KILLING THE BUDDHA

By

Tag Mendillo

Kathy Muraviov
The Muraviov Company
818.425.5165 / 323.375.9400
Kathy@TheMuraviovCo.com

FADE IN:

RIPPLED OCEAN WATER

The Pacific at dusk. The water is dotted with GREEN GLOW STICKS. Bobbing in the darkness like tiny alien pods. A total of 40, in FIVE CLUSTERS of eight.

A RED FLARE shoots skyward -- now illuminating FIVE ZODIAC BOATS with eight SEAL RECRUITS in each. Shivering. Exhausted. The Chem-Light GLOW STICKS on their vests the only way to track them.

This is Navy SEAL BUDS Training at Coronado Naval Base. Hell Week.

CLOSER - IN THE HEAVY SURF

POWERFUL WAVES SLAM into the five Zodiacs. One of them CAPSIZES, sending all eight recruits into the raging water.

SEAL INSTRUCTOR (O.S.)
(over a bullhorn)
Let's go Boat Two! Get it together!

BINOCULAR POV - ON THE RECRUITS

Battling the elements, struggling to reclaim their boat and get back into the race. But the heavy surf scatters them again --

UNDERWATER

An EXPLOSION of sea foam bubbles -- BODIES -- limbs flailing in every direction -- mass confusion -- which way is up?? Panic until some find the surface while others hit...bottom.

EXT. NAVY OBSERVER VESSEL #1 - CONTINUOUS

A Navy MEDIC TEAM watches the training exercise. In dark blue sweats with the word "Medic" stamped across it. Two attend to a RECRUIT shivering in a thermal blanket. Checking his vitals.

Another scans with a pair of BINOCS. Lowers them -- REVEALING:

CAPTAIN SHANE DOWNING (32), a Navy doctor observing the exercise. His sharp eyes follow the action...counting the soaked bodies attempting to get back into Boat Two. His binocs come up again --

SHANE'S POV - THROUGH BINOS

Jumbled IMAGES. Faces in agony. Bodies lost in violent swells. Then, Shane locks onto a YOUNG RECRUIT fighting exhaustion.

ON SHANE

Concern flashes in his eyes -- as WE RACE across to NAVY OBSERVER VESSEL #2. Shane cues his walkie:

SHANE
Boat two, Classman Rivera's in trouble, he's going into hypothermia.

EXT. NAVY OBSERVER VESSEL #2 - CONTINUOUS

A TEAM of SEAL INSTRUCTORS watch the exercise from the deck. In full wet-suits. Snorkel masks ready in case they have to jump in.

At the hub is MASTER CHIEF NICK GRATTON (38). Ripped. An Alpha dog. This BUDS class is under his command. He calmly watches Boat Two's recruits flailing to get back into their Zodiac. Then turns his attention back to the other boats.

NICK
(into his walkie)
Negative. Rivera stays wet. That slacker becomes a man tonight or he drops out.

ON SHANE - WATCHING THROUGH BINOCS

Finds Boat Two's recruits clinging to their Zodiac. Chem-Lights adrift amidst the dark SURF as they attempt to climb back in. Shane scans...counting 5, 6, 7...

SHANE
Dammit, I count <u>seven</u>. Rivera's missing.
(to his BOAT CAPTAIN)
Bring us closer!

Shane's Observation Vessel races into the raging SURF. No time for protocol. Wasting another second could cost this kid his life. Shane lets a cresting wave pass then launches himself into raging SURF without diving gear...!

NAVY OBSERVATION VESSEL #2

Another wave CRASHES into Nick's Observation Vessel -- nearly capsizing it. Nick sees Shane dive into the surf --

NICK
Shit!
(to his BOAT DRIVER)
Get us in there! Go!

Nick's Observation Vessel races headlong into the SURF -- gets broadsided by a SURGE but holds together.

Nick snaps on a mask and plunges into the dark, frigid water. A second instructor, TORRES, right on his heels.

QUICK CUTS:

Shane descends -- searches the depths -- straining to see through the murky water -- nothing -- waves roaring overhead -- Shane fights to go deeper -- still no chem light -- deeper -- and then -- a faint green glow -- then a boot -- a leg -- Classman Rivera!

Shane snags Rivera by the legs -- powers back up through the turbulent water...racing to meet:

THE SURFACE

Shane and Rivera emerge! Shane's own body is close to going into shock. His arms wrapped around the comatose recruit as another wave crests, riding over them.

The rest of the Medic Team on Observation Vessel #1 scramble to retrieve them but Nick and Torres intercept Shane and Rivera in the water first.

NICK (CONT'D)
I got him...!
(to Torres)
Help the Captain back onto his boat!

Without the aid of a wet-suit, Shane's core body temperature has dropped dramatically. Torres helps him onto his vessel's ladder. The Boat Captain and others haul him aboard.

ON DECK - OBSERVATION #1

Shane THUDS to the deck, shivering. Several MEDICS assist him in removing his sweatshirt. Offering him a sweatshirt and blanket. But Shane motions to leave the rest of his clothing.

SHANE
I'm okay...leave it...

The Boat Captain pivots the boat and speaks into his MIC.

BOAT CAPTAIN
Observation One is heading to shore.

Observation #1 kicks up a heavy WAKE and races for the coast following Observation #2.

INT. BARRACKS - LOCKER ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Shane sits on a wooden bench amidst a row of LOCKERS. His sweat bottoms drip water onto cracked tile as he unlaces his shoes.

MAJOR ZUMAYA (O.S.)
(slight Jersey accent)
Couldn't stay outta the water, could you?

Shane turns to see a broad-faced senior officer in his late 50s. This is NCIS OFFICER MAJOR ERNESTO ZUMAYA.

MAJOR ZUMAYA (CONT'D)
You Downings always gotta stick your neck out...even when ordered not to. You're just like your old man. Real pain in my ass.

SHANE
Just keeping you on your toes, sir. My dad says you prefer it that way.

Zumaya grins at the joke. Watches Shane pull his sweat pants off, REVEALING: an HMD (Home Monitoring Device) ANKLE BRACELET. The kind used for house arrest.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Forgot I had the damn thing on.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
It's alright. We'll get you another. It's not like you made a run for the border.

SHANE
At least not yet.

Both laugh as Shane grabs clean clothes out of his locker, slips new sweat bottoms on. An awkward moment passes. It's evident both are trying to find any humor they can in a bad situation. One Shane got himself into. One we're going to find out about.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
How's that recruit?

SHANE
Hypothermic, but stable...

Both look up to see Torres, the other Seal instructor, appear with his bag. He salutes Zumaya who motions, 'at ease.'

TORRES
(to Shane)
Nice work out there, Captain.

SHANE
Thanks for the boost.

TORRES
No problem. We shoulda been there first.

Torres calmly changes into dry clothes at another locker. Shane quickly pulls his pant leg down over his ankle. It's evident he wants the ankle bracelet to remain a secret.

SHANE
(aside, to Zumaya)
Sir, can I meet you at your office? I want to make sure everything gets handled at the ER.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
See you there.

EXT. BUDS TRAINING AREA - BEACH - MORNING

The sun is up now. Shining over an endless stretch of SAND DUNES back 100 yards from the ocean. Shane appears, headed for:

NICK

With his inner cadre. Two more SEAL INSTRUCTORS watch with Nick, NORTON and TALLINGER. They've been in many battles together -- you can see it in their eyes.

Nick regards his recruits charging up the beach. They're soaked, freezing and exhausted. But Nick shows no sympathy. After all, this is Hell by choice.

NICK
Bring it in!

ON SHANE

Watching the shivering recruits huddle up in front of the SEAL instructors. Nick wields a BOAT OAR in his hand.

NICK (CONT'D)
Navy SEALS live and die as what?!

RECRUITS (UNISON)
A team, Master Chief Gratton!

Nick points to THREE MOCK GRAVES built of sand mounds.

NICK
Garnett, front and center.
(Garnett appears)
As a team leader you will dictate the fate of your brothers.

CLASSMAN GARNETT
Yes sir, Master Chief Gratton!

Nick hands Garnett the boat oar.

NICK
A second oar is buried in one of these graves. It represents Classman Rivera who was forced to drop out this morning. Why? Because of your collective failure! In battle, he would be dead!
(to Garnett)
Decision time, Garnett. Pick the right grave and hit the oar? You save your team five more laps outside the break.

Garnett feels the heat. Raises his oar and rams it down into a mound. Hits water-logged sand, realizing he hit nothing but sand.

NICK (CONT'D)
Looks like you guys're getting wet again.

CLASSMAN GARNETT
Yes sir, Master Chief Gratton! Move out!

The Recruits rush back to the ocean and into the surf. Nick notices Shane watching. Both are anxious to say something about the early morning's events.

NICK
How you feeling, Doc?

SHANE
I'm good, thanks.

NICK
I'm recommending they give Rivera a medical pass. Roll him back to the next class.

SHANE
I'm sure he'll be ready. Kid doesn't know when to quit. But maybe that's his problem?

Nick nods, looks out at his recruits in the water for a moment.

NICK
We teach these guys to push beyond their limits and persevere, endure and overcome any obstacle.
(beat)
Sometimes it backfires.

SHANE
I hear you.

Nick looks Shane over.

NICK
(quick grin)
Well, way you handled things this morning, I know one thing: you aren't a paper shuffler. Where were you deployed?

It hangs there. Shane doesn't want to talk about it. But:

SHANE
Najaf. I was attached to the Marine 1-7 Alpha Troop. I was an IOC for our company's shock trauma platoon.

Any NCO knows that means this guy has seen some heavy action.

NICK
In the shit.

SHANE
Something like that.

NICK
Keeps you alive.
(appreciatively)
It was a heads-up play out there today. Good job.

SHANE
Any time.

They shake, bonding. Shane watches Nick walk back to his cadre. He barks for his binocs and watches the recruits swim their laps like an overbearing mother hen.

ZUMAYA (O.S.)
This unit's a little newer.

INT. ZUMAYA'S OFFICE - CORONADO NAVAL BASE - DAY

Major Zumaya places a new, black ANKLE BRACELET onto Shane's ankle. Locking it into place using a specialized KEY.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
It's coded the same, so it'll link up with the master unit at home.

SHANE
Green good. Red bad.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
You don't miss anything do you? Just remember, if the system thinks something's wrong it'll track your location.

Seeing the HMD back high on his ankle hits Shane hard. A constant reminder of the uncertain future he faces. The anxiety appears in his eyes. Zumaya can sense it.

SHANE
Can't wait until this thing's over with.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Heard they moved your dates.

SHANE
Six weeks from Monday. Prosecution's got one last motion. Just another little intimidation tactic.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
(considers)
Try not to let it bother you.

Zumaya watches Shane pull his pant leg down self-consciously.

MAJOR ZUMAYA (CONT'D)
Best you can do is get on with your life like always. You're gonna get through this.
(points to his ankle)
You know this GPS tracker will still come on randomly. So, just clear your movements with me...and we'll be good.

Shane nods as they shake hands, trying to stay upbeat.

INT. SHANE'S OFFICE - CORONADO NAVAL BASE - DAY

On a COMPUTER SCREEN -- a STATIC VIDEO SHOT of JANIE DOWNING (30) and son STEVEN (7), SINGING happy birthday INTO CAMERA.

Shane smiles back at his family via a WEB LINK CAMERA. They are illuminated by the candles on a cake.

JANIE AND STEVEN
Happy birthday to you...
Happy birthday to you...
Happy birthday, dear Daddy...

Various MILITARY PHOTOS of a an ARMY RANGER TEAM lie on a desk. Along with a group shot of them huddled together at the completion of an op. In face paint. Desert warfare gear.

JANIE AND STEVEN (CONT'D)
(over the web cam)
Happy birthday to you. Yay!!

SHANE
Wow...what a great surprise!

INTERCUT SHANE AND HIS FAMILY

Facing a WEB CAM Janie and Steven clap and laugh.

JANIE
He could barely wait.

SHANE
You gonna blow 'em out for me, Stevie?

Stevie obliges. Blows out the candles on the cake.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Thanks, buddy. You can have my piece!

Janie cuts a piece of cake. Stevie bites into it, leaving frosting on both cheeks. Then lays into a second piece.

STEVEN
Mmm...this cake rocks!

JANIE
Look who's excited to have "two" pieces of cake. Somebody'll be bouncing off the walls later...
(OFF Shane's laugh)
How's it been? Sunny at least?

SHANE
No, marine layer all week.

JANIE
Well, if it makes you feel any better the power went out again this afternoon. So, we've been living by candlelight. PG&E says there's a bad transformer somewhere...
(MORE)

JANIE (CONT'D)
(then)
Everything okay?

SHANE
We've been on night maneuvers. Had to get wet last night. Froze my butt off.

JANIE
Why, what happened?

SHANE
Ah, nothing really. Recruit had a little trouble, that's all. It's fine.

Unsure, Janie lets it go.

SHANE (CONT'D)
How about Grandma and Grandpa?

STEVEN
Grandma read me stories last night.

JANIE
They came for dinner.

STEVEN
When are you coming home Daddy?

SHANE
Weekend after next. Nine days and counting, buddy. You guys pick out a puppy yet?

JANIE
He wanted to wait for his daddy.

SHANE
(touched)
Wow, thanks bud. We'll go as soon as I get back...okay?

Stevie nods in excitement. Packs a last bite of cake in and carries his place to the kitchen sink behind them. Shane regards his wife. The love of his life.

SHANE (CONT'D)
I miss you.

JANIE
Miss you too.

Shane's PAGER buzzes on his desk. He glances at it.

SHANE
I got the hospital calling.

JANIE
I love you, Captain Downing.

She smiles back at Shane, radiant in the candlelight. He realizes he's choked up.

SHANE
I love you, too.

CUT TO:

INT. HONDA MINIVAN - DAY

Janie and Steven drive along, grocery bags in back.

STEVEN
Mommy, I want to go look at the puppies.

JANIE
We don't have time, honey.

STEVEN
But Daddy told me I have to. Or he won't know which one I like...

Janie considers this.

JANIE
Well. Okay, but we have to get the dry cleaning first.

STEVEN
Yes!

They pull past a posse of ILLEGALS squatting, waiting for a job to come down the road. Janie's eyes watch after them.

She pulls into a rather rundown strip mall. There is a dry cleaner down at one end. Janie gets out --

ONTO THE STREET

JANIE
Wait here. I have to get the dry-cleaning.

STEVEN
I wanna come!

JANIE
Alright, hang on.

Janie swings around to let him out...and we jump CUT TO:

JANIE

Exiting the dry cleaners -- nothing can prepare us for what happens next -- it's fast -- ugly -- evil.

TWO SKINHEADS

-- beanie hats low, facial stubble -- Skinhead #1 grabs Janie's PURSE -- Skinhead #2 slashes his hand across her body -- landing a punch in her solar plexus...she staggers, falls.

WIDER - THE LOT

Nobody is there. Not even the illegals who were squatting moments ago. The skinheads round a corner. And they're gone.

BACK ON JANIE

Looking down she sees: a KNIFE HANDLE, protruding from her sternum. Janie gasps for air, eyes registering shock at the blood.

Steven leaps out, finds his mother, bloodied and clutching her stomach. She is slumped against the tire.

JANIE (CONT'D)
Are you...alright...honey...

STEVEN
Mom! Mom!!

He WAILS, holding her hand. She gasps...and dies. We drop back into eerie silence now and we find ourselves back in PURGATORY...

EXT. NAVY OBSERVER VESSEL #1 - PACIFIC OCEAN - EARLY MORNING

Shane and the Medical STAFF scan steel blue water for trouble.

ACROSS THE RIPPLED WATER

Navy Observer Vessel #2 bobs restlessly in the swell. Nick oversees the action with his SEAL Instructors. The ever-present Torres, Norton and Tallinger barking orders, etc.

ON SHANE - HOLDING BINOCS

His eyes finding Nick's for an instant. Then both go back to the recruits riding out the storm in punishing SURF.

Shane glances back towards the shore where...

A THIRD OBSERVATION VESSEL APPEARS

Cutting through dark water. Outboard engines WHINING. Major Zumaya at the bow wears a grim expression. Shane notices. Something's wrong. He stands, bile rising in his stomach.

As Observation Vessel #3 arrives alongside Shane's...

CLOSE ON NICK

Watching Shane and Major Zumaya across the way. They confer. Shane's knees buckle. Zumaya holds him tightly as Shane's face contorts. An excruciating emotional trauma.

Nick stands. Eyes filled with sympathy. Whatever Shane's plight may be, it's obviously devastating. Nick takes it in.

OFF Shane Downing...a man shattered into a million pieces.

EXT. SHANE'S CAR - MOVING

Shane SLALOMS aggressively through traffic.

INT. SHANE'S CAR - DAY

Shane is consumed with rage. Grief. His eyes raw. He speeds towards an INTERSECTION -- the signal turns RED.

Despondent, Shane closes his eyes -- plows right through the light -- crossing traffic SCREECHES, SWERVES -- somehow escapes his path. Shaken by his stupidity, Shane pulls over. He could've killed someone. He shuts off the engine.

Lost.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE DOWNING FAMILY HOME - SAN LUIS OBISPO - DAY

Days later. On a back patio. Leftover platters from Janie's wake. A memorial pamphlet with Janie's PHOTO.

WE FIND Major Zumaya in a suit on his way out the door with MR. DOWNING, a sturdy 60 year old whose precise body language testifies to his past as an ex-Navy officer.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
You'll all be in my prayers.

MR. DOWNING
Appreciate everything you've done for us, Ernesto.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Hey, we're Navy. We gotta look out for each other. That's it, that's how it is.

Mr. Downing accepts a quick hug. His eyes search Zumaya's one last time.

