RECKLESS

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1st Revised Network Draft
1/9/13

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TEASER

INT. DULLES AIRPORT - DAY

The security line. Efficient one-bag business travelers locked in a passive-aggressive death match with families laden like Sherpas.

In the line we find DAVID RITTER (late 20's). He's good-looking, pleasant, if a bit guarded. He puts his shoes, cell phone, keys, belt in a bin with an almost practiced meticulousness -- as if he spent last night laying in bed rehearsing every move... which he did.

David unzips his computer bag and lays it flat on the conveyor belt. As he feeds it through --

TSA AGENT
Computer out of the bag, sir.

DAVID
It's okay. This bag is TSA compliant --

TSA AGENT
All computers need to be out of their cases.

DAVID
No, they don't. I'm an engineer, I know how this machine works.

It's not that David is OCD or crazy or obstinate. He actually *does* know how things work. It's a point of pride with him. And it irritates him when other people *don't*.

TSA AGENT
Do I need to ask you to step out of line?

David's debating whether this is a fight worth having when we suddenly hear the sound of Karen Carpenter singing "Close to You" coming from the x-ray machine.

DAVID
That's my phone! I need to get that!

He's met by the dull, implacable stare of the TSA guy. *Fine*. As David hurriedly pulls his computer from its case, Karen Carpenter takes us to:

EXT. URBAN SLUM - DAY

Scraggly dogs and equally scraggly children play in the garbage-strewn street, dodging motorbikes and battered old cars. Over these images we hear, incongruously:

KAREN CARPENTER (V.O.)
"Why do birds suddenly appear every time you are near?"

Judging by the tropical locale and the look of the locals, we're in Southeast Asia. We move in on a run-down building, a long line of locals waiting to get in.

KAREN CARPENTER
"Just like me, they long to be --"

DAVID (V.O.)
(cutting in, breathless)
Hello?

INT. MEDICAL CLINIC - DAY

High-end medical equipment and supplies stand in contrast to the decrepit surroundings. DOCTORS and NURSES (mostly Western) from a volunteer NGO sweat through their scrubs in the tropical heat as they treat a steady stream of locals.

There's an urgency here, but also a sense of purpose and hopefulness. These are people following a calling -- and none of them more so than SARAH HARRISON (late 20's). Where David is careful and methodical, she's brash, impetuous. At the moment she's standing in the corner with a stethoscope around her neck and a SATELLITE PHONE pressed to her ear.

SARAH
I was about to hang up.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. DULLES AIRPORT - DAY

Now through security, David hurries through the terminal, refastening his belt as he talks on his cell.

DAVID
Sorry, I was stuck in the security line.

SARAH
(amused, knows him too well)
Did they make you take your computer out?

CONTINUED:

DAVID
They need to train these people!

SARAH
(laughs)
I love you.

Another doctor, ANN (mid-30's), walks by, hears this --

ANN
Hi, David!

SARAH
Ann says hi.

DAVID
Hi, Ann.

SARAH
I'll see you in eighteen hours.

DAVID
It's going to be the longest
eighteen hours of my life.

Two young brothers run to Sarah with big smiles on their faces -- call them NICOLAS (8) and LUC (10). They clamor for her attention, trying to show her a LIZARD they've caught.

NICOLAS/LUC
(in French)
Dr. Sarah!/Look, look!

SARAH
(in French)
Ooh! I hope he doesn't bite!
(into phone)
Tell me about your day.

DAVID
I have to get to the gate --

SARAH
You know the rule.

We get the sense that this is something they do.

DAVID
Okay, it was boring. Packing.
Last minute stuff.
(then)
And then your dad called and busted
my ass for taking a six month leave
from work. Tell me about *your* day.

CONTINUED: (2)

SARAH
It was awesome. The power was on for three whole hours this morning, which is a new record. And I treated a kid with leprosy.

DAVID
I'm going to hate it, aren't I?

SARAH
Oh sweetie, you are. You really, really are.

As they talk we become aware of a rising commotion outside -- shouts and cries, then the sharp CRACK of gunfire.

DAVID
What's that?

SARAH
I don't know --

What follows happens very quickly: People begin surging through the door of the clinic, shouting, frightened -- some with bloody wounds. And right on their heels come the SOLDIERS, brutally beating people to the ground with rifle butts, shouting in French. It's chaos.

SARAH
What are you doing? Stop it!

DAVID
What is it? Sarah?

Still clutching the sat phone, Sarah steps forward to try and stop the troops, but a small hand grabs her arm. She looks down to see Luc and Nicolas at her side. Luc clings to her sleeve and gravely shakes his head, "*Don't do it.*"

But one of Sarah's colleagues doesn't heed the advice. A MALE DOCTOR (40's) steps up to confront the troops, blustering with outrage --

MALE DOCTOR
This is an international aid organization! You can't just --

Without blinking, the COMMANDER of the troops raises his sidearm and FIRES. The doctor simply drops, a marionette with its strings cut, dead before he hits the floor.

Sarah stares in shock and horror as the room erupts in panic.

DAVID
Sarah! What's going on?!

CONTINUED: (3)

Sarah feels herself being pulled and we see the two boys are urgently dragging her toward a rear exit. As she moves with them, she spots Ann, frozen in terror.

SARAH
Ann!

Sarah grabs her and as they push through the panicked mob she drops the phone. It hits the floor and we see it kicked away, spinning under a cabinet CUTTING THE CONNECTION --

END INTERCUT:

INT. DULLES AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

ON DAVID tamping down panic --

DAVID
(into his phone)
Sarah? *Sarah?*

He quickly redials the number. We hear a recorded voice: *"The number you are dialing is unavailable -- "*

INT. DULLES AIRPORT - DEPARTURE GATE - DAY

David arrives at his gate, dialing his phone *again* -- and from his frustrated reaction, the result must be the same.

He looks up just as the FLIGHT STATUS BOARD over the check-in counter changes from "ON TIME" to "CANCELLED." Over the P.A. we hear:

GATE AGENT (V.O.)
I'm sorry to announce that Flight 1206 has been cancelled --

A chorus of GROANS erupts from the waiting passengers, who surge toward the counter. But David stands rooted to his spot, his attention fixed on a large TV MONITOR mounted over the waiting area.

ANGLE ON THE TV: A CNN newscast plays silently. Horrific images of a violent military crackdown splash across the screen -- troops clubbing civilians, cars burning, bloody bodies sprawled in the street.

The crawl along the bottom of the screen reads: VIOLENCE ERUPTS IN EAST MYANMAR -- MILITARY COUP OVERTHROWS GOVERNMENT -- ASSAULT ON CAPITAL LAUNCHED TWO HOURS AGO --

OFF DAVID, reeling, we...

END TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

We soar over the familiar iconography of the most powerful nation on Earth: the White House, over the Lincoln Memorial along the National Mall to the imposing dome of The Capital.

INT. THE CAPITAL - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

The well-rehearsed choreography of a Washington press conference: A SENATOR (60), a wily survivor of decades in D.C., stands before a crush of JOURNALISTS.

SENATOR
-- we can lodge strongly-worded protests 'til the cows come home, but it's been ten days and we've still got American citizens missing in East Myanmar.

The Senator's in his element, milking the moment with practiced bluster.

SENATOR
I'm putting this General Allard on notice. We're not going to sit on our hands with our people's lives hanging in the balance.

A cable news reporter speaks up -- she's an aggressive Nancy Grace-type named JANE CASEY.

JANE
Senator, are you pushing for action because of your personal ties to the family of one of the missing aid workers?

SENATOR
I'm not going to dignify that --

JANE
But Dr. Sarah Harrison's father *is* both a friend and a campaign contributor --

The Senator musters just the right amount of outrage.

SENATOR
We are working tirelessly to bring every American home safely. Americans whose only crime was trying to make the world a better place.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

SENATOR (CONT'D)
(into the cameras)
The clock is ticking, General Allard.

As more reporters SHOUT QUESTIONS we go to --

INT. SENATOR'S OFFICE - DAY

As imposing as you'd expect from a guy with five terms in the Senate under his belt. The Senator is alone with David and SARAH'S FAMILY, giving them a private briefing.

SENATOR
Can I get you anything?

He looks to Sarah's father TOM HARRISON (50's) -- old school, an ex-jock who built a successful business by taking responsibility for himself, and not taking crap from anybody.

SENATOR
Tom, I've got some Blue Label here with your name on it.

TOM
You know my weakness, Bob, but I'll pass.

