THE LAST HIT

by

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INT. SHOPPING MALL - SOMEWHERE IN AFRICA - DAY

Something is happening here. There are dead bodies of AFRICANS here and there -- in front of stores -- on the escalator --

SOUNDS OF GUNFIRE within. Men shouting. A TEENAGE AFRICAN GIRL peers out of a storefront -- looks both ways -- starts to run -- *ratatat* -- and a machine gun takes her down.

Running up the stalled escalator is JACKIE SEWARD (early 30s), her long hair clipped in the back, a camera bag and three loose cameras hanging from her shoulders.

She gets to the top, starts taking photos -- *clickclickclick*: dead bodies, pools of blood.

A REBEL, a bandolier across his chest, a Kalashnikov in his hand, steps out, takes aim --

JACKIE
Press! I'm press! American!

The guy lowers his gun. Backs off. SOUND of WINDOWS BREAKING below -- BILLOWS OF SMOKE start to rise. Jackie lifts the bandana around her neck to cover her nose and mouth --

SOLDIER (O.S.)
Get out! Get out now!

She looks all around. More gunfire. It's getting closer. Tear gas is oozing into her space.

SOLDIER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I said, GET OUT NOW!

There he is -- on the top level of the mall, uniformed, with a red beret -- his gun aimed right at her.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)
Stay and I will kill you before they do.

She backs off. Races down the escalator -- around bodies on the ground floor -- until she reaches

EXT. SHOPPING MALL - SOMEWHERE IN AFRICA - CONTINUOUS

As other PRESS PHOTOGRAPHERS pull up in jeeps, in trucks, in VW vans. As they get out --

JACKIE
Sorry, boys. It's my exclusive now.

She reaches a battered old motorcycle. Mounts it just as her cellphone chimes a text: *MARRY ME?* She kicks her bike into life.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

We follow a BELLBOY wheeling a luggage cart. He unlocks a door of the bridal suite.

INT. BRIDAL SUITE - PARIS - CONTINUOUS

An oversized bed, chocolates on the pillows. A basket of fruit, champagne in a bucket. Honeymoon heaven in the city of love.

Jackie and MARK SINCLAIR (32) step in behind the bellboy. Mark looks like a CFO, even when he's on his honeymoon.

BELLBOY
On behalf of the hotel management we offer our warmest congratulations. May I open the champagne?

They barely notice him. As they kiss, the champagne cork loudly pops. Like a gunshot. Which is when Mark's eyes shoot open.

BELLBOY (CONT'D)
Bonne nuit, monsieur et madame.

Mark slips him a tip and he leaves them alone. Mark begins to unbutton her blouse.

JACKIE
My husband.

MARK
You noticed.

She starts to unbutton his shirt.

MARK (CONT'D)
Sounds strange, doesn't it.

JACKIE
I'll get used to it.

MARK
Happy here? In this beautiful city?

A spectacular view of the nighttime city is framed by the window.

MARK (CONT'D)
Or are you only really happy in the middle of a firefight with your camera?

JACKIE
After that rebel attack in East Africa I covered last month? I can learn to like this. For a day or two, maybe. War can wait till the weekend.

MARK
Champagne?

She shrugs off her unbuttoned blouse and puts her arms around him.

JACKIE
Screw the champagne.

LATER...

A digital clock reads 3:22AM. Mark silently rises from the bed. Quietly he dresses. He opens the wardrobe, feels around the top shelf -- he makes a noise.

Did that wake her? No. He takes down a pistol and a silencer. Tucks it behind him in his waistband.

EXT. CITY SQUARE - NIGHT

A darkened doorway in the shadows. The hint of someone standing there. Headlights appear as a car enters the square.

INT. BRIDAL SUITE - NIGHT

Jackie wakes. Feels beside her. He's not there.

JACKIE
Mark...? Mark?

There's a commotion in the street. Voices. Shouts. The short blast of a car horn.

She rises quickly, glances out the window, grabs her camera, *clickclickclickclickclick.*

An approaching klaxon as a POLICE CRUISER pulls into the square, followed by two others. *Clickclickclickclickclick.*

The room door opens, Mark comes in, out of breath.

MARK
Did you see that?!

JACKIE
Where were you?

MARK
I couldn't sleep. I went for a walk by the river, saw the cops pull up. I must've just missed it.

He looks out the window. As a GENDARME opens a car door, a body slumps out. An AMBULANCE races into the square.

MARK (CONT'D)
Jesus...

JACKIE
Nice way to end a honeymoon.

MORNING

Naked, Mark walks into the bathroom, turns on the shower. Jackie sits up in bed and begins reviewing the shots from the night before on her camera. The square. The shooting.

In one the shooter's face is lit up by the car's interior light.

Click. Click... She comes in close on it.

The shower is turned off.

She starts moving from shot to shot, coming in closer on each one. Click. Click...

He comes out of the bathroom, towelling his hair. Stops dead when he sees her face.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
The guy who shot him... That was *you*.

MARK
No, I--

JACKIE
It was you, Mark. Look.

She hands him the camera. Without looking he sets it down.

MARK
All right, well...

Digs around his suitcase and takes a passport from its lining. Holds it open.

MARK (CONT'D)
I'm with the CIA.

JACKIE
Pete Archer?

MARK
Mark Sinclair's just a name.

He shows her a CIA ID.

JACKIE
What, you're a spy?

MARK
Contract worker.

JACKIE
You shot the man in the car.

MARK
It's what they hire me to do. Ever since I got out of the army.

She's stunned. She can't even find the words to express how she feels.

JACKIE
You...had a gun with you the whole time? *The whole fucking time?*

MARK
It was planted here for me.

JACKIE
Whoa, wait a moment. You mean...this hotel, this...honeymoon, our wedding...? This was all part of some assassination plot?

MARK
Not an assassination--those are forbidden by executive order. These are...cosmetic hits. No one has any idea who was behind it. It's how it works. It's...a way to readjust things.

JACKIE
Are you out of your mind? You killed a perfect stranger? You just took out a gun and shot him to death?

MARK
Look. Listen. Whatever the reason--the Company--

JACKIE
The CIA--?

MARK
They determine that this is necessary for national security. I don't ask questions, I don't know who these people are, I just do the job, get rid of the weapon, and walk away. It's what I do, it's what I'm good at. It was what I did in the army as a sniper.

JACKIE
"Good at." Right.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Like two strangers, each gazes into a different middle distance.

INT. LOFT - EVENING

Jackie's loft. Walls are covered with framed war photos, magazine covers she'd shot, various awards. Including a Pulitzer. Boxes of wedding gifts are everywhere.

They're in the middle of a raging argument.

MARK
It's my *job*, for chrissake, just like yours is to--

JACKIE
I take photographs of *people*, Mark, I don't *murder* them.