MAJOR ZUMAYA (CONT'D)
He's a good kid. He'll beat this thing.

Major Zumaya turns, exits.

DOWNING FAMILY HOME - BACKYARD

Shane is in a crisp, white shirt and tie. Jacket off. Solemnly tossing a wiffle ball for Steven. Steven smacks one. Mr. Downing appears tapping his left arm.

MR. DOWNING
They're calling for the bullpen.

He comes in, taking the ball. Shane walks back towards the house where MRS. DOWNING (50s) is cleaning up. The consummate caretaker, she offers a plate of food to Shane.

MRS. DOWNING
You haven't eaten, honey. You need to get something in your stomach.

Shane reaches the patio, declines the food with a sullen shrug. Pulls out his cell phone. Checks his pager.

SHANE
They're asking for an opinion on a surgery.
(annoyed)
Attending still thinks I'm in San Diego.

MRS. DOWNING
(lets it go)
Why don't you have Stevie stay with us for the summer? You can come up, he can go back...

He cuts in, bitter.

SHANE
When? When can he go back...? He can <u>never</u> go back.
(tears welling)
Can you imagine what he thought? Seeing her like that...dying...?

MRS. DOWNING
Shane, don't do this to yourself. It's not your fault --

SHANE
-- I should've been there, Mom. I should've been there to protect her!

MRS. DOWNING
Shane --

Shane puts his hands up apologetically. Moves off. This outburst is not lost on Steven, his eyes little pools of sorrow.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - DOWNING FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Shane and his son are in their PJs. Getting ready for bed.

STEVEN
Did I kill Mommy?

It stops Shane in his tracks.

SHANE
What? No, buddy...

Steven says nothing for a moment.

STEVEN
I think she was mad at me.

SHANE
What makes you say that?

STEVEN
I wanted to get a puppy. She wouldn't let me...so I told her a lie. I told her you said I had to go see them...

Shane softly grabs his son, hands on his tiny shoulders. Locks eyes with his son.

SHANE
Stevie...none of this was your fault. Okay? None of it.

Steven nods, guilty. Unsure. He starts to cry. Shane climbs into bed with his son, holds him tight. Rocking him back and forth.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. POLICE STATION - SAN LUIS OBISPO - DAY

Shane enters, glances around awkwardly. A STAFF SERGEANT sees him.

STAFF SERGEANT
Can I help you, sir?

INT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Shane waits in a reception area. Alone. In a trance. DETECTIVE HENSLEY (35) appears through a secure door. Sympathetic eyes. Ruddy, freckled cheeks. Offers a hand to Shane.

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
Dr. Downing...Detective Hensley.

The two shake hands.

THE DETECTIVE'S OFFICE

Shane sits across from Hensley and a modest desk.

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
I want to reiterate how sorry we are about what's happened to you and your family.

Shane nods a polite thank you. This refrain has gotten old over the past two weeks.

DETECTIVE HENSLEY (CONT'D)
Lately we've had some trouble downtown. Car jackings. Muggings. Shoplifting. I have to be honest, there haven't been many arrests.

This news is not what Shane wanted to hear.

SHANE
What about my wife's case? Is there anything new?

Hensley is reluctant, trying to find a way to couch it.

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
We collected DNA evidence...very feint traces on the knife. But none of it matches anyone in our databases. And we haven't come up with any usable prints.

Shane shifts. A sickening pit in his stomach.

DETECTIVE HENSLEY (CONT'D)
(going through his notes)
We've checked all surveillance cameras in the area. But have no clear images. Interviewed over 75 people there that day. Yielding one possible witness. A Hispanic woman who saw two white males in a Chevy pickup with short hair, buzz cuts. She thinks it was an Arizona plate. But she's not a hundred percent. And on top of it all? We checked her employer, she's an illegal.

SHANE
What does that mean?

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
Unfortunately, anything she adds will be inadmissable.

Shane's frustration is palpable.

SHANE
And what about the plate?

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
We're obligated to give the plate lead to the FBI. Since it's across a state line.

Shane's blood quietly boils. Hensley reads this.

SHANE
What will they do?

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
Everything they can, Captain. Look, right now, we have very little to go on...
(beat)
When we don't get a solid break within the first 48 hours so many like this --

SHANE
(abrupt)
-- I know about unsolved cases, Detective.

A tense beat.

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
Another option may be to interview your son again, see if there's something we missed...

SHANE
(a realization)
So you guys...you're off the case?

This is the question Hensley didn't want.

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
Unless something turns up? That is correct.

OFF Shane, his jaw tightening...

EXT. POLICE STATION - SAN LUIS OBISPO - DAY

Shane storms out. Reeling. Heads for his car. Then he stops -- sees somebody. Nick. Waiting, with a sympathetic gaze.

NICK
You look like you could use a drink.

Off Shane's reluctance:

NICK (CONT'D)
Come on. I'm buying.

INT. IRISH BAR - SAN LUIS OBISPO - DAY

Shane and Nick sit at the end of a nearly empty bar. A BARTENDER pours Glenlivet into tumblers.

NICK
(to Bartender, eyes on the bottle)
Leave it.

The Bartender reads their eyes. No question these guys are going to get fall-down, shit-faced drunk. The Bartender walks off.

NICK (CONT'D)
Can't tell you how sorry I am, man. All the guys on base...they feel the same.

Shane is embarrassed, disgusted. Toasts him and downs the drink. It's going straight to his head.

SHANE
How'd you know where to find me?

NICK
Got the address on file at base. Showed up at your parents...your dad said you were here. What are the police saying?

SHANE
Don't have shit. Aren't gonna do shit.
(bitter)
They have a partial plate off an Arizona pickup, two possible suspects...but they go and give the case to the Feds. Cops nowadays join the force for two reasons: free medical. And their pension.

Nick pours more scotch. Motions to a NEWS REPORT on a TV about a conflict. Another suicide bombing. More US soldiers dead.

NICK
And there's the biggest cluster fuck of all. Whole place's going up in smoke and we bleed for what? While our own country goes sideways. Do you realize every man, woman and child in this country owes something like fifty g's to our national debt? It's a fucked-up time we live in.

Annoyed, the Bartender throws them a "I don't want any trouble" look. Nick meets it with a glower.

NICK (CONT'D)
Let's go over there. Talk in private.

Shane starts over, flushed. The Scotch going to his head. Nick follows. They sit. Shane motions to the Bartender.

SHANE
Guys like that? Have no idea what we've been through.

NICK
Najaf, right? Shock trauma platoon?

Shane nods. Eyes on Nick, watching cautiously.

NICK (CONT'D)
See, I don't gotta tell you about what's right...I look into your eyes and I know you lived it. You. Me. Every one of us.
(motions to the TV)
Soldiers bleed for each other. We die for each other. We <u>protect</u> each other.

Shane feels a twinge of the pain he's trying to drown.

SHANE
What are you getting at?

NICK
You're a hard-working, honest sonofabitch, Downing. Kind of person this world needs to do right by. Problem is, it never does.
(beat, eyes on Shane)
But I might have a way to fix it.

Shane doesn't want to admit it, but Nick has struck a chord.

SHANE
How? How could you help?

NICK
(voice lowered, even)
A group of us in the SF community -- Seals, Delta, Force Recon. People with special skills. People who've experienced loss like you...situations the law won't deal with.
(beat)
There is a way to restore law and order. Somebody completely uninvolved with your situation comes. Takes care of it. Quietly. Efficiently. No questions asked.

SHANE
You're talking about murder --

NICK
No, that's what they did to your wife. What I'm talking about is your peace of mind.

Nick's words have penetrated Shane.

SHANE
I don't get it...why risk all this for me?

NICK
Because I saw you risk your ass for us. Maybe nobody else gives a shit about that anymore. But see...I do.

A poignant moment passes between them.

NICK (CONT'D)
I can stop right now. Pay the bill and walk out the door.
(MORE)

NICK (CONT'D)
And you can sit in this place and drink all night feeling sorry for yourself. Or you can do something.

SHANE
(even)
I'm listening.

NICK
Your beef goes before a secret arbitrator. Nobody knows who it is. Codename is "The Buddha." This person authenticates your problem...and if your request is approved, it's sent to an unknown operative who's "in the hat." Somebody who owes the system.
(OFF Shane's look)
That's the catch. It's reciprocal. Could be tomorrow, could be five years from now... you get 30 days to fulfill the obligation.

Shane's resistance is beginning to waiver. Nick senses it.

SHANE
How would they know where to find these guys?

NICK
We're talking about covert operatives with access to high resolution satellites watching every square inch of this country. I give them the partial plate...location and time of day? They'll find them.

Shane stares back, his head swimming, the alcohol clouding his judgment.

SHANE
I don't know...

NICK
(eyes penetrating)
You're probably like me...see I think human life is irreplaceable. Sacred. That's a contract we all live with. And if it's broken? We let those who break it do so at our peril. To me? It's an obligation.

SHANE
I'm not a killer --

NICK
-- you don't have to be.
(OFF Shane's look)
A friend of mine, Jeff Sanetti.
(MORE)

NICK (CONT'D)
Contractor, Ex-Delta...deep cover in Iraq.
(glances around)
I got word he was KIA last month. Anbar Province. Mortar got him in some godforsaken goat field. He was unlisted, so CID won't investigate. They got too much on their plate to worry about some missing contractor.
(beat)
If I submit a request under Sanetti's name? You get the benefit of a one-way street.

Shane breathes deep.

SHANE
What about the police? I mean, this whole organization...what if...

NICK
They've all tried. Local. Feds. CID. But you know what they say. You can't touch what you can't see. Look, nobody is gonna go on the record for this thing. You aren't going to get a testimonial.
(a whisper)
But one thing is certain: it's foolproof.

Shane waivers. Temptation setting in. Nick leans forward, speaks in a fierce whisper:

NICK (CONT'D)
You deserve justice. Your wife deserves it. This is a one-time deal. <u>Give it to her</u>.

Their eyes come together...Shane can feel the lure of instant gratification. His anger realized...<u>revenge</u>. He whispers the words, hoping God won't hear him:

SHANE
...do it. Just tell them to...<u>do</u> it...

OFF Nick's nod, the sound of an ALARM --

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - SHANE'S PARENT'S HOME - MORNING

The alarm clock BEEPS. Stevie enters the room, dressed. Stares down at his father who is coming to.

STEVEN
Dad, Grandma says we have five minutes.

Shane kills the alarm. Slides out of bed and pulls on leftover clothing. The evening's events slowly returning in his mind.

INT. SHANE'S CAR - DAY

Shane drives. Eyes bleary, hair hastily combed. Steven is in the passenger seat. Peering over the backpack on his lap.

Shane's mind races. Echoes of Nick's words RING in his head.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Shane and Steven pull up. Shane kisses him on the head.

SHANE
Have a good day, bud. I love you.

STEVEN
(leans over, hugs his dad)
Love you, Dad.

Steven jumps out and falls in with some other kids. Glancing back to his father...a smile. He seems better.

Shane speeds off...pulls over on a side street. Reaches for his cell phone. Shane scrolls through to a number and pushes "send." A moment, ringing...then:

NICK'S VOICE (O.S.)
Leave a message.

BEEP.

SHANE
(into the cell)
Nick, it's uh, well you know who it is. Look, I need to call this thing off. It's not for me. I know you're trying to help, but I'm putting this all behind me. So, call it off. Right away.
(awkwardly)
Thanks for understanding.

Shane hangs up. Exhales a sigh of relief.

EXT. ADMAX PENITENTIARY - FLORENCE, COLORADO - DAY

From behind. We TRACK a MAN walking to the entrance in a blue power suit, tie and briefcase. Like a high-priced attorney... until we realize it's Nick.

A camera's auto-winder SNAPS...and we REVEAL:

A DISTORTED FIGURE

Through heat waves. Snapping PHOTOS of Nick arriving at the entrance. It's a WOMAN. Running shoes. Hair back. She looks like she could be a soccer mom. But she is obviously anything but that.

INT. ENTRANCE AREA - ADMAX PENITENTIARY - CONTINUOUS

Nick signs in. Shows an ID.

NICK
I'm here to see Charles Wayright.

A PRISON GUARD picks up the phone.

PRISON GUARD #1
I need Wayright pulled out of ADSEG. Another lawyer's here to see him.

INT. SECURE VISITING AREA - ADMAX PENETENTIARY - CONTINUOUS

Another PRISON GUARD leads Nick to an ISOLATION CAGE made out of solid metal. The front is steel mesh.

Inside, sits a WHITE INMATE (50s). His greying goatee outlines cigarette-stained teeth and jaundiced, waxy skin. Opaque eyes.

Nick turns to the guard:

NICK
I'd like to preserve my client's rights and talk to him in private.

PRISON GUARD #2
Whatever floats your boat. Ripper here's got triple life. He ain't going anywhere. Are you Ripper?

RIPPER (WHITE INMATE)
I'll let you know when I want my dick sucked again, K-9. Next time use both hands.

The prison guard just grins. Used to the daily taunts of Ripper. Leaves them. Nick sits on a folding chair outside the cage.

Both gauge each other through the steel mesh.

RIPPER (CONT'D)
My cousin a Navy SEAL yet?

NICK
Passed BUDS with flying colors.
Signed his paperwork myself.

RIPPER
I owe you.

NICK
I'd say we're even.

Dead to the formality of small talk, Ripper leans forward. All business now.

RIPPER
Word is, you can handle some business
for me and my brothers on the outside.

NICK
(signals "cash")
If you got the love.

RIPPER
We got endless love.

Nick gauges Ripper. He wants something first.

NICK
I need a favor first. Somebody
expendable to do a job for me. Call
it a..."good faith" gesture.

RIPPER
Done.

INT. NAVY CHAPEL - CORONADO NAVAL BASE - DAY

Shane drops an envelope into an offering plate, hands it to an USHER. A NAVY CHAPLAIN stands. The rest of the CONGREGATION follows his lead.

NAVY CHAPLAIN
Heavenly Father, we ask that these
gifts may be acceptable to You...

OFF Shane, bowing his head in silent prayer.

EXT. NAVY CHAPEL - CORONADO NAVAL BASE - DAY

Shane walks with Major Zumaya outside.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
How's Stevie?

SHANE
A little better. He wanted a puppy. So my parents got him one. Golden.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
And you? How are you, Shane?

Major Zumaya stops. Shane won't meet his gaze.

SHANE
I won't lie, it's been tough. Day by day.

Zumaya nods gently. His eyes are filled with sympathy.

ZUMAYA
I spoke to Admiral Kohler about your situation. He's agreed to let you return to San Luis so you can be with your boy, have your folks nearby...I think it's the best thing for you. We'll move the HMD system up there. You'll have to track all your movements with me the same way. But at least you'll be near family.

SHANE
Thank you, sir.

Zumaya places a comforting hand on his shoulder.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
This is a time for you to take care of your boy, yourself. At least until the trial starts. Alright?

Shane nods in reluctant agreement.

EXT. BUDS TRAINING AREA - BEACH - DAY

Shane appears, watching new SEAL Recruits. Sprinting back to their boats. Gearing up for more punishment under the watchful eyes of a different Master Chief. There's no sign of Nick.

Shane's eyes fall to the three sand mounds (mock graves) in the sand...a grim reminder of the reality he faces. He sees part of Nick's cadre, Norton and Tallinger, watching the exercise.

NORTON
Captain. How're you doing?

Shane shakes their hands.

SHANE
Okay. Where's Master Chief Gratton?

NORTON
Left for an op a couple days ago.

SHANE
You guys know where?

TALLINGER
They're classified from CENTCOM, so you never know unless you've been activated.

NORTON
(grins)
We call it "ghost time."

SHANE
(troubled)
Thanks.

Norton gives Shane a sympathetic nod.

NORTON
Everyone here at BUDS is sorry about your loss, Captain. We're all behind you 100 percent.

Shane gauges the two SEALS...are they aware of Nick's offer? Neither gives anything away. Shane lets it go.

SHANE
I appreciate it.

Shane heads off.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - LOCATION UNKNOWN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: Arizona plates. Skinhead #1 (Janie's killer) steps out of a Chevy pickup. Without a care in the world.

He walks down a covered walkway, then it dawns on him. The overhead lights are OUT. All of them.

He stops. That's weird. But he sees the lights lining the driveway are out too. Must've blown a fuse. He continues to his apartment...

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Skinhead #1 steps in. Dark in here, too.

MYSTERY POV -- THROUGH NIGHT-VISION GOGGLES

Watching the skinhead's MURKY GREEN IMAGE as he reaches for the light switch. PFFST! The skinhead flinches, grabs at his chest like he's been shot. He has. Reveal: a TRANQUILIZER DART.

The skinhead shudders, drops violently to the floor -- the heavy drugs attacking his nervous system.

WE PUSH IN

As he twists, convulses. Attempts a SCREAM, but nothing comes out. His motor functions have been completely PARALYZED.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

The back doors open -- Skinhead #1 LANDS inside. Head rattling against the metal floor. Discovers that he is staring into the drugged eyes of Skinhead #2.

The back doors of the van SLAM SHUT...go to BLACK.

SLAM CUT TO:

A DIRT GRAVE

Six feet wide, four feet deep. Both skinheads land in it with a THUD. Fearful eyes darting from side to side. A Polaroid FLASHES -- !

AN UNSEEN FIGURE

Holds the camera and a NEWSPAPER SECTION showing the date.

ANOTHER SHADOW FIGURE

SHOVES a plastic-wrapped brick into each of the skinhead's mouths, wedged between their teeth. Semtex. Next, WIRES are stuck into the bricks, leading to a COIL OF WIRE and a small DETONATOR.