Allie's brother RYAN (mid-20's) perks up.

RYAN
I'll have a splash of that.

He's a good guy, if slightly under-motivated. Feels the pressure of *not* being his father. His sister ALLIE (22) shoots him a look, "Really?" He shrugs.

ALLIE
Thank you so much for seeing us, Senator. Can you tell us anything new about Sarah's situation?

She's smart, eager to step up, to prove herself -- especially to her father.

SENATOR
Unfortunately, we don't have much information. This General Allard nutcase has closed the borders, shut down all Internet and cell service --

David finally speaks up, the stress of the last ten days etched in his face, in the hoarse crack of his voice --

CONTINUED:

DAVID
Yeah, I saw that on CNN. *A week ago.*

Tom turns to David -- he's the calm in the eye of the storm here, the rock they're all leaning on.

TOM
The Senator is here to help, David. We're lucky to have him on our side.

Sarah's mother CATHERINE (50's) lays a comforting hand on David's arm. She may defer to her husband publicly, but behind the scenes she's just as formidable as he is -- underestimate her at your risk.

CATHERINE
(to the Senator)
It's been hard, for all of us... not knowing.

DAVID
I'm sorry. But the only thing coming out of that country now is bodies. Bloated, mutilated, tortured by Allard's goons -- floating down the river like logs.

His words choke off. The Senator nods, the hardened veneer of a political animal softening for a moment.

SENATOR
The political situation is very volatile right now, but eventually we will open a dialogue with General Allard's government. For all we know, Sarah has simply been detained. Once all diplomatic options are back on the table we'll begin negotiating for her safe return.

ALLIE
How long will that take?

SENATOR
If things go well, it could happen pretty damn quickly.

TOM
And if they don't?

CONTINUED: (2)

SENATOR
Well, you remember those hikers arrested on the Iranian border? That had a happy ending, but it took two years of serious horse trading --

DAVID
Two years? What happened to putting this mad man on notice? "The clock is ticking." Did that mean anything?

SENATOR
As I said, the situation is volatile.

David sags. Tom reaches out and takes Catherine's hand. Off the family, clinging to the only thing they have in this crisis, each other.

INT. HARRISON MANUFACTURING - FACTORY FLOOR - DAY

A high-tech manufacturing facility. Workers run computer-controlled machines that turn out precision components for aircraft engines. This is the company that Tom Harrison built from the ground up.

INT. HARRISON MANUFACTURING - DAVID'S OFFICE - DAY

It's also where David works. The office isn't lavish (David isn't an honorary v.p./son-in-law); it's the cluttered space of a working engineer. David appears engrossed in his work, but we see he's intently SEARCHING THE WEB:

He flicks through multiple windows: News sites, blogs, social media. We see headlines flash by: SEVEN AMERICANS STILL MISSING... THREE WEEKS AND COUNTING... NO END IN SIGHT... A DICTATOR DIGS IN...

WOMAN'S VOICE
You're not exactly the poster boy for productivity.

David turns to see SUSAN LEE (mid-30's) leaning in his office doorway. Cool, competent and extremely sharp, Susan is Tom's chief financial officer and his most trusted advisor. Very little slips past her.

SUSAN
(lightly)
Just cause you married the boss's daughter doesn't mean you can spend all day on Facebook.

CONTINUED:

David gives her a game smile, but he looks like he hasn't slept in about a year. She immediately regrets her words.

SUSAN
Sorry, bad joke... you run out of things to say.
(off his computer)
Anything new?

DAVID
I emailed a guy I knew a little in college. He works for some big D.C. lobbyist. I guess he's hooked into the intelligence community.

SUSAN
That sounds promising.

DAVID
I don't know. Maybe. I'm gonna see him on Friday.

Tom appears in the doorway.

TOM
See who on Friday?

SUSAN
David's got a line on someone in D.C. --

TOM
(to David, a bit sharply)
You think you can do better than the Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee?

SUSAN
(diplomatic)
It's not a competition, Tom.

Tom nods, backing off. The stress is getting to all of them.

TOM
Of course it isn't. Sorry. Let me know what you find out.
(to Susan)
And make sure the financials are in order. That Air Force audit is in six weeks.

And he's gone.

CONTINUED: (2)

SUSAN
No rest for the wicked.
(a reassuring smile)
You need anything -- time off, whatever -- you tell me. I can handle Tom.

DAVID
Thanks.

She exits. David turns back to his computer and pulls up a technical spec sheet. He stares at it blankly for a beat, then clicks back to Facebook. He pulls up photos: he and Sarah, smiling, goofing, in love. David's gaze drifts out his window to the tree-shaded grounds outside, and we go to --

EXT. HARRISON MANUFACTURING - DAY (FIVE YEARS AGO)

Those same grounds -- now filled with employees standing in small groups, laughing, drinking, eating. It's the company picnic. Find David by himself, holding a plate of food. He doesn't know anybody here. As he scans the crowd he sees:

SARAH

in a bright sun dress. She's chatting with Susan Lee, laughing. *Radiant*. David can't take his eyes off of her. As if sensing his gaze, she turns and catches his eye.

This is where you'd normally look away, caught. But he can't. The moment is broken when a man steps up to Sarah and puts a proprietary arm around her. He's mid-twenties, handsome, confident, from money. His name is KYLE.

David watches the tense, subtle exchange between them: Kyle wants to go, she isn't ready. Kyle walks off. Off David --

EXT. HARRISON MANUFACTURING - DAY (FIVE YEARS AGO)

Moments later. Sarah stands by herself, drinking beer from a plastic cup.

DAVID (O.S.)
It's never going to work.

She turns to see David, still holding his plate of food. This is a bold move for him. Uncharacteristic.

SARAH
Excuse me?

DAVID
You and that guy? I'd save yourself a lot trouble.

CONTINUED:

She stares at him, stunned. Who *is* this guy? She should probably tell him to fuck off -- and the longer she looks at him, the more David thinks she's about to.

DAVID
I'm sorry. I don't --

SARAH
Why won't it work?

It's a challenge. "You started this," her eyes say, "finish it." David takes a breath --

DAVID
It's basic engineering.
(off her look)
Some components are designed to work together -- one can't even function without the other. They're elegantly compatible.

SARAH
I like that. "Elegantly compatible."

DAVID
It's all yours.

SARAH
Thanks.

DAVID
Say you're a fuel flow sensor --

SARAH
That sounds kind of dirty. Go on.

DAVID
-- and you're rated at ten amps. If I hook you up to a power supply that only puts out five amps the engine is never going to perform the way it's supposed to. Not like it would if you were mated to the right component...

SARAH
And if I were "mated" to you I'd have all the power I'd need to... perform.

DAVID
No.

She reacts, surprised. Not much of a sales pitch.

CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID
You don't need power from me. Not from anyone. But if I had someone like you...

He suddenly hesitates, self-conscious.

DAVID
I don't know what would happen. It's never been tested.

She looks at him, *really* looks at him now, taking him in. Then Tom steps up to Sarah.

TOM
There you are. Kyle's looking for you.

She nods, but doesn't take her eyes off David.

SARAH
I'll bet.
(then)
Sorry, Dad, I was talking to...

David reacts to the "Dad." Oh, shit.

DAVID
David. Ritter. I just started.

TOM
I know. I hired you.

SARAH
(a sly smile)
David was telling me all about fuel flow sensors.

Tom claps David on the shoulder.

TOM
Save the shop talk for Monday, son. Enjoy yourself.

They walk off and Sarah glances back over her shoulder. As she holds David's eyes, we come OUT OF FLASHBACK into --

EXT. URBAN SLUM - DAY (PRESENT)

The same desperate landscape we saw outside Sarah's clinic. Only now it seems more grim, if that's even possible. A military vehicle rolls down the street, an oddly upbeat voice blaring government propaganda from a loudspeaker on its roof:

CONTINUED:

LOUDSPEAKER
(in French)
-- rejoice! Rejoice! A new dawn has broken!

SOLDIERS move down the street, kicking doors, hauling out the occasional terrified local. As they approach a squalid-looking apartment building --

INT. SQUALID APARTMENT - DAY

A local family huddles. FATHER, MOTHER (both early 30's) with an INFANT clutched tightly to her, a wizened GRANDMOTHER and Nicolas and Luc -- *the 8 and 10-year-olds we saw with Sarah at the clinic*. They hear from outside:

LOUDSPEAKER
(in French)
But only by purging our country of the enemies of our beloved and benevolent General can the light of this new day wash over us --

The family holds their breath as they hear the soldiers move closer -- the slap of boots and the clatter of weapons. An endless moment... then the sounds begin to recede, the soldiers moving on up the street, passing them by.