MARK
You take pictures of people dying and suffering and then you come home to this expensive loft of yours and sleep in your warm bed. Ever lift a hand to help them? Probably not. Ever learn their names? Never, right? I'm just the same, Jackie, I do the job and walk away and get my eight hours every night.

JACKIE
I don't know who you are anymore.

MARK
Same guy, different name. That's all.

JACKIE
And not a currency trader.

MARK
It's my cover. It's how I get to travel so much. Something they put together for me at the company.

JACKIE
Doesn't mean I have to accept this.

MARK
No. You don't.

JACKIE
And you were going to tell me this when?

MARK
When I walked away from the job. That was my last hit. I'm going to put in for a desk job here in the New York office.

JACKIE
(beat)
Why did you marry me, Mark?

FLASHBACK: INT. PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - NIGHT

A party's in progress in a Manhattan penthouse. Jackie sips a drink, talks to a MAGAZINE EDITOR. She looks dynamite in a simple black dress.

Framed examples of her work are on display.

JACKIE
I'm leaving for Pakistan on--what day is today?

He laughs.

EDITOR
Bet that happens a lot.

JACKIE
Yeah, well it does, actually.

Over his shoulder she spots Mark--from now on he's PETE--glancing her way. She's clearly interested.

EDITOR
Anyway, congratulations. The Pulitzer is very well deserved. I'm so happy to be celebrating it with you, Jackie.

JACKIE
Thanks, Ben.

He drifts away. A few other GUESTS offer passing congratulations.

PETE (O.S.)
Get you another?

She turns to see him beside her.

JACKIE
Hi.

PETE
Bourbon, isn't it?

JACKIE
Doing your homework?

PETE
Just observation, that's all.

He takes her glass.

JACKIE
A double. Straight up.

He extends a hand.

PETE
Mark Sinclair. Congratulations on the prize. I think your work is amazing.

He's still holding her hand. She looks at him curiously.

JACKIE
Do I know you?

PETE
These photos, wow--you get right into the middle of every shitstorm you can find, don't you. I find that really admirable. Pretty damned gutsy, too.

JACKIE
Well, it's not for everyone. And I'm also not walking around killing anyone.

PETE
So you're not an action figure. After the Pulitzer, maybe...?

JACKIE
I--no. I am definitely not someone who wants to get involved. I just record it.

BACK TO:

INT. LOFT - NIGHT

PETE
And after I came to admire the pictures, I fell in love with the photographer.

JACKIE
Let me tell you my side of this. I married you because I wanted someone to come home to after an assignment. Someone reliable, who would always be there for me. I mean, I'm out in the field for a week or a month, I'm filthy, sweaty, I've seen people at their worst, and yeah, I'm protected by my lenses, I'm just a fly on the wall of other people's misery. Which doesn't do me any good when four Somalian soldiers threaten to rape me, or some fourteen-year-old jihadist has a knife to my throat. But when I met you I thought I was buying into something that would give my life a little more meaning than just standing around corpses and looking for the best angle.

The phone rings. A beat as they take each other in. She reaches to answer it. The caller ID reads: **PRIVATE CALLER.**

PETE
Leave it. We need to talk some more.

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - NIGHT

Desks, cubicles, computer monitors, the chirp of ringing phones, etc.

STAN, Frank, and others stand before a wall of dark screens.

SOUND of a phone ringing through a phone line.

FRANK
Come on. Pick it up, Pete.

INT. LOFT - NIGHT

She picks up.

JACKIE
Jackie Seward... Hello...? Anyone...?

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - NIGHT

A wall of screens. Triggered by the phone call they all come to life. Scenes from Jackie's apartment. Different rooms, different POVs.

FRANK (O.S.)
Here we go.

DAVE FARMER comes up alongside FRANK KEYES: 2 CIA officers in suits.

JACKIE
(on monitor)
No one there.

She hangs up. They go their separate ways in the loft. He's seen via surveillance cam in the bathroom, washing his face. Jackie, in another monitor, as she begins to unpack.

FRANK
One of these days he's going to start talking. And she'll be the first to know.

DAVE
And maybe the last. What's her backstory, anyway?

INT. CIA CAFETERIA - NIGHT

At a table, over coffee and sandwiches.

FRANK
The top-paid war photographer. Married once, husband dumped her after six weeks.
(off Dave's look)
Hell, she was never home more than a day or two. Jackie Seward made her real bones on nine-eleven. After the first plane hit she went up on the roof of her dorm. Caught the second plane just as it hit the tower. Got her lungs full of dead-people dust, but she kept shooting, got down on the street, down by the South Tower when it collapsed.
(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)
Her photos went around the world. Along with her name. She was only eighteen. Freshman at NYU. Photography major.

DAVE
She been vetted?

FRANK
She's as clean as they come.

DAVE
Psychological profile?

FRANK
In a word? Uneven.

DAVE
That a medical term, Frank?

FRANK
She's been under treatment off-and-on with a psychiatrist. PTSD-like symptoms. Began after a stint in Somalia.

DAVE
How did you find that out?

FRANK
After she married Pete we hacked into her shrink's computer. Got hold of her file. Just like we know your Kathleen had a bridge put in just about there--

He points to his teeth.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Six years ago.

DAVE
Fuck you, Frank.

FRANK
I'd ask you about your prostate, but I'll leave that up to Dr. Siegal.

DAVE
Enough. What's her weak point?

FRANK
She doesn't play well with others. People either hate or tolerate her. But she does solid work.

DAVE
And keeps going back into the field.

FRANK
Every time. It's all she's got. Her talent. Her passion. Her addiction. Like one of those kids who cut themselves, you know? They just keep going back to the pain to know they're alive.

DAVE
She'll get herself killed one of these days.

Frank stands to return his tray.

FRANK
Without question.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jackie steps in. Shuts the door. She unbuttons her shirt, hangs it up. Unhooks her bra...

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - NIGHT

...and she appears on multiple screens. A few CIA MONITORS watch with interest.

MONITOR
She's hot, I'll say that.

She glances pointedly right at us. She grabs her shirt, holds it against her chest. Comes in close to peer at us. Turns off the light.

INT. LOFT - NIGHT

Jackie pulls Pete into the bathroom. She flips on the light. Grabs a lipstick, draws an arrow pointing right.

His eyes follow it till he sees a tiny hole in the wall beside the mirror.

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - NIGHT

CIA MONITOR
Sir?

Frank walks over. Pete looks right at him.

FRANK
Okay, kill the taps...

On the screen, Pete uncurls his middle finger.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Now.

Monitor keys code into his computer. The screens go immediately black.

FRANK (CONT'D)
As of this minute he's out in the cold.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Over drinks in this upmarket Tribeca establishment.