The skinheads try to scream. To plead for mercy. But the only sound is of their wretched gasps as their unseen captors grab shovels -- begin shovelling dirt onto them.

SLAM CUT TO:

THE COIL OF WIRE

Being fed out by hand. Yards of it. Boots shuffling across the desert floor. Hands fasten a POSITIVE WIRE to the detonator. Then the PLUNGER BUTTON is pressed -- KA-BOOOSHHHH!

A hundred yards away, a MUFFLED EXPLOSION of dirt and fire. Within two seconds, we're back into TOTAL DARKNESS. Just the sound of dirt and flesh raining back to earth -- pap-pap-pap-pap.

CUT TO:

INT. SHANE'S CONDO - DAY

Shane walks to the front door and tries the lock...and realizes that the bolt lock is not locked...he flips it back and forth. Blood pressure rising. He steps out front.

EXT. SHANE'S CONDO - CONTINUOUS

Shane notices the mailbox flag is UP. He walks out onto the grass and looks around. He steps to the MAILBOX and discovers a PACKAGE jammed inside.

INT. SHANE'S CONDO - CONTINUOUS

Shane staggers into the kitchen, tears into the PACKAGE with a steak knife.

Inside are two eerie PHOTOS: the skinheads. Lying in the dirt grave. Mouths stuffed with Semtex. Eyes filled with terror.

A SECOND PHOTO

A dug-out, charred CRATER. The site of the skinheads' execution. A MESSAGE in black Sharpie: "*REQUEST EXECUTED, CAPTAIN DOWNING*".

ON SHANE

A wave of nausea passes through him. They did it. They actually went and killed these guys. He walks the PHOTOS into the living room and sits.

The phone RINGS. Shane is startled. Sees the CALLER ID's BLOCKED. Finally picks it up:

SHANE
Hello?

Through a modulator, a distorted MALE VOICE:

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Sleep well tonight, Captain Downing. The men who killed your wife are dead and gone.

SHANE
Who is this?

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Your request was executed. Consider yourself in the hat.

SHANE
Wait -- !

CLICK. The voice disappears. Shane hurries down the hall.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Stevie...?

Shane arrives at Steven's room. He's on the floor with Legos. Safe. Looks up with a smile.

STEVEN
Hi, Dad.

Shane smiles back.

SHANE
Hi, honey...

STEVEN
What's wrong?

SHANE
Nothing.

But the dread...that sickening pit in his stomach has returned...and that's when he hears his DOORBELL.

STEVEN
I'll get it!

INT. SHANE'S CONDO - SAN LUIS OBISPO - DAY

Shane arrives at the door with Steven.

Steven pulls it open to find Detective Hensley there, along with another detective. PEROTTI.

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
Dr. Downing? Mike Hensley. San Luis Police. This is Detective Jim Perotti. He's with Mojave Police. May we come in?

Perroti waves at Steven.

SHANE
Stevie, go grab your markers...

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Shane sits across from Hensley and Perotti. Blood pressure rising. The PHOTOS are right there...

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
There's been a bizarre twist in your wife's case.

SHANE
What do you mean?

Perotti's eyes are penetrating. Shane tries to hide his nerves.

DETECTIVE PEROTTI
Hikers in Mojave found what looks like a makeshift grave. Forensics checked it out, found traces of high-grade explosives...with human remains.

SHANE
You think my wife's killers had something to do with it?

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
Since they weren't formally charged, the term we have to use is suspect. But yes.
(OFF Shane's look)
The two bodies match DNA evidence taken from the murder weapon and dry cleaning bags. Statistically? It's a lock. These are your wife's killers.

A pause. Shane's throat tightens. Perotti reads it.

SHANE
Sorry, I'm trying to process all this.

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
Trust me, we were just as shocked. Seems somebody found them before we did.
(now the hard question)
Are you still on a leave of absence?

SHANE
For now.

DETECTIVE PEROTTI
Did you have any contact with these individuals, Captain?

SHANE
The dead guys? No.

DETECTIVE PEROTTI
Did you have any communications with any third party about these individuals?

Shane stares back, body language stiffening. His seat just got a whole lot hotter. But the truth is:

SHANE
No.

DETECTIVE PEROTTI
Reason I ask is they appear to have been killed execution-style.

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
Categorizing the event as a homicide.

Shane's mouth has gone dry as Perotti keeps pressing the issue.

DETECTIVE PEROTTI
I'm a military man, too, Captain. Army Ranger. 101st Cavalry. Saw action in Desert Storm. And I had friends...guys who, you know, thrived in combat. Guys who don't mind the blood. The kill. You know the type.

SHANE
Last time I carried a gun was basic training. Twelve years ago, Detective.
(gaze swings between them)
I'm a doctor. The guy trying to save lives.

Perotti takes that in, skeptical eyes still on Shane.

DETECTIVE PEROTTI
Do you mind if we ask where you were over the past 48 hours?

Shane raises his pant leg showing the ANKLE BRACELET.

SHANE
I'm awaiting a military trial. If you have any questions you can call Major Ernesto Zumaya, NCIS. He's at Coronado.

They trade a look. Hensley makes another notation. Steven appears, holding a picture drawn in marker.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Hey, buddy. How's the coloring going?

STEVEN
I made a dinosaur. T-Rex. It's for you.

SHANE
(examines it)
Wow...I love him.

Shane hugs Steven tightly. Emotions get the best of him. His boy is the only thing he has left. The detectives smile, watching father and son. Hensley motions to Perotti.

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
Think we wasted enough of your time.

Shane recovers.

SHANE
I'm sorry...it's just...it's all still a shock. We've had to make a lot of adjustments with my wife gone...

DETECTIVE PEROTTI
We understand.

DETECTIVE HENSLEY
Thank you, Captain.

Shane walks them out to...

OUTSIDE - AT THE FRONT DOOR

Shane's relief is palpable as they leave. He shuts the door.

EXT. SHANE'S CONDO - TERRACE - NIGHT

Shane paces, cell phone to his ear.

NICK (V.O.)
(his cell message)
Leave a message.

Shane hangs up. Paces on the terrace. Back and forth.

INT. SHANE'S CONDO - NIGHT

Later. He tries to watch a ball game. Eyes heavy, drifting off...when his cell phone RINGS!

He snatches it.

SHANE
Hello -- ?

NICK (O.S.)
(over phone)
Glad you called...we got a problem.

Off Shane, stricken.

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - MORNING

Nick stands under a light fixture, grim. Shane stalks up to him through a crisp wind. Beyond them, city NOISES.

NICK
Army Rangers in Kandahar found human remains...ID'd Jeff Sanetti. Pinned him to the location through dental records.

SHANE
You told me nobody would find out -- !

NICK
-- I know what I said, I was wrong. They know now. They traced it back to me.

Nick reveals a one-page fax. On it are scrawled two words: "WE KNOW." Shane stares at it, numb.

SHANE
Somebody called my house...said I was 'in the hat.' I tried to check the number but it had an ID block on it.

Nick's eyes lower. This is bad news.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Look. We gotta contact this "Buddha" guy...tell them it was just a mistake.

NICK
(indicates fax)
<u>They contacted me</u>. I told you, I don't know who this person is. Nobody does.
(exhales)
You don't get it...we went against protocol. We're lucky to be alive right now. Both of us.

SHANE
(cuts in)
-- I told you to call it off --

NICK
It was too late...things were already in motion.

A moment. Both realizing their fortunes are tied together.

SHANE
So what now?

Nick pulls out a manila envelope from inside his coat.

NICK
I received this. A target.
(their eyes collide)
You have 30 days to fulfill the obligation.

Shane stares at the envelope like it's a ticking bomb.

SHANE
No, no, there's gotta be another way...
(Nick's eyes say there isn't)
You got me into this -- you handle it. I'll pay you -- !

NICK
Pay me? Fuck you -- that's not how it works. It was <u>your</u> request. It's <u>your</u> obligation. They know who you are.

SHANE
But, hold on --

NICK
-- listen to me, I'm not gonna abandon you. We're in this together, I'll be right with you to see it through --

SHANE
How the fuck do I know that? How do I know you aren't setting me up!?

Nick's reply is full of calm authority.

NICK
Think about it. I coulda' just walked away...let you take the fall alone. And you wouldn't even know why. But instead? <u>I am here</u>. Helping you find a solution.
(MORE)

NICK (CONT'D)
And why would I set you up? You think I'm afraid of pulling the trigger? Remember my background. The shit I've been in.
(throws it back at him)
By the way, how do I know you won't fuck me over? Now that I'm here risking my own ass?

Shane's mind reels. There has to be a way out of this.

SHANE
I am not capable of murder. No matter what.

NICK
If this isn't carried out? They'll kill us both. Do you understand that? There is nobody who can protect us from them.

SHANE
Fuck it, I'll go to the police --

NICK
-- and tell them what? That we set up a murder? That we're part of a "fraternity of moralistic killers?" Oh, no wait...you're just a hard luck case with a kid and it's your first offense, right?
(lets that sink in)
You'll get us both 10 to 15 for accessory to murder. There is no way out.

Nick holds up the envelope. Shane refuses to take it.

SHANE
I'm sorry. I gotta get back.

Shane walks back to his car, leaving Nick standing there.

NICK
You can't ignore this, Shane!

Suddenly both are caught in staccato STILL SHOTS...SNAP, SNAP!

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

REVEAL: The Woman who was at Admax -- SNAP -- SNAP -- more photos following Shane as he storms to his car. There is no question she is surveilling them both.

CUT TO:

SHANE

Asleep. A NOISE downstairs...he awakens! Hand swinging to a side table -- finding a gun. He sits up, rigid. He rolls out of bed, disoriented.

He walks down the hallway...GUN ready...approaching the kitchen where a LIGHT is emitting from something...he rounds the corner and finds Stevie with a glass of water staring back at him. He lowers the gun...

SHANE
Stevie...what are you doing up?

STEVEN
I was thirsty.

Shane puts an arm around his son and walks him back to the stairwell...

EXT. CONDO COMPLEX - MORNING

Shane walks Steven towards the car. Opens the door for Steven.

SHANE
Buckle up, buddy.

Steven sits, buckles up. Shane gets in, turns the ignition -- the car comes to life -- stereo and heat BLASTING! Windshield wipers at FULL TILT. Steven reacts, hands over his ears --

Shane kills the engine, all goes silent. Wipers frozen halfway. The only sound now -- Shane's heart POUNDING.

<u>Somebody was in his car</u>. But who?

He rifles through the glove box -- under the seats -- behind the visors like a maniac -- then, he spies the rearview -- a handwritten message in black Sharpie: "*BOOM!*"

Shane reacts, smears it off with his hands. Then his eyes catch an envelope taped to the ceiling of his car.

STEVEN
Dad, what is that?

Shane regains his composure, leans over.

SHANE
I left myself a message, buddy. And forgot to turn off the radio. My fault.
(OFF his son's worry)
It's okay.

Shane clutches the envelope, eyes furious.

INT. SHANE'S CONDO - CONTINUOUS

Shane hurries in with Steven following.

STEVIE
Am I going to camp?

SHANE
Yeah. Just hang on a second, okay?

Steven plunks down on the couch. Shane heads into --

THE BEDROOM

Closes the door. Opens the envelope revealing a CD-ROM. Shane sticks the CD-ROM into his laptop. A moment, then an icon appears on the desktop: "*PLAY.*" Shane clicks it.

MPEG VIDEO FOOTAGE APPEARS

Hand-held NIGHT-VISION footage. Inside a bedroom. The shot continues toward a bed, where two bodies lie, asleep.

Shane blanches -- <u>the bodies are his parents</u>!

The shot ZOOMS IN. A RED LASER DOT appears on Mr. Downing's forehead, then swings to Mrs. Downing's forehead.

Then, the shot CUTS TO SNOW...

Shane scrambles for the phone. Dials so fast, he fucks up the number -- hangs up -- dials again. The phone rings...no answer...Shane's heart sinks further and further. Finally:

MRS. DOWNING (O.S.)
Hello?

SHANE
Mom...what's...where's Dad?

MRS. DOWNING (O.S.)
He's playing golf with Bob Humphreys.
Is something wrong?

Shane fights off tears. With no choice he lies to his mother:

SHANE
No, I...just wanted to...ask about
dinner.

MRS. DOWNING (O.S.)
We're having chicken. And don't come later than 5:30, your know how he gets...

SHANE
Okay...I've got to run...we'll see you later.

Shane hangs up before his mother can respond. Hands coursing through his hair. What the hell is he going to do now?

MAJOR ZUMAYA (V.O.)
(over phone)
Shane, how are things?

EXT. NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS BASE - CORONADO - DAY

Shane passes through the Coronado base and reaches a far side GATE. He approaches in his car, flashes credentials to a SERVICE MAN at the entrance and passes through.

SHANE (V.O.)
(over phone)
Good. It's been 12 months since I've had any "live fire" training. So, I'll be at the range on San Clemente island. I'm going straight back to San Luis afterwards.

MAJOR ZUMAYA (V.O.)
(over phone)
I'll clear it.

SHANE (V.O.)
(over phone)
Thank you, sir.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

Shane rides on a zodiac. In a sweatshirt and track pants. Alone. Approaching San Clemente Island.

EXT. SAN CLEMENTE ISLAND - DAY

Shane pulls ashore. He cuts the engine and lets the zodiac glide right up onto the beach. He leaps onto shore avoiding the water.

WITH SHANE

Pulling the zodiac onto shore.

NICK (O.S.)
I cancelled live fire training today...so the island is empty.

Shane looks up to see: the seasoned pro. Ball cap. Fatigue bottoms. Navy SEAL t-shirt.

SHANE
I just want to make myself crystal clear: I'm not doing this alone.

NICK
I got just as much to lose as you do.
(resolved)
We're in it together.

WITH SHANE AND NICK

On a knoll overlooking a target range. Nick extends a BLACK CASE similar to a laptop case to Shane.

NICK (CONT'D)
This is your new surgical tool.

Shane opens it, REVEALING a SNIPER RIFLE in disassembled parts.

NICK (CONT'D)
The RRA Varmint A4 with silencer. Fires a .223 round. Highly effective at medium range. It's already sighted in.

Body and soul numb, Shane reaches out...and takes it.

CUT TO:

SHANE

Holding the sniper rifle. Aiming...adjusting...the lead target's blood red paint target glistens in the sun.

BAMM! A shot rings out spooking us...PANKK! Red paint flies.

BACK ON SHANE

Eyes searching for the target but instead seeing --

A FALLING BODY IN SLO-MO

Blood specklets spraying like sea foam instead of paint... it's not a target -- it's a real, live PERSON...a SOLDIER...

He squeezes another round!

BAMM--PANKK!

Bright crimson paint SPLATTERS like blood -- the force of the round SLAMS the target over! It lands on the ground -- but:

THE SOLDIER

Drops into the dust -- blood flecks spray her as his body hits the ground --

BACK ON SHANE

Lowering the rifle, perspiration soaking his shirt. He stands. Mind elsewhere...

ON NICK

Scanning to the lead target with binocs...200 yards downrange.

NICK (CONT'D)
Hit. But you're low on the aim and you won't be this close.
(eyes go to Shane)
You gotta cradle that rifle like a baby. Let the cross-hairs rest on the target.

SHANE'S POV - THROUGH HIS SCOPE

BAMM! A .223 round SLAMS into another target -- splattering red paint. The target pitches over again. THUD.

BAMM! Another target -- more blood-red paint flies -- THUD.

ON SHANE

The breach on his rifle open. Smoking. Nick regards him.

NICK (CONT'D)
See, nothing to it. Guess you remember enough from basic training after all.

Shane just stares out towards the felled targets...mind reeling.

JUMP CUT TO:

SHANE AND NICK

Nick slides the case back into the Suburban.

SHANE
So, who's the target?

Nick regards him.

NICK
Let's leave that I.N.A.
(OFF Shane)
"Information Not Available."

SHANE
Excuse me?

NICK
Look, I've seen veteran operatives lose their shit and go south while setting up. That's a problem we can't have.

SHANE
Wait a minute, no, I've been in combat --

NICK
You get a name. You see a face. You live with that face for awhile...you get sympathetic. Get your head all screwed up. Then you freeze...and we're fucked.

Shane isn't convinced.

SHANE
I'm sorry, but I want proof that we got the <u>right</u> person...from this Buddha. Or I'm not pulling the trigger.

NICK
We're not playing games here. This is real!

Shane is trying to hold onto any justification he can.

SHANE
So I'm supposed to just take your word?

NICK
No, <u>we</u> take their word. I didn't choose the target. They did.
(closes the Suburban's lift gate)
It's set for Las Vegas...I'll do the recon.

SHANE
Wait...I need more than that...

Angered, Nick walks for his driver's door.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Hey -- !

Nick keeps walking. Shane starts for him.

SHANE (CONT'D)
You gotta give me something!

Nick wheels.

NICK
Do you know how to surveil a target? How to set up a kill zone? Calculate the point of execution? Evac routes? Contingency plans?

Shane knows he can't go anywhere to do any of this.

NICK (CONT'D)
It's a sixty-nine-dollar plane ticket. If you want to try it be my guest.

SHANE
No.

NICK
This gets fucked up? You're a dead man. And so am I.
(calms, hand on his shoulder)
We're in this together.

Shane has no options. And he knows it. He finally nods.

INT. SHANE'S CAR - MOVING

Shane drives with Steven in the back. His eyes go to the rearview mirror...uneasy. Is somebody following them?

He makes another turn...finds his street and sees a PG&E TRUCK. Paranoid, he pulls into his driveway, gets out. He herds Steven towards the front door.

From his flank, a PG&E FOREMAN approaches.

PG&E FOREMAN
Sir?