A long beat, then the father and the two boys push aside a rickety cupboard against the wall. They pull apart a few loose boards in the wall and --

SARAH AND ANN CRAWL OUT.

ANN
(terrified)
Oh my God... I can't breathe...

SARAH
It's okay, they're gone.

They're both ragged, unkempt -- showing the effects of weeks of hiding, literally, in a hole in the wall. But they're alive. Sarah turns to the father --

SARAH
(in French)
They haven't come this close before.

FATHER
The General is very thorough.

The implication is clear -- *they won't stop looking.*

CONTINUED:

SARAH
They'll come back.

FATHER
(shrugs, a wry smile)
Your hole is waiting.

Sarah smiles wearily, grateful, but she turns to look at the family who has sheltered them -- the two boys who probably saved her life at the clinic. Ann pulls her aside --

ANN
You said things would have died down by now.

SARAH
I thought they would.

ANN
That we'd get to the airport, they'd start flying us out --

SARAH
It didn't happen.
(making a decision)
We can't wait any longer. We have to go.

ANN
Go where?

SARAH
Try to get to the American consulate.

ANN
(shocked)
It's half a mile from here. The streets are full of soldiers.

SARAH
I know --

ANN
They're hanging people from lampposts!

Sarah jerks her head at the family.

SARAH
And it'll be those kids if they find us here!

ANN
It's suicide --

CONTINUED: (2)

Sarah leans close to Ann, fire in her eyes, her mind made up.

SARAH
I won't be responsible! You hear me? We're going.

Sarah takes a breath, trying to calm herself, realizing what she's just committed them to.

EXT. RURAL VIRGINIA HIGHWAY - DAY

An economical sedan, a few years old but well-cared for, turns off the highway and pulls up to a guard shack. A sign on the gate reads RED RIVER SECURITY SERVICES.

A GUARD steps out of the shack and moves to the car. He's got a hard, humorless expression on his face and a Baretta pistol in a combat holster on his leg.

GUARD
Can I help you?

David looks up from the driver's seat, holds out his I.D.

DAVID
I'm here to see Wyatt Bickford.

The Guard takes the I.D. and moves back to the shack. While David waits he notices a sign on the fence nearby: USE OF DEADLY FORCE AUTHORIZED BEYOND THIS POINT. Off David --

EXT. RED RIVER COMPOUND - DAY

Half bucolic college campus, half military base. David walks along with WYATT BICKFORD (late 20's).

WYATT
You didn't pledge Sigma Nu?

DAVID
That was my roommate Brett.

Wyatt nods. He clearly barely remembers David from college. Wyatt has a confidence, even arrogance about him. He's charming, entitled, used to getting what he wants -- 'cause he almost always does.

DAVID
I lived in Steiner Hall. You dated my friend Erica for a while.

WYATT
(no clue)
Right, right...

CONTINUED:

David jumps at the sudden sound of GUNFIRE.

REVEAL that David and Wyatt have arrived at an observation platform overlooking a TRAINING AREA. Below them men in combat gear rehearse a hostage rescue scenario in a mock-up of an apartment (like the Navy SEALS trained in for their raid to take out Osama Bin Laden).

DAVID
What do they do here, exactly?

WYATT
(grins)
They kick ass.
(off David's look)
Red River is one of several private security contractors my firm represents. They have people in hot spots all over the world.

DAVID
(off the armed men)
Could they find Sarah?

WYATT
Easy, hoss. They're the option when you're out of options. You're a long way from that.
(pulling out an envelope)
But I had the intel guys pull together a list of foreign nationals who have been taken into custody. Sarah's name isn't on it.
(off his look)
That's actually a good thing.

DAVID
How? They said if she's arrested we can start negotiating --

WYATT
You don't negotiate with General Allard. He's a paranoid lunatic. There're all kinds of crazy stories about him -- that he has black magic powers, that he eats the hearts of his enemies.

DAVID
They're not true.

WYATT
They don't need to be. Three years ago a group of his officers tried to overthrow him.
(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

WYATT (CONT'D)
They put him in front of a firing squad -- not a single soldier would pull the trigger. They were terrified he'd rise from the grave and wreak his vengeance on them.
(grimly)
So, yeah, it's a good thing.

David nods, a bit numb -- the almost surreal horror of Sarah's situation hitting hard. Wyatt looks at David, *really* looks at him, sees the honest pain and desperation. He dials back the attitude a bit.

WYATT
I'll ask the guys here to keep their ears to the ground. If they hear anything I'll pass it along. Just stay tough.

DAVID
Yeah. Thanks...

POP-POP-POP! David looks down at the combat scenario playing out below -- men kick doors, clear rooms, and unleash precise BURSTS OF AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE at cutout targets of "terrorists." We hold on David's face for a beat as the staccato pop of GUNFIRE carries us to--

EXT. URBAN SLUM - NIGHT

Back in country, where GUNFIRE echoes in the distance. The sporadic electrical grid is down and the only light comes from a few burning tires and oil drums. Two shadowed figures dart along the street, hugging the buildings, ducking doorway to doorway. Sarah and Ann --

ANN
(hushed, terrified)
I don't recognize any of this. We need to go back.

At that moment they hear the roar of an engine. Sarah pulls Ann into the shadows as a military vehicle races up the street, a squad of rowdy (probably drunken) SOLDIERS in the back, FIRING their weapons into the air. As the vehicle careens around a corner, Sarah steps back out into the dim light.

SARAH
Come on.

ANN
(frozen with terror)
No --

CONTINUED:

Ann just stands there, violently shaking her head. Sarah grabs her by the arms, gives her a hard shake -- she can't have her lose it, not now.

SARAH
The consulate's only a few more blocks. We're going to make it.

ANN
I can't --

SARAH
(hard)
I am going home. I am going to see my husband again. Do you hear me? You can come with me, or I can leave you here in the street. But I am going.

Ann looks into Sarah's eyes, sees the fierce determination there. She nods. Sarah gives her friend a quick smile and they move off --

AROUND THE CORNER

Sarah and Ann come around the corner and hurry through the darkness. Suddenly they hear a sound rising, a pulsing roar of voices, coming closer.

ANN
What's that?

The answer becomes clear when a large DEMONSTRATION rounds the corner ahead of them. A crowd of locals fills the street from sidewalk to sidewalk -- marching, chanting, venting their rage and frustration at General Allard.

SARAH
Back! Go back!

But as they turn to head the opposite way, several military vehicles roar up, cutting off their escape. Soldiers move up the street toward the demonstrators, weapons raised. Sarah and Ann are caught in the middle. They have no choice except to plunge headlong into the crowd --

The women try to push their way through, clinging desperately to each other. Some surprised locals make way for the two incongruous Westerners. We notice a few of them recording the scene with CELL PHONE CAMERAS. Then --

GUNFIRE. The soldiers open fire on the demonstrators without warning and the peaceful demonstration instantly degenerates into a panicked mob.

CONTINUED: (2)

A JAGGED, CHAOTIC SERIES OF SHOTS as Sarah and Ann are nearly trampled --

ANN
Sarah!

-- and finally wrenched apart.

SARAH
Ann! Ann!

But her friend is gone, swallowed up in the chaos. Sarah tries to push through the melee. There's the steady crack of GUNFIRE. Blood blossoms. Bodies drop.

And then CRACK! Sarah is hit. Blood pours from a leg wound and she tumbles to the ground.

SARAH
David!

We catch a last glimpse of her face, twisted in pain, then she's lost from view as the panicked stampede of humanity surges over her, and we...

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - SITUATION ROOM - DAY

A half dozen CIA ANALYSTS take notes on legal pads, laptops. Their attention is on the man leading the briefing -- he's mid-forties, fit and sharp from a career that started in the Marines and wound up here. His name is BAUMAN.

BAUMAN
We got word on two of our missing people this morning.

He indicates a white board with photos of seven people taped to it, including Sarah and Ann.

BAUMAN
With the assistance of local civilians, two NGO volunteers slipped across the border into Thailand last night.

He grabs a marker and circles two of the photos --

BAUMAN
Felson, Wendy and Goodman, David A. Both with UNICEF --

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Ow. Dammit.

REVEAL a man, about fifty, at a table in the back blowing carefully on a cup of hot coffee.

