drums.

TITLE OVER:

SOUTHERN AFGHANISTAN

A MILITARY CARGO VEHICLE

pulls into frame. It's going over 70, a thick wedge of dust rising behind it. As it passes, we look into the back, where two AFGHANIS with M4 rifles guard a tarp-covered object the size of four coffins.

INT. VEHICLE CAB - DAY

The driver is an American: THEO VANOWEN. Built like a wall, he's effortlessly intimidating. In his forty-odd years, he's fought on four continents and killed many men -- but not one more than he had to. He keeps both eyes scanning the road.

VANOWEN

Is it a camel?

MCGINTY

No. That's twelve.

A decade younger, JOE MCGINTY is more MBA than Marine. Much better with words than weapons, he's an expert negotiator who could talk his way past St. Peter. Both men wear body armor vests.

VANOWEN

A mountain?

MCGINTY

You're sure you've done this before.

VANOWEN

Yeah.

MCGINTY

Because it's not really a brute force kind of game. You have to have a system. You're constantly trying to winnow it down to smaller categories.

VANOWEN

You got your way, I got mine.

MCGINTY

Okay, but your way will never work.

VANOWEN

Is it a toaster?

MCGINTY

No! That's fourteen.

Noticing something in the distance...

VANOWEN

Heads up.

EXT. THE ROAD - DAY

A pile of BURNING JUNK blocks the road ahead. A half-dozen AFGHANI GUNMEN spill out of two JEEPS and one stakebed TRUCK. A ragtag group, they wear no uniforms, but carry M4 rifles.

INTERCUT WITH VANOWEN / MCGINTY

MCGINTY

And suddenly it's a toll road.

McGinty's not just being flip -- this is pretty common here.

MCGINTY (CONT'D)

We're good. We'll pay 'em off.

VANOWEN

How many cars have we passed in the last hour?

MCGINTY

One.

VANOWEN

Two. And they're both behind us.

IN MCGINTY'S MIRROR,

we see a PICKUP TRUCK and a RUSTED CAR closing from behind. Inside are MORE AFGHANI GUNMEN, aiming.

MCGINTY
That's not encouraging.

Vanowen picks up the walkie.

VANOWEN
(into walkie; in Arabic)
Hold on!

Vanowen suddenly veers off the road.

EXT. BACK OF THE TRUCK - DAY

The two Afghanis cling on for dear life. The heavy cargo strains against its moorings.

Looking back, we see the two vehicles following them have gone off-road as well.

EXT. ON THE ROAD - DAY

The three vehicles making up the roadblock ROAR back to life, the gunmen piling back in.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

McGinty and Vanowen's truck leads the way across the scrub desert, kicking up a massive cloud of dust. The other five vehicles fall into a phalanx behind it.

INT. CAB OF THE TRUCK - DAY

Despite the pressure, Vanowen stays frosty. McGinty tries to pinpoint their location with a map and a GPS.

MCGINTY
They're not shooting.

VANOWEN
They want the cargo intact.

Spotting something in the distance, Vanowen veers right.

VANOWEN (CONT'D)
Coming up on a road.

MCGINTY
(checking map)
Got it. Take it. Left.

INTERCUT INSIDE / OUTSIDE

Vanowen cuts onto the new road.

The nimble Jeeps are moving up quickly, trying to flank the truck to keep it from veering back across the desert.

MCGINTY (CONT'D)
(checking map)
Bridge ahead, one klick.

VANOWEN
No.

MCGINTY
It's on the map.

VANOWEN
I blew it up last year.

CUT TO:

EXT. UP AHEAD - DAY

We see that the road does in fact dead-end at a sizable ravine, fast approaching.

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY

MCGINTY
Can you General Lee it?

Vanowen looks at him: yeah, right. Hits the brakes.

INT. BACK OF THE TRUCK - DAY

Vanowen's VOICE on the radio, in Arabic. We don't bother to subtitle it, because the two Afghani day-hires hit the deck, hiding behind the cargo.

Looking out the back, we see the pursuers close in. Gunmen hop out of the vehicles, rifles drawn.

INT. CAB OF THE TRUCK - DAY

Vanowen watches this in his side mirror. His fingers curl around the shifter.

Suddenly, he REVS the engine and slams it into reverse.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The truck SMASHES back into the rusty car, clearing a path. The Afghani gunmen scatter. One releases a burst of MACHINE GUN FIRE that SHATTERS the windshield, raining glass on McGinty. The leader YELLS at his men to stop shooting.

INTERCUT VANOWEN

He's an ace at the wheel, completely in his zone. He jackknives the truck, ready to plow forward in a new direction.

He thrusts the stick forward, but gets only GRINDING GEARS. Pops the clutch and tries again. No go. Still trying...

VANOWEN

How much you pay for this truck?

The gunmen are running up on both sides.

MCGINTY

Six.

VANOWEN

Get a refund.

The gunmen yank open the doors, SHOUTING in Arabic as they drag McGinty and Vanowen out.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Vanowen and McGinty are thrown face down into the dirt. Everyone's SHOUTING at once.

MCGINTY

We're not soldiers! Not soldiers!

The LEADER approaches, his shadow falling across them.

Bearded, amped on adrenaline, he's every American's nightmare of a *mujahadin* insurgent. He switches his M4 to automatic, aims down at them -- and FIRES, two quick bursts.

McGinty flinches as the bullets kick up a spray of dirt next to his head. Vanowen doesn't react at all.

The leader smiles to his men. He likes fucking with people.

As he steps forward, delivering a vicious KICK --

CUT TO:

QUICK TITLE SEQUENCE

It's just the title, with a DRIVING BEAT to accompany it. The rest of the credits play over the continuing action.

CUT TO:

INT. BACK OF A COVERED TRUCK - NIGHT

By the light of a swinging ELECTRIC LANTERN, we find Vanowen and McGinty side-by-side on a bench. They've been roughed up and blindfolded, hands zip-tied behind their backs.

Their Afghani day-hires flank them, similarly bound, and much the worse for wear. With the truck in motion, it's hard to keep from falling over.

One young Afghani GUARD with an AK-47 across his knees keeps a wary eye on the captives.

We HOLD ON McGinty and Vanowen for a long beat.

VANOWEN

Is it a rabbit?

MCGINTY

No. It's not an animal.

VANOWEN

I didn't ask.

MCGINTY

But you should have. Like, ten questions ago.

GUARD (IN ARABIC)

Quiet! No talking!

After a beat...

VANOWEN

What am I at?

MCGINTY

Sixteen.

Freaked out, the guard shoves the barrel in McGinty's face:

GUARD (IN ARABIC)

Shut up! Shut up!

Warned by the edge of strain in his voice, our guys shut up.

The truck makes a sharp TURN, throwing the captives against the side. They've arrived.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

BLAZING HEADLIGHTS illuminate its interior as the trucks and Jeeps pull in. The warehouse has been completely stripped by looters, right down to the wiring and electric outlets.

Lots of chaotic action, Afghani gunmen jumping down from their vehicles, others running to meet them.

INT. BACK OF THE TRUCK - NIGHT

Vanowen and McGinty can HEAR everything but see nothing.

The guard jumps down from the truck, leaving the captives alone for a moment.

MAN'S VOICE

You are Americans?

REVERSE to find there's a fifth captive in the truck, also blindfolded. He's been there all along. He's in his forties, with a stubbly blond beard that looks as if he's spent a week in the desert. His name is ARTUR NILSEN.

NILSEN

I am Artur Nilsen. I am consultant for Norway Statoil.

MCGINTY

Joe McGinty.

A little hesitant...

VANOWEN

Theo Vanowen.

NILSEN

You are soldiers?