Shane wheels, nerves on edge.

SHANE
Yeah?

PG&E FOREMAN
Power's out until seven tonight. Bad transformer.

Shane nods and backs away towards his house, on-guard.

INT. SHANE'S CONDO - SAN LUIS OBISPO - DAY

Shane is in the same clothes we saw him wearing at the gun range. His sweatshirt and jeans are caked with desert sand.

His eyes find the HMD UNIT. The light is red.

STEVEN (O.S.)
Can I have my friend James come for a play date?

He turns, sees his son.

SHANE
Sure.

INT. SHANE'S CONDO - MOMENTS LATER

Shane holds a phone.

MAJOR ZUMAYA (V.O.)
(over phone)
This is Major Ernesto Zumaya. Please leave a message...if you need immediate assistance press the pound and I will be paged...

Beep.

SHANE
Major, it's Shane Downing. The power is out here so the HMD unit won't be working until later tonight...seven I think. Thanks.

He hangs up. How the hell is he going to get around this?

INT. SHANE'S CONDO - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Shane gives Steven a bath. Scrubbing his hair.

SHANE (V.O.)
...and I would eat them here or there and I would eat them anywhere...

INT. SHANE'S CONDO - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Shane reads to Steven in his bed.

SHANE
I do so like green eggs and ham...thank you, thank you, Sam-I-Am.

Steven looks at the last page of the book.

STEVEN
Do you think the man on the boat likes green eggs and ham?

SHANE
After all that convincing? I think he loves green eggs and ham.

Shane smiles, closes it up. Kisses him.

STEVEN
(feels his stubble)
Your face is too scratchy.

SHANE
Sweet dreams, buddy.

Shane stops at the door, steals a look at all he has left in this world. The sole reason he has to move forward.

CUT TO:

INT. SHANE'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Shane cleans leftover plates in the kitchen. We can hear VOICES from Steven's room. A play date. Steven chases a boy, JAMES, out of his room -- they're playing army.

STEVEN
I got you!

JAMES
No way!

The doorbell CHIMES. Shane opens it. It's JAMES' MOM.

JAMES' MOM
Hi, Shane. How was it?

The boys tear past. Shane tries to act natural.

SHANE
Oh, hi. They had a great time.
(to the boys)
Guys...James's mom is here...!

Shane's CELL phone RINGS startling him. He debates. Answer? Or not? It keeps ringing incessantly.

SHANE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry...just a second.
(into phone, corralling boys)
Yeah? Hello?

NICK (O.S.)
First flight from Santa Barbara to Vegas tomorrow. Flight number 4-2-5. Be on it.

CLICK. Shane's smile to the boys masks a thousand deaths he's dying inside.

STEVEN
Who was that, Dad?

SHANE
...a friend.

FIONA
(to James)
What do you say?

JAMES
Thank you, Mr. Downing.

SHANE
(covering)
Sure. Any time.

They shuffle out the door amidst "thank yous" and "see you soon", etc. But Shane is reeling. We hear a doorbell RING...

EXT. DOWNING FAMILY HOME - SAN LUIS OBISPO - DAY

The door opens, revealing Shane and Steven standing there. A small suitcase in Steven's hand.

MRS. DOWNING
(hugs them)
There are my boys.

Mr. Downing smiles at Steven, scoops him up.

MR. DOWNING
Hey, kiddo.

STEVEN
Hi, Grandpa.

MR. DOWNING
I know somebody who's going on a trip to the lake house!

STEVEN
Me!

Shane regards his father who reads a hint of unease.

SHANE
Thanks for taking him with you.

MR. DOWNING
Are you kidding? I gotta have somebody to pitch my knuckle curve to.
(then)
It's all been cleared with Ernie, right?

SHANE
Yeah. Of course.

Shane's voice is hollow. But Mr. Downing lets it go. Steven goes into a wind-up.

MR. DOWNING
You have a number where you'll be staying?

SHANE
I'm not sure yet...just call the cell.

MRS. DOWNING
That's nice they asked you to speak at a seminar, Shane.

Shane fusses with Steven's backpack, dying a slow death inside with his deceit. Picks up Steven.

SHANE
It'll only be a day or two, buddy. You be a good boy...listen to your Grandma and Grandpa. They're in charge.

STEVEN
I will, Dad.

Shane holds his boy tight, realizing it could be the last time he sees him if things go wrong. It almost brings tears to his eyes.

SHANE
I love you.

Steven hugs him back extra hard. He's just a boy, but like most kids he intuitively senses something different about his father.

INT. SHANE'S CONDO - DAY

With the shades drawn, we find Shane staring at the black box HMD DEVICE attached to his phone. A green light glows on its side indicating it's receiving the ankle bracelet's signal.

WITH SHANE - MOMENTS LATER

Arriving at the fuse box in his garage.

MAJOR ZUMAYA (V.O.)
(over phone)
I got your message, Shane. If the power's not back on by one p.m., you need to have PG&E contact me... thanks...

Beep. The answering machine logs off.

Shane holds a flashlight on the fuses. And gingerly reaches in with a rag and flips a cluster of switches to OFF.

The LIGHTS go dead plunging the garage into an eerie darkness.

CLOSE ON: The HMD device. Its green light turns to red. Off. The HMD device is now useless. Everything goes dark.

NICK (V.O.)
What do you think happens when somebody gets shot in a crowded place...?

The whine of a jet engines builds.

SHOCK CUT TO:

A SOUTHWEST JET

Screams past and touches down. Rubber wheels SMOKING.

NICK (V.O.)
I'll tell you what happens. People freak the fuck out.

INT. AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

We pick up Shane. Bobbing like a piece of driftwood amongst the crowd. Passing TA Workers. Passengers. The police. Anonymous.

NICK (V.O.)
We will use that to our advantage.

Shane continues -- a subtle hint of tension now showing.

TIGHT ON: GAS CAP

Shane opens it. Retrieves a plastic BAGGY tied to a string on the cap. Inside are a set of KEYS and a CLAIM CHECK.

INT. GREEN CHRYSLER - MOVING

Shane drives past a progression of BLINKING casino LIGHTS and NEON SIGNS against blue sky reflected in the windshield.

He stops at a light. Reaches down and checks his ankle bracelet. It's still green.

INT. MOTEL - DAY

Shane stands in a ratty lobby. Hands the claim ticket to an INDIAN WOMAN in a Sari who holds out a wheeled SUITCASE. He takes it with a smile. But she doesn't smile back. Women's intuition.

NICK (O.S.)
(over phone)
You have the kit?

INT. GREEN CHRYSLER - DAY

Shane strides down the strip, checks his watch. 8:30 AM sharp.

SHANE
Got it.

SHOCK CUT TO:

NICK - IN LIMBO

Tense eyes obscured by smoky sunglasses.

NICK
The address is 220 Sands. Use the key on the ring. I turned the lobby's security cameras off.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

The green Chrysler arrives. Circles to the back row and parks.

MOVING - WITH SHANE

Senses heightened. Crossing the structure. Rolling the wheeled suitcase behind. He passes a SET OF ELEVATORS, the doors open --

REVEALING: A WOMAN. Mid 30s. Fit. In running shoes, jeans, a crisp blue shirt. No make up. But wait: it's the woman we've seen taking pictures of Nick.

EXT. 220 SANDS BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

The LIGHTS from the Vegas strip PULSATE in the distance. Shane arrives, enters THE LOBBY. His eyes find a lobby SECURITY CAMERA. He takes note: the red light is, as Nick said, off.

INT. SIXTH FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Shane hurries off the elevator. However cool he was before? Nerves are kicking in now. He heads down the empty hallway.

Stops at an office door. Uses keys from the Chrysler's gas tank, unlocks the door and enters...

INSIDE SUITE 605

Shane locks the door, crosses to a window. Exhales...staring at raw drywall, the suitcase. He unlocks its padlock. Unzips it.

REVEALING: New clothes. Surgical gloves. Black laptop case. He opens the case -- a snap-together Special Forces issue A4 SNIPER RIFLE and SCOPE are Velcro'd down.

Shane changes into the clothes -- dons the surgical gloves -- snaps the stock into place -- scope on -- magazine into the breech -- fastens a V-stand onto the stock -- chambers a round.

Fast -- less than 30 seconds.

SHANE
(into Bluetooth)
Give me visual.

Shane stays low. Sets the rifle on the window sill. Scans...

SHANE'S POV - THROUGH THE SCOPE

An airy, outdoor ROCK & ROLL CAFE directly across the street. Bustling with Vegas TOURISTS. Tits. Ass. Baby strollers. Drunken hipsters. All jammed together. The CROSS-HAIRS fall from one person to the next. Random. Whose life ends today?

NICK (O.S.)
(over phone)
There...being seated. Brown hair. At the railing. Wearing a blue shirt.

Shane SCANS...SCANS...FOCUSES on a young HOSTESS who smiles. She hands a menu to the Woman who sits.

The Woman in the French blue shirt is the target.

She recoils -- jerks the GUN away from the window, wide-eyed.

SHANE
What the fuck? Are you crazy?? No -- you -- fuck -- it's off -- you didn't tell me I was going to shoot a woman!

NICK (O.S.)
(overlapping, over phone)
-- calm down and listen to me -- this has been approved. It's not your decision.

NICK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(over phone)
Calm. Down. Look down the street. Look.

Shane peers through the scope -- PULSATING LIGHTS -- TRAFFIC -- SUN GLINTING -- then he sees it: a BLACK SUBURBAN. Inside, a shadow. Nick. Holding a small, metallic device.

NICK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(over phone)
You see this? It's a remote detonator. Now look up. In the room you're in. Look up!

Shane looks up: ELECTRICAL WIRES crisscross the ceiling. Tied to florescent light fixtures are putty-colored bricks of PLASTIC EXPLOSIVES and a SMALL REMOTE with an antenna.

NICK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(over phone)
Semtex.

Desperate, Shane's eyes flit from the window to the door.

NICK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(over phone)
I lose sight of you? I hit the remote.

SHANE
I can't do this!

NICK
You're not getting me killed with you!

BELOW - IN THE CAFE

The Woman waits alone. Nervous. On guard. Clutching her bag.

BACK ON - SHANE

Dizzied, the outdoor cafe below swirls. Momentary vertigo. Then...from overhead, a loud CHIRP.

NICK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(over phone)
The Semtex is armed. You got 10 seconds. I'm sorry. I had to be sure.

The line goes dead. Shane glances out the window...shit...! Four seconds just ticked off...he's down to 6 seconds! He swallows -- sets the rifle...scans...5...4...3...now or never...

SHANE'S POV - THROUGH THE SCOPE

Cross-hairs on her -- trigger finger tightening -- breathing ragged -- cross-hairs bouncing -- BAMM-FF -- a silenced shot!

And now everything collapses into SLO-MO -- the woman pitches back -- PATRONS too stunned to move now recoiling -- blood -- instant realization -- oh-my-god, somebody's shooting! It's pandemonium.

BACK ON SHANE

Jerks back inside the sill -- shock -- disbelief -- he did it -- disassembling the rifle -- hands shaking -- snapping rifle pieces back into the laptop case.

Shane's eyes lurch up to -- the Semtex -- it's still armed!

He leaps up with the laptop case, jams it inside the rolling suitcase and slams out the door and into --

THE HALL

Shane reaches a TRASH CHUTE -- dumps the SUITCASE -- every last thing inside it clatters down into a black abyss.

He hurries for the elevator -- presses the button -- waits -- heart pounding -- eyes fall to his hands -- shit! The surgical gloves. He rips them off just as the elevator arrives.

Revealing a MAN and WOMAN -- business attire -- chatting politely. Shane tries to cover -- eyes glued to the floor -- just be cool.

IN THE ELEVATOR

Rattling down, down, down -- the three of them riding in nervy silence. Shane feels their eyes bounce off him.

Reaching the ground floor, Shane calmly steps out -- glances back and sees the man and woman heading out the front doors.

EXT. THE BUILDING - IN THE ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Shane exits -- scans the alley -- no sign of Nick. For a beat he is utterly lost. A double cross? Broken play?

He glances at the walkway leading to the structure -- he's got a half second to get the hell out -- his gaze rises to the SURVEILLANCE CAMERA. It's following him -- red light on!

But instead of running, he looks back across the street at:

ROCKETS OUTDOOR CAFE

Mass confusion -- people running -- screaming -- in -- out -- is somebody still shooting??

BACK ON SHANE

Instinct says to run -- to get out. But instead he turns, walks directly into the mayhem.

FROM DOWN THE STREET

Along the curb. Nick sees Shane entering the cafe.

NICK
You stupid motherfucker.

Nick jams the Suburban into gear -- wheels off into traffic -- leaving the scene and Shane behind.

ON THE CAFE'S PATIO

Frenetic, tense energy. TWO WAITERS hold the woman -- pressing white, cloth napkins against a ragged, bloody shoulder wound.

WAITER
Please, you have to hold still --

Shane appears -- swallows his fear -- wades in. Assumes control.

SHANE
Let me through, I'm a doctor.

WAITER
Thank God...! Oh, thank God!

They all peel away and let Shane get next to the woman, cradling her head and upper body.

SHANE
It's gonna be okay...what's your name?

Their eyes collide -- vague recognition -- then fear -- but? -- no time for an answer -- the chaos is swirling too fast.

WOMAN
-- Katherine --

SHANE
Katherine, I'm Shane. I'm a doctor. We're going to get you out of here.

Shane gently starts to sit her up.

WAITER
We called an ambulance -- you really think we should move her?

SHANE
(checks exit wound)
The bullet pierced an artery. She won't make it that long. Get me ice -- now.

WAITER
(Spanish, to busboys)
Get ice!

Improvising, Shane ties cloth napkins together fashioning a tourniquet. The ICE arrives. He loads several napkins and packs it around the bullet wound. Then motions to the first waiter.

SHANE
(grabs her bag)
My car's in the structure directly across. Help me --

WAITER
But --

SHANE
(sharp)
-- you want her to bleed to death?

WAITER
Okay, okay -- Marco -- let's go!

Each man takes an arm and they hustle across the street.

KATHERINE
Where are you taking me?

WAITER
It's gonna be okay -- he's a doctor.

From the corner of his eye, Shane sees:

TWO UNIFORMED POLICE OFFICERS

-- jogging for the cafe -- but behind them. Shane holds his breath -- they miss them, heading into the cafe.

THE PARKING STRUCTURE

Shane and the waiters carry Katherine -- gently rest her against the Green Chrysler.

WAITER
I'll go with you.

Shane has to think fast --

SHANE
Okay, wait, hold her. Let me get in, we'll lower her together.

The waiters wait at the passenger door holding Katherine. Shane runs around -- climbs in -- opens the passenger door and helps guide her in -- nods to the waiters and starts the car.

SHANE (CONT'D)
I got her. Shut it.

The first waiter shuts the passenger door, reaches for the back door -- but Shane slams the LOCKS DOWN!

WAITER
Hey, what are you doing??

Shane SLAMS into reverse -- the waiters scramble -- arms waving, giving chase as --

ON SHANE

Determined -- arm over the seat -- wheeling out.

KATHERINE
Where are you taking me?

SHANE
A safe place.

She reaches for her door, but the movement sends a shock of pain coursing through her. She nearly passes out. Shane eases her back.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Don't move, you'll cause more bleeding --

KATHERINE
(sharp)
-- who are you??

SHANE
I told you, I'm a doctor.

KATHERINE
-- I want -- I need to get out -- !

The car swerves as he throws it into drive. She lilts, eyes heavy -- gulping air -- she's going into shock.

SHANE
-- wait, stay with me...<u>stay with me</u> --

Katherine's head lilts again -- eyes flutter -- she passes out.

Shane floors it through an intersection. An oncoming CAR skids -- HONKING -- just missing them.

INT. HOTEL PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Shane pulls in -- a COUPLE walks towards them. Shane's got to think fast -- tilts her seat down -- reclining her so she's out of sight -- the couple passes by.

Shane springs into action -- removes her blood-soaked shirt -- freezes -- blood draining from his face. She's wearing:

<u>A WIRE</u>

Taped to her skin, just below her bra. It's thin black wire leading down into her jeans.

And there's something else -- strapped down at the waistline of her jeans in a belly holster:

A BERETTA .380

Compact. Thin. Fully customized. Competition grip. Hair trigger. Muzzle compensator. Glow sights. Double mag. A weapon set up by somebody who <u>knows</u> <u>their</u> <u>shit</u>.

What the hell is this? Is she a cop? A fed? But there is no time to theorize -- he's got to move his ass -- takes the .380 -- YANKS the black wire -- pulling the other end out of her jeans.

He strips off his shirt, threads her arms into it. Steps out, shuts the door.

INT. MOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Trying to remain calm, Shane stands at a Plexiglas counter with a cash tray. Finishes signing in as Charles White. Holds up some money for the DESK MANAGER behind the glass.

SHANE
Cash...I only need a couple hours.

The implied reason is a hooker in the car. Used to it, the desk manager takes the cash, drops a key like it's no big deal.

BACK AT THE CHRYSLER

Shane reappears. Sees Katherine still out cold. He opens her door -- pulls her to her feet and walks her towards a stairwell -- shuffling -- hurrying.

IN THE STAIRWELL

Crashing down a set of stairs -- reaching another -- nobody's there. He carries her across a courtyard -- his room only steps away -- he's almost there -- when from behind him:

VOICE
Long night?

Shane wheels -- pastes on a nervous smile. An OLD MAN regards them mischievously.

SHANE
Longest of my life.

OLD MAN
You don't have to explain..."what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas," right?

Shane forces a smile at the man's joke, hurries off.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door opens -- Shane plows in -- deposits Katherine on the bed. Heads to the window -- scanning outside -- bolts the door shut.