BAUMAN
Something wrong, Frank?

This is FRANK WOLFE. He's an intelligence analyst. His job is to pore through mountains of data and make sure we don't invade the wrong country. Again.

FRANK
Sorry. Burned my lip.

Another analyst gives him a smirk -- he's late-twenties, a cocky up-and-comer. His name is LORING.

LORING
Caution, contents may be hot.

A ripple of laughter --

BAUMAN
Anyone want to save some American lives today?
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

BAUMAN (CONT'D)
(then)
With our operations people locked down in the consulate over there, these two --

He taps the pictures of Felson and Goodman.

BAUMAN
-- are the only eyes and ears we've had inside East Myanmar in three weeks. They're landing at Andrews this afternoon and I want them debriefed while it's still fresh.

Frank starts to rise, but --

BAUMAN
Loring. It's all yours.

Frank freezes. What the hell?

BAUMAN
The rest of you stay on your assets. It's Day 22 and we've still got five people missing.

As the meeting breaks up Frank moves to intercept Bauman --

FRANK
Loring?

BAUMAN
He's sharp.

FRANK
I've been working General Allard since '98 --

BAUMAN
Then tell me what the hell he's up to? Why make his move now? And why target Americans when he's taking kickbacks from every oil company in Texas? What does he want? Ransom? Leverage?

FRANK
I'm working it --

BAUMAN
There's a lot of pressure from the Hill on this one. I need someone a little... hungrier.

CONTINUED: (2)

FRANK
You saying I don't do my job?

BAUMAN
I'm saying we all gotta make way sometime, Frank.
(then)
Look, I still need someone to go through those files on the contractors who were on the ground during the coup. Maybe there's something we missed --

FRANK
(is he kidding)
You could put an *intern* on that.

BAUMAN
Are you saying no?

Bauman looks him square in the eye. What's it gonna be? A beat, then Frank nods, fine. Off Frank, biting back the anger, the humiliation.

INT. DAVID & SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The cozy nest of a young couple starting what was supposed to be a long journey together. David is at his computer. He's scrolling quickly through posts with titles like: MORE BODIES WASH UP... 5 VOLUNTEERS STILL MISSING... WHERE'S THE OUTRAGE?!... THE MADNESS OF "KING" ALLARD...

Several of the posts feature pictures of General Allard, posing in military uniform, toting an AK-47, standing over a sprawl of bodies, grinning broadly.

David bites back his revulsion, then clicks on a link titled ALLARD LOSING HIS GRIP? VIDEO SMUGGLED OUT!! David clicks on the link and we see:

SHAKY CELL PHONE FOOTAGE -- it's dark, difficult to make out. We're in the midst of a crowd, people marching, jostling, angrily shouting in French. As the camera pans around, picking up fragments of the crowd, the darkened street, we realize IT'S THE DEMONSTRATION THAT SARAH AND ANN WERE CAUGHT UP IN.

David leans forward, peering intently at the screen. Then he sees something -- *a flash of blonde hair, a figure stumbling through the crowd.* David reels, his heart in his throat. *Could it be?*

He quickly rewinds the footage trying to see if it's Sarah, but CAMERA POV jerks shakily around, never quite managing to find her clearly.

CONTINUED:

Then there's a CRACK OF GUNFIRE and the figure falls to the ground, the panicked mob closing over her. Off David, horrified --

INT. HARRISON HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Laughter, the clink of silver on china, the sounds of normalcy. We find the Harrison family seated around the dinner table -- Tom, Catherine, Ryan and Allie. Allie's boyfriend BRADEN (24) sits next to her. There are two empty seats at the table, presumably for David... and Sarah.

TOM
(a toast)
To my daughter. Who also happens to be my alma mater's newest MBA, *and* Harrison Manufacturing's newest employee --

RYAN
Newest intern.

ALLIE
Paid intern.

BRADEN
(kisses Allie)
You'll be VP by next year.
(grins, to Ryan)
Watch your back, buddy.

RYAN
If she goes through promotions as fast as she does boyfriends I'm sure she'll do fine.

Allie shoots Ryan a look. He shrugs. It's true.

CATHERINE
Enough. I think it's wonderful you two will be working together.

TOM
Hear, hear.
(to Ryan)
A little sibling rivalry might goose your numbers a bit, son.

Ryan frowns. He's spent his life trying to please this man, with varying degrees of success.

TOM
(raising his glass)
You start Monday. Don't park in my spot.

CONTINUED:

They toast. Life goes on. At that moment, David hurries into the room --

TOM
It's about time --

DAVID
I have to show you something.

As they all register the anxious look on David's face --

INT. HARRISON HOME - TOM'S STUDY - NIGHT

They're all crowded around a computer monitor. The video of the street demonstration plays. David freezes on the indistinct image of the blonde figure being hit by gunfire, falling to the ground.

CATHERINE
My God...

Tom puts his arm around her, reassuring.

TOM
It's okay. We don't know that's her.

DAVID
(incredulous)
What do you mean? Look at it --

TOM
Stop. I understand you're trying to help, but I won't have you terrifying my wife based on some crap you found on the Internet.

ALLIE
Dad's right. That could be anyone.

RYAN
You don't have to start sucking up until Monday.

ALLIE
Screw you --

DAVID
(off the video)
This was only posted a few hours ago. If that is Sarah, she's hurt. We need to get this to somebody.

RYAN
Hell yes, we do.

CONTINUED:

BRADEN
I agree with Allie.

They all turn to Braden, having forgotten he's even here.

BRADEN
You don't even know where this came from.

RYAN
Thanks for the input. Now shut up.

ALLIE
Don't talk to him like that --

BRADEN
It's Psych 101. You're projecting. You're seeing what you want to see.

RYAN
Get the hell out of here!

Ryan moves to grab Braden and tries to push him toward the door.

ALLIE
Leave him alone!

TOM
Ryan!

Allie grabs Ryan, trying to pull him off her boyfriend. David steps in, moving to separate the two men.

CATHERINE
Stop it!

They all freeze, pulled up short by the sharp emotion in her voice.

CATHERINE
Not in my home. Not with everything that's happened. I won't have this family torn apart.

An awkward beat as they all seem embarrassed. We realize how the stress of Sarah's kidnapping is pushing this family to the breaking point, cracking the thin veneer.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Not fancy, but not a dive. It's fairly crowded, a little loud. We find David and Ryan seated at the bar, nursing drinks and egos.

DAVID
Your dad's not a bad guy.

CONTINUED:

RYAN
Sure. If you toe the party line, kiss his ass.
(kills his drink)
Allie'll do fine.

DAVID
He's just scared, like all of us.

Ryan waves to the bartender for another round.

RYAN
A scared asshole is still an asshole. Maybe even more... asshole-y.

DAVID
He's cut you a lot of slack.

Ryan turns on him -- David is straying into sensitive territory.

RYAN
You mean by not having me thrown in jail?

DAVID
I'm sorry. Forget it.

RYAN
Why? He won't.

The BARTENDER sets two more drinks in front of them and Ryan hoists his in a mocking toast:

RYAN
So here's to the father of the year. As long as none of us ever let him down.
(downs his drink, then)
They need to restock their jukebox. Is that The Carpenters?

It takes David a second to realize what Ryan's talking about, then he hears it, too -- faintly, coming from his pocket: "*Close to You.*" David pulls out his cell phone.

DAVID
Hello? Hello?

But it's too loud in here, too hard to hear. He moves away from the bar --

MOVE WITH DAVID as he weaves through the crowd.

CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID
Is anyone there? Hello?

He finally ends up in a far corner by the men's room.

SARAH (O.S.)
(scratchy, distant)
David?

The wind goes out of him. He leans against the wall for support, hardly able to believe it --

DAVID
Sarah?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MEDICAL CLINIC - NIGHT

It's dark and ruined, equipment and supplies ransacked. And huddled in the corner, wounded and barely conscious we find Sarah. She's clutching the sat phone that we saw kicked under a cabinet when troops stormed the clinic in the teaser.

SARAH
Hey, baby. I was afraid I was gonna get your voicemail.

DAVID
I can't believe it. I've been going crazy. We all have.

SARAH
I miss you.

DAVID
I miss you, too. Are you okay? Where are you?

SARAH
I can barely hear you. Are you in a bar?

DAVID
Um, yeah. With Ryan. Tell me where you are?

She's groggy, out of it from pain and blood loss.