MCGINTY

We're private contractors. We were making a delivery.

A beat.

NILSEN

I have a daughter. Dagny. Dagny Nilsen, in Kristiansand. If I die...

MCGINTY

You're going to be fine.

NILSEN

If I die, find her. Tell her she
is everything to me.

The back of the truck is THROWN OPEN. Armed men pull all five captives down, SHOUTING menacingly.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Guards herd the captives along with kicks and rifle-prods. The Afghani day-hires are separated from the group and shoved through a doorway to an unseen fate.

McGinty is forced down to his knees beside Vanowen and Nilsen. BLAZING HEADLIGHTS illuminate their faces. All three men squint as blindfolds are pulled off...

THE BIG BOSS

climbs down from the HUMVEE whose headlights are blinding them. As eyes adjust, the menacing silhouette resolves into BRIAN BARKER (38), an American in Kevlar and cargo pants.

VANOWEN

Son of a bitch.

Barker is senior operations director for SOS Security Solutions, a mid-size private military corporation. Vanowen's assessment is apt: He is a son of a bitch.

BARKER

Gentlemen. What brings you to this little corner of paradise?

MCGINTY

Barker.

VANOWEN

These are your men? Figures by the sloppy training.

Artur Nilsen looks, dazed, from one man to another. For just this moment, he has hope that maybe he's not going to die.

McGinty and Vanowen start to get to their feet. The Afghani guards angrily SHOVE them back down to their knees.

BARKER

Did I say you could stand?
(to his men)
(MORE)

BARKER (CONT'D)
 Mr. Vanowen and Mr. McGinty are old friends. They used to be good little SOS employees, before they caught the entrepreneurial bug.

Stooping down in front of McGinty...

BARKER (CONT'D)
 How's business, Joe? Using that MBA?

MCGINTY
 I can sleep at night.

BARKER
 Let's see what that clear conscience was hauling.

CUT TO:

THE BACK OF THEIR TRUCK.

Afghanis clamber onto the truck bed, where the mysterious cargo is strapped down. They pull back the tarp to reveal

A VIKING RANGE.

Six burners of culinary wonder, complete with built-in grill.

Barker WHISTLES.

BARKER
 She's a beaut. Hard to get that kind of firepower out here. How much was Sardar gonna pay you for delivery? Thirty? Forty?

MCGINTY
 You got an \$80 million contract. What's one stove?

BARKER
 It's not about money. It's about territory. And right now, you're in mine. Come sunrise, you're on the first truck back to Kandahar.

VANOWEN
 Along with our men.

Barker half-turns to look at his lead gunman, who gives an almost imperceptible head-shake.

BARKER
 The Hajis stay here.

MCGINTY
 (re: Nilsen)
 You know that guy works for
 Norwegian Statoil, don't you? One
 of your biggest clients.

Barker keeps his cool, but we can see his eyes flinch.

MCGINTY (CONT'D)
 Wonder how the corporation would
 feel about being mixed up in a
 prisoner abuse scandal.

McGinty knows he's hitting a tender spot. Barker has no
 choice but to back down.

BARKER
 (to Nilsen)
 My apologies, sir. In a war zone,
 sometimes it's hard to tell friend
 from foe.

VANOWEN
 Not really.

CUT TO:

EXT. AFGHANI CITY (KANDAHAR) - DAY

In a dark doorway, McGinty pays the two Afghani day-hires in
 U.S. cash. They eye the street nervously -- it's not good to
 be seen taking money from a foreigner -- and escape quickly.

McGinty steps out, rejoins Vanowen in the bright sunlight.

VANOWEN
 So it's smaller than a tuba. Not
 an animal. It's not purple.

MCGINTY
 Not necessarily purple. That
 doesn't really...

VANOWEN
 You got your way, I got...

Suddenly, an EXPLOSION. We don't see the blast, but HEAR it.
 Vanowen pulls McGinty down into a doorway as debris rains
 down: scrap metal, dust, a steering wheel.

A car bomb has detonated about half a block away. The
 remains are still burning.

A smoking BOOM-BOX radio lands beside Vanowen. He looks at it for a moment, while the ECHOES die down.

VANOWEN (CONT'D)

Is it a boom-box?

MCGINTY

What?

VANOWEN

The thing. Is it a portable stereo, a.k.a. a boom-box?

A long beat. With disbelief...

MCGINTY

Yeah. Good guess.

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY (CONNECTICUT)

A low-slung office building like a million others, with a sign advertising square footage available for rent.

TITLE OVER:

STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

INT. OFFICE RECEPTION AREA - DAY

It's a rented office, cheaply furnished -- but it's home. There are two rooms: this reception area, and McGinty's office, visible through a glass wall with blinds.

TINA GIBSON (30's) is Falcon International Security's only other employee: bookkeeper, receptionist, keeper-afloat-of-things. To look at her, you'd never guess she's a single mom with a twelve-year-old son -- or Vanowen's half-sister.

TINA

The client won't pay for delivery?

MCGINTY

It got delivered. Just not by us.

McGinty's sitting on the edge of Tina's desk, perusing an accounts payable printout. Tina points out a few lines.

TINA

We're at 30 days on the rent. And the Amex. I'd start with those. And...

MCGINTY

Right, it's Friday. Cut yourself a check.

TINA

I did. Question is, when can I cash it?

Vanowen has his feet up on the coffee table and is reading the new issue of "Firepower" magazine.

VANOWEN

We hear anything on that DOD contract?

MCGINTY

They're going with Blackwell.

VANOWEN

Home of the eight hundred dollar screwdriver.

MCGINTY

Maybe they'll sub-out to us.

VANOWEN

That's a business plan. Feast on the crumbs.

MCGINTY

You want to make yourself useful? Start calling your old jarhead buddies and find us some work.

TINA

Better do it today. They're cutting off the phones tomorrow at five.

MCGINTY

How much is the bill?

TINA

Thirteen hundred. Afghanistan doesn't have a friends-and-family plan.

A silent beat between the three of them.

VANOWEN

I'll take care of the phones. The rest of it...

MCGINTY

I'll get the money.

INT. STARBUCKS - DAY

McGinty accepts his change from the kid behind the counter. Carries two cups of coffee to the table where

BROOKE COLESON (30), his soon-to-be-ex-wife, is waiting. They were college sweethearts who got married soon after graduation, and it's not hard to see why. She's a legislative director, and every bit as sharp as McGinty.

BROOKE

I have to get back to the office.
The Senator's coming in at three.

She pulls a short stack of clipped legal papers from her briefcase. There are red arrow-tags for what McGinty's supposed to sign.

MCGINTY

So after this we'll be...

BROOKE

Separated. Divorce is one more checkbox.

MCGINTY

So we're not going to?

BROOKE

Why, do you want...

MCGINTY

Do you?

BROOKE

It doesn't matter to me.

McGinty nods, relieved, and takes the pen. We sense he's not altogether eager to end this relationship.

Not looking up from signing the papers --

MCGINTY

I'm gonna need some money from the joint account. It's a cash flow thing, just to make payroll.

BROOKE

How much?

MCGINTY

Ten thousand. I'll put it back in a couple weeks.

BROOKE
 (frustrated)
 Joe, the point of mediation was to
 avoid this kind of thing.

MCGINTY
 The point of mediation was
 amicability. I think I'm being
 amicable.

BROOKE
 All things considered.

He nods -- her words, not his. He slides the papers back.

BROOKE (CONT'D)
 We need to do it in writing. A
 loan, not an investment. It has to
 be clear. I can't be part of
 Blowing Stuff Up, Incorporated.