He takes off his watch -- rolls up his sleeves -- goes to work.

Rifles through his toiletry bag, pulls -- Listerine, toothbrush, tweezers, his razor -- starts to build a makeshift O.R.

A credenza becomes his operating table -- he lies Katherine on it -- tucks sheets under, across and over -- tears more into long strips.

Then, he scrubs his hands with soap -- douses his makeshift surgical tools in Listerine -- starts to operate on her.

Uses the razor's blade to slice open her bullet hole -- inserts the toothbrush handle to spread the wound -- uses the tweezers to locate and extract various bullet fragments --

Finishes by cleaning the wound with Listerine, pours it liberally -- efficiently packs and closes her wound with the sheet strips.

ON SHANE

A silent moment. Studying the subtle lines on her face. Mother? Daughter? Who is she? Could she be a killer?

He remembers the MIC. And lifts her shirt to see it disappear into her pants. He undresses her, REVEALING: the mic's high-tech RECORDING DEVICE taped to her inner thigh. He pulls her jeans back up, then rifles through her bag.

Finds her wallet with a California driver's license: KATHERINE ST. GEORGE. An address in Moreno Valley, California.

His eyes fall onto the woman again...jarring a memory of:

SHOCK CUT TO:

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

Fragments -- the Coroner in white -- Janie on the slab -- dead. The horror. But we hear KNOCKING --

MAID (O.S.)
Maid service.

BACK TO - SHANE

He snaps out of it. Arrives at the door.

SHANE
No...thanks...come back later.

The MAID shuffles away. He turns on the TV -- local Vegas NEWS ANCHORS drone on with a "Breaking News" runner underneath:

ON THE TELEVISION

A NEWSCASTER standing at the CAFE where the shooting took place.

NEWSCASTER (ON TV)
SWAT Teams and local police were dispatched to the strip today as Las Vegas Police look for a Caucasian man in his thirties impersonating a doctor.

TWO SKETCHES are displayed on the screen. One's a dead ringer of Shane. The other, harder to decipher, is Katherine.

CUT TO:

INT. NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS BASE - ZUMAYA'S OFFICE

Close on: Major Zumaya. Something awful brewing in his stomach as his eyes catch the sketch of Shane on CNN.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
(into phone)
I gotta call you back...

He hangs up. And dials information.

MAJOR ZUMAYA (CONT'D)
I need San Luis Obispo, PG&E.

He listens, writes the number. Steps to the TV and turns up the volume.

NEWSCASTER (ON TV)
These are composite sketches of the suspect and a woman who was abducted. The suspect was driving a green Chrysler or GM, late model sedan. Plates starting with TUL...anyone with information should contact Las Vegas PD at the number on your screen.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Shane attends to a patch of blood appearing through Katherine's makeshift bandages. He's running out of time. He picks up his cell phone, dials.

CUT TO:

INT. DOWNING FAMILY HOME - SAN LUIS OBISPO - DAY

Mr. Downing answers, sees the CALLER ID. Answers:

MR. DOWNING
Hi Shane...?
(beat, nothing)
Hello? You there, son...?

Nobody.

BACK TO:

CLOSE ON: SHANE

A motel CORKSCREW WINE OPENER -- the tip pressed firmly against his jugular. Katherine holds it in her good hand. <u>She is in control</u>.

Shane stays frozen -- she motions to hang up. He does.

CUT TO:

MR. DOWNING

Holding the dead CELL. Steven leans in, excited.

STEVEN
Was that Daddy?

MR. DOWNING
It was his number. Must be in a bad area.

BACK TO:

KATHERINE

Keeping the corkscrew against his neck. Shane doesn't dare move.

KATHERINE
(glances at his waistline)
My Beretta...slowly place your thumb and forefinger on the grip. Toss it on the bed. Flinch and I'll puncture your jugular...

SHANE
I just saved your life... I'm on your side...!

KATHERINE
-- shut up! The gun -- <u>now</u>.

Shane does as he's told -- retrieves the pistol the way she wanted -- tosses it on the bed.

Katherine snatches up her Beretta. Levels it.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Turn around.

Shane turns face to face with Katherine. Sees that predatory glint in her eyes. Doesn't look like a soccer mom now.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
I'm gonna ask you some questions. You don't answer? I'll stop asking. And pull the trigger. Understand?
(Shane keeps his hands up)
Who are you?

She steps closer. Holding the Beretta inches from his face with her good arm.

SHANE
...I told you, I'm a doctor...

KATHERINE
-- don't fuck with me!

She presses the cold gun barrel into his forehead.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
I've seen you before.

She shrugs her shoulder to slide off the sling, but flinches in excruciating pain. Shane motions to stop, hands up.

SHANE
You're going to open the wound...and you can't afford to lose more blood --

KATHERINE
(eyes blazing)
-- who hired you? Lie again, you die.

Shane considers her -- armed -- cornered -- the moment of truth.

SHANE
Look...I am a doctor...a Naval medic...I got conned into this --

KATHERINE
-- by who?

SHANE
An officer on base. He said he could help.

KATHERINE
Help you how? How??

Shane hesitates.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
I will blow your fucking head through those windows right now if you don't answer the next question!

On a razor's edge. She is in complete control.

SHANE
A month ago. My wife...Janie...was murdered...they couldn't find her killers.

KATHERINE
And -- ?

SHANE
-- and a Navy SEAL I know came to me...said he could get me justice.

KATHERINE
What was his name? His name, let's go!

SHANE
Nick. Nick Gratton.

The name registers. She motions: keep going.

SHANE (CONT'D)
He said he could take care of my problem. Something he called... "killing the Buddha."

A grim realization dawns on Katherine. This guy was set up.

SHANE (CONT'D)
They forced me into this. Threatened to kill my family. But I knew I couldn't... actually kill you. So, I shot you where I knew I could treat you.

Ironic. She knows she's lucky that Nick hired a doctor as his patsy. It's the only reason she's alive.

KATHERINE
Shit.

Defeated, she lets the Beretta fall to her side, glances back at the TV. The Vegas News Reporter still stands on the strip surrounded by a mob of gawkers. She motions to his bag.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Get me another clean shirt. We gotta get the hell out of here.

EXT. VEGAS STREET - DAY

Shane and Katherine hustle. Katherine wears his oxford. Sleeves rolled up. Keeps the Beretta concealed but at the ready. They are the only people on the street.

SHANE
Look, you gotta help me --

KATHERINE
Help you? Me help you?

SHANE
I need information --

KATHERINE
You want information? What's your name again?

SHANE
Shane. Captain Shane Downing.

KATHERINE
Okay, Captain Shane Downing. I got news for you. Whatever shit this Nick fed you? This "Buddha" thing...it doesn't exist.

Shane is thrown.

SHANE
Wait a minute...he said there was a private contractor named Jeff Sanetti ...killed in Iraq. But nobody knew --

KATHERINE
(eyes meeting his)
-- your friend Nick is Jeff Sanetti. That's his alias.

SHANE
You're saying none of this is real?

KATHERINE
Only thing real? Is you were set up to kill a federal agent. How's that grab you?

Katherine pushes past a stunned Shane, crosses the street.

SHANE
That's why you were wearing a wire.

KATHERINE
Nick uses the Sanetti name as an alias in the private sector. We think he may be doing private sector contract hits.

SHANE
So he sets me up to kill you...why?

KATHERINE
I was one step away from busting his ass.
(eyes scanning traffic)
Cops pick you up...you start going on about some mumbo-jumbo and a Buddha. And he's gone.

Shane's mind is in overdrive. Assembling the pieces.

SHANE
What about your badge?

KATHERINE
In my car. You walk into a situation like that with a shield? Good way to get yourself killed.

SHANE
Then where's your backup?

KATHERINE
I'm a level five SAC...I decide to roll without back up? It's usually 'cause I have a pretty fucking good idea of what I'm doing.
(eyes jump to his)
That good enough for you? What about you. How'd you get here?

SHANE
(utterly betrayed)
He befriended me when I was down. Sold me a bill of goods.
(eyes on her)
My wife was murdered last month. The cops had nothing. And he knew it. So he came, offered me a solution.

KATHERINE
And you took him up on it?

SHANE
(beat)
I tried to call it off. But it was too late.

They reach the curb. A crossroad. Both have spilled their guts.

SHANE (CONT'D)
What happens now?

KATHERINE
Whether you like it or not...you're part of a federal investigation now. It's the only shot you have at clearing your name.

SHANE
What do I have to do?

KATHERINE
(motions to her wound)
Keep me alive. And tell me everything you have on this guy.

She starts for a TAXI amidst traffic at a red light. Knocks on the window. The Cabbie shakes his head, like “are you crazy?”

CABBIE
I gotta go to the hotel queue up there.

KATHERINE
(discreetly shows her gun)
No, you don’t.

The Cabbie’s eyes snap to the mirror. A COP is stuck in traffic half-a-dozen cars back. Shane appears at the other window.

KATHERINE (CONT’D)
Don’t even think about it.
(to Shane)
Hurry. Get in.

INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS

Things are in flux. The Cabbie weaves through traffic, wigging out. Katherine is next to him, gun low. Shane in back, unsure of what’s next, his eyes nervously bounce off his ANKLE BRACELET.

It’s only a matter of time before somebody will activate it.

CABBIE
Barstow? Are you kidding me? They’ll send out an APB for the cab --

She peels off $500 in cash. Drops it on the seat. Then reaches under the dash, YANKS some wires out by the meter.

KATHERINE
That’s 500 bucks so be smart --
(rips more wires out)
-- and don’t hit your panic button.

The Cabbie has no comeback.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Turn the AM on. We need a clean route out.

Katherine suddenly spots something. The Cabbie’s other arm inching under the dash by the door. She slams her foot onto his brakes -- sending the Cabbie’s forehead off the windshield.

CABBIE
I’m sorry! I’m sorry!

She steers the car off to a side street. Stops.

KATHERINE
Get out!

He does. She walks him to the trunk. Pops it.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Get in.

CABBIE
No, I can't. You don't understand --

KATHERINE
Get in!

He climbs in. She slams the trunk. Motions to Shane.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Drive.

Shane shakes his head. Gets into the driver's seat.

SHANE
Which way?

KATHERINE
South on I-15. Go.

Shane eases into traffic, lost in seconds.

EXT. BARSTOW OUTSKIRTS - LATER

The armpit of the world. The smell of cow shit hangs heavy in dense, smog-infested air.

KATHERINE (O.S.)
Where did you meet this guy, "Nick"?

INT. CAB - CONTINUOUS

Shane drives.

SHANE
BUDS training in Coronado. I'd been stationed there for the past two months.
(eyes her)
How'd your investigation start?

KATHERINE
I'm not at liberty to talk about it.

SHANE
(annoyed)
Wait a minute -- I think I'm entitled to a few basics.

KATHERINE
You want basics? You don't know fuck all about this guy. You see him pontificating to a bunch of hopped-up kids about honor... execution...team work...right? He's made a living conducting some of the most brutal black op assignments CENTCOM has ever run.

SHANE
So what's the problem? DOD's got thousands of guys like him on the payroll.

Katherine looks Shane over. He won't back down.

SHANE (CONT'D)
If I'm part of this investigation? I need to know what you have on him.

She considers. Finally:

KATHERINE
This is off their books. Nick's working on his own...

FLASH CUT TO:

NICK

Walking in the power suit -- SNAP-SNAP-SNAP -- we see Katherine obscured by hedges taking his picture as he strides past the perimeter fences of the ADMAX "Supermax" Facility.

KATHERINE (O.S.)
He made three recent visits to ADMAX prison in Colorado. They call it the Alcatraz of the Rockies.

BACK TO:

THE TAXI

Shane listening, eyes completely focused on her.

KATHERINE
It houses the top five Aryan Brotherhood shot callers. These guys run an empire.
(MORE)

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Aryans, skinheads, public enemy number one. It's all one big organized crime family. They're awaiting trial...if the US Attorney gets their way? All five will die by lethal injection within sixty days.

BACK TO:

THE TAXI

Shane is making a connection here. His wife's killers were young, white males. Buzz cuts.

KATHERINE
We think Nick may be adding "for-hire" contract hits to his resume...making a deal with these guys.
(beat, studying him)
What is it?

SHANE
The two suspects who killed my wife were young punks. Buzz cuts. Police thought they could've been skinheads.

KATHERINE
You think there's a connection?

Shane's stomach turns.

SHANE
...I don't have any real proof.

Shane's eyes swing back to the road. Mind in overdrive.

NICK (O.S.)
Where are you?

CUT TO:

TORRES

In shadow. Limbo.

TORRES
The phone tap.

CUT TO:

NICK

NICK
Stay there. I'm in.

Nick hangs up his cell. As he moves across the small room, WE REVEAL stark white drywall with crisscrossing lead tape snaking across all four walls. Against one wall is --

A LONG BLACK DESK

A KEYBOARD and a SMALL BIOMETRIC SCANNER (for fingerprint recognition) sit in front of a 27" MONITOR. A CPU just below with FIVE BLACK SERVERS in a line. A gargantuan tangle of phone lines, sophisticated cable and power cords flow into PVC pipe.

What the hell is all this?

Nick unplugs each SERVER. The CPU. Snips the cords. Loads it all up including the keyboard, biometric scanner and monitor into a large secure SAFE BOX on wheels. He's taking it <u>all</u>.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Major Zumaya speeds up the 405.

HMD TECHNICIAN (O.S.)
(over phone)
This is Mike from DATCO.

INT. ZUMAYA'S SEDAN - DAY

Holding his cell.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
This is Major Ernesto Zumaya. NCIS. I need you to locate a signal from a bracelet that hasn't been registering since this morning.

MIKE (O.S.)
(over phone)
Subject's name?

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Downing. Shane.

MIKE (O.S.)
(over phone)
Sure. Can you give me the security pass code?

MAJOR ZUMAYA
K-6-4-5-6.

CUT TO:

EXT. PUBLIC STORAGE FACILITY - BARSTOW OUTSKIRTS - DAY

Smog hangs heavy in the air. The taxi cab trundles into a series of grimy potholes doubling as a parking lot. Shane and Katherine get out, scan the lot. Only one other car. A beat-up Dodge.

SHANE
Why are we at this place?

Katherine is evasive, surveying the lot.

KATHERINE
My surveillance gear is here. I need to check it. I'll be back --

SHANE
-- I'm not staying out here.

KATHERINE
Yes you are.
(motions to trunk)
Let the cabbie out for some air.

Katherine starts toward the storage facility.

SHANE
Hey, I don't have time to play games -- !

KATHERINE
(wheels, gun in his face again)
You want some advice?? Wanna stay alive?
(once again, she's in control)
You do what I say. You don't? You can hit the road. Go ahead. Take a walk. First thing you'll do is contact your family. And that's the first place they'll be waiting for you.
(lowers gun)
I know you're smarter than that.

JUMP CUT TO:

SHANE POPPING THE TRUNK

The Cabbie climbs out, shitting. Hands over his head.

CABBIE
I got a wife and kids, man.

SHANE
Put your hands down. Nobody's going to hurt you.

The Cabbie nods, eases toward the driver's door.

CABBIE
I need my cell...my family must be worried.

Shane watches the Cabbie open the door and reach --

UNDER THE SEAT

A Glock 9mm strapped up. As he grabs it --

THE CABBIE

Wheels out of the cab -- raising the gun -- but Shane sees it. With no choice, he SLAMS the Cabbie against the vehicle -- wrenches his arm -- forces him to drop the Glock.

Shane snatches it -- controls the Cabbie with his arm bent behind his back -- forces the man toward the cab's open trunk and grabs a pair of jumper cables -- wraps them around the Cabbie's hands.

CABBIE (CONT'D)
Oww, shit! I didn't mean it!

Shane flips him back into the trunk. He's going nowhere.

CABBIE (CONT'D)
(shrill, fighting to get free)
Fuck you, man! You can't do this! I'll scream my balls off -- !

WHANKK! Shane CLOCKS him with the Glock. The Cabbie slumps, out cold. Shane shuts the trunk.

INT. DOWNING FAMILY HOME - SAN LUIS OBISPO - DAY

Mr. Downing appears with a last bag. He glances out the window, sees Mrs. Downing and Steven playing in the back yard.

NEWS REPORTER #2 (V.O.)
(ON TV)
Eyewitnesses have linked a Navy captain to the scene...Captain Shane Downing.

Mr. Downing arrives at the kitchen TV, stares in disbelief as NEWS REPORTER #2 stands by the rock and roll cafe.

The TV CUTS TO: SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE

Shane exits the building -- the security camera sees him.

NEWS REPORTER #2
It's believed he kidnapped an unidentified woman after he shot her. Authorities won't say if they have any leads but he should be considered armed and extremely dangerous.

The phone RINGS. Mr. Downing grabs it. He's close to tears.

MR. DOWNING
Hello -- Shane is that you??

SHANE (O.S.)
Dad, why haven't you left yet??

INTERCUT SHANE AND MR. DOWNING

Shane scans the storage building and the road, Glock in hand.

MR. DOWNING
Shane, what is going on?! You're all over the news!

His father is shaking. His eyes jump to the window, Mrs. Downing and Steven are headed to the house.

SHANE
-- you need to leave immediately -- get to the lake house. Don't even turn the lights off. Get out.

MR. DOWNING
They're charging you with attempted murder and kidnapping, son. You need to tell me what the hell is going on!

HOLD ON MR. DOWNING

There's something neither are aware of -- WE MOVE to the window, then ZOOM UP toward the exterior phone line REVEALING:

A SMALL WIRELESS TRANSMITTER

Hidden on the roof. Spliced into the Downing's phone line.