SARAH
(a hazy smile)
Don't drink and drive.

CONTINUED:

DAVID
What? Okay, no, I won't. Are you hurt? I saw a video online, some kind of street demonstration --

As they talk Sarah carefully pulls back the torn fabric on her pants leg, revealing an ugly bullet wound. She reacts, woozy, nearly passing out. She needs something to focus her, to keep her in the moment --

SARAH
Tell me about your day.

DAVID
What?

It's that thing they do.

SARAH
You know the rule.

DAVID
(quickly)
It was boring. I worked on the computer, ruined dinner at your parent's. The usual.
(choking back tears)
Tell me about *your* day.

SARAH
(weakly)
It was awesome...

Her satellite phone BEEPS.

DAVID
Sarah? I'm going to bring you home. Do you hear me?

SARAH
The battery's dying...
(fading)
I love you.

DAVID
Sarah, where are you? *Sarah.*

But the line goes DEAD. Off David, stunned, raw, all alone in the crowded bar, we...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. HARRISON HOME - DAY

David is with the whole family -- Catherine, Ryan, Allie. They all wait anxiously as Tom wraps up a phone call.

TOM
(into phone)
-- all right. I appreciate it...
(glances at David)
No. That's all the information we got... I know... Thanks, Bob.

He hangs up and turns to the expectant family.

TOM
The satellite phone was registered to Sarah's NGO. Bob... the Senator says they'll try and trace it.

DAVID
Maybe that means she's at the clinic. Did they check there?

TOM
How? Send in the Marines?

DAVID
Why not? For weeks your buddy the Senator has been telling us to sit tight until we get some real information. Now we have some and he's telling us to sit tight!

Tensions are running high. Tom is about to fire back, but Ryan can't contain himself --

RYAN
I'm sorry, am I the only one here who's like... *she's alive!*

It's true. And they're all still processing it. Catherine turns to David, eyes moist.

CATHERINE
How did she sound?

DAVID
Tired. Kind of out of it.

RYAN
Can you blame her?

CONTINUED:

TOM
What did she say again? Exactly?

DAVID
I told you. She asked about my day.

ALLIE
That doesn't seem weird to you? The first time she's able to make a phone call and it's like, "Hey, honey, how was your day?"

Catherine gives her a slightly reproachful look, then finds Tom's eyes.

CATHERINE
Maybe she just wanted to hear her husband's voice.

DAVID
It's a thing we do. And you have to answer, no matter how lousy or boring or frustrating it was.

CATHERINE
And how was her day?

DAVID
She said what she always says...
(raw)
That it was awesome.
(composing himself)
I kept asking where she was, but then we got cut off.

TOM
I'm still asking myself what she was doing there in the first place.

DAVID
(surprised)
What do you mean? She was doing what she loved.

TOM
There are safer places to practice medicine. I'd have had serious reservations about letting *my* wife go to a place like that.

It's Tom's pain and frustration talking, but David is utterly blindsided.

CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID
Let her go? Are you blaming me?

CATHERINE
(to Tom, defending David)
How much luck have we ever had telling her what to do?

TOM
We knew this country was unstable. That something like this could happen.

DAVID
What was I supposed to do? Forbid her?

TOM
Or gone with her. You let her go to that hellhole alone?

DAVID
I *was* going with her!

David finally snaps, unleashing the torrent of guilt that's been dammed up inside him since all this began.

DAVID
She was so excited. I was too. It was going to be this great adventure. But then we got the Air Force contract and I knew how important it was. So, I told her I'd come when I could. She said she understood.
(raw)
I should have gone with her...

There's a silence in the room as David stands before them, broken, utterly bereft. We PUSH IN on his face and go to --

INT. DAVID'S OFFICE - DAY (FIVE YEARS AGO)

David stands in his office, only now it's empty -- a bare desk, nothing on the walls, no arsenal of Nerf weaponry. Just David and his banker's box of stuff. He takes it in, basking, until --

SARAH (O.S.)
Very nice.

David turns to see Sarah standing in the door. She gives him a smile and his heart catches in his throat.

CONTINUED:

SARAH
Your own window. Moving on up.

DAVID
Yeah, out of cubicle purgatory. I must have done something right.

SARAH
Must have. My father is pretty stingy with the perks.

DAVID
He's been a good guy to me.

SARAH
Trust me, you'd be out on your ass if you didn't know what you were doing.
(then)
Speaking of which, you were right.
(off his look)
Kyle and I. We weren't "elegantly compatible."

DAVID
Oh, that. That's, um... I kind of made that up. I mean, the principle is sound, but the term is... made up.

She gives him a long look, then can't help up but grin.

SARAH
Glad I used it to reassess my entire future.
(off the office)
Congratulations.

As she turns to go --

DAVID
Would you like to have dinner with me?

She turns back, amused.

SARAH
Boom, he goes for the rebound.

DAVID
No. It's not -- I just, I don't know if I'll ever find myself at this perfect intersection of nerve and opportunity again. So...

CONTINUED: (2)

She just looks at him. What is it about this guy?

SARAH
It's not a good time.

DAVID
Oh. Okay.

SARAH
Honestly, I'm leaving next week for Guatemala --

DAVID
You don't have to do that --

SARAH
I *am*. I'm taking a three month leave from my residency to do volunteer work.

DAVID
Three months.

SARAH
Three months.
(then)
Unless you want to have dinner there.

DAVID
In Guatemala?

SARAH
That's where I'll be.

DAVID
I know. But I just... It's not a good time.

He gestures around the office.

SARAH
Right. The window.
(then)
Maybe I'll see you... next time I'm passing by Nerve and Opportunity.

Off her smile, we COME OUT OF THE FLASHBACK --

INT. MEDICAL CLINIC - DAY (PRESENT)

CLOSE ON a bullet wound. Ugly, ragged, still pulsing blood. A curved SUTURE NEEDLE moves into frame, the point tentatively pressing at the flesh at the edge of the wound --

CONTINUED:

ON SARAH gasping. She's managed to scrounge up some sutures in the ruins of the clinic, and a few filthy bandages, but clearly no anesthetic. And she knows this is going to hurt.

She takes several deep breaths... and pushes the needle through the flesh of her leg. She bites back a scream and keeps going -- pushing the needle through, cutting the suture, tying it off, pushing, cutting, tying --

She's nearly done when she hears a noise, a CLATTER coming from the rear of the clinic. *Someone's there.* She pushes herself across the floor with her good leg, trying to find someplace to hide --

-- and bangs into a metal table, sending it crashing to the floor with an ear-shattering CLATTER. Shit. She holds her breath. Silence.

Then she hears footsteps, moving closer -- she tries to press herself deeper into the ruins. A shadow looms over her --

NICOLAS AND LUC

peer down at her, worry in their eyes. She nearly laughs with relief, reaches out to them. She pulls them both into a tight hug.

SARAH
(in French)
What are you doing here?

LUC
(also in French)
Looking for you.

SARAH
It's not safe. Do your parents know you're out here?

They look at each other sheepishly, clearly not. Now Sarah can't help but grin, hugs them again.

SARAH
Why were you looking for me? How did you know I didn't get away?

The boys exchange another look. Something's wrong. Sarah reads their grim expressions.

SARAH
What is it? What's happened?

Off Sarah --

INT. SENATOR'S OFFICE - DAY

David stands with Tom and the Senator intently watching a video playing on a flat screen TV.

ANGLE ON THE TV: It's a grainy, disturbing video image of Ann, Sarah's friend from the clinic. She looks beaten down, broken, too psychologically battered to even be frightened anymore. Her eyes are cast down as she numbly reads a "confession."

ANN
-- my so-called humanitarian organization is nothing more than a nest of spies... we are agents of deceit... sent here to legitimize and support the former criminal regime... for this I am ashamed and humbly sorry...

Ann's face is replaced by the image of GENERAL JEAN-BAPTISTE ALLARD. He stares into the camera with a calm expression. As he begins to speak, he comes across as reasonable, well-spoken -- not the psychotic mad man he's been described as. Yet he's oddly even more terrifying in his banality.

GENERAL ALLARD
(in French)
These enemies of the noble people of my country will not be allowed to spread their poison within our borders. We will not rest until all of these enemies of our state have been captured and held accountable for their crimes. The people have spoken.

The video ends, freezing on an image of Allard's face.

SENATOR
Now we're making some progress.

DAVID
(shocked)
That woman is our friend, we've known her for years. Look at what they did to her, how the hell is this progress?