JACKIE
Someone had to have broken in while we were in Europe. Someone who's done this before. You saw the alarm panel, how the place is completely wired with detectors.
(beat)
It was one of *yours*, wasn't it. Someone who knows his way around surveillance. What are they watching for?

PETE
I don't know, Jackie.

JACKIE
So even your own employers don't trust you. This is, what, about that thing in Paris?

PETE
I don't ask questions. I just do the job.

JACKIE
But it was different this time, wasn't it. Because they wouldn't be spying on us. You have any idea who the victim was?

His eyes glance around. He lowers his voice.

PETE
The deal was that the man was going to a late dinner. Then to a meeting the next day. There was another hotel in the square, across from ours. That's where he was staying. When they knew we'd be in Paris they gave me the assignment.

JACKIE
I married a stranger, for chrissake. I don't even know you.

Heads turn to see what she's raising her voice about. He shushes her.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
(quieter)
Pete Archer? I mean, who the hell is that?

PETE
Calm down. Let's talk it through. Then we can decide how we'll work this out.

She sits back and looks at him.

JACKIE
You know what's sad? I really, really liked Mark Sinclair...

She leans in.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
I was in love with him.

PETE
I need to go to the office, talk to my bosses, see what's going on. Get them off our backs. Then maybe we can start over.

JACKIE
Until the next job.

PETE
I'm done. It's finished, Jackie. It's time for a new life.

EXT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - DAY

A gray, drizzly morning.

An anonymous, older building in the Financial District. Nothing indicates what's housed there.

Pete steps up to a door with no handle. He shows his face to a security cam mounted discreetly above it.

PETE
(to himself)
C'mon, c'mon...

He looks back at the street. A noisy garbage truck stops to pick up.

Now it's starting to rain harder. Pete bangs on the door.

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - DAY

Frank and Dave watch him on a monitor. They do nothing.

EXT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - DAY

Pete takes out his cellphone. Keys in a number.

STAN (V.O.)
Stan Hughes.

PETE
It's me. Pete.

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - DAY

Stan is right beside Dave and Frank. They watch Pete on the monitor.

STAN
Who?

PETE
Pete Archer, dude. Look--

He waves his ID at the cam.

PETE (CONT'D)
Buzz me in, I just want to talk to Frank Keyes.

STAN
I'm sorry, but there is no Pete Archer employed by this company.

PETE (V.O.)
Don't be a dick. You were at my wedding last week. Open up, okay?

Dave makes a throat-cutting gesture. Stan ends the call.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

The rain is torrential as Pete tries to find a taxi in rush hour, looking behind him, checking out the cross streets, weaving in and out of the traffic as horns blare and a BIKE MESSENGER nearly collides with him.

He reaches the corner just as a cab pulls up to the light. He hops in.

INT./EXT. TAXI - DAY

TAXI DRIVER
Where you headed?

PETE
Tribeca. North Moore.

ON DRIVER

-- as he starts the meter.

ON PETE

-- who's soaking wet. He looks over his shoulder through the back window. No one seems to be following him.

He keys a number into his cell.

PETE (CONT'D)
I'm on my way.

JACKIE (V.O.)
What happened?

PETE
Can't talk now.

He clicks off. They stop at a light. Pete looks around. Meets the driver's eyes in the mirror.

ON DRIVER

-- as a bead of sweat rolls down his brow,

TAXI DRIVER
Here on business?

PETE
No, I live in the city.

The driver reaches into the door pocket and stealthily slides out a gun with a silencer. Places it on the passenger seat.

PETE (CONT'D)
It's funny. Most taxi drivers here are either Russians or Arabs.

His eyes meet the driver's once more.

PETE (CONT'D)
But you're not.

TAXI DRIVER
It's a job, right? Someone's gotta do it.

PETE
Stop here.

TAXI DRIVER
But this isn't--

PETE
I said pull over. Behind that UPS truck.

TAXI DRIVER
It's your ride, mister.

The driver pulls to the curb. The rain is really falling. No one pays them any attention.

ON DRIVER

-- as he reaches for the gun it's reflected in the windshield.

Pete reaches through the partition -- grabs him in a headlock as the driver's fingers get hold of the weapon.

PETE
Who put you up to this? Talk to me!

TAXI DRIVER
The...Company.

He can barely breathe. He tries to -- but can't -- bring his gun up.

PETE
What was the order?

TAXI DRIVER
(beat)
El--elimination.

PETE
Why?

No answer.

PETE (CONT'D)
I said why?

Pete snaps the man's head. It's lethal.

INT. LOFT - DAY

Pete walks in. He's soaking wet.

PETE
Jackie--?

No answer. A long beat, then she appears behind him.

JACKIE
Go

He looks at her.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Get out of my life.

PETE
What happened?

JACKIE
Apparently your employer found out about the Nepal spread I was supposed to do for *National Geographic*. Looks like the CIA called the magazine and I've been told not to bother, they've already found someone else. I was looking forward to the assignment, Mark, Pete, whoever you are. The money was amazing, and it wasn't a war zone. You may be cut off from the CIA, but my reputation is about to tank. I want you to walk away and never come back into my life again.

PETE
Listen. Jackie. In about five minutes they're going to come after us. Together we can get away. We separate, they'll get us both.

JACKIE
And if I don't agree, you'll eventually have to kill me, too, right?

PETE
No.
(beat)
They will.

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - NIGHT

Frank leans into Stan's space. All the monitors show scenes from Jackie's empty loft.

STAN
There's been zero activity for over three hours. So we've expanded our scope.

All the monitors cut to video feeds from all over the city -- crowds in Times Square, in the theatre district, in Lower Manhattan, etc.

STAN (CONT'D)
I've hacked into every available cam-- streetlevel ATMs, traffic cams. TSA cams at Kennedy, another in Grand Central. Not to mention the drones no one's supposed to know about.

Red rectangles and lines of data pop up over people's faces as they walk to their trains, planes, or just down the street. Anonymous faces with suddenly accessible ID info-- names, social security numbers, addresses, etc.

STAN (CONT'D)
Entered Pete's algorithms and headshot into our system. So far, nada.

Other Monitors also pay close attention to the screens as Dave comes to the desk.

DAVE
No indication they've tried to leave the country. Airports show nothing.

FRANK
Could he have an extra passport?

DAVE
Apart from Mark Sinclair? Possible but unlikely. But I'd bet Jackie Seward only has one. And it hasn't been flagged.

Stan's screen displays an alert.

STAN
Hang on. We just got a--

He plays his keys until a SURVEILLANCE PHOTO appears on his screen. A line of cars on the MANHATTAN BRIDGE going to NJ.

STAN (CONT'D)
Okay, the time-stamp was forty-seven minutes ago.

He enlarges the photo. A line of cars, the bridge lights reflected off the windshields.