SHANE (O.S.)
Somebody set me up, Dad. I didn't kill anybody...I swear to you. Now go -- I'll explain it all later...

BACK ON MR. DOWNING

He sets the phone down. A man on a mission now.

MR. DOWNING
Honey! Stevie! We need to get a move on --

CUT TO:

TORRES AND NORTON

Sitting in the back of a van. Listening in with a sophisticated RECORDING EQUIPMENT. Torres writes the incoming phone number down, climbs into the front of the van. Dials on his cell:

TORRES
(a beat, then)
Downing just turned his cell phone on. I need you to track its location.

SLAM CUT TO:

TALLINGER

In front of his laptop. He's hacked into a NGIS website. A sprawling MAP of the United States is up on the screen.

TALLINGER
(typing commands, into his cell)
I'm on it.

BACK TO:

TORRES AND NORTON

Staying low, Torres peers out the windshield and sees...

EXT. DOWNING FAMILY HOME - DAY

Mr. and Mrs. Downing pile into their Volvo with Steven. Mr. Downing turns it over and drives up the road past...

THE VAN

Torres gives them a headstart, then follows onto the street.

CUT TO:

INT. SHANE'S CONDO - DAY

Major Zumaya enters. He passes through, arrives in the garage at the fuse box. He sees the cluster of fuses that were tripped over to "off". He switches them back to "on".

INT. SHANE'S CONDO - CONTINUOUS

Major Zumaya stands next to the HMD BASE. He can see that the system is re-arming itself. The red light blinks to yellow. And then blips and turns green.

Zumaya stands and peers out onto the street...where did Shane go? And why did he do this?

INT. VOLVO - MOVING

Mr. Downing's cell phone RINGS.

MR. DOWNING
Hello.

MAJOR ZUMAYA (O.S.)
(over phone)
Russ. It's Zumaya. Are you near a television?

WE GO TO MAJOR ZUMAYA

A CNN caption reads: "Navy Captain Wanted in Shooting". Another NEWSCASTER drones on.

MR. DOWNING (O.S.)
I've seen it. Ernie, you know he didn't do it.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Then help me find him.

MR. DOWNING
(considers)
I can't do that, Ernie. Family comes first. I've gotta protect him right now. I'm sorry.

Major Zumaya considers his friend's words, hangs up the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. STORAGE FACILITY - BARSTOW - DAY

Katherine moves up a flight of stairs. Hair on end. Into a hallway. Walls scarred from furniture, spit tobacco juice.

She arrives at #227. Heart pounding. Breathing shallow. Fear. Draws the KEYS. But she slows...realizing the LOCKS have already been shimmied. She touches the door...it swings open.

She presses into the pitch dark room...tension mounts. But then she flicks the LIGHT ON. Nobody. Nothing. We are inside:

THE STORAGE UNIT

Which has been turned into a MILITARY-STYLE SCIF (Secure Compartmentalized Information Facility). Bare drywall with crisscrossing LEAD TAPE overlaid. She quickly realizes...

The wall where the CPU and SECURE SERVERS were housed is empty. The phone lines and wiring have been severed. The monitor, biometric scanner and keyboard are also gone. All of it.

She knows Nick was here...but hours? Minutes?

Frozen, Katherine walks across, reacting to the destruction.

KATHERINE
Shit.

She reaches gingerly to the ceiling and pushes away a section of the wall revealing a compartment. Uses a key to unlock a METAL BOX. Opens it and pulls out a LAPTOP with a backup set of cable and wiring.

JUMP CUT:

KATHERINE - MOMENTS LATER

She finishes plugging the laptop into the system. The laptop SCREEN lights up.

She navigates into a COMMERCIAL WEB SITE with every telemarketing offer known to man, “Call now! Don’t hesitate on your 1.9 APR!”, etc. TYPING in a series of commands, messages scroll across followed by something peculiar: uniform strands of numbers.

SHANE (O.S.)
Nice surveillance setup.

Startled, Katherine minimizes it -- turns to see Shane. She notices the Glock in his hand.

KATHERINE
Where’d you get that?

SHANE
Cabbie had it under his seat.

KATHERINE
Put it away.

She looks him over skeptically. He tucks the gun into his waist band as she turns back to work on the computer, a hint of suspicion in her eyes.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Nick’s been here...took my computer gear. He must’ve found a way to track me.

Shane’s eyes comb the walls, the lead tape, conduit pipe, wires -- all of it.

SHANE
It’s built like a military-style SCIF. Lead tape keeps the signals secure. Nothing in. Nothing out.

Shane reaches out, touches the lead tape...sparking an idea. His eyes fall to his ankle. He bends down behind the desk where she can’t see. Checks the ankle bracelet. Its light has gone red.

He quickly moves to her. Eyes catching the monitor, the uniform series of numbers. The marketing gags.

SHANE (CONT’D)
What are those?

She quickly cancels out of it. He files it, doesn’t react.

KATHERINE
Bells and whistles to cover up my secure internal server page. Luckily he didn’t find my laptop.

Katherine types in more commands. He circles around to see:

THE LAPTOP SCREEN

She’s navigated to an internal page for ADMAX PRISON in Colorado.

SHANE
Admax. What’s this?

KATHERINE
You gave me an idea. Nick'll need to hook up with the Aryan Brotherhood's contacts on the outside at some point. If we can pinpoint a location or time in one of their kites...we can get the jump and surprise him.

SHANE
Kites?

KATHERINE
Handwritten letters from inmates with coded messages. Prisons keep them on file with the codes broken down to try to stop further crimes.

Katherine starts a SNIFFER PROGRAM. It scans all the ADMAX firewalls. Searching for a way in. Stops on a SEARCH PAGE.

SHANE
Sniffer program. You guys have all the tricks.

KATHERINE
Locates the soft spots in the system then steals the passcodes.

She LOGS IN a search: "Aryan Brotherhood." The sniffer blinks on the screen -- a password appears -- granting access.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
We're in.

INT. NAVY RESERVE BASE - SAN LUIS OBISPO - DAY

Major Zumaya hurries down a hallway with a RESERVE SAILOR escorting him to a VIDEO CONFERENCE ROOM.

They pass through a small technician's room where CNN runs a non-stop visual of the Las Vegas shooting.

RESERVE SAILOR #1
(salutes)
The Admiral is waiting, sir. It's all yours.

INT. NAVY RESERVE BASE - SAN LUIS OBISPO - MOMENTS LATER

Zumaya sits at a conference table in the hot seat.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Sir, last confirmed tether signal was outside Las Vegas about half an hour ago. Forty miles south to be exact. Along I-15.

On the VIDEO FEED is ADMIRAL BRANDON KOHLER. A career Navy man who looks thoroughly unimpressed with Zumaya's performance.

ADMIRAL KOHLER
Major, do you remember John the Baptist?

MAJOR ZUMAYA
The biblical figure...of course.

ADMIRAL KOHLER
I used to love the idea of a man who everybody thought was crazy but in reality was paving the way for The King of kings... and it was the common people who were just too ignorant to understand. But what a terrible end he met. Used to make me sad when I'd hear about it in Sunday School. There was this crazy woman who wanted his head on a silver platter...and I could never square it...why? I always asked that question. Why? Why couldn't they understand John...?
(beat)
And then I realized. Because for all his talk? John never delivered them the king he promised.

Kohler's eyes burn into Major Zumaya for a moment.

ADMIRAL KOHLER (CONT'D)
You promised to deliver me a king, Major. So you better find him. Or your head will be on a silver platter.

Off Zumaya, feeling the heat.

CLOSE ON: FIVE SURLY LOOKING INMATES

A group of CAUCASIAN GANGSTERS. <u>Including Ripper</u>. She clicks on the name: Charles Wayright. Starts typing in more commands, navigating through pages, until...

A lengthy series of HANDWRITTEN LETTERS appear.

KATHERINE
Here. Number one shot caller for the Aryan Brotherhood. Charles Wayright.

Katherine scrolls through a list of original letters, what looks like harmless banter. But next to each, their sophisticated CODES are broken down showing different and clever ways the gangster was getting the real message through.

SHANE
They look like normal letters.

KATHERINE
That's the idea. But look at the code. Everything has double meaning.

Shane scans the code key. Suddenly, one catches Shane's eye. The blood drains from his face.

SHANE
Stop.

KATHERINE
What is it?

He scans the "decoded" version of the kite. Points to four numbers within the coded letter. "0-4-1-4."

SHANE
04-14. "April 14th." That's the date Janie was murdered.

Shane scans the letter further. Sees something else. A beat. A monumental epiphany for Shane. His eyes are suddenly brimming with tears. He's devastated.

SHANE (CONT'D)
This proves it. Nick had Janie killed.
(points to the decoded letter)
Right there. That's my home address.

FLASH CUT TO:

THE CHEVY PICKUP

Skinheads #1 and #2 roll by Shane's condo, watching Janie and Steven get into the Honda Minivan. We PAN DOWN to:

A NOTE IN SKINHEAD #1'S HAND

The address on it matches Shane's condo unit.

BACK TO:

SHANE

His eyes fall to the Glock in his hand. A surge of pent-up rage courses through him. Katherine tries to temper it.

KATHERINE
Hey. We can use this information. We're gonna take him down.

Shane says nothing. His devastation is total. He's hardened over in a way we've never seen before.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Look, I don't know...I can't know...

SHANE
No, you're right about that. When this is all over? You'll go home. Take a hot bath. Watch TV. And forget about it. So, no, you can't know.
(beat, eyes focused on hers)
You'll never know.

He turns, and goes. Katherine watches after him...wondering.

Her eyes fall to the computer screen. She types in the name: Shane Downing. Out spits a military FILE including a section that reads: "Downing vs US Dept. Of Justice & US Army." And underneath it lists three names, the defendants. All deceased.

Her expression registers the gravity of it all: holy shit. This guy is facing triple murder charges.

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE THE STORAGE FACILITY

Shane finishes wrapping filched lead tape around his ankle bracelet to block transmission of its GPS signal.

KATHERINE (O.S.)
I got an address from another kite.

He wheels, eyes meeting hers. There is a building sense of calculation now with her every move. She doesn't say anything but she saw his ankle bracelet.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
In Barstow.

She holds out a slip of paper to him.

SHANE
That's sixty miles away.

KATHERINE
We've had surveillance at this address before. We believe it may be the location for the Buddha's "point of contact."

Shane doesn't respond. She reaches the cab. Now he's the one watching her skeptically.

SHANE
There's something you're not telling me.

KATHERINE
Oh. I'm sorry. I thought for a minute that you were this guy...who... pointed a gun at my head a couple hours ago and pulled the trigger...and I couldn't help but notice that you were just wrapping lead tape around a pretty little ankle bracelet...

Her eyes are piercing now.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
And I know...you aren't a guy...who spent time in a Navy brig awaiting a murder trial...right? Because if you're that guy? And I take you in...?
(she has his attention now)
I'm privy to every case brought by the US Attorney in this jurisdiction. I know all about you. There is a good chance you're going down for triple homicide. I'd say all things considered you've gotten one hell of a lot of info out of me. So, are we done with the violins?

SHANE
I'm innocent.

KATHERINE
I'd like to believe that. And maybe it's true. But I can't verify it...and so right now you still belong to me.
(motions at the taxi cab)
We need a new car. This cab's a liability.

No sign of the driver.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Where’s the driver?

Shane’s reply is a BANG on the trunk. The Cabbie lets out a MUFFLED YELP.

SHANE
They teach you how to hot wire at Quantico?

Off Katherine’s look...

NICK (O.S.)
Yeah?

SLAM CUT TO:

NICK

Coming out of a MINI-MARKET, carrying two bags of ice. Bluetooth headset on his ear:

TORRES (O.S.)
(over phone)
They were in Barstow. Heading due West.

Nick arrives at his Suburban. Opens the back lift gate. Makes sure no one is close. Dumps the ice into a STYROFOAM COOLER.

NICK
Means they’re going to Gunnerson’s. Is he still with her?

INTERCUT TORRES:

Driving in the van. Norton next to him.

TORRES
Affirmative.

NICK
Have Tallinger handle it. You stay on his family. In case we need some insurance.

TORRES
Done.

We stay with Torres who shuts his cell. Norton next to him. We realize they’re on the road not far behind...

INT. THE DOWNING'S VOLVO - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Downing drives, eyes worried.

MRS. DOWNING
What are we going to do?

MR. DOWNING
We're going to be careful. We're not going to panic. And we're going to do what's best for Shane.

MRS. DOWNING
(hushed)
Well, I am panicking, Jim...my son is all over the news as a murderer!

She looks back at Stevie, asleep.

MRS. DOWNING (CONT'D)
You should have told Ernie to do something!

MR. DOWNING
Like what? We can't jeopardize Shane any more than he already is. Listen to me. Ernesto can't help him.

He takes her hand comfortingly. She closes her eyes.

MR. DOWNING (CONT'D)
We have to protect him, Maggie. And Steven. That's all we can do.

A moment, tears welling in her eyes. She nods understandingly.

CUT TO:

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - MORENO VALLEY, CA - EVENING

Built in the 40s. Well-maintained. A perfectly manicured yard. Everything is in its place. The home of a military man.

The beat-up Dodge stops at the edge of the drive. Shane and Katherine assess the place. The house is dark, save a single light in a center hallway.

Katherine pulls her Beretta .380. He pulls the Cabbie's Glock. Both get out. She regards him. Can she trust him?

KATHERINE
Be careful with that.

Shane cautiously starts to the left, behind hedges along an old slate walk.

Katherine winds to the right. Ever so cautious. Arrives next to Shane at the door. Both take a knee. It's tense.

Shane presses at the door...opens it. No sign of anyone.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Federal agent!

THE DOORWAY

Is clear. The curtains are drawn leaving murky shadows everywhere. Carefully, Shane presses in, gun ready.

He hasn't taken more than a step or two when he realizes the floor is covered in droplets of dark, viscous slick...like black motor oil...or something worse.

Katherine sidewinds next to him. Beretta ready. Shane stops.

SHANE
Blood.

Shane's eyes focus further into the living room.

THE ROOM IS TRASHED

Husks of a bamboo hutch and chairs. Signs of struggle. A bloody trail leads them around a corner...

...into the kitchen. Nothing. Until they see...a FIGURE slumped across the kitchen table. It freezes Katherine in her tracks.

KATHERINE
...no...God, no...

Shane crosses carefully to the body...REVEALING:

NED GUNNERSON (60)

Severely beaten. Steel bailing wire embedded in his neck from what must have been an excruciating strangulation.

Distraught, Katherine reaches out to touch him...but Shane stops her. His eyes darken.

SHANE
Don't. He could be booby-trapped.

He carefully scans the body. Nothing. No wires.

Then Shane notices it. <u>Ned's hands have been severed</u>.

Horrified, Katherine raises her hands to her face. Trying to keep her wits. Eyes locked on Ned's butchered stumps. Shane's eyes catch hers. In that instant, he knows she knew this person.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Why would they torture him like this?

Katherine's still in shock. In that instant his eyes catch hers.

SHANE (CONT'D)
You knew him...

Katherine rushes out. Shane goes after her --

SHANE (CONT'D)
What's going on...?

IN THE DINING ROOM

Katherine shoves the dining table and chairs back -- yanks an ornate, serape Oriental rug out of the way -- REVEALING a hidden TRAP DOOR --

SHANE
Talk to me, Katherine!

She pulls it open -- descends wooden steps lead down to...

A BASEMENT ROOM

Katherine flies down the steps. Rounds a corner and enters another room configured as an ACTIVE SCIF.

Exactly the same as the one in Barstow with crisscrossing lead tape on the walls, wires fed through conduit pipe. The same high-tech computer on a desk with a row of servers. All of it, intact.

She taps a key and the system BOOTS UP. Shane appears behind her. She logs into the same MARKETING WEB SITE as before: the AD SLOGANS, the LONG STRAND OF NUMBERS.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Wait a minute...it's identical.
(a revelation)
The military ID numbers. That's how you keep track of your people. And the marketing cues...that's how the assignments are delivered.

She types in a fury like he wasn't even there. But the realization is hitting Shane like a ton of bricks now.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Operatives in the hat receive a hidden message embedded in junk mail. They log into a dummy site and get access to their assignment...a blind kill mission. And since it's been authenticated? The target is hot. Everything's legit.

He has slowly circled around to face her.

SHANE (CONT'D)
And you would know...since you're the one who authenticates it. Aren't you?
(now he's in control)
Because you're no Fed. And this is no communications center. You are the Buddha.

The game is over. He's right.

SHANE (CONT'D)
(pointing upstairs)
That's why Nick tortured him. Because he wouldn't give you up.

Katherine closes her eyes. Emotions rising to the surface. For the first time, she is the one who looks vulnerable.

KATHERINE
Ned was my Godfather.
(wipes away tears)
...and he won't die in vain.

She hits a series of rapid fire commands. And a message appears on the screen "System Secure: Enter New Biometrics".

SHANE
What are you doing?

KATHERINE
Boxing Nick out. The system uses a biometric scanner for clearance. Only two sets of fingerprints can authorize it.
(looks at Shane)
Ned's. And mine.
(indicates the laptop screen)
I just hit the internal kill switch. Now, my prints are the only ones that will allow him access to the list of operators who are in the hat.

That fast, she's added a new wrinkle.

NICK (O.S.)
-- shit --

SLAM CUT TO:

THE TIP OF A FINGER

Pressed down onto a biometric flatbed scanner.

ON A COMPUTER MONITOR

We see the same MARKETING SLOGANS -- “Call now! Don’t hesitate on your 1.9 APR!”

But text in the PASSWORD BOX reads: “IDENTIFICATION UNAUTHORIZED”.