SENATOR
They finally made a move --

DAVID
Yeah, trying them as spies.

CONTINUED:

TOM
And they'll be in the legal system. That international law firm I hired can start earning their pay.

DAVID
You think lawyers are going to help?

David points to Allard's face frozen on the screen.

DAVID
People are tortured and executed at the whim of this man. Their justice system is a sick joke.

SENATOR
Look, son. These pissant dictators won't hurt Americans. They don't want to poke the bear.

DAVID
(off the video)
Then what's this?

SENATOR
He's making a big noise. He wants a show trial. He'll get his fifteen minutes on the world stage to rant and rave and then we'll start negotiating.

DAVID
And what if he's not that reasonable?

Tom turns to David, irritated -- the tension and pressure of the preceding weeks ripping at these relationships, exposing every crack.

TOM
Okay, what's *your* plan? Spend some more time on the Internet checking out YouTube videos? That's my little girl over there, and I have pulled out every stop, rattled every cage, spent every red cent of political capital I have. Now if that's not enough for you -- if you think you can do better -- I am all ears. Please, show me what you got.

Off David, wishing he *could* do better, wishing he had an answer --

INT. DAVID & SARAH'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

David stands at his open refrigerator -- frustrated, angry humiliated. Shut down by Tom, feeling more useless than ever. He slams the refrigerator door and turns back to the TV, sound muted, tuned to cable news. He freezes when he sees --

ANN'S FACE FILLING THE SCREEN

reading her "confession." David grabs the remote, flips on the sound. We hear Jane Casey's voice (the Nancy Grace-type from the teaser) under the haunting image of Ann's face --

JANE (V.O.)
-- has expressed outrage and sorrow over the death of humanitarian aid worker Dr. Ann Marie Venable.

David reacts, stunned. Jane appears on camera as Ann's image recedes to a box over her shoulder.

JANE
(soberly)
The government of General Jean-Baptiste Allard had threatened to put Dr. Venable on trial as a "spy." But it's unclear whether she was executed, only that she was in government custody when she died.

David aims the remote, mutes the sound.

He stands for a long beat, his face a mask. Then he finds his cell phone on the counter and dials. A beat, and he speaks evenly, unwavering --

DAVID
(into phone)
Wyatt, it's David Ritter... I need to see you again... I want to talk about options, *serious* options... For bringing Sarah home.

Off David, grimly determined, we...

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. RED RIVER COMPOUND - TRAINING AREA - DAY

David and Wyatt stand in what at first appears to be a comfortable living room.

DAVID
-- I can't just sit around anymore. I need to take some kind of action.

WYATT
Then you need some intel that's *actionable*. You don't know if Sarah's in custody, in hiding, on the run. You've got nothing.

Wyatt flops onto the sofa, puts his feet on the coffee table.

DAVID
What about these people you work with? These security consultants --

David gestures around the room, which we now see isn't a living room at all -- *it's the mock-up they watched the assault team training in before*. The walls are pockmarked with BULLET HOLES, plywood cut-outs of bad guys are SPLINTERED AND SHREDDED from precise bursts of gunfire.

DAVID
-- can't they go in? Find her? Bring her out? I've got about twenty-thousand in my savings --

WYATT
Stop. First of all you do not want to be involved with these people. And 20k wouldn't begin to cover it if you did.

DAVID
I could mortgage my house --

WYATT
What do you think this is, the parking lot at Home Depot? "Hola, amigos! Who needs some work today?" You don't just pull out your checkbook and hire Seal Team Six. That's not how it works.

DAVID
Then tell me how it works! They killed our friend!
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

DAVID (CONT'D)
They tortured her and stuck her in front of a TV camera and made her confess her “crimes” and now she’s dead.

WYATT
David --

DAVID
I don’t care what it costs -- my house, my job, my freedom. I don’t care. There’s got to be someone who can help.

Wyatt looks up from the bullet-riddled sofa, searching David’s face. A long beat --

WYATT
There might be somebody I can talk to.

DAVID
Thank you.

WYATT
If he agrees to even meet you, and *if* he decides to help, and *if* he can even find Sarah, and *if* he decides an extraction is possible --

DAVID
I get it, it’s iffy.

Wyatt just shakes his head.

WYATT
Okay then. I’ll make a call.

David nods, grateful. For the first time he feels like he’s doing something, like he’s in charge.

INT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - BAUMAN’S OFFICE - DAY

Frank Wolfe appears in the doorway, a thick file folder in his hand. Bauman looks up from his desk.

FRANK
So, I’ve been a busy little intern. I went through every file on every freelancer who was on the ground in East Myanmar when it hit the fan.

Bauman leans back in his chair, spreads his hands.

CONTINUED:

BAUMAN
What do you want, Frank? You want me to apologize for asking you to do your job?

Frank drops the file he's carrying on Bauman's desk.

FRANK
Somebody popped.

Bauman flips open the file and we catch a glimpse of a PHOTO OF MAN, maybe 40, hard, cold --

BAUMAN
(reading)
Roland Shaw.

FRANK
British national, former SAS. Contract work in West Africa, Iraq, Afghanistan -- excessive force, civilian deaths. There are about a dozen countries he can't set foot in without spending the rest of his life in a dungeon.

BAUMAN
Is ours one of them?

FRANK
Not yet. Passport control picked him up coming in through Toronto three weeks ago.

BAUMAN
He's here? You think he knows something?

FRANK
With that resume he wasn't in East Myanmar bussing tables.

Bauman nods, hands him the file back.

BAUMAN
Good work. Give it to Loring.

But Frank doesn't move.

FRANK
Is this how you think I want to go out? Wandering the halls like a goddamned dinosaur, billing time, catching a nap at my desk --

CONTINUED: (2)

BAUMAN
Frank.

FRANK
You think I don't know how long it's been since I had a win? What those sharp young kids say about me behind my back? You said you needed somebody hungry on this. I'm *starving*.

BAUMAN
(a beat)
Okay. Find him. Find out what he was doing over there. Who he was working for. But light a fire under it.
(off Frank's look)
They're shutting down the consulate in East Myanmar, pulling the rest of our people out.

FRANK
(surprised)
With Americans still missing?

Bauman finds a memo on his desk, reads --

BAUMAN
"We deplore the suppression of democratic rights by the regime of General Allard and are withdrawing all American personnel for their own safety."
(then)
Clock's ticking.

Frank nods, looks down at the folder in his hand -- at the photo of the mercenary clipped to the file. There's a spark in Frank's eyes. He's a man on a mission. A dog with his teeth in a very juicy bone.

INT. DAVID & SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dark. Quiet. We hear keys jingle in the lock. The door opens and David steps in. He heads for the kitchen, but as he crosses the darkened living room, something pulls him up cold -- lying on the coffee table is a GUN. With a FIGURE behind it, shadowed, sitting silently in the darkness.

DAVID
Who's there?

Silence. Then a low threatening growl of a British accent:

CONTINUED:

BRITISH MAN
You're Wyatt's mate?

DAVID
I wouldn't call us "mates" exactly. We went to school together...

The figure shifts in the darkness, leaning forward -- the gun within easy reach.

DAVID
Yeah, I'm Wyatt's friend.

BRITISH MAN
Your wife's in East Myanmar.

David now puts the pieces together -- this is the call that Wyatt made for him.

DAVID
Can you find her?

A beat. David shifts uncomfortably, feeling eyes sizing him up from the shadows. Then --

BRITISH MAN
I want $50,000.

David reacts, a little surprised.

DAVID
Okay. That actually seems pretty reasonable.

The man laughs, a mirthless rumble.

BRITISH MAN
It's gonna cost more than that to get her out. If she's still alive. A lot more. The fifty is to prove you're serious. Are you serious?

DAVID
More serious than I've been about anything in my life.

The man slides a slip of paper onto the coffee table next to the gun.

BRITISH MAN
That's an account number for a bank in the Caymans. Fifty thousand deposited by noon on Friday and we'll talk. Noon. Or the window closes. Understood?

CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID
I can get the money.

A beat. David shifts uncomfortably, then --

BRITISH MAN
You look like you've had quite a day. Why don't you go in the kitchen? Grab a bite. Pour yourself a pint.

David slowly turns and walks into the kitchen, his heart pounding. He hears the sound of his front door OPENING and CLOSING.