MCGINTY
 Absoutely. You're not part of it.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Wearing a rock-climbing harness, Vanowen dangles two stories
 above the parking lot. With a cheap handset, he's clipped in
 on two telephone wires, part of a tangled switching box
 mounted to the side of the building.

He pokes around with his Leatherman tool to find other
 available circuits.

VANOWEN
 (to the phone)
 Let me know if the line goes dead.

INT. OFFICE RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Tina's on the other end.

TINA
 Will that mean you've fallen to
 your death?

INTERCUT VANOWEN / TINA

VANOWEN
 Funny.

TINA

I'll tell Matty his uncle was killed
in action stealing phone service.

VANOWEN

If they didn't want us to take 'em,
they shouldn't have put 'em on the
building. Crap!

He accidentally drops a plastic line cap. Looks down as it
falls, nearly beaming a BUSINESSMAN walking below.

The Businessman looks up. He's Nilsen, the Norwegian from
Afghanistan -- cleaned up and wearing a \$4000 suit.

NILSEN

Mr. Vanowen?

VANOWEN

Hey!

(to phone)

Tell McGinty I got us a client.

INT. MULLANE'S MUG - DAY

The bar next door to the office. Nilsen, McGinty and Vanowen
sit in a corner booth. They're almost the only customers.

NILSEN

Statoil is competing for a large
investment in Venezuela. I will
travel there next week to finish
negotiations. My daughter, Dagny,
will come with me.

MCGINTY

Having your own security is a smart
idea anywhere in Central America.

VANOWEN

I take it you're not using SOS?

NILSEN

My experience as captive made me
appreciate benefits of small
company.

VANOWEN

Can't get smaller than us.

Shooting Vanowen a look...

MCGINTY

What he means is that we'll be able to shift some personnel around. We can oversee your case personally.

NILSEN

Excellent.

Nilsen raises a glass to toast.

NILSEN (CONT'D)

Skal!

MCGINTY / VANOWEN

Skal!

CUT TO:

EXT. MARACAIBO - DAY (SECOND UNIT)

We glimpse kids playing, crowded street markets, President Chávez smiling from storefront posters. The soldiers are young and wear red berets. It's city life, poor but vibrant.

TITLE OVER:

MARACAIBO, VENEZUELA

EXT. PRIVATE AIRSTRIP - DAY

With the Andes in the background, a PRIVATE JET pulls to a stop at the midpoint of a blacktop runway, where it's met by two bullet-proof Mercedes.

VANOWEN

gets out of the lead car. Wearing sunglasses and a freshly-ironed shirt, he's a world away from his desert camouflage. Two of his FOUR LOCAL HIRES scan the horizon for trouble. They're private guards, tougher and better-armed than the red-beret national militia.

McGinty is first out of the jet. Nilsen carefully climbs down after him, followed by his daughter DAGNY.

Technically Norwegian, Dagny has travelled so much in her 16 years that she's thoroughly cosmopolitan -- and jaded. Her English is flawless.

Vanowen approaches, shaking hands with Nilsen.

VANOWEN

Welcome to Venezuela.

MCGINTY
Dagny, this is my partner, Mr.
Vanowen.

Quickly sizing him up...

DAGNY
So, he's the brains and you're the
muscle?

NILSEN
Dagny.

VANOWEN
Nah, I'm the brains. All this...
(re: his muscles)
...just vanity.

They start walking towards the cars.

DAGNY
How close is the hotel?

VANOWEN
You'll be staying at Señor Romero's
compound.

DAGNY
We're not in a hotel? Daddy?

VANOWEN
(with a wink at Dagny)
Wait till you see this place.

He opens the door for her, but she's not getting in.

DAGNY
I don't want to stay at somebody's
house.

NILSEN
We will do as they say.

DAGNY
Why? They work for us.

NILSEN
Dagny, get in the car. Now.

DAGNY
No.

NILSEN
Dagny, please.

Now that he's practically begging...

DAGNY

Fine.

She gets in. Vanowen shuts the door behind her. He gives McGinty a can-you-believe-this-shit look. Once Nilsen is inside, out of earshot...

MCGINTY

(low)

Try a ten-hour flight from Miami.
In case you were wondering, passive-aggression sounds exactly the same in Norwegian.

Vanowen signals his men to circle back to the cars.

MCGINTY (CONT'D)

How's the local help?

VANOWEN

They're good. Long as we keep this tight, shouldn't be drama.

MCGINTY

(re: the car)

Oh, there'll be drama.

EXT. ROMERO ESTATE - NIGHT

Ensclosed on a hilltop high above the city, it's a serene slice of Paradise.

SERIES OF SHOTS

shows the security setup, Señor Romero's staff of a half-dozen bodyguards plus the four hired by Vanowen:

- One guard with a rifle stationed on a high balcony
- Another guard patrolling the garden
- Two guards in a car parked on the driveway, blocking the wrought-iron entrance gate

VANOWEN AND MCGINTY

sit at a table going over maps and floor plans. An attractive, dusky-skinned CATERING WAITRESS offers McGinty a mushroom-cap hors d'oeuvre.

MCGINTY

Gracias.

McGinty is mesmerized as she turns and walks away.

VANOWEN

Thought you were allergic to mushrooms.

Busted, McGinty wraps it up in a napkin.

GONZALES (O.S.)

Suicida!?

Vanowen and McGinty turn to see HECTOR GONZALES approaching. Gonzales is Romero's chief of security: squat, powerfully built, with a broad, friendly grin.

VANOWEN

Gonzales, what the hell?

They do a manly, back-slapping hug.

VANOWEN (CONT'D)

Joe McGinty... Hector Gonzales.

MCGINTY

Good to meet you.

VANOWEN

Haven't seen you since Nicaragua.

GONZALES

I been making a living. Keeping the bullets away. Working for Romero now.

He jerks a thumb toward ROMERO (60's), a stogie-chomping pillar of Venezuelan society, chatting with Nilsen and a half-dozen OIL EXECS at the garden party.

GONZALES (CONT'D)

Half these guys report to me. Can you believe it? Seriously, you look good, man. You stayed in shape. Me --

(slaps his own gut)

I got soft. I admit it.

MCGINTY

I'll leave you two to catch up.

McGinty makes his exit. We sense Vanowen would be just as happy to have never seen this man again.

ON THE PATIO

Romero chats with his guests.

NILSEN

Señor Romero, some would say your new president is communist.

ROMERO

Our government understands the necessity for outside investment.
(slyly)
But, it's true it is much easier now to get Cuban cigars.

All LAUGH except for BETTY-ANN CARLSON (49), a senior VP at Confederated Oil and a Texan tip-to-toe. Her broad accent, pageant smile and folksy disposition belie her considerable savvy. She didn't rise to this position on charm alone.

BETTY-ANN

I've never seen a politician turn down money. Hard part is getting that money back out.

Nilsen introduces McGinty, who's just joined the group:

NILSEN

Joe McGinty... Ms. Carlson, Confederated Oil.

BETTY-ANN

(shaking hands)
Betty-Ann. We save Carlson for cursing.

MCGINTY

Cursing?

BETTY-ANN

As in, 'That witch Carlson, she swooped in and stole my deal.' You see, Artur and I are both trying to woo this lovely girl...
(touches Romero's arm)
...and convince Venezuela of our noble intentions.

MCGINTY

Well. Here's to young love.

McGinty catches a glimpse of Dagny as she disappears with Venezuelan teenager MARTA (15) and another girl, up a staircase and out of sight.

MCGINTY (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

He moves to follow Dagny and Marta.

INT. ROMERO ESTATE, FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

FELIX ROMERO (17) and his BROTHER (10) are intent on a Sony PlayStation shoot-em-up. Felix is breathtakingly handsome, with olive skin, long dark hair and lashes a girl would envy.