STAN (CONT'D)
Cam detected his license plate. It's only a partial, but--

DAVE
Tighten up on that?

Stan does so. Two unreadable faces behind the windshield.

DAVE (CONT'D)
(to Frank)
What do you think?

FRANK
(beat)
Jesus, I don't know. Could be them. How partial is the ID?

STAN
First three digits.

Frank looks at Dave.

DAVE
Good enough for me.

FRANK
Okay, so they drive to Brooklyn. Only place beyond that is the Island.

DAVE
Where they could catch a ferry to Connecticut.

FRANK
Why would they do this? Why not head south, go west, hit Jersey, Pennsylvania, get out of town altogether?

DAVE
What do we know about him? He have any family--?

FRANK
None. Raised outside Pittsburgh, both parents are dead. No siblings, no close relatives. Not many friends, either. He was our best candidate for the job. There is no one for him to go to. No one would ever miss him.

DAVE
Until now.

INT. BROOKLYN MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Room is dark. Pete stands at the window, peering out between the curtains. Jackie sits on the bed.

JACKIE
Anything...?

He shakes his head. Shuts the curtains. She looks up at him. It's a look both of longing and repulsion, but he reaches out and touches her face.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
No. I married Mark Sinclair. Not some...hitman. I'm tired. I need to get my life back on track. I'm going to get some sleep, and when I wake up I'm out of here. You have a car. Go. Get lost. I'll find my own way out of your life.

She walks into the bathroom. He watches as she undresses.

BATHROOM

He comes in behind her as she looks in the mirror. She shuts her eyes. She does not want to give in to this man. He wraps his arms around her.

PETE
It's still me, Jackie. Still your husband. Same face, same body--

JACKIE
Different lie?

PETE
Just give it a chance.

She turns to him. They kiss. Deeply. Passionately. Gently she pushes him away.

JACKIE
I can't.

He backs off.

PETE
You're right. This isn't the time.

She turns to him. A slight smile.

JACKIE
Thanks for understanding.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A meeting in progress. MEN and WOMEN around the table.

CIA AGENT
Why wasn't Archer removed ASAP in Paris?

DAVE
He was with his new wife. If she'd reported him missing it would have set off all kinds of alarms.

2ND CIA AGENT
Why he is being cut now?

Dave and Frank share a look.

DAVE
This was always intended to be Pete Archer's final hit--simply because of the very sensitive nature of the operation. It was necessary for us to close the book on something that took place in Iraq two years ago.

2ND CIA AGENT
So Pete would retire?

Mild laughter ripples through the room.

3RD CIA AGENT
As if we could ever get outta this place.

More laughter.

DAVE
Typically we do a relocation assignment, providing the operative with a new identity, a new town or city, usually a desk job at another federal facility.
(MORE)

DAVE (CONT'D)
Many go into the private sector, running security for corporations, that kind of thing. In Pete Archer's case this was never going to be an option.

CIA AGENT
He didn't know that.

DAVE
(beat)
No.

It leaves the room in dead silence.

FRANK
The death in Paris of Salim Ahmed Quassim is as much about Agency security as it is about our national reputation. I can't say more about it at this time, except that it was done quickly, cleanly, leaving no agency fingerprint on the operation. As far as anyone's concerned, this was an attempted robbery that went bad.

2ND CIA AGENT
Why eliminate Quassim?

FRANK
Because he was preparing to initiate a deal that would have left us weakened for years to come. In return for his silence over a sensitive and confidential matter he wanted a significant amount of cash as well as future involvement in commercial investments in Iraq. It's why he was in Paris. The next day he would be meeting with a team of American businessmen.

DAVE
To apply pressure on us.

FRANK
Call it what it was--blackmail. Something took place two years ago in a town south of Baghdad. It killed his family, but he survived. He...managed to get away. I can't go into any great detail, but it drew the agency in and left us vulnerable to the kind of thing Quassim was attempting to do. Had he lived, had this meeting taken place, it could have exposed the CIA to potentially damaging revelations.
(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)
We've been working with the security services in France to keep this under the radar--a complete news blackout on the victim's identity. We're creating a future narrative to explain his disappearance.

DAVE
I think we need to bring this meeting to an end.

FRANK
Right. Well. Okay, let's all get back to our desks.

3RD CIA AGENT
Sir?

Dave and Frank turn to him on their way out.

3RD CIA AGENT (CONT'D)
Did Archer know who his victim was?

DAVE
Sorry. We're done now.

2ND CIA AGENT
How about Archer's wife? What's her role in all of this?

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

Jackie's eyes are wide open as she lies in bed. Beside her an apparently sleeping Pete Archer. She props up on an elbow and looks at him. Gently takes a lock of hair from his face.

Quietly she slips out of bed and walks into the bathroom. The door is shut. The shower comes on.

And Pete's eyes are now wide open.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

In a hoodie--hood up--and leather jacket, Pete steps out of the motel room and crosses over to a CONVENIENCE STORE across the street.

He looks in all directions. The road's quiet. A BOY rides by on a bicycle. A car passes. Pete crosses.

As he enters he ducks his face away from the security cam above the checkout counter.

Down one aisle, then another. He picks up a few bottles of water. Slides a GO-PHONE off a rack, heads for the checkout, then gets sidetracked when he sees a display of wrapped sandwiches.

A WOMAN pushing a TODDLER in a stroller enters the store. She's in her late 30s, looks like she's had a rough life. A smoker's face. She barely takes Pete in, goes to get some milk.

When she walks by him she causes him to drop one of his waters. She goes to pick it up just as he does.

WOMAN IN CONVENIENCE STORE
Sorry.

Then -- quietly --

WOMAN IN CONVENIENCE STORE (CONT'D)
Get outta here.

PETE
What?

WOMAN IN CONVENIENCE STORE
Now--get outta here. *Run!*

PETE
What do you mean?

She shows him a $50 bill.

WOMAN IN CONVENIENCE STORE
Lady across the street gave me this if I told you to get out.

He looks out the window. A PIZZA DELIVERY CAR is parked in front of the store. A DELIVERY MAN in a Mets jacket gets out.

Except he isn't carrying any pizzas. And he's walking BACKWARDS, as if watching for someone. Or something.

Now -- Pete RUNS -- throws the door open --

CASHIER
Hey--! You didn't pay me, asshole!

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

Endless traffic at the tail end of rush hour in Brooklyn.

Pete waits for a chance to cross -- and he turns to look at the Delivery Man. Who now has a cellphone in his hand.

He's keying something in -- the traffic's still flowing -- Pete breaks into a run -- rolls over the hood of a Chevy just to get away -- weaves in and out -- when THE DELIVERY CAR BLOWS UP, blowing out the front of the convenience store, sending pieces of metal everywhere --

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Pete shuts the door behind him. The shower's still running. He opens the bathroom door. Steam is everywhere.