WIDER NOW - REVEALING:

Nick holds Ned’s severed hand. Pressing Ned’s dead finger onto the scanner.

NICK
The bitch froze me out.

Frustrated, Nick tosses the severed hand back on ice in a Styrofoam cooler. Dials on his cell. Someone answers:

NICK (CONT’D)
You there yet?

CUT TO:

TALLINGER

Driving up a street that looks familiar. It leads to Ned’s.

TALLINGER
I’m close.

NICK (O.S.)
We need her now. You understand? Dead or alive, it doesn’t matter. Get her.

INT. ZUMAYA’S SEDAN - MOVING

Zumaya picks up his ringing cell.

ZUMAYA
Zumaya.

MIKE (O.S.)
(over phone)
It's Mike. From DATCO Home Monitoring Services? We got trouble.

ZUMAYA
What do you got, Mike?

MIKE (O.S.)
(over phone)
Well, the last tether signal we have was sent eight miles south of Barstow...

ZUMAYA
Where's the signal coming from now?

MIKE
Actually, there isn't one. Something is blocking the GPS feed.

ZUMAYA
What does that mean?

MIKE
I mean he's given us the slip. Maybe he took the bracelet off. Or maybe he destroyed it.

ZUMAYA
Mike. I don't care if you have to send the signal out every ten seconds...I need to find him <u>now</u>. Do you understand?

MIKE
Yes, sir.

BACK TO:

INT. NED'S KITCHEN - DAY

Katherine stands over Ned's body. She touches his face tenderly. Then places a bed sheet over him.

Shane appears behind her, eyes sympathetic.

SHANE
Why you? Why is all this happening now?

KATHERINE
My mother was murdered December 8th, 1981. But her killer got off on a technicality. My dad was still active duty back then.
(MORE)

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
The night after it happened his men agreed they'd help him get justice.

Katherine remembers it all.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
They made a pact. To help any brother in their community. If you were part of it? And it was legit? He'd get you justice...but you had to be willing to go in the hat.
(a proud beat)
He became known as the "Buddha". Executing the assignment was known as "Killing the Buddha."

SHANE
The Confucian proverb. The Buddha never appears to his followers. So, anyone who claims they are is just a figment of the imagination. There to deceive you.

KATHERINE
For 35 years it was his illusion.
(then)
Then my father died six months ago. His final request to me was to keep his creation...alive.

Shane's eyes linger on her. Her allure. Vulnerability. He has to check himself. He's been drawn in by it.

SHANE
So, where does Nick fit in?

KATHERINE
(eyes harden over)
He thought it would be passed on to him.
(OFF Shane's look)
My father raised him from the time he was eleven. He was under my father's command for eight years here in the States. But his first deployment was Mogadishu...he was never the same after he came back from it.

There is more but she doesn't want to say it.

SHANE
So, Nick uses me to kill you...and he becomes the Buddha. Makes a fortune off selling his services to any criminal organization he wants.

KATHERINE
An endless supply of body bags to the highest bidder.

SHANE
Different than the body bags you authorized?

KATHERINE
(incensed)
You don't have the right to judge me. My father's system works -- it provides justice when no one else will!
(in his face)
And nobody knows that better than you!

SHANE
I made a mistake...I was weak...

KATHERINE
No, you wanted what was right! And you had no other way to get it!

The stark truth. There it is.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
(scrutinizes him)
You're up on three counts of homicide...as well as rape. So, he frames a guy who looks like a killer anyway. But the only question then is...did you do it?

Off Shane, remembering. Now it's his turn to answer.

SHOCK CUT TO:

INT. MUD BRICK HOUSE - AFGHANISTAN - DAY

Shane is in fatigues inoculating WOMEN and CHILDREN in a shanty, blown-out mud brick house. After a moment there is some distant screaming. He lowers a syringe.

SHANE (V.O.)
...I was inoculating a town outside Kandahar for small pox...it was early evening, about seven...I heard a scream...

EXT. MUD BRICK HOUSE - AFGHANISTAN - CONTINUOUS

Shane exits and starts down a road, approaching another series of mud brick huts.

As he walks, the village is silent. But strangely so. Nothing seems out of place.

The front doors to all the huts are closed. Except for one.

Shane approaches the door. And shouldering his weapon, pushes it open gently. He steps into shadows. Nothing. He presses in further and sees...a body on the kitchen floor. Two bodies. An Afghan HUSBAND and WIFE. Both dead. Eyes open in shock.

SHANE (V.O.)
I thought maybe there'd been a domestic disturbance...but then I saw bodies. Civilians.

He hears a gentle rustle back in the bedroom. A voice?

As he rounds the corner, he finds a bedroom with the door cracked open...he comes closer. The only thing he can see is:

A YOUNG WOMAN'S EYES

Through a crack in a door Shane can see her pretty, girlish features. Her head sways gently. Hair askew. She is an Afghani TEEN, lying on sand floor.

Shane comes still closer. He sees US ARMY GI #1 on top of her. Forcing himself on her.

Shane's rage surfaces as he kicks in the door --

The Army GI scrambles to his knees -- turns and FIRES his sidearm! The bullets skim past Shane who realizes there are two more ARMY GIs there as well, #2 and #3. Waiting their turn.

SHANE (V.O.)
The first one pulled the trigger. The rest went for their guns...and I just knew...they would've killed me.

The other GI's reach for their weapons -- Shane's eyes catch it -- it's a split-second decision -- pull the trigger now or die -- and so he does -- P-PPP-POW! PAMM! All three drop dead, weapons clattering to the ground.

We JUMP CUT to the Army GI's down on the ground. Dead. Then WHIP PAN to Shane...weapon leveled...dazed, disbelieving.

Shane reaches for a blanket and tries to comfort the traumatized Afghani Teenager. But fearing the worst, she reaches out with her hands and sinks her nails into his face!

He wraps her in the towel and just holds her as she claws at his face like a wild cat!

SHANE
It’s alright...it’s alright, I’m not going to hurt you...!

SHANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
She scratched my face and arms so bad...they thought I was in on it.

BACK TO:

SHANE AND KATHERINE

Shane willing the gruesome images away, out of his head.

SHANE
(remembering)
I was covered in her blood. Army CID came, saw my face and arms and called it mitigating circumstances. Put me in the brig. Refused to question the locals or get her side of it. So, it was my word against theirs...Army word...then they shipped me out of theater. To Coronado.

KATHERINE
Except Nick found out who you were.

SHANE
(the final piece to the puzzle)
He came to me because he thought I’d pull the trigger.

A moment, staring at each other. All their cards on the table. Then, Katherine kills the computer. Digs into her pocket. Pulls out the last of her hundreds. From the wad she used in the cab.

KATHERINE
Here.

SHANE
What’s this?

KATHERINE
Sorry. But this is where we part ways.

SHANE
Wait a minute -- what?

Her hand closes around the Beretta in her waistband.

KATHERINE
Look at it this way...I won't be around to press charges.

SHANE
No, the Vegas police will take care of that part just fine. They got me at the scene, remember?

He pulls the Glock -- but she's ready -- has the Beretta out. Standoff. Her eyes quickly dart to her left. Then back.

SHANE (CONT'D)
If we split up he'll eat us alive.

Shane's eyes track hers...a shadow at the window. Is somebody there...?

KATHERINE
Don't make this harder.

SHANE
I need you!
(beat, their eyes settle)
If you don't come forward I go down for whatever happened today in Vegas...and maybe a lot more. You're all I have.

There. He said it. She's the only way out for him.

And in that instant -- BWA-BAPP-BAP-PAP -- the air vibrates -- Shane pushes Katherine out of the way just as -- a volley of black projectiles hurtles past them!

Tallinger appears behind muzzle FLASH from an XM-8 ASSAULT RIFLE! Bullets ANNIHILATE windows, lights, cabinets -- dry wall becomes confetti --

Surgical gloved fingers press the XM-8's trigger -- a series of BURSTS -- SMOKE -- CASINGS -- BA-BA-BA-BAMM!

Shane CRASHES over furniture, Katherine along with him -- skidding, rolling -- FIRING BACK -- both keep moving -- running into the back of the house, disappearing --

At the front windows, Tallinger ejects a clip -- the XM-8's breech open -- hot smoke pours out -- he efficiently SLAMS a new clip in -- jumps inside the broken window -- on the hunt --

Stalking from room to room -- searching -- weapon trained with seasoned hands -- his movements professional --

IN A BEDROOM

Tallinger enters, XM-8 shouldered. Suddenly hears footsteps clattering over hard wood floor -- behind him -- SWINGS -- but Shane knocks the assault rifle away -- !

Both go CRASHING through a set of French doors -- LANDING --

IN THE BACKYARD

They engage in hand-to-hand combat. Grappling, swinging, kicking, eye-gouging -- Shane surviving any way possible -- it's kill or be killed --

Tallinger is stronger, more experienced -- SLAMS Shane through the half-open door of an aluminum toolshed -- shovels, pitch forks, tools go CLATTERING --

Each one grabs a crude weapon. Tallinger clutches a PITCH FORK. Shane has a STEEL RAKE. They circle as if in a pit fight --

Tallinger SLASHES at Shane with the pitch fork -- once, twice, three times -- GOUGES Shane badly with the last strike! Shane counters with the rake -- blocks Tallinger's strike at his face!

Tallinger sees Shane's arm is a bloody mess. The SEAL parries a spinning move -- thrusts the pitchfork into Shane's leg!

Shane gasps in pain, falls -- Tallinger plunges the pitch fork down again and again -- SHUNK -- SHUNK -- gouging the earth -- as Shane grits his teeth -- rolls away --

Kicks out Tallinger's legs -- the SEAL falls back -- Shane leaps up -- SWINGS the rake in desperation, with everything he's got --

A sickening THOKKK -- the rake's steel prongs spear Tallinger in the face! He HOLLERS in pain -- yanks the prongs from his flesh --

But Tallinger's not finished -- grabs a set of LARGE PRUNING SHEARS -- snaps them open and shut -- circling with Shane -- the side of the SEAL's face a bleeding mess.

He LUNGES -- the pruning shears SNAP an inch away from Shane's face! Tallinger kicks Shane to the ground...bloodied ...badly weakened...the SEAL readies to plunge the shear jaws down into Shane and finish him...but -- !

BA-BA-BA-BAMM! Tallinger stops midway -- body RIDDLED with bullets -- he twists, collapses into a heap -- <u>dead</u>.

Shane turns his head, sees Katherine -- XM-8 shouldered and smoking -- the two stare at each other. She can see he's been badly gored.

KATHERINE
He got you.

Shane grimaces, blood pooling on the floor from his gored arm and leg. He uses his hands to hold his leg together.

SHANE
(winces)
...could say that...

Keeps the XM-8 leveled. She's in control once again.

SHANE (CONT'D)
But we got the upper hand now.

KATHERINE
How's that?

Shane motions to Tallinger's body.

SHANE
Nick sent him because he knew we were here.
(points to her hands)
You are his only way to access the list. We go to him now? He's got to deal with us.

Katherine regards her hands, gruesome thoughts washing through her mind.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Question is...are we together on this? Or are you going your own way?
(crawls into a sitting position)
Because if I bleed out? I'll just be some guy who misses his trial...but Nick? He'll find another way to find you. And when he does? He's going to hurt you. And then kill a lot of innocent people.
(eyes leveled at her)
And it'll be on your watch.

OFF Katherine, debating her options...

EXT. DINER - OJAI - DAY

Mr. and Mrs. Downing walk out, having just eaten. Steven asleep in his grandpa's arms. They walk cautiously to their car.

But Torres' van SKIDS to a halt in front of them! Steven wakes up, startled at the LIGHTS and commotion. All three look into the van's open side door -- Norton has a PUMP SHOTGUN leveled at them!

OFF Shane's family...with no way out.

INT. NED'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Shane stitches the last of his wounds up. Wraps sheet strips smeared with Vaseline to hold it all together and hobbles across the kitchen floor dialing his cell. His father's VOICE MAIL picks up. He scans out the window, as:

SHANE
Dad...call me the minute you get this. Hope you guys've already gone.

Shane ends the call, crosses back into the kitchen. Sees Katherine staring at Ned's covered body. She regards him:

KATHERINE
Maybe they're just out of range.

SHANE
(checks his watch)
We need to call him.

KATHERINE
(hesitant)
You know when I power my up cell...he'll be able to track us.

SHANE
Good. Do it.

Knowing what's at stake, Katherine pulls out her cell, POWERS IT UP. Finds Nick's name in her call list. Types in a text message: "*Need a hand, asshole?*" She hits send.

They wait in silence. Tension. Nothing. Still nothing. Then his reply appears like magic: "*Would love one*."

Her phone suddenly RINGS. Shane motions to answer it.

KATHERINE
Yeah -- ?

NICK (O.S.)
(over phone)
Pretty clever changing up the biometric scan, sweetheart.

KATHERINE
(enraged)
I can't believe you'd betray my father's memory like this -- you've gone against everything he wanted!

INTERCUT NICK:

In limbo. His location unknown. Cell to his ear.

NICK
No. He betrayed us. Because as much as you're his daughter? You'll never be one of us.
(beat)
Put the captain on the phone.

She looks at Shane. Hits the SPEAKER function.

SHANE
You killed my wife, you sonofabitch.

NICK
You have trouble telling the truth, captain. You were never in Iraq. I checked with CENTCOM. You were in Afghanistan. Where you shot three Army Rangers and left them for dead...

SHANE
You set me up!

NICK
Maybe you should've thought before you pulled the trigger on your brothers!

SHANE
Spare me on the brotherhood speech. We both know that right now, without Katherine? You have nothing.

NICK
(ahead of him)
That's right, my friend. I have nothing. And you...have nothing. See, I found something that puts us on a level playing field. Something we can barter with.

Nick motions OFF-SCREEN -- Torres appears with Steven who walks stiffly, traumatized. Nick puts the phone next to his ear.

STEVEN
Daddy...Daddy, are you there?

The jolt is almost electrical as Shane realizes who it is.

SHANE
Stevie? I'm here, Stevie...listen to me, it's gonna be okay -- daddy's coming to get you!

NICK
(takes the phone back)
Damn right he is. You wanna see the rest of your family alive? Bring me that bitch.

Shane's eyes bounce to Katherine's. Straining to maintain her tough veneer but knowing that Nick has the upper hand now.

SHANE
Where?

NICK
BUDS class is over. Meet me at the dunes. No detours. Just you and her. And don't be dumb enough to enter through the base gates. Use the beach entrance.
(checks his watch)
Guessing you're still at Gunnerson's...you can be here in an hour. Give you an extra thirty for the walk. You got ninety minutes. Starting now.

Nick shuts his phone.

WE STAY WITH SHANE AND KATHERINE:

Shane paces. Mind churning, going into survival mode.

SHANE
Ned was an ex-SEAL, right?

KATHERINE
Yes.

SHANE
You know where he kept his guns?

KATHERINE
A gun locker in his closet.

He's already descending the wooden stairs into Ned's SCIF.

SHANE
Perfect.

KATHERINE
For what? Getting us killed?

Shane arrives at the computer. The glow of the screen reflecting on his face.

SHANE
The asshole just gave us his position. And he doesn't know that we have access to your system.

Shane glances down at the ANKLE BRACELET wrapped in lead tape.

SHANE (CONT'D)
We're gonna track him.

INT. NED'S WALK-IN CLOSET - MOMENTS LATER

Darkness. Then the overhead light TURNS ON. Katherine produces a set of keys. She separates some of his hanging clothes, REVEALING: A six-foot-tall 25-GUN LOCKER.

Katherine unlocks it with a key -- swings the dual doors open. Inside are Ned's weaponry and all his SEAL paraphernalia.

Shane grabs the M-14 SNIPER RIFLE with SILENCER and LASER SIGHTS, a TACTICAL KNIFE and black-colored CAMOS. Ready for war. This is not the easygoing family man and doctor from the beginning.

Katherine retrieves Ned's Colt .45 Series 70. Scoops up several CLIPS. Metal ammuniton boxes.

SHANE
We'll need his vehicle. Chances are good somebody called in the Dodge.

They check their weapons, head out...

INT. NED'S OLD RANGE ROVER - MOVING

Shane rides passenger. Dressed in Ned's black fatigues and hat. Katherine drives, wearing a clean shirt. Her jeans. Both are completely drained. Physically. Emotionally. They're riding on adrenaline now. Feeding off each other.

EXT. INTERSTATE 5 - CONTINUOUS

The old Range Rover passes a sign: "Imperial Beach - next exit". As it veers onto the OFF-RAMP...

INTERCUT:

INT. SEDAN - DUSK

Major Zumaya races along on the highway. His mind plays the day's events over again for the 40th time. Until the silence is broken by his CELL PHONE. He answers.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Zumaya.

SHANE
Major?

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Shane. You got a world of holy horse shit coming down...talk to me...

SHANE
I'm coming in.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Where?

SHANE
My GPS tracker will come on in less than fifteen minutes.

Shane hangs up.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
(beat, lowers phone)
I hope you know what you're doing.

SLAM CUT TO:

PURGATORY

A murky void of ROLLING FOG...THUNDERING ocean...white FOAM rolling past us. Shadowed apparitions appear, then disappear. One apparition turns into...

KATHERINE

Laboring in the sand, face showing uncertainty. No sign of Shane. Her tired legs plunging through deep, wet sand. Heading up the beach head. She checks the .380 in her waistband.

POV - THROUGH A RIFLE SCOPE

Somebody is watching her from a small bluff. WE REVEAL:

SHANE

Tracking her movements. He moves alongside her on a parallel course hidden behind a series of SAND DUNES.