Dagny and the girls pass by the arched doorway behind them.

MARTA

Hola, Felix.

MARTA'S FRIEND

Hola, Felix.

Felix ignores them completely. Then, uncannily, he senses Dagny's eyes on him, although she hasn't spoken. He turns. Their eyes meet. A teenage thunderbolt.

The girls hustle Dagny out of the room. She turns for one last glimpse of Felix.

EXT. ROMERO ESTATE, ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Dagny stands alone at the railing, gazing out at the breathtaking vista. Behind her, a half-dozen Venezuelan TEENAGERS sit in a circle, passing around a bong. A BOY strums on a guitar.

Felix comes up behind Dagny. His quiet voice startles her.

FELIX

Is it your first time in Venezuela?

Dagny nods, tongue-tied.

FELIX (CONT'D)

Felix. You are?

DAGNY

Dagny.

Felix leans on the rail beside her.

FELIX

So -- is it what you expected?

DAGNY

It's beautiful.

With the pretentious worldliness only a 17-year old would attempt --

FELIX

You know, there is a lot of poverty here. Only a few people are really living. The rest are just surviving.

Dagny looks deep into his eyes -- and is transfixed. He's not only cute, he's sensitive.

INT. STAIRS TO ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Rounding a corner, McGinty's just in time to see the kids scramble to hide the bong.

INT. ROMERO ESTATE, DEN - NIGHT

A dark, cozy room. Dagny wanders past a wall of PHOTOS showing Romero with business and political big shots.

Felix steers her to a glass display case entirely filled with Coca-Cola cans and bottles from around the world. Dagny doesn't know what to make of it.

FELIX

These are mine. I started collecting when I was six.

DAGNY

(enthusiastic)
That's cool!

FELIX

(picks up a bottle)
This one's from Cuba, from before the revolution.

DAGNY

Wow.

FELIX

I got it on eBay.

As Dagny takes the bottle, her hand grazes Felix's. Dagny blushes and pulls her hand away.

FELIX (CONT'D)

What are you doing tomorrow?

ROMERO (O.S.)

Felix?

The kids look up. Romero -- Felix's father -- stands in the doorway. It's hard to read him, but he clearly has something serious to say, and it's probably about Dagny.

ROMERO (IN SPANISH) (CONT'D)
*Felix, come with me please.
 Right now.*

Felix follows his father out, walking past

McGINTY,

who quickly connects the dots. Dagny is still fluttery. Felix looks backs over his shoulder at her.

McGinty smiles.

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. ROMERO ESTATE / DRIVEWAY - [THE NEXT] MORNING

McGinty and Vanowen approach as Nilsen and Dagny have a typically heated discussion. Romero and Gonzales wait by one of the Mercedes, ready to take Nilsen and Betty-Ann Carlson on a tour of the area.

DAGNY
 I've seen refineries! I don't want
 to see another.

NILSEN
 You want to stay here.

Actually...

DAGNY
 My friend Marta is having her
 quinceañera...

NILSEN
 Your friend?

DAGNY
 I make friends. She's having her
 quinceañera on Sunday, a bunch of
 kids are helping her set up.
 (gesturing to Romero)
 Ask him.

ROMERO
 She'd be quite safe. My men will
 be there, and my son.

Nilsen looks to McGinty and Vanowen. Put on the spot...

VANOWEN
One of us would go with her.

DAGNY
See? It's fine.

Nilsen relents.

NILSEN
I see you at dinner, then. Behave.

DAGNY
Thanks, Daddy.

She kisses him on the cheek, then runs back into the mansion.

VANOWEN
(low, to McGinty)
Rock, paper, scissors?

MCGINTY
No way. She's all yours.

McGinty gets in the Mercedes with Nilsen.

PRELAP: A local POP SONG.

EXT. HOTEL COURTYARD - DAY

This high-end beachfront hotel's main courtyard is being set up for a lavish *quinceañera*: crepe paper, dance floor and seating for 100 guests.

Birthday girl Marta practices a choreographed dance with FOUR BOYS her age. It's lame, but charming in its innocence.

At the edge of the dance floor, Dagny watches and applauds with a dozen OTHER KIDS her age.

One of the boys is Felix. Their eyes connect. He smiles.

Vanowen is keeping watch nearby, along with Gonzales.

GONZALES
(fondly)
Suicida. Never woulda thought
you'd end up a babysitter.

VANOWEN
On the website, we call it
'executive protection.'

GONZALES
Beats sleeping in the jungle, huh?

One of Marta's older COUSINS approaches with her finished dress. It resembles nothing so much as a pink wedding gown. All the girls COO over it. Marta says something to Dagny, who doesn't understand.

FELIX

She wants you to try it on.

DAGNY

Wow, no, I... Okay.

With the other girls' help, Dagny slides the pink dress on over her clothes. She looks like a Barbie fantasy.

Felix gives her a "thumbs-up" sign. Dagny swoons.

DAGNY (CONT'D)

I have to find a mirror.

As Vanowen and Gonzales watch...

GONZALES

What are you packing these days?
Forty-five?

VANOWEN

These days, we think it's not in the client's best interest to go running around a foreign country with concealed weapons.

GONZALES

You're unarmed?

VANOWEN

I wouldn't go that far.

He indicates one of his guards stationed by the doorway. Gonzales nods appreciatively.

Vanowen spots a YOUNG JANITOR watching from a walkway above. Something about him sets off Vanowen's spidey-sense.

Dagny goes off with a bunch of the girls to find a bathroom.

VANOWEN (CONT'D)

You got this?

GONZALES

I'm happy.

Vanowen heads upstairs, leaving Gonzales to follow the girls.

EXT. SECOND STORY WALKWAY - DAY

Vanowen reaches the upper walkway to find the suspicious janitor is gone.

TRANSITION TO:

INT. REFINERY - DAY

McGinty trails behind Nilsen, Romero, Betty-Ann, various Oil Execs and VENEZUELAN OFFICIALS as they tour the facility. Venezuelan SOLDIERS are everywhere, on guard and alert.

ROMERO

I will tell you frankly, those strikes hurt us. Two years later, our production still has not recovered.

NILSEN

You need new equipment. Or, if I may say --
(all-inclusive gesture)
New plant.

Romero nods respectfully.

NILSEN (CONT'D)

But this percentage cap would make profits very difficult.

BETTY-ANN

(for Romero's benefit)
Oil is the blood of the land. You can't blame the people for protecting their birthright.

McGinty's cell phone RINGS. He drops back a bit to answer.

MCGINTY

McGinty.

EXT. HOTEL / UPSTAIRS WALKWAY - DAY

Vanowen is calling.

VANOWEN

How are the guys working out?

INTERCUT MCGINTY

McGinty looks at their three guards, escorting the group.

MCGINTY

They know what they're doing.

VANOWEN

Tell them to keep an eye on the low-level workers. Security guards, janitors.

MCGINTY

(a little offended)

Close Protection 101.

Vanowen looks down to see Dagny, still wearing the dress, walking back out into the courtyard. The other girls are clustered tightly around her.

VANOWEN

Just a feeling.

MCGINTY

And they say tough guys don't have...

VANOWEN

Just keep it tight.

Vanowen hangs up. We stay on his side of the conversation, watching the girls below.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL COURTYARD - [A FEW MOMENTS] LATER

Vanowen reconnects with Gonzales.

VANOWEN

We're missing one.

GONZALES

One what?

VANOWEN

One girl.

GONZALES

You counted?

VANOWEN

You didn't?

Gonzales is about to explain, but Vanowen is already walking up to the girls. Dagny has her back to him.