BATHROOM

PETE
Jackie--we gotta go. Right now.

Nothing. Not a word. Just the noise of the shower.

PETE (CONT'D)
Jackie...? Oh no, no, no, oh god no!

He starts to slide open the shower curtain. He knows what he's going to see. And it's not going to be pretty.

But no one's there.

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

He steps out just as --

EMERGENCY VEHICLES converge upon the scene of the car bombing -- FIRE TRUCKS, AMBULANCES, CRUISERS.

Then: the roar of an approaching car in the motel parking lot. The squeal of brakes.

JACKIE
Get in...

He just stares at her.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Five seconds. Get in!

INT./EXT. PETE'S CAR - DAY

She speeds out of the motel parking lot and fishtails onto the service road. Her hair's still wet from the shower.

PETE
You paid that woman?

JACKIE
I've been around enough car bombings to know when one's being set up.

She glances up at the rearview.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Behind us.

In his wing mirror: a CROWN VIC gaining on them.

She veers off suddenly into a vacant city lot -- cuts across it, kicking up dust -- as the Vic follows them -- and now she's heading THE WRONG WAY on a ONE-WAY STREET. Cars sound their horns, people swear and shout at her --

JACKIE (CONT'D)
We just got real lucky. Maybe.

She comes to a corner. The light goes from red to green. The traffic's still slow. She comes to the next street only to find it's blocked by the Vic. TWO MEN in suits stand by it. One of them points a gun.

She glides to a stop. Nothing happens.

PETE
They think we may be armed.

JACKIE
Are we?

PETE
Hm-mm. Except I'm going to get out, put my hands up and show them my agency ID.

The 2nd MAN reaches into the back of the Vic and takes out a SHOTGUN.

JACKIE
Ever been to a roadblock in Somalia?

PETE
What do you think?

JACKIE
This is how you deal with it.

She slams the car into reverse. Stomps her foot to the floor and, burning rubber, pushes 100 as she backs down one street, through an intersection, down another street -- horns blow -- cars screech to a stop - as others pull out of her way onto the sidewalks --

And the Vic is now headed their way. She throws Pete's car into drive, turns down an alleyway between two buildings -- sending plastic garbage bins flying and scattering rubbish.

And coming to a halt just as the Vic speeds behind them past the alley.

PETE
You really do it like that?

JACKIE
Usually you pay the bastards and put your hands in the air. But Jersey cops never take bribes, you should know that.

Her look says otherwise.

INT./EXT. PETE'S CAR - MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Before the stores have closed. They're just one car out of hundreds of them.

Pete and Jackie eat their sandwiches. Down time.

PETE
So...how do you do it? You've never really talked about it.

JACKIE
It's not complicated. I'm behind the camera, the one no one sees. I'm like you. I'm in, I do my thing, I'm out.

PETE
And if you see someone in trouble? Someone who needs help?

FLASHBACK: EXT. MIDDLE EASTERN VILLAGE - DAY

The ground is littered with corpses immediately after a car-bombing. The dust hasn't even begun to settle over the screaming INFANT sitting in the middle of it all.

Other SURVIVORS scream and run to find loved ones.

We only become aware of Jackie as we pull back ten feet. She's on her knees, taking photos -- working fast.

IRAQI SOLDIER
(in Arabic)
Get out! You must leave now!

She lowers her camera. Looks at the baby. The soldier's gun is pointed right at her. She walks away as her hijab blows around her in the swirling dust.

INT. PETE'S CAR - NIGHT

JACKIE
The person who takes the photos is a whole different woman. She's cold. She has no conscience. What's left of her heart is all dried up. I'm not brave, I'm not courageous, I'm just a little dead inside. But what I produce, what I publish--are things that may move other people. Some even to act, to make changes.

PETE
You're the messenger.

JACKIE
The one they usually end up killing.

He flips open his go-phone. Keys in a number. A beat, then:

PETE
Tell Frank Keyes I want to come to an agreement. I'm done running... And I want to make sure nothing happens to my wife. That's my deal.

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - NIGHT

Frank leans over Stan's cubicle. Stan looks up at him. A beat, then Frank takes the phone.

FRANK
Pete.

INT. PETE'S CAR - NIGHT

PETE
Why are your people after me?

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - NIGHT

ELSEWHERE IN THE ROOM

Stan's with a TECH AGENT.

TECH AGENT
Need a few minutes to triangulate.

Stan glances over to Frank. He makes the “keep him talking” gesture.

FRANK
As far as we’re concerned you’ve got yourself a hostage, not a wife. You need to think long and hard about how you’re going to make this work.

PETE (V.O.)
What do you want from me, Frank?

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - NIGHT

FRANK
How much do you know about the Paris operation?

INT. PETE’S CAR - NIGHT

PETE
Same as every other. Bang-bang, and I walk away. It’s--

FRANK (V.O.)
Did you--

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - NIGHT

FRANK
--recognize the subject?

PETE (V.O.)
(beat)
No.

FRANK
Then we have one last assignment for you.

INT. PETE’S CAR - NIGHT

She watches him as he listens. A long beat. His eyes shift to her face. He says nothing. Does nothing. Then --

PETE
Go! Now! *Gogogo!*

She tears out of the parking lot as Pete tears the flip phone in half, tossing each piece out the window.

PETE (CONT'D)
I'm already dead to them. We both are. They're coming after us.

JACKIE
Where the hell are we going?

PETE
There's this guy I know in L.A. Mariano Lopez. He can help us.

JACKIE
L.A.'s like three-thousand miles away, are you crazy?

PETE
He'd been contracted by the CIA for a whole bunch of black ops over the years...

She takes the corner almost too quickly.

PETE (CONT'D)
Did some mercenary work in Africa. *Jesus*--okay--just slow down a little, will you? He ran guns for the rebels in Syria. Now he's got a little business of his own. He sells information. Names of informants, double agents, inside men. Guns-for-hire--that kind of thing. But he's also a solid exo-man--

JACKIE
What's that?

PETE
He can get us passports, documents, whatever we need. He's a real pro. He can help us disappear.

JACKIE
And go where?

PETE
Anywhere but here.

They've driven right into a

STREET FESTIVAL. Probably Italian. Lots of food stalls. A PLASTER SAINT with dollars stuck all over it.

PETE (CONT'D)
Shit. We'll never get out of this.

She slips into a space by the curb. Crowds throng the sidewalk. Looks like the safest place in the world.

JACKIE
I'm not going with you, Pete. I just want to find myself a nice quiet war somewhere and do what I'm best at.

PETE
You already know you'll never get another job. They'll detain and question you until they find me.

JACKIE
Except I'm really good at staying off people's radar.