BACK WITH KATHERINE

Walking on the ocean side of the DUNES. Through the dancing haze she sees three MOCK GRAVES (like at BUDS Training).

NICK (O.S.)
Close enough.

Katherine stops. Unsure of Nick's location. The haze parts and Nick appears, coming slowly toward her.

NICK (CONT'D)
Where's Downing?

KATHERINE
He said he'd meet me here. Where's his son?

Nick's eyes go hard.

NICK
(into a small mic)
Norton, paint her up. Torres, we got one bogey out there.

Suddenly a RED DOT appears on Katherine -- an evil little stain. A laser sight. Pressure. She stifles a gasp, realizing.

ON NORTON

Prone, behind a sand dune with an M-14 sniper rifle. Holding the laser sight signature on Katherine.

BUT WE SWING AROUND BEHIND NORTON - REVEALING:

A new RED LASER DOT appearing on the back of <u>his</u> shaved skull!

RACK TO 30 YARDS OUT: ON SHANE

Holding Ned's sniper rifle...he squeezes the trigger -- BAMM-FF -- a whisper...lost in the sound of restless SURF.

NORTON'S HEAD

Pitches forward as the bullet strikes him.

ON KATHERINE

For an instant the RED DOT disappears on her...then returns. Nick doesn't notice -- eyes scanning the darkness.

<u>But Katherine has noticed the shift</u>.

NICK (CONT'D)
(shouts out)
Show yourself, Downing...or she's dead. You got 10 seconds...

Dead air...counting...9, 8, 7, 6...

NICK (CONT'D)
Five...four...three...two...

The red dot makes a sudden swing from Katherine to Nick.

NICK (CONT'D)
Norton...!

No response. Just the ocean rumble. The red dot stays on Nick.

NICK (CONT'D)
Don't fucking play games with me!

SHANE (O.S.)
I want to hear my son's voice.

Nick realizes his sentry (Norton) is down. Shane inches closer in the darkness, holding the red laser dot on Nick.

NICK
(low, into his mic)
Torres...he's three o'clock...find him.

KATHERINE
(hearing Nick, shouts)
Shane, he has another man out there!

Nick BELTS her across the mouth to silence her. Katherine drops to one knee -- lip bleeding -- she draws, but he's faster and he seizes her .380 Beretta.

NICK
(gun to her temple)
Shut the fuck up!

Katherine glares back, defiant to the end.

WITH TORRES

Sidewinding on his belly. Then stopping. Searching through the FOG. Sees Katherine...Nick...they fade in and out of view with the rolling FOG...but no Shane yet.

ON NICK

Straining to locate Shane through the FOG.

SHANE (O.S.)
Adapt...overcome...survive. Isn't that what you preach to your recruits, Nick?

NICK
Every second you waste talking? Is a second less your boy has a chance to live.

The sea RAGES behind them. After a beat, Shane materializes out of the ether. Holding his sniper rifle on Nick. Nick sees him, pulls Katherine close as a shield.

SHANE
Step away from her!

NICK
I don't think so -- !

No choice. Shane has to get closer. He closes in. Reaching them -- weapon aimed -- point blank. Face to face.

SHANE
-- drop it -- !

NICK
(gun on Katherine)
You wanna go to trigger time??

Shane senses Nick's conviction. He's got to be careful.

SHANE
You said this was an exchange -- that's what I'm here for.

Nick's eyes jump to the FOG -- scanning for Torres.

NICK
This way. Nice and easy.

Nick backs toward more dunes. Shane follows, keeping the sniper rifle shouldered -- the red laser dot on Nick.

REACHING THE TOP

Shane's eyes find THE GLOW of 50 CHEM LIGHTS scattered across a lower area. Each light located at a MOCK GRAVE SITE.

In the green ghoulish glow, he sees his parents at the bottom of the dunes. Tied together, back to back. Blindfolded and gagged.

NICK (CONT'D)
Your folks...they're kind of old to be out in the elements...but they can probably handle it, right?

Shane presses the rifle to Nick's jugular. All the fury, all the rage boiling to the surface.

SHANE
I will fucking kill you!

NICK
Yes! That's exactly why I chose you. I figured anybody that could shoot three of his own brothers could shoot one woman if his life depended on it!
(lets his gun fall away)
Go ahead, pull the trigger. Get your revenge. Get it!

But Shane hesitates. Nick motions toward the mock graves. All 50 of them. Shane's stomach turns.

NICK (CONT'D)
He's got enough oxygen to last 20 minutes.
(shows watch)
That was 11 minutes ago.

Shane's finger tightens on the trigger as his fury dissolves into pure, guttural horror.

SHANE
You...didn't...

Momentarily distracted, a gun appears at Shane's temple! It's Torres, who's stealthily appeared from behind a dune. Shane freezes. If he shoots Nick? Shane's dead. And so is his boy.

NICK
Do or die decision. Just like my recruits. Kill me? Or be your son's hero?
(a malicious beat)
Because you can't have it both ways.

Shane glances at Katherine...both know if she goes with Nick it will probably cost her life. She gets to her feet.

KATHERINE
Forget about me, Shane. About everything. Find your son. That's all that matters.

Boxed in, Shane says nothing. Shane eyes her quickly: this isn't how it's supposed to end.

SHANE
You could've left me.

KATHERINE
And you could've killed me.

It's a poignant moment between the two. And maybe the last. But each one owes their life to the other.

NICK
(growling)
Eight minutes. We doing this or not?

Shane acquiesces, lowers the rifle. Torres lowers his as part of the deal and slowly backs off. Nick follows suit, holding Katherine by the arm. All three disappear into the fog...

Shane bounds across the dunes toward his parents -- quickly takes the blindfolds and gags off and unties them.

MRS. DOWNING
(terrified)
Shane! They have Steven!

MR. DOWNING
They buried him, son...somewhere out here...we heard them -- !

Shane pulls them up, rushing towards the CHEM LIGHT GRAVES.

SHANE
Start digging!

They start frantically digging up each mock grave...

SHANE (CONT'D)
Steven! Can you hear me! I'm coming, son!

Nothing. Shane continues -- to the next grave -- digging like a man possessed...

CUT TO:

NICK

Hustling Katherine through the FOG. Torres next to him.

NICK
I'll take her with me.
(checking over his shoulder)
Clean it up.

KATHERINE
Leave him alone, Nick -- you gave your word!

NICK
Shut up and move.

Nick shoves her forward, hard. Torres shows no emotion, heads back into the darkness. Back on the hunt. His weapon ready.

CUT TO:

THE MOCK GRAVES

Shane and his parents digging frantically. Reality setting in that they might be too late.

SHANE
Steven...Steven! Yell if you can hear me!
(beat, no response)
Hang on, buddy...we're coming!

CLOSE ON: SHANE

Covered in sweat, blood and sand -- he stumbles out of a grave and falls...nose coming to rest on a PAIR OF BOOTS.

He looks up and sees it's Torres -- Sig Sauer 9mm leveled. Torres stares down at Shane. Still no emotion.

TORRES
I'm not lettin' a kid die on my watch. I'll get your son out. You got my word.

Torres readies to finish Shane execution style -- Mrs. Downing sees it and SCREAMS! But...

Two more WHISPERS echo across the beach. Torres pitches into the sand, blood leaking out a gaping hole in his head. He's been shot. But how...? And by who...?

Shane scrambles to pick up Torres' weapon...his eyes scanning the darkness. <u>But there is nobody there</u>.

CUT TO:

NICK AND KATHERINE

Her heart sinks as the echo of the gunshots dies behind them. Nick strides more confidently, knowing things are back in hand.

KATHERINE
You'll pay for this. I swear it to you.

He wrenches her arm painfully, causing her to cry out in pain.

NICK
Yeah? How?

He shoves her forward again.

KATHERINE
He's smarter than you think he is...

He jerks her back up, causing her to cry out again.

NICK
What the fuck are you talking about?

She just regards him...a slow smile creeping across her face. He shoves her down to her knees and unsheathes a COMBAT KNIFE.

NICK (CONT'D)
I'll teach you to play your fucking games with me.

She pulls free, scrambles backwards. He closes in...

CUT TO:

SHANE

Digging, breathless, on the verge of breaking down completely. Desperate eyes scanning from grave to grave. They're not even halfway! His parents tear into another sand mound next to him.

MR. DOWNING
(looking over)
Son, who was shooting at us?

SHANE
They weren't shooting at us -- keep going we've got to find Stevie!

Shane stands...he can see HEADLIGHTS...bouncing unevenly over the dunes. Coming in fast. Two JEEPS.

Shane leaps onto the next grave -- hands raw, slashing into the wet sand. The headlights turn into TWO MILITARY POLICE JEEPS racing over the sand...they bounce up.

Zumaya and FOUR MILITARY POLICEMEN exit, weapons ready, dashing toward Shane and his family.

HEAD MP
Captain Downing...! Get on the ground!

SHANE
(hands raised, desperate)
My son...Gratton buried him in one of these graves...please, you've got to help!

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Dear God...
(motions to the MP's)
Let's go -- you got a shovel on that jeep? Go get it!

The MP's fan out and start digging, one races back to the jeep and pulls the utility shovel off.

HEAD MP
(to Zumaya)
Sir, I have orders to bring him in.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
You can bring him in after we find the boy.

CUT TO:

NICK

Closing in. Certain victory on his face.

NICK
I need your hands, bitch. And that's it.

KATHERINE
(screaming at him)
Yeah. So, come get them...!

Nick closes -- eyes burning -- right on top of her.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
You never counted on somebody outthinking you, Nick...

NICK
Shut up.

He snares her wrist. But she reaches down to her ankle with her free hand.

KATHERINE
You never thought anybody could cover their bases like you...but see...we did. You gave us your position. So, we gave it to some people I know...who are pretty good trackers themselves.

She reveals that she is wearing Shane's ANKLE BRACELET. The lead tape is gone. The signal light has gone red. Nick looks at it, disbelieving...

NICK
What the fuck...?

Then...TWO FAINT WHISPERS -- a millisecond later -- TWO PRECISION SHOTS sink into Nick's shoulders -- forcing him to stutter step and drop his gun. Katherine quickly snatches it.

Nick reacts in shock, blood spouting from holes in both shoulders.

NICK (CONT'D)
Agghh -- what the -- you fucking cunt -- !

KATHERINE
(gun trained)
I used the SCIF at Ned's to activate ten operatives. All in the hat. All looking for you. It was Shane's idea.
(holds out the ankle bracelet so he can see it clearly)
They locked onto this, Nick. You were dead as soon as you gave us your position.

NICK

Fighting off immense pain, he reaches to the sand for his COMBAT KNIFE. This alpha dog still isn't beaten. He grits his teeth -- charges -- but TWO MORE FAINT WHISPERS -- PRECISION SHOTS strike both of Nick's knees!

He buckles to the sand like a broken doll -- disoriented -- bloodied -- descending into shock. Then, he sees...

SIX SF OPERATIVES in black wade in from out of the shadows. The operators she and Shane activated.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Guess he never trusted you either.

Off Nick, bleeding in the sand, his own venom consuming him...

BACK TO:

THE MOCK GRAVES

Exhaustion setting in, Shane's bloody arm dangles, unable to function. All hope is dimming. Until...

His hand scrapes something metallic. He pounds it with his fist. A metal door. His heart skips a beat.

SHANE
I got something!

Shane frantically pushes the sand away -- uncovering a FOOT LOCKER!

Everyone rushes to him as he undoes the latch and pulls the lid open -- REVEALING STEVEN -- his fearful eyes open wide -- an oxygen bottle and mask taped over his mouth!

Shane pulls the respirator away from his son's face -- he's alive. Steven gulps in air -- clutches his father in a tight bear hug.

Shane eyes fill with tears of joy. Mr. and Mrs. Downing join in as well, rejoicing.

Major Zumaya lets them have a moment...but we know it can't last. He's here to bring Shane in.

Mrs. Downing approaches Major Zumaya and the MP's, grateful.

MRS. DOWNING
Thank you, thank you...

MAJOR ZUMAYA
For what, ma'am?

MRS. DOWNING
He was going to kill Shane.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
I don't understand...who?

Shane comforts his mother quickly.

SHANE
It's okay, Mom. It's over.

Zumaya stands on the fringe and pulls his GPS locator. He peers into the FOG.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Why am I reading the GPS on your tracker...a quarter mile due south?

Shane motions towards the JEEPS.

SHANE
I knew she'd be safer with it on.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Who would?

SHANE
We need to find the tracker, the woman, Katherine -- she's wearing it.
(Zumaya is reluctant)
Here. Handcuff me, whatever. Just give me a chance to find her. That's all I ask.

The Head MP and Major Zumaya trade a look.

BACK ON KATHERINE

Standing over Nick, the .45 aimed down at him.

NICK
(gurgling on blood)
He should have given it all to me.

Nick is fading fast. Breathing in choppy, ugly gasps.

KATHERINE
It's like you said, Nick. KTB belongs to those who keep its code. To the real operatives.

She aims her GUN at him...debating...does she pull the trigger? But Nick's raspy breathing suddenly cuts out. He's dead.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
(turns to Operative #1)
There's a boy in the dunes --

Operative #1 adjusts his ear mic.

OPERATIVE #1
(into MIC)
We got a boy in the sand dunes...?
(listening to CHATTER in earpiece)
They just found him. The military police convoy is there. They'll be coming this way.

Katherine peers into the FOG. She can hear the JEEPS.

KATHERINE
Let's finish it.

And they hurry towards the tree line, as:

CUT TO:

EXT. DUNES - MOMENTS LATER

The MP jeeps arrive. Shane steps out, looking for any sign of Katherine or Nick. There's nothing. No bodies. No casings. No blood. Just several footprints in the sand and the sound of the raging surf.

Shane realizes they sanitized the entire area.

Zumaya and the MP's arrive next to him. His parents remain at the Jeeps, holding Steven in a blanket.

Zumaya bends and discovers THE ANKLE BRACELET in the sand. He holds it out to Shane.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Talk to me, Shane. You let me down. You gotta give me something here or I can't help you. What happened?
(beat, he motions at the MPS)
Give me your answer. Or you're going with them.

SHANE
I put the ankle tracker on her. So you'd find us...find her...

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Put it on who?

SHANE
Katherine. Nick came...and took her. She's got the answers.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Wait. Who is Katherine?

She's The Buddha. But Shane doesn't divulge that. A WALKIE crackles. The Head MP listens to a VOICE in his earpiece.

HEAD MP
Roger that.

The Head MP reluctantly steps forward, holding cuffs.

HEAD MP (CONT'D)
Captain...I'm sorry, but I have orders from Admiral Kohler to place you under arrest. And bring you to base immediately.

Shane glances at Major Zumaya. There is nothing he can do.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
There is nothing I can do, Shane. It's their show now.

Shane glances back at his parents, Stevie. They're safe. He's got to hold onto that. Shane raises his wrists. Holds them out.

Mrs. Downing holds back tears.

MRS. DOWNING
Shane...what's happening...?

SHANE
It's alright.

Steven looks at his father for an explanation, but there isn't one. This is how it's going to end...until:

KATHERINE (O.S.)
Help me -- !

All eyes turn to see...a woman (Katherine) hurrying from out of the FOG. Stumbling. Beaten. Exhausted.

Shane starts for her but the Military Police stop him. Zumaya sprints over, assists her the rest of the way.

Out of breath, Katherine arrives, motioning behind her:

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
...he just tried to kill me.

Katherine pours it on, "the damsel in distress."

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
You've got to stop him!

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Who?

KATHERINE
Nick Gratton. He's a SEAL instructor.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Where is he now?

KATHERINE
(dazed)
I don't know...we were at least a mile down the beach. Maybe more now.

MP #2
(to the Head MP)
I'll radio it in.

As MP #2 runs toward the Jeeps, Zumaya looks at Katherine.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
I'm Major Zumaya. Let's start with your name. What's your name?

KATHERINE
Katherine St. George. I...look. Here.

Katherine pulls the top of her shirt open, exposing a bandaged and bloodied shoulder -- the place Shane shot her.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
I'm Nick Gratton's ex.
(motions at Shane)
He set this man up to make it look like he tried to kill me.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
You mean what happened today?

KATHERINE
That's right. I'm the woman who was shot in Las Vegas. This man standing here wasn't trying to kill me.
(eyes locked with Shane's)
He was trying to save my life.

Zumaya and the MP's quickly realize this is the woman that Shane is accused of attempting to kill. Everyone is stunned.

Her eyes flit to Shane's. Shane marvels. Damn she is good.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
(to the Head MP)
Please...take the cuffs off of him. He's innocent. And I will testify to that in court.

HEAD MP
Ma'am, I have orders...

MAJOR ZUMAYA
(considers Shane's family)
Take them off.

The Head MP looks at Major Zumaya.

HEAD MP
We're still going to need to take you both in for questioning.

MAJOR ZUMAYA
Whatever you need. Go ahead.

The Head MP realizes he's got to take off the cuffs. Even though he's been ordered not to, he unlocks them. Stevie runs to his dad. His father scoops him into his arms.

STEVEN
I wanna go home, Dad. Can we go home now?

Shane hugs him back with everything he’s got.

SHANE
We’re going home, buddy...I promise.

Grateful, he catches Katherine’s eye. She crosses to them.

KATHERINE
You might not agree with what my father built. But he would’ve agreed with what you did. Believe it or not...he was a man of high principle. Just like you.

He smiles at her. A mutual understanding.

SHANE
...kill the Buddha if it appears.

KATHERINE
Because it’s only an illusion.

Katherine turns for the MP JEEP. Shane and Stevie watch after her. Zumaya helps Mr. and Mrs. Downing into his vehicle...and we PULL OUT and

FADE OUT.

THE END