VANOWEN (CONT'D)

Who left?

THE GIRLS [VARIOUS]

¿Qué? No entiendo. No inglés.

They're clearly playing it up. Vanowen reaches for Dagny's elbow, but the girls pull her away. He's not amused.

He spins Dagny around, only to discover she's

SOME OTHER GIRL.

She has Dagny's hair and basic figure, but the pink dress was the main distraction. The girls designed this ruse to let Dagny slip away.

VANOWEN

Where is she? *¿Dónde?*

The girls are GIGGLING at their joke.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF HOTEL - DAY

Dagny is nearly running as she leaves the hotel, pumping with adrenaline. She's smiling, proud of her brilliant escape.

She runs left, down a narrow alley, a mental flip-of-a-coin to decide whether to run right or left.

BACK AT THE HOTEL,

Vanowen and Gonzales emerge. Vanowen signals for Gonzales to head right, while he heads left.

EXT. HOTEL COURTYARD - DAY

The girls still think this was tremendous fun. Felix walks away, dialing a number on his cell phone.

EXT. OLD TOWN / CROWDED STREET FAIR - DAY

It's market day, and both sides of the narrow street are full of BUYERS and SELLERS. Dagny keeps checking over her shoulder to see if she's been followed.

Her cell phone RINGS. She checks the number and answers, breathless -- as much from the caller as the run.

DAGNY

Hola.

INTERCUT FELIX / DAGNY

Felix walks casually, keeping one eye out for the bodyguards.

FELIX

Where are you?

DAGNY

A market. Food, mostly.

FELIX

At the end of the street should be
a square with a fountain.

DAGNY

I see it.

FELIX

I'll be there in two minutes.

EXT. OLD TOWN - DAY

Vanowen runs down the narrow alleys of Old Town, looking for his charge.

INT./EXT. A VAN - DAY

OMINOUS P.O.V. as we look through a dusty windshield. A white van weaves its way through Old Town.

EXT. OLD TOWN SQUARE - DAY

Daggy reaches the fountain. She's still on with Felix.

DAGNY

Your town is beautiful.

EXT. OLD TOWN / CROWDED STREET FAIR - DAY

Vanowen pushes his way through vendors and customers.

EXT. OLD TOWN SQUARE - DAY

Daggy kneels down to take a flower offered by a LITTLE GIRL.

DAGNY

Thank you. *Gracias.*

The girl's MOTHER says something Dagny can't understand.

INTERCUT THE WHITE VAN,
pulling into the square.

INTERCUT VANOWEN,
getting closer.

INTERCUT DAGNY

DAGNY (CONT'D)
(to Felix on phone)
What's the word for pretty?

INTERCUT FELIX

Still walking. He's almost to the square. He can see Dagny.

FELIX
Bonita.

DAGNY
(to the girl)
Bonita.

Suddenly, brakes SQUEAL behind Dagny. She looks back as TWO MEN WITH PULLOVER MASKS jump out of the white van. They grab Dagny from behind. She SCREAMS.

THE CROWD reacts, but no one tries to stop the men as they carry Dagny off. The Mother pulls her daughter back.

VANOWEN

hears the commotion. He races for the square.

FELIX

runs, full sprint.

THE VAN

speeds off, the door sliding shut.

By the time Vanowen reaches the fountain, the kidnappers are gone. All that's left is Dagny's cell phone on the cobblestones.

Vanowen looks around, spots Felix standing stunned. The girl they were both after is gone.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. ROMERO ESTATE / PATIO - NIGHT

The dining room has been converted into kidnapping command central. A small army mills about: Gonzales and guards, various Oil Execs, and the servants keeping them all fed.

Nilsen sits off to one side in private anguish. Betty-Ann holds his hand supportively, revealing her softer side.

McGinty and Vanowen are outside, watching through the French doors of the patio off the dining room.

MCGINTY

Don't beat yourself up. She was out of your sight what, five minutes?

VANOWEN

Five minutes too long.

MCGINTY

So they had someone on the inside who set it up. Any idea who?

Vanowen looks through the glass into the room full of people.

HIS POV: GONZALES.

VANOWEN

No.

INT. ROMERO DINING ROOM / HALLWAY - NIGHT

McGinty strolls through the dining room.

Hearing raised VOICES, he pauses to look down a hallway.

MCGINTY'S P.O.V.

Through the open doorway to the den, he sees Romero and Felix having a full-on shouting ARGUMENT in Spanish.

McGinty, intrigued, starts to approach. Romero SHUTS the door, blocking him out.

That's interesting...

Suddenly a CELL PHONE RINGS, grabbing everyone's attention.

Nilsen leans over his cell phone, which is plugged into a speakerphone system. He checks caller ID. Shakes his head.

Gonzales races over -- evidently this is his job -- but McGinty answers it first.

MCGINTY

Yes.

VOICE (V.O.)

Mister Artur Nilsen?

The voice is male, Spanish-accented.

MCGINTY

I'm his representative. Who's this?

INT. KIDNAP SHACK - NIGHT

A corrugated-metal shack. We don't see much of it. A terrified Dagny is flanked by TWO KIDNAPPERS. Their LEADER talks on a cell phone.

LEADER

I am the man who can return Mr. Nilsen's daughter. Alive, or dead.

He waits, listens; then passes the phone to Dagny.

DAGNY

Papa? Papa!
(fast stream of Norwegian)
Pay them the money, please get me out of here, I'm scared! Papa!

INT. ROMERO ESTATE - NIGHT

Dagny's plea ends in a CRY and a SLAP as the phone is wrenched from her hand. The sound of Dagny's voice has frozen everyone in the dining room, including Nilsen.

McGinty motions to Nilsen to remain calm.

MCGINTY

How can we get Miss Nilsen back?

LEADER (V.O.)

One hundred thousand U.S., in used twenty-dollar bills.

Nilsen nearly gasps in delight. \$100,000 is nothing.

McGinty glances at Vanowen -- this feels fishy.

MCGINTY

A hundred thousand is too much.
The family can't pay that.

Nilsen starts up in horror. Vanowen signals to be quiet, let them handle this.

LEADER (V.O.)

The father will carry the money himself.

FLASH FORWARD:

EXT. VENEZUELAN STREET - NIGHT

THREE CARS drive in a caravan along a deserted avenue. Preceding scene CONTINUES OVER:

LEADER (V.O.)

At four a.m., his phone will ring. He will be instructed where to bring the money. If he follows the instructions exactly, the girl will be returned.

BACK TO:

INT. ROMERO ESTATE - NIGHT

MCGINTY

The banks are closed. There's no way it can happen tonight.

LEADER (V.O.)

Cabron, these are the terms! Do you accept them or do you refuse?

MCGINTY

I can't accept them, for the simple reason that --

CLICK. DIAL TONE. The caller has hung up.

NILSEN

What--? What have you done?

MCGINTY

You never accept their first offer.
They'll just call it a down payment
and come back with new demands.

FLASH FORWARD:

EXT. VENEZUELA OIL FIELD - NIGHT

McGinty stands with a plastic garbage bag in his hand, by his
beat-up Fiat parked near a chain-link fence.

McGinty's CELL PHONE RINGS. He grabs it.

BACK TO:

INT. ROMERO ESTATE - NIGHT

VANOWEN

He's right. We have to take
control back from the kidnapers.

Romero has heard enough.

ROMERO

Mr. Vanowen, did you read this in a
book? Or is kidnapping one of the
services you provide?

Gonzales tries to strike a middle line between his boss and
his old buddy.

GONZALES

Could be they're in a hurry, they
want her off their hands.

Betty-Ann ignores the men and focuses just on Nilsen.