PETE
And they're a million times better at catching people like you.

JACKIE
I can try.

PETE
And you will fail. You need to decide. Together we have a chance. Are you in or are you out?

JACKIE
What happened in Paris? Why are they doing this to us?

PETE
I don't know--

JACKIE
Think. You were there, you were waiting for him.

FLASHBACK: EXT. PARIS SQUARE - NIGHT

The car containing Quassim pulls up. Someone inside it says something in Arabic, someone else laughs, then the back door opens. Pete steps out of the shadows -- lifts his gun --

Then, IN SLOW-MOTION, Quassim turns to look at him. Holds up a hand to shield himself.

There's a FLASH, a *fffp* of a silencered bullet --

INT. PETE'S CAR - NIGHT

Off his look --

JACKIE
It's all coming together now, isn't it.

PETE
Latifiya...

JACKIE
What about it? I was there, Pete, I was--

PETE
Just tell me right now. Are you in or are you out? It's all I need to know. If you're not, I'm opening the door and you'll never see me again.

She looks out her window across the street as she mulls over it.

A MAN DRESSED AS A TROUBADOUR, playing a mandolin and singing in the street, catches her eye. He sings "O Sole Mio."

JACKIE
Okay, Pete...

She turns to him.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
I'm in.

There's a barely noticeable *fffp*. Which is when she notices the tiny bullet hole in the windshield. The spidery crackling around it.

And then the bullet hole in Pete's head...

It takes her breath away. No one on the sidewalk or in the street seems guilty of it. The Troubadour is strolling away. Everyone looks innocent. Anyone could be the assassin.

It takes her a moment but...she quietly opens the door. Shuts it carefully. And vanishes into the music and happiness of the crowd.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - NIGHT

Jackie walks forlornly down the pedestrian walkway towards Manhattan. She looks drained. Beaten. Defeated. And alone.

INT. JACKIE'S BUILDING - NIGHT

She trudges up the stairs to her loft. The door's ajar. It's dark inside. She steps back, takes it in.

Then she nudges the door open with her toe.

JACKIE
(quietly)
Hello? Someone there?

Nothing. She reaches in and switches on the lights, and the loft comes aglow.

INT. LOFT - NIGHT

Now she's inside.

The place has been ransacked. Cushions have been cut open and tossed aside, WEDDING PRESENTS have been torn open, tossed onto the floor. Someone did this in a hurry.

Someone did this to leave a message.

She slides down a wall and collapses to the floor. And now the tears come in great gulping sobs. She's alone. Violated. And now hunted.

SHORT TIME LATER...

In a daze she walks through the spaces in the loft. A bottle of wine in one hand, a glass in the other. Something to calm her down.

Each space has been searched, turned over. Until she comes to her

STUDIO AREA. This looks clean.

It's lined with expensive wood cabinets with hundreds of flat drawers -- each labelled with a different assignment: 9/11. KIGALI. KABUL. BAGHDAD. FUKUSHIMA. NEW ORLEANS. BALI. Lots more, each one a place of devastation.

She sets down her glass and bottle.

She slides each drawer open. Everything seems to be there: contact sheets and prints. Until she opens a drawer labelled LATIFIYA...

AND IT'S EMPTY. She sits back. Takes it in.

She gets up and turns on her computer. Enters her passcode, *clickclickclickclick*...

She enters a search for a folder labelled LATIFIYA. The result: FOLDER NOT FOUND. She pounds her fist on the desk.

Clicks on her iPhone. Puts it on speaker. Jackie is wired.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
(groggily)
Yeah...hello.

JACKIE
It's Jackie, Colette. Jackie Seward. I need to--

COLETTE (V.O.)
Do you have any idea what time it is?

Jackie's eye goes right to the clock on the wall: 2:47AM.

JACKIE
Shit. Sorry. Sorry. Look--something's happened. Something I don't understand yet. Someone broke into my place. I may need to get away fast.

COLETTE (V.O.)
Did you call the police?

JACKIE
I--I can't do that right now. Just--an entire project's worth of photos are missing. They didn't take anything else. One project, one place, one event.

COLETTE (V.O.)
Can't this wait till--

JACKIE
I just need to see those shots again. The Latifiya sequence.

COLETTE (V.O.)
This is the Iraq piece you did for our Sunday Magazine, right? That big massacre?

JACKIE
Two years ago, I think.

COLETTE (V.O.)
Just...gimme a moment...
(big sigh)
(MORE)

COLETTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Okay. I'm at my computer. Looka this-- forty-nine emails overnight. Why am I so fucking popular after I go to sleep? Okay, I'm in the Times's archive. And...it looks like you submitted a total of hundred and thirteen shots for that assignment. We used six. I have both hard copies and digital of the entire submission--

JACKIE
I need them now. All of them. Just attach the images.

COLETTE (V.O.)
They're on their way... And I will say goodnight and go fuck yourself for waking me from my desperately-needed beauty sleep.

Jackie's iMac screen fills with thumbnails of the Latifiya sequence. She enlarges one at a time.

Scenes of massacre. Bodies everywhere. In the village square. In rooms.

And now CIVILIANS -- AMERICAN CIVILIANS. Suits. ARMY OFFICERS.

Which is when she leans in. Everything now looks different to her.

Click. Click... She comes in close. Because...on screen...is PETE ARCHER. Right at the left edge of the photo. Taking off his sunglasses.

CLICK. The next in the sequence. He looks pointedly at her, from the left of the shot, over a line of bodies on the ground.

She clicks between the images. Obviously just a few seconds apart.

JACKIE
(to herself)
You and I, my beloved husband, had seen each other before.

Her phone rings. She looks at the iPhone screen. *COLETTE*.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Yeah.

COLETTE (V.O.)
Just happened to see this, Jackie. You had a name written on the back of three of the unpublished ones. I'd made a note of it on your folder.

Now Jackie's interested.

COLETTE (V.O.)
Trying to read your writing... Taylor...something? Wait--it's Tyler...Wiltz, maybe? Waltz? Something...

JACKIE
Spell it.

She grabs a pen, writes on her hand --

COLETTE (V.O.)
God, you write like a four-year-old. Looks like W-i-l-t-z to me. Yeah. That's it. Probably something for the caption.

JACKIE
Which photos is it on? Just the numbers.

COLETTE (V.O.)
Lemme see... Okay, that's forty-seven, forty-eight and...fifty-one.

Jackie writes those, as well.

JACKIE
Got it, thanks.

Jackie clicks off. She goes to her computer. Enlarges those three photos so they all fit together on the screen.

A UNIFORMED MAJOR, the six distinctive stripes on his sleeves, in sunglasses -- sometimes alone, sometimes with others. All are candids.

Click. And her big photo printer kicks into life.