He looks back into the living room. The figure is gone. On the coffee table the gun is missing, just the slip of paper with the account number. Off David, having just stepped into the deep end --

INT. HARRISON HOME - TOM'S STUDY - NIGHT

David talks with Tom and Catherine. He's animated, focused --

DAVID
I've been looking into some options for helping Sarah.

CATHERINE
What kind of options?

DAVID
Unconventional ones. I told you I had a friend in Washington. He works with people who handle situations like this.

TOM
I've been dealing with Washington --

DAVID
These people are more proactive.

CATHERINE
What do you mean "unconventional?"

David takes a deep breath -- then takes the plunge.

DAVID
I mean it's not strictly legal. They go into the country, secretly. They'll find Sarah, and use whatever means they need to, to bring her out safely. It'll cost a lot of money --

CONTINUED:

TOM
Jesus Christ. Are you talking about mercenaries?

DAVID
They're professionals. They've done this before --

TOM
Are you insane?

DAVID
You told me to come up with a plan.

TOM
And hiring some Rambo wannabes is it?

David has finally reached his limit. He's tired of taking a back seat, and he squares off with Tom.

DAVID
I'm not going to turn on the news one night and find out my wife was tortured to death and realize I didn't do everything I could to save her.

TOM
Even if it's illegal?

DAVID
If that's what it takes, yes!

TOM
(suddenly)
I didn't want Sarah to marry you.

DAVID
What?

For the first time Tom seems haggard, exhausted -- not the posturing blowhard he may sometimes come off as. He isn't lashing out at David. This is a painful confession.

TOM
I liked that Kyle kid. He was on a fast track, had his shit together.

DAVID
Go to hell.

CONTINUED: (2)

TOM
(a small smile)
But *you*. You were too much like me.

DAVID
(taken aback)
What are you talking about?

Catherine looks at her husband. She knows.

TOM
I'm talking about what a dumbass I was at your age. Thought I could fix any problem myself. Every decision I made was the right one. And all the heartache I put my wife through because I was too stubborn to admit I didn't know everything. I wanted to spare my daughter all that.

CATHERINE
You learned.

TOM
Yeah, I learned. It took awhile.
(to David)
But I'm gonna save you years of painful life lessons -- forget this crazy idea right now.

David turns to Catherine, impassioned, almost pleading --

DAVID
You've always believed in me. More than anyone in this family other than Sarah. Back me on this.

CATHERINE
Oh, David...

DAVID
You know what Sarah means to me...

CATHERINE
I do. But it's not more than she means to us.

She steps to Tom, wraps her arm through his. Off David, shot down, nowhere else to turn. *Where the hell is he going to get the money?*

INT. DAVID & SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

David paces the living room, the phone to his ear --

DAVID
-- I need it by Friday... Yes, I understand the loan needs approval... No, we just had an appraisal when we refinanced... No... No! Listen to me --
(exploding)
I can't wait that long!

David suddenly hurls the phone across the room. He erupts, tears the place apart, kicking over furniture, ripping pictures from the walls, sweeping framed photos of him with Sarah from the mantle -- sending the artifacts of a life together crashing to the floor.

KNOCK-KNOCK. The door. David stands for a beat, wild-eyed, gasping. KNOCK-KNOCK. He finally goes to the door, opens it. Ryan stands there, a six pack of beer in his hand. He peers past David into his ruined house --

RYAN
(beat)
The Nats are playing the Cubs tonight.

INT. DAVID & SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A bit later. David and Ryan sit on the couch drinking beer. The baseball game plays soundlessly on the TV.

DAVID
She's my wife. I have as much right to handle this as Tom does. More.

Ryan clinks his beer bottle to David's.

RYAN
Welcome to the family.
(drinks)
Don't let him own you. That's the mistake I made.

DAVID
I thought the mistake you made was stealing $90,000 from his company and blowing it playing online poker.

CONTINUED:

RYAN
That's cold, dude.
(then)
I'm sorry I got all in your face the other night. I had a couple too many.

DAVID
It's okay.

RYAN
You're the last person I should be acting like a dick to. Sometimes it feels like you're the only one around here who actually has my back.

They watch the game in silence for a beat.

RYAN
But since you brought it up, the mistake I made was not actually stealing the money, but was doing it while I was drunk.

David can't help but smile and shake his head.

DAVID
Jesus, Ryan.

RYAN
(laughing)
Seriously, it had to have been the tequila! I mean, he owns like eighteen different shell corporations and I couldn't make a measly 90k disappear? How did I screw that up?
(swigging his beer)
He's got so much money even he can't keep track of it all.

We PUSH IN on David's face -- wheels beginning to turn, and idea forming. *"He can't keep track of it all..."*

DAVID
No. He probably can't.

Off David, his face setting in resolve, we...

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. HARRISON MANUFACTURING - FACTORY FLOOR - DAY

David walks across the shop floor. He finds Ryan talking to a WORKER. David has to raise his voice to be heard over the clamor of machinery --

DAVID
Hey, do you mind if I use your computer?

RYAN
Why?

DAVID
I'm working on my expenses for the Air Force audit and I can't access our server for some reason.

RYAN
Sure, go ahead. Ignore the porn.

David starts off, then --

DAVID
Oh, what's your password?

RYAN
It's taped under the mouse pad.

DAVID
That's secure.

Ryan gives him a shrug, "What are you gonna do?" As David walks away we hold on his face, his smile drops away --

INT. HARRISON MANUFACTURING - RYAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Nothing fancy. Tom makes everyone work for a living here, even his kids. David sits at Ryan's desk. He enters the user name "ryan_harrison" and types in Ryan's password --

ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN we see windows rapidly opening and closing: FINANCIAL DATA... CORPORATE ACCOUNTS...

David pulls the slip of paper with the account number on it from his pocket. He selects TRANSFER OF FUNDS and enters the account number. A window opens prompting him for an amount. He inputs $50,000.

He's about to hit enter when something catches his eye, a photo sitting nearby: *Ryan with his father, smiling on the factory floor.* David realizes the trust he's betraying.

CONTINUED:

And he realizes he *can* stop. He can still turn back. How far is he willing to go? He hits ENTER.

SUSAN (O.S.)
What are you doing in here?

He startles, looks up to see Susan in the doorway.

DAVID
Just running my numbers for the audit.

SUSAN
Something wrong with your computer?

He glances at the computer screen. It flashes PROCESSING. The number $50,000 still highlighted on the screen.

DAVID
The server's just being funky.

SUSAN
I haven't had a problem.

She steps into the office, moves toward the desk.

David glances down -- PROCESSING... PROCESSING...

SUSAN
Have you thought about what I said?
(off his look)
Taking some time off? I want you to be able to focus on what's important.

DAVID
I appreciate that.

SUSAN
You're under a lot of stress. I don't want you to make a mistake. Do something we'll all regret.

PROCESSING...

DAVID
Like what?

She starts to step around the desk.

David looks down -- TRANSFER COMPLETE. He hits a key and the bank website disappears, replaced by CORPORATE DATA.

CONTINUED: (2)

SUSAN
I'm sorry if I sound callous, but it's my job --

Susan moves to David's side, glances at the screen. Nothing out of the ordinary.

SUSAN
You know how big this Air Force deal is. We can't have any screw-ups because your mind is understandably someplace else.

DAVID
I'll be fine.

She smiles, lays a hand on his shoulder. The gesture is slightly intimate.

SUSAN
Okay. You got six weeks till the audit. Just make sure all your zeros are in the right place or it's both our asses.

DAVID
No pressure.

She turns to go, hesitates.

SUSAN
And Sarah's coming home, okay? I'm sure of it.

DAVID
So am I.

She leaves. Off David, realizing that he's set something into motion, and hoping he doesn't regret it --

EXT. GEORGETOWN STARBUCKS - DAY

Well-dressed professionals poke at iPads and chat over double tall cappuccinos. David sits by himself, fitting right in. A cardboard drink carrier with two grande lattes sits on the table in front of him. He checks his watch.

A BLACK SUV with tinted windows pulls up. The window powers down and Wyatt calls out from the driver's seat.

WYATT
Let's go.

David grabs his drink carrier and walks to the car. As he reaches for the front door handle --

CONTINUED:

WYATT
In the back.

David hesitates, surprised. Then opens the back door --

INT. SUV - DAY

David climbs into the back seat, is startled to find another man there. He's thirties, lean with dark, sharp eyes. He gives David an unsettling smile. Call him DUVALL.

DUVALL
Hi.

DAVID
Oh, hi. I didn't realize someone else was coming. I only got two lattes --

DUVALL
Get down on the floor.