BETTY-ANN

If a hundred thousand can get your
daughter back, I say do it. I can
get you the cash in an hour.

All eyes are on Nilsen.

NILSEN

Every hour we wait, is an hour
Dagny is with those men.

Looking straight at McGinty --

NILSEN (CONT'D)

We do it.

And now we're caught up with the flash-forwards:

EXT. WAREHOUSE DISTRICT - NIGHT

An abandoned industrial area bordering the city slums.

McGinty's Fiat drives up slowly along a cement wall with a hand-painted mural of a Venezuelan flag.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Engine idling, McGinty peers out into the darkness.

MCGINTY
(on the phone)
I'm here. I think. There's a flag
painted on the wall.

VANOWEN (FILTERED)
You see anyone?

The skinniest, most feral STRAY DOG McGinty's ever seen darts past the window.

MCGINTY
No. Where are you?

VANOWEN (FILTERED)
Right behind you.

McGinty swivels in his seat, sees a brief flash of HEADLIGHTS on a bridge overpass 100 yards back -- quickly doused.

As he strains for a second glimpse, he becomes aware of OTHER HEADLIGHTS approaching head on. The headlights stop about fifty yards ahead of him and wait, ominous in the darkness.

MCGINTY
Here we go.

He stashes the cell phone under the seat and opens the door.

EXT. WAREHOUSES - NIGHT

Hands raised, garbage bag in one, McGinty begins the long, exposed walk toward the waiting headlights.

EXT. OVERPASS - NIGHT

Vanowen watches McGinty through BINOCULARS.

He's with Nilsen and Gonzales, their two Mercedes parked on the bridge with lights off. FOUR MEN with rifles stand by.

EXT. WAREHOUSES - NIGHT

McGinty keeps walking. The distance is a lot longer than it seemed at first.

As he nears the waiting car, the DOORS OPEN. FOUR MASKED KIDNAPPERS with AK-47s climb out.

LEADER (THE VOICE)
Where is Nilsen?

MCGINTY
You're dealing with me. I brought the money.

LEADER
You are alone?

MCGINTY
I followed your instructions.

He tries to give the kidnapper the bag.

LEADER
Drop it!

McGinty lets the garbage bag fall to the ground.

MCGINTY
Where's Miss Nilsen?

LEADER
Step back!

Hands raised, McGinty steps back. A second kidnapper frisks him, while a third checks the bag's contents, methodically flipping through each banded packet. He's young and scared. Fumbles one packet, picks it up again.

LEADER (CONT'D)
(to the money-counter)
Rapido, pendejo!

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

A new P.O.V. we haven't seen before -- LOOKING DOWN onto the bridge overpass where Vanowen and Gonzales are parked.

We're on the rooftop of a high-rise building where a SNIPER -- Latino, 40's, cool as a cucumber -- is watching the action.

The sniper is aware of Vanowen's group, but they're not his target. Turning away, he flattens himself on the rooftop, sights through the scope of his rifle.

SNIPER'S P.O.V.

Down by the warehouses, McGinty is surrounded by masked men with rifles. The CROSSHAIRS drift across the group... settle on McGinty.

EXT. OVERPASS - NIGHT

Vanowen, unaware of the sniper, continues to watch McGinty through binoculars.

VANOWEN
(to himself)
Okay, now get out of there.

EXT. WAREHOUSES - NIGHT

McGinty stays put, watching the money get counted.

MCGINTY
Where's Miss Nilsen?

LEADER
Shut up!

SNIPER'S P.O.V.

The crosshairs linger briefly on McGinty... then move on, to the kidnapper crouching over the money bag.

EXT. WAREHOUSES - NIGHT

The top of the KIDNAPPER'S HEAD BLOWS OFF. Like a rag doll, he collapses onto the bagful of money he was counting. The GUNSHOT comes late, more echo than bang.

VANOWEN

reacts to the sound -- like a night owl snapping its head toward something a less keen predator wouldn't have perceived.

EXT. WAREHOUSES - NIGHT

Panic! The kidnappers all start SHOUTING at once, pointing their AK-47s everywhere -- at McGinty, into the darkness.

KIDNAPPER #2

Ahi!

Spotting movement, he unleashes a BURST OF AUTOMATIC FIRE at a spot behind McGinty. McGinty hits the dirt.

EXT. OVERPASS - NIGHT

Gonzales raises his rifle to shoot. So do his four men.

VANOWEN

Hold your fire!

Too late. With the automatic reaction of trained soldiers, Gonzales's men unleash FIREPOWER on the kidnappers.

NILSEN

(in anguish)

No!!

EXT. WAREHOUSES - NIGHT

McGinty scrambles for cover, while yards away, all four of the kidnappers are cut down by machine gun fire.

Bullets RIP through the garbage bag, filling the air with PAPER MONEY that floats to the ground like goose feathers.

MCGINTY

lying on the ground, checks himself. He's unscathed. The four kidnappers lie dead.

He looks back toward the ridge. Makes a feeble thumbs-up sign for Vanowen.

EXT. OVERPASS - NIGHT

Relieved, Vanowen lowers the binoculars. Turns furiously on Gonzales.

VANOWEN

You know what you just did?!

Then he bites his tongue, because Nilsen's right there listening. He was about to say: The girl's as good as dead.

GONZALES

Man, we just saved your partner's
life! They started shooting!

VANOWEN

Who started shooting?

Gonzales points toward the kidnappers.

GONZALES

They did! They just opened up!

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

The sniper crawls back out of sight, his mission
accomplished.

EXT. OVERPASS - NIGHT

Vanowen isn't satisfied. He looks around, scanning the
surrounding buildings.

GONZALES

Man, what are you looking for?

Vanowen doesn't really know. Gonzales and Nilsen are both
watching him.

Then, a NOISE. A small noise, but enough. Vanowen looks up.
At the abandoned office building directly overhead.

VANOWEN

Ernesto, Carlos, take Mr. Nilsen
home. Anyone asks, he wasn't here.
(to Gonzales)
Watch the exits.

Before Gonzales can protest, Vanowen is sprinting towards the
building.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

The sniper hurries downstairs, carrying a briefcase.

VANOWEN

enters the stairwell. Keeping close to the walls, he makes
his way up.

THE SNIPER

pauses, listens. He hears NOISES in the stairwell below him.
He draws a HANDGUN.

VANOWEN

keeps climbing, absolutely silent now.

THE SNIPER

descends. His movements are those of a professional --
special training plus years of hard-earned experience.

Cautiously, he approaches an open doorway...

VANOWEN (IN SPANISH)
(behind him)
Put your hands up.

The Sniper whirls, aims and fires in one lightning movement.
Vanowen's THREE SLUGS from a Colt .45 rip through his chest.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT OF THE BUILDING - NIGHT (SAME MOMENT)

Gonzales and McGinty hear the SHOTS. They run into the
building.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Vanowen kneels beside the dead sniper. Turns him over.
Looks at his face.

McGinty and Gonzales burst in. They take in the scene.

Vanowen straightens. Locks stares with Gonzales.

GONZALES
Thought you weren't carrying.

Vanowen pockets the .45 and walks out, leaving Gonzales to
deal with the body.

EXT. FRONT OF THE BUILDING - NIGHT

McGinty falls in beside Vanowen. Notices his troubled
expression.

MCGINTY
He was on the roof?

VANOWEN
Before we got here.

MCGINTY
Any ID?

VANOWEN
Don't need it. His name's Jandro Ortega.

MCGINTY
You know him?

VANOWEN
I trained him. Nicaragua, eighty-five. He was a scout-sniper. One of the best.

MCGINTY
Jesus. I'm sorry.

VANOWEN
He's dead.