EXT. HUDSON VALLEY COUNTRY ROAD - MORNING

Jackie appears over the rise of the hill, walking amid falling autumn leaves, a brittle sun breaking through the branches overhead.

The air looks heavy and autumnal. She carries her backpack over one shoulder, her camera bag over the other.

EXT. HUDSON VALLEY FARMHOUSE - MORNING

A mosaic of colorful fallen leaves. Smoke rises from the brick chimney of the house.

An old Volvo wagon is parked in the driveway. A few bumper stickers on the back. *Hillary '08. Obama 2012. Visualize Whirled Peas.*

The front door opens. Jackie's white-haired MOTHER (63), and still something of a bohemian, comes out, squints to see, then opens her arms as Jackie approaches. She shines on a smile.

JACKIE
Mom.

MOTHER
I thought I saw you from the window. How did you get here?

JACKIE
Took the train.

MOTHER
Why didn't you call? I would've picked you--

JACKIE
I wanted to walk. Sorry for the surprise.

Jackie falls into the woman's arms. Shares a hug. But her mother looks concerned.

MOTHER
Are you okay? How have you been?

Jackie looks at her at arm's length. She has no words. Her eyes fill with tears.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

A fire burns in the hearth. Jackie and her mother enter.

MOTHER
You'll stay for a while?

JACKIE
Maybe just for the night. I should've called first, I'm really sorry--

MOTHER
Stop apologizing. I'm just glad you're here. Let me call Callie. She'd love to see you. Maybe she can drive down for lunch? I have some nice--

JACKIE
Don't--no--I'd rather not let her know I'm here.

MOTHER
She's your sister, sweetheart, she'd love to--

JACKIE
And don't tell anyone I was here, okay? Don't even say my name on the phone.

MOTHER
Why not? Are you in some kind of trouble?

INT. FRANK KEYES'S OFFICE - CIA - DAY

Frank stands at his desk, looking down at a document. There's a tap at the door.

FRANK
Yeah.

It's Stan.

STAN
We've lost her. She's off the grid.

Frank takes it in.

FRANK
And Pete?

STAN
You know, that was really just too--

FRANK
I know you were friends. But this is about national security.

STAN
Anyway, we're working on his narrative now.

FRANK
How did he die?

STAN
Car crash somewhere in Canada, maybe eight months from now. All the evidence will be airtight, as always.

Dave steps in behind him.

FRANK
(to Stan)
Give us a few minutes, okay?

Stan leaves. Dave shuts the door.

FRANK (CONT'D)
The assumption has to be that she now knows.

DAVE
We'll find her. Hell, we found bin Laden.

FRANK
Hiding in plain sight. Look. She's been in war. She knows how to read people. She knows how to move in and out of visibility. It could complicate things.

DAVE
The question right now is her memory. Does she have enough to put two and two together over what happened back in Iraq?

FRANK
If she can do that--

DAVE
Then she'll know why Pete came into her life.

FRANK
We have to send someone after her she won't ever suspect. One day soon he--or she--will walk into her life. And then it'll be over.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DUSK

Jackie climbs the stairs. She reaches the landing outside her MOTHER'S BEDROOM. Photos on the wall of Jackie and Callie at different ages. She turns to look in on it -- as --

FLASHBACK: INT. IRAQI HOUSE - DAY

In battered jeans and Kevlar vest, cameras hanging from her shoulders, Jackie reaches the top of the stairs. It's quiet--too quiet. She nearly trips over a DOLL on the floor. Catches herself. Then --

She enters a large room. Shutters are closed. It's dark. She turns on her flashlight to find --

BODIES--of WOMEN, CHILDREN, OLD PEOPLE. A family. Scattered, all shot. Blood everywhere.

FLASHBACK: INT. FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

JACKIE'S BEDROOM

Jackie (12 years old) hears raised voices. In her long nightgown she walks down the hall to her

MOTHER'S BEDROOM

JACKIE'S FATHER
Bitch! Goddam whore!

Her mother's face is bruised and swollen. Her father takes a Colt .44 from a drawer and aims it at her. Young Jackie watches this in silent horror.

Her father turns to her, gun still in hand, now pointed right at her. And --

FLASHBACK: INT. IRAQI HOUSE - DAY

Jackie, camera in hand, walks among the dead, stunned into silence by what she's seeing.

She throws open the shutters. A town square filled with bodies. Men, women, children. All of them shot dead.

WHAM! A door flies open into the dusty, gloomy room. An AMERICAN CIVILIAN walks in. His shirt is damp from the heat. We can barely make out his features. A blinding flashlight is turned on her.

CIVILIAN
What are you doing here?

She shields her eyes.

JACKIE
Press. Photographer. I got a call last night. They said something happened here.

She takes out a card and document.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
These are my credentials--

CIVILIAN
Your job's done, okay? Time to leave.

FLASHBACK: INT. MOTHER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Her father lowers the gun. He looks at it. Looks at Jackie.

FATHER
I'm not going to hurt her, Jackie. I promise.

It all happens very fast: he puts the gun in his mouth and pulls the trigger. Blood splashes on the wall behind him as he falls.

BACK TO:

INT. JACKIE'S OLD ROOM - PRESENT DAY - DUSK

Her childhood is here--her books, sketchbooks, CDs, photo albums. A framed photo of her parents when much younger. And happier.

On the desk is a pink VIVITAR POINT 'N SHOOT CAMERA from the 1980s. It brings a wistful smile to her face.

She goes to the window. Peers through the lensfinder at the sun setting over the woods below.

MOTHER (O.S.)
Jackie?

Her mother stands in the bar of light from the hallway.

DINING ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Pot roast and vegetables and potatoes. Jackie pours herself a very large bourbon from the sideboard.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
You're drinking. A lot these days?

JACKIE
Gallon or two a week.
(off her look)
Joking, mom.

MOTHER
Your father always drank too much.

JACKIE
I'm not my father.

MOTHER
To his eternal regret.

JACKIE
I hated him.

MOTHER
(beat)
Yes. I know.

JACKIE
Did you love him? Ever?

Mother forces a smile to change the subject.

MOTHER
Have you seen the doctor lately...?

JACKIE
I stopped seeing him before the wedding.

MOTHER
So...everything's okay.

JACKIE
(beat)
For the moment.

MOTHER
Stable... Balanced...?

JACKIE
When I'm working, yeah, it's all good.
That's the best treatment for me.

MOTHER
It's dangerous.

JACKIE
(smiles)
It's a trade-off.

MOTHER
I guess it makes sense to you. You go off to some...scene of devastation--some war or disaster and take photos and you feel healthy. Most people would be just the opposite.

JACKIE
I'm not most people.

Mother serves herself some food.

MOTHER
And how's Mike?

Jackie looks at her with puzzlement.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Your husband?

JACKIE
Mark.