DAVID
What?

WYATT
Do what he says.

Okay. David doesn't know what to do with the coffees. He hands them to Duvall, then hunkers down on the floor. Duvall pulls a heavy blanket over David, tucking it in so he's completely covered.

Duvall nods to Wyatt, all set. Then he takes one of the lattes and hands the other to Wyatt. As the SUV pulls away --

WE STAY WITH DAVID under the blanket. He crouches in the dark jostled by the moving car -- the sounds of traffic and tires on pavement muted dully by the blanket.

We go TIGHT ON DAVID'S FACE -- the sound of his BREATHING grows exaggerated, labored, drowning out all the other sounds. The feeling is suffocating, claustrophobic.

It's as if he's passing through a long, dark tunnel, moving from the life he knew -- comforting, familiar, bright -- toward someplace dark and unknown.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

We don't know how much time has passed, but it's dark now. The SUV pulls into an alley in a rundown urban section of who-knows-where. Wyatt and Duvall climb out.

CONTINUED:

WYATT
We're here.

David climbs out from under the blanket and steps out. Duvall heads toward the rear door of a building. David moves to follow, but Wyatt catches his arm --

WYATT
It's not too late. Let him keep the 50k for his trouble and just walk away.

A beat. Then David just turns and follows Duvall. Passing the point of no return.

INT. BUILDING - REAR STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Duvall enters, followed by David and Wyatt. They head down a narrow staircase, along a dank, dimly-lit corridor. David catches fleeting glimpses into rooms off the hallway -- half-seen figures engaged in business we probably don't want to know about. David follows Duvall and Wyatt into --

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sweat-streaked COOKS bark orders at each other in an exotic language. We follow the three men as they weave through the steamy chaos, flames leaping from pans, cleavers thunking down on animal carcasses, until they finally reach a table set up in a back corner of the kitchen.

A man is seated there, eating alone. He's handsome, with hard features and dark, unsettling eyes. He reaches out and pours himself a glass of wine from a bottle on the table.

If you haven't guessed yet, this is ROLAND SHAW.

WYATT
David meet Roland.

DAVID
(holds out his hand)
We've met. Sort of.

Roland ignores the hand. He takes a sip of his wine then, faster than any of them can follow, he has the steak knife from his place setting at David's throat.

WYATT
Hey, hey, take it easy --

ROLAND
(to David)
Are you setting me up?

CONTINUED:

DAVID
What? No.

ROLAND
Then explain why five minutes after I agree to meet you I've got the CIA on my ass.

WYATT
What are you talking about?

ROLAND
I'm talking about some spook named Wolfe making calls, sniffing around, wanting to know what I was doing in East Myanmar.

DAVID
I don't know anything about that.

Roland presses the blade -- a trickle of blood runs down David's throat. The cooks go on with their business, as if this sort of thing happens every day.

WYATT
Jesus, Roland. The guy's been all over the news crying about his missing wife. It's a helluva cover story if he's just trying to set you up!

But Roland wants an answer from David. He leans in close.

ROLAND
Why should I trust you?

This is the moment where David must make a decision, where he has to answer a question -- *how far is he willing to go?*

DAVID
When I was in high school my mom got cancer. It started in her lungs, then it got in her bones, her brain --

Roland stares at David, unreadable, the knife not wavering.

DAVID
My father was long gone by then, so it was just me. But that was okay. That was pretty much how it had always been. How can you miss something you've never had?
(then)
Then I met Sarah.
(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID (CONT'D)
And it was like the Wizard of Oz -- like the world suddenly went from black and white to color. And once you see things that way. Once you know what you were missing, you can't live without it.

He meets Roland's eyes, his gaze unwavering.

DAVID
Wyatt says you may be the only person who can get her back. If that's true there's a lot of money in it for you. If you tell me you can't... that I have to go back to the life I had... to black and white. Use the knife. I don't even care.
(defiant)
So why the fuck would I call the CIA?

Nobody's breathing. Then... Roland lowers the knife.

ROLAND
I'll be in touch.

DAVID
I'm not finished.

Roland reacts, surprised by David's balls. Wyatt can't believe it. He looks like he's about to piss his pants.

DAVID
You're the professional, but she's my wife. If we do this I'm going to be involved every step of the way.

For the first time we see the tiniest hint of a smile play at the edge of Roland's mouth.

ROLAND
You sure about that?

DAVID
I'm sure.

Roland sits back at the table, nods for David to take a seat.

ROLAND
I did a little poking around on you, Mr. David Ritter. Due diligence and all that.
(MORE)

CONTINUED: (3)

ROLAND (CONT'D)
Nice little nine to five job, nice little mortgage, not so much as a speeding ticket. You do know that's all about to change?

David doesn't say a word.

ROLAND
Because what you're asking is illegal. And not a slap on the wrist, you naughty boy. A lifetime rotting in prison illegal. And if you want to avoid that, then all your family and friends who've been so supportive during this trying time...? You're going to start lying to them, betraying their trust, putting them in profoundly compromised positions.
(then)
But I imagine you've already done that, haven't you?
(off David's look)
You came up with that fifty thousand pretty quickly. And it didn't come out of your bank account.

He pours David a glass of wine.

ROLAND
So whatever well you dipped into, you're going to keep going back. Again and again. And we'll hire men. And buy guns. And we'll need transport and bribes and God knows what else and you'll spiral down the rabbit hole so bloody fast you don't know which end is up.
(holding David's gaze)
That is what you're asking to be a part of "every step of the way." Now... are you comfortable with that?

David's eyes don't waver from Roland's.

DAVID
I already told you. She's my wife.

Roland nods. He goes back to his meal. We hold on David, the full weight of what he's agreed to do sinking in. But as we PUSH IN on his face, we once again understand *why* he has no choice --

EXT. GUATEMALAN VILLAGE - DAY (FIVE YEARS AGO)

Impoverished but utterly charming. Children laugh and kick a patched soccer ball in the dirt. The sun sets behind a lush mountain range. Sarah and her friend Ann walk up the sleepy street talking and laughing.

SARAH
Want to have a drink?

ANN
Are you crazy? I don't even know how I'm still on my feet.

SARAH
(laughs)
Okay. I'll see you tomorrow.

Sarah walks up to a small, ramshackle cottage. She touches the metal doorknob and --

A DAZZLING ARRAY OF TINY WHITE LIGHTS BLAZE AROUND HER.

They fill the trees, winding up the trunks, through the branches, strung all over her tiny cottage. And we hear:

KAREN CARPENTER (V.O.)
Why do birds suddenly appear every time you are near?

Stunned, Sarah lets go of the doorknob and the LIGHTS GO OUT. THE MUSIC STOPS. A beat --

ANN
What the hell was that?

SARAH
I don't know.

She tentatively reaches out and takes the knob again, and the same thing happens -- LIGHTS, MUSIC.

DAVID (O.S.)
It's you.

Sarah and Ann turn to see David standing in the street.

DAVID
There's low voltage running through the doorknob. Your hand completes the circuit and...

He gestures around. Lights. Music.

CONTINUED:

SARAH
Why?

DAVID
I told you once you didn't need anything to power you. Because you light up everything you touch.

Ann looks at Sarah. Oh. My. God.

DAVID
So... are we on for dinner?

The answer is in her face, beaming more brightly than all the lights. And we come out of FLASHBACK TO --

EXT. URBAN SLUM - NIGHT (PRESENT)

As we last saw it. Ruined, empty. Then we pick up someone slipping through the darkness -- Sarah. Alone.

She's limping and wincing at every step, but moving with purpose. She looks up to see a sign marred with graffiti and pocked with bullet holes: *Consulat américain.* She lurches forward, determined--

EXT. AMERICAN CONSULATE - NIGHT

Sarah slips around the corner to see the high metal gates of the American consulate just ahead. She picks up the pace, the end of her ordeal in sight -- safety, home, *David*.

But then she reaches the gates to find they're chained and padlocked. She peers through the bars into the compound beyond -- dark, *abandoned*. Stunned, she pulls on the gates, violently trying to wrench them open.

SARAH
No. No, no, no...

And then LIGHTS WASH OVER HER. She turns, shielding her eyes from the glare of headlights pinning her to the gate.

A military vehicle roars to a stop in front of the consulate. Armed soldiers leap from the vehicle, menacing silhouettes advancing on her. Sarah shrinks back, sliding to the ground as the soldiers surround her, and we...

END PILOT