MCGINTY
It was you or him.

VANOWEN
No, I mean he's dead.

Facing McGinty...

VANOWEN (CONT'D)
Ortega and every man in his patrol were wiped out in the hills above Julgalpa. Twenty years ago.
(closer)
He's a ghost.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. KIDNAP VAN - DAY

CAREENING through the slums of Maracaibo. Dagny, bound and gagged in back, is HURLED against the side. She CRIES OUT.

The KIDNAPPER at the wheel turns around with a PISTOL. A manual-laborer type (50's), he's more terrified than she is.

KIDNAPPER
Shut up! Shut up!

Dagny SCREAMS. Not because of the gun -- because of an oncoming TRUCK. The truck's HORN BLARES; the kidnapper WRENCHES the wheel just in time to avoid a head-on collision.

The kidnapper picks up his cell phone, starts punching numbers while he drives.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

Vanowen and McGinty look down on the overpass from the dead sniper's perspective. Vanowen is lying on his stomach, checking angles with a make-believe rifle.

MCGINTY
Sniper was aiming for me?

VANOWEN
I trained Ortega. He's a class five marksman. He wouldn't have missed.

Vanowen twists his position to look back down the alley. There's no line of sight.

VANOWEN (CONT'D)
He was aiming at the kidnappers.

MCGINTY
The kidnappers picked the location. How could he know to be on this rooftop?

Vanowen looks back -- good question.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

VENEZUELAN POLICE are just starting to arrive. Vanowen and McGinty continue their discussion on the walk to the Towncar.

VANOWEN

Someone wanted bullets to start flying. Sniper on the roof will do that.

MCGINTY

Okay, but who hired him? He wasn't working for us, and he wasn't working for the kidnapppers.

VANOWEN

Someone wanted the deal to fall apart.

MCGINTY

And all the kidnapppers dead.

They reach the car. Talking over the roof...

MCGINTY (CONT'D)

What if it was never about a ransom?

VANOWEN

Think someone's got it in for Nilsen?

MCGINTY

Take a step back. So the ransom drop gets bloody. Who benefits?

VANOWEN

No one I can see. Bunch of lowlifes are dead, a girl's missing... Nilsen's a basket case...

MCGINTY

What happens to the oil deal?

Vanowen sees where he's going.

MCGINTY (CONT'D)

The Norwegians are already skittish about investing in Venezuela. One gruesome kidnapping later, they pull out. Romero's left with only one bidder.

VANOWEN
Maybe he only wants one bidder.

INT. ROMERO ESTATE / PATIO - DAY

Romero approaches Nilsen with a drink. The poor Norwegian is a shadow of himself, ripped apart by worry and sleep-deprivation.

ROMERO
It's a secret family recipe.
Whisky and nothing else.

Nilsen takes it. Tries to feign a smile.

ROMERO (CONT'D)
I can't blame you for what you must
think of my country. For all the
progress we've made, it is still a
dangerous place to do business.

EXT. ROMERO ESTATE, DRIVEWAY - DAY

The guards open the gate, wave the town car through.

EXT. ROMERO MANSION - DAY

The car pulls up in front. McGinty and Vanowen get out.

INT. ROMERO ESTATE, FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Felix is playing videogames, working through levels on his Playstation 2.

Vanowen and McGinty enter. Vanowen goes straight to the TV, turns it off.

FELIX
Hey!

MCGINTY
You want to tell us what you and
your dad were fighting about last
night?

Felix is silent. In the background, Vanowen closes the doors.

VANOWEN
You were there when they grabbed
Dagny. What did you see?

FELIX

Nothing.

MCGINTY

That's what you were arguing about
with your father. Nothing.

FLASHCUT TO:

INT. STUDY - NIGHT [FLASHBACK]

Felix is arguing with Romero in Spanish. Romero closes the door.

BACK TO:

INT. ROMERO ESTATE, FAMILY ROOM - DAY

McGinty sits on the coffee table, looking directly into Felix's eyes.

MCGINTY

How do you think Dagny's doing
right now? Are they beating her?
Torturing her?

FELIX

No.

MCGINTY

Raping her?

FELIX

No!

VANOWEN

He sounds pretty certain.

MCGINTY

How do you know, Felix? How do you
know she's okay?

Felix tries to get up, but Vanowen pins his shoulders to the couch.

VANOWEN

Whatever your dad told you the plan
was, it's out the window. Only way
Dagny's getting out of this is if
you help us.

MCGINTY

What do you know?

Long pause.

FELIX
The van. I recognized it.

VANOWEN
(incredulous)
A white van.

FELIX
There was a dent in the door. I
recognized it. I told my father.

MCGINTY
Who's the van belong to?

FELIX
A guy who works for my dad
sometimes. Roofing, digging.
Stuff like that.

VANOWEN
He have a name?

FELIX
No. I never heard it.

McGinty is disappointed -- it's not much to go on.

FELIX (CONT'D)
But I know where he lives. I went
there once.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSES - DAY

Police from multiple state and municipal agencies are all
over the crime scene. Bodies are being zipped into bags.

Gonzales' cell phone RINGS. With a glance over his shoulder
to make sure he is not overheard, he answers it.

GONZALES (IN SPANISH)
Yes.

On the other end, we HEAR the Kidnapper's panicked voice
jabbering a mile a minute.

GONZALES (CONT'D)
Slow down. Take it easy. Are you
ok? Is she OK?
(MORE)

GONZALES (CONT'D)
(listens; then)
Where are you?

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL AREA - DAY

The town car ROCKETTS down a rutted dirt road, making no allowance for potholes.

INT. TOWN CAR - DAY

Felix, in back, cranes to figure out where they are.

FELIX
I think it was that road back
there.

Vanowen SLAMS on the brakes.

EXT. RURAL AREA - DAY

The car U-turns and SPEEDS back up the road the way it came.

CHILDREN

stand staring from the roadside.

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL HOUSE - DAY

The cinderblock house sits just a few yards from the road, surrounded by thick jungle.

A sturdy peasant WOMAN (40's) exits through the back door. She's carrying a steaming pot of stew up a trail into the jungle.

VANOWEN

is watching from the edge of the trees. McGinty and Felix are behind him.

VANOWEN
Stay here.

He begins to follow her, completely silent. We see the Special Forces in him coming out.

CUT TO:

INT. SHACK - DAY

Little more than corrugated steel, it's set far back into the trees -- out of earshot.

The Woman -- the kidnapper's wife -- fills bowls for Dagny and her husband. The Kidnapper tucks into his like a starving man. His pistol and Kalashnikov rifle lie on the table.

DAGNY

I don't want it.

The kidnapper's wife, wheedling, tries to spoon-feed her.

KIDNAPPER'S WIFE (IN SPANISH)

*You can't go on eating nothing.
Look at you, you're skin and bones.
Try it!*

She sees Vanowen coming through the doorway, SCREAMS and drops the bowl. The kidnapper snatches up his pistol -- too late. Vanowen forces him to the ground. Swivels the Colt to aim at the kidnapper's wife -- freezing her before she can grab the Kalashnikov.

KIDNAPPER'S WIFE (IN SPANISH) (CONT'D)

*(begging for their lives)
Please! They told us no one would
get hurt.*

VANOWEN (IN SPANISH)

Stand back. Against the wall.

The Wife obeys, terrified.

VANOWEN (CONT'D)

*(to Dagny)
You hurt?*

DAGNY

No, I'm okay. I'm...Thank you.

She's starting to tear up. She clings onto him.

Hearing a SOUND, Vanowen suddenly pushes Dagny out of the way, whirls with drawn .45. It's McGinty and Felix, hurrying breathless toward the shack.

VANOWEN

I told you to stay put!

MCGINTY
We've got company.

DAGNY
Felix!

She runs into his arms.

MCGINTY
It's Gonzales and his men.

The Kidnapper looks up from the floor.

KIDNAPPER (IN SPANISH)
Gonzales. He hired us.

A look between McGinty and Vanowen. Even Felix knows this is bad.

DAGNY
(confused)
They're here to rescue me?

VANOWEN
They're here to kill you.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

BIRDS call out from the vine-covered trees, their songs lost in the humid haze.

From here on, the soundtrack is MUSIC ONLY.

CUT TO:

BOOTS,

three pairs in all, leave footprints in the mud as they run in silent SLOW-MOTION.

CUT TO:

INT. KIDNAP SHACK - DAY

CLOSE ON Vanowen as he checks the sight on the Kidnapper's rifle.

Dagny and Felix slide under the cot. He wraps his arms around her.

McGinty motions for the wife to stay down.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Gonzales motions for his TWO MEN to spread out, flanking the little hut as they approach.

INT. KIDNAP SHACK - DAY

Vanowen starts to hand McGinty the rifle. McGinty nods over to the Kidnapper -- he's the better shot.

Vanowen hands the old man the rifle.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Gonzales gives his men a signal.

INT. KIDNAP SHACK - DAY

Brilliant shafts of sunlight burst through the corrugated metal walls of the shack. We don't hear the gunshots or the hits -- we simply watch as the holes open up.

Under the cot, Dagny is screaming, but we don't hear it -- we only see her open mouth.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Only now do we see Gonzales and his men silently firing, emptying the clips of their fully-automatic rifles.

INT. KIDNAP SHACK - DAY

Vanowen is flat on the floor, looking out through a broken board. Sweat is dripping into his eyes, but he stays rock-solid.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Gonzales signals for his men to stop. They listen. One man takes a few steps to his right.

INT. KIDNAP SHACK - DAY

Vanowen squeezes the .45 trigger. This SINGLE SHOT is deafening. (At this point, normal SOUND RESUMES.)

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

The man falls, a single shot kill. Gonzales and his remaining man open fire again.

INT. KIDNAP SHACK - DAY

Vanowen rolls to his left just as bullets rip apart his part of the wall.

INT. JUNGLE - DAY

While his man keeps shooting, Gonzales lobs a smoke canister through the shack's broken window.

INT. KIDNAP SHACK - DAY

McGinty spots it and doesn't waste a breath. As smoke begins to billow out, he dumps the wife's stew and uses the heavy pot to cover the canister.

CLOSE ON Vanowen, listening for the source of the gunfire. Sensing a rhythm we never could, he knows exactly when the shooter will pause.

At just the right moment, he pops up to the window. Squeezes off TWO SHOTS directly into Gonzales' remaining man.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Gonzales returns fire, but Vanowen is already out of harm's way.

With both men down, Gonzales weighs his options. He starts to take a few steps back towards the road.

INT. KIDNAP SHACK - DAY

VANOWEN
Just Gonzales left.

McGinty nods. We see a change in the Kidnapper. He leaps towards the door. Before McGinty can stop him...

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

The Kidnapper charges out of the house, filled with the rage of revenge and betrayal. He SPRAYS his AK-47 at Gonzales, only one bullet connecting. For his part, Gonzales fires a focused BURST of shots into the old man's chest. The Kidnapper drops.

From the shack, Vanowen lands three shots. Gonzales falls back.

Pistol still raised, Vanowen steps out of the destroyed building. McGinty follows behind, checking on the kidnapper, whose Wife is SCREAMING.

Vanowen reaches Gonzales, who's just realizing his wounds are fatal.

GONZALES

I'm not gonna...

VANOWEN

No. You'll die.

Gonzales squeezes his eyes shut.

VANOWEN (CONT'D)

Who were you working for?

GONZALES

Same as you, I bet.

A wince of pain goes through Gonzales. He recovers.

GONZALES (CONT'D)

You just don't know it yet.

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. JUNGLE / ROAD - [HALF AN HOUR] LATER

Dagny runs to meet her father, who's just arrived. Nilsen squeezes her tight.

The Wife is being interrogated by a female PTJ detective (Venezuela's FBI). She's in shock, her husband lying nearby, not even covered with a blanket.

VENEZUELAN POLICE and MILITARY swarm over the scene, past Vanowen and McGinty, who watch as Romero embraces his son.

VANOWEN

They're calling it an 'express kidnapping gone bad.' Blaming it on Gonzales and the bodyguards.

MCGINTY

No way to prove Romero was involved. Everyone who could link him is dead.

VANOWEN

Almost everyone.

McGinty follows Vanowen's gaze to Felix, who looks back. With just his body language, we sense he's fully back on his father's side.

Betty-Ann Carlson, who arrived with Nilsen, looks over at Vanowen and McGinty. For just a moment, we see past her down-home facade to something ruthless, and scary.

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. BEACHFRONT HOTEL - DAY

Marta's quinceañera goes off as planned, a crowd of well-dressed PARENTS and CHILDREN enjoying her big day. She's beaming, a vision in pink.

We feel the warmth of family, history and pride. It's what we always want Latin America to be.

Vanowen and McGinty follow Felix and Dagny at a distance, giving the hand-holding young couple a little privacy. Felix WHISPERS something into her ear that makes her laugh.

MCGINTY

I used to be that guy.

VANOWEN

You helped your father kidnap your girlfriend?

MCGINTY

Brooke and I got married when we were 20. We had that Romeo and Juliet thing.

VANOWEN

I read that one. They both end up dead.

MCGINTY

(notes his mood)

You OK?

VANOWEN

Something doesn't add up. You want to scare off some Norwegians, you don't need to hire an elite ghost sniper.

McGinty considers for a moment.

MCGINTY

I can't believe I'm saying this, but you're overthinking it. Strip it down, it's the same thing as always -- blood and oil.

The EVENT PHOTOGRAPHER takes a picture of McGinty and Vanowen. McGinty looks back, sensing something. But he lets it go.

CUT TO:

EXT. BASEBALL DIAMOND - DAY

A beautiful day, not a cloud in the sky. A Little League game is in progress, young PLAYERS on the field.

TITLE OVER:

LA MIRADA, CALIFORNIA

CLOSE ON: A digital photo of McGinty and Vanowen, taken in the previous scene, now on a PDA/cell phone display.

WOMAN'S VOICE (FILTERED)
 McGinty was an account rep at SOS.
 He and Vanowen quit last year, now
 they're on their own.

The next photo is McGinty and Vanowen in Kandahar, from the start of the episode.

MAN'S VOICE
 How much do they know?

WOMAN'S VOICE (FILTERED)
 Unclear.

A TOW-HEADED BOY steps up to bat.

THE MAN, sitting in the bleachers, glances up from his PDA. He's in his late '40's; we don't see his face.

THE MAN
 C'mon Bobby! Show 'em what you
 got!

Resuming his conversation via cell phone earpiece --

THE MAN (CONT'D)
 What's our leverage?

WOMAN'S VOICE (FILTERED)
 Vanowen has a half-sister, Tina.
 Single mom.

THE MAN
 Family's good.

The Man clicks through the next two photos:

- Tina, loading a baby into a car seat.
- Brooke and McGinty, at a political fundraiser.

WOMAN'S VOICE (FILTERED)
McGinty's wife works for Senator
Collins.

THE MAN
Small world.

The Boy makes a good hit, and runs to first base.

THE MAN (CONT'D)
Atta boy, Bobby!
(to the phone)
Okay. Put 'em on the watch list.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
Which one? Threats or assets?

THE MAN
Both.

CUT TO BLACK.