MOTHER
Because I noticed you didn't bring him along.

JACKIE
He--he's fine. He's working, and...

Her mother just looks at her.

MOTHER
You're in trouble, aren't you.

Jackie's mood suddenly changes.

JACKIE
Just hungry.

And she sips her drink.

LATER...

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Jackie walks to the BARN behind the house. She pulls open the door -- at least tries -- it isn't easy -- until it finally flies open with a bang and swings back on its hinges.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

She switches on a light mounted high in the ceiling.

A hay loft. Below it a few empty horse stalls. She picks up a wisp of hay from the floor and tosses it aside.

She climbs a ladder to the hayloft. In the corner is an old LEATHER TRUNK. She opens it. A stack of wartime LIFE MAGAZINES. A rubber band around a thick stack of letters dating back decades. An old key or two.

She reaches under the magazines and takes out a pistol -- an old-fashioned Colt .44. The same gun her father used to kill himself.

She reaches back in the trunk and takes out an old, beaten-up box of bullets. She sits back against the wall. Holds the gun between two hands. The thing is huge. The John Wayne of weapons.

FLASHBACK: EXT. WOODS - DAY

12-YEAR-OLD JACKIE's with her FATHER, in his mid 40s. He watches carefully as she holds the gun between two hands.

She lowers it.

JACKIE
It's heavy.

FATHER
Everything serious is heavy. Now lift it up. Look at your target.

JACKIE
I don't want to, daddy.

FATHER
It's just a skill to learn. Like fishing. Or doing arithmetic. This isn't something you'll probably ever do again. But it doesn't hurt to learn. I did when I was your age.

She takes a deep breath. Lifts the gun. Anything to please the old man.

FATHER (CONT'D)
That's it... It's just like taking a picture with your camera, kiddo. You just point and--

BLAM!

The bullet cleanly blows away a tin can off a tree stump.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
You have any idea what unit he was in?

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Jackie sits with her cellphone on a tree stump.

JACKIE
I was kind of hoping that his name might appear in some sort of...general registry or something.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
Let me run that through another program here. You say his name is Diltz?

JACKIE
No--Wiltz, with a "W."

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
Oh yeah, I got it. Major Tyler Wiltz. He's in Chicago. Was in Jesse Brown for almost three and half years--

JACKIE
Who is that?

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
The V.A. Hospital in Chicago. Called the Jesse Brown. He's still an outpatient there. Comes once a week. When he remembers.

JACKIE
I need to get in touch with him.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
You have a pen handy?

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Her Mother has fallen asleep in front of the TV. Jackie switches it off. Kisses her mother lightly on the cheek.

Her mother's eyes blink open.

MOTHER
Was I asleep?

JACKIE
I have to leave.

Mother looks at her watch.

MOTHER
But I thought you were staying the night.

JACKIE
I can't. I have to go away. Maybe for a long time.

MOTHER
Is it...another assignment?

JACKIE
No. This time it's personal.

INT. LOFT - MORNING

Jackie sits against the wall. Sleepless. Red-eyed. The gun comes into focus. Then the clock. 10:53AM. She looks at it.

JACKIE
Oh fucking hell--

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - MORNING

MAIN OPERATIONS ROOM.

STAN
No Internet activity, no cellphone, no credit card use for almost twenty-four hours.

One of the MONITORS, a woman, comes up to him.

MONITOR
We just intercepted a Google search from her computer for...
(re paper in his hand)
Mariano Lopez. Couple different permutations. Mariano Lopez Los Angeles. Mariano Lopez CIA.

Frank picks up a phone.

FRANK
Check to see if there's any record of a Mariano Lopez on our lists. Yeah, I'll be here.

Dave steps in.

DAVE
I just heard.

FRANK
I want this taken care of ASAP. Let's get someone down there now.

Phone rings. He grabs it.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Yes... You're sure of that?

He hangs up.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Mariano Lopez worked in black ops in Iraq with Pete Archer. Contractor just like him. Deep background, very transparent.

DAVE
American?

FRANK
Latino. He's one of the ghosts. The guy no one notices after he's shot you dead. No one has ever connected his kills with the Company. He's that good.

DAVE
Question is, how the hell does she know him?

INT./EXT. TOWN CAR - DAY

In NYC traffic. The DRIVER is in his late 30s. Wears a suit, driving gloves, has a mustache and goatee. He wears lightly-tinted sunglasses.

A Mozart piano sonata on the stereo

On the seat next to him is a WALL STREET JOURNAL. As the traffic halts at a light he picks up the paper, revealing a GLOCK WITH A SILENCER.

He glances at the headline, then drops it on the gun as the traffic advances.

INT. LOFT - BEDROOM AREA - DAY

Jackie's in jeans, sweater. A beaten-up leather jacket.

She's finished packing a backpack. Places a few cameras into her camera bag. Returns to the

STUDIO AREA

...where she gathers the print-outs from the Iraq assignment, folds and places them carefully in her backpack.

Grabs her passport from a shelf. And then, finally...

She takes out all her credit cards from her purse and starts feeding them into her shredder. Visa. MasterCard. AmEx. When she gets to the debit she slides it into her jeans pocket.

And now her driver's license heads for the shredder, her photo disappearing into the teeth of the machine.

INT./EXT. TOWN CAR - DAY

The Driver pulls into North Moore Street just as Jackie steps out of her building, letting the door shut behind her.

She walks to the corner as he tracks her from ten feet behind. He follows her around the corner, pulls into a space across the street as she steps inside a café.

INT. CAFÉ - DAY

At counter.

JACKIE
Americano. Big one. With an extra shot. And...I'll have one of those.

BARISTA
Maple scone?

JACKIE
Please.

She digs in her purse for the cash. Behind her, through the window, still parked is --

INT./EXT. TOWN CAR - DAY

The Driver tosses the newspaper to the back seat. *Click-clunk*: he chambers a bullet in the gun.

The passenger window slides down with a faint whine.

And he waits. The sidewalk is busy. People heading to work, parents taking their kids to school.

Music continues to play on the car stereo. He wraps his hand around the gun. Watches the café door.

Which now opens. Jackie steps out, coffee and scone in hand.

He raises the gun. Takes aim as she starts to walk away. His finger pulls gently on the trigger --

The gun makes a *ffffp* sound, as a MOTHER pushing a DOUBLE STROLLER with her twins passes in front of Jackie.

The mother goes down. The shooter seems briefly stunned by his miss. Jackie doesn't notice it.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Jackie gets into a TAXI.

INT./EXT. TAXI - DAY

Arabic music plays on the sound system.

TAXI DRIVER
(Middle Eastern)
Where to?

JACKIE
Penn Station.

He pulls away, passing the scene on the sidewalk. People have rushed to the shot mother and her kids.

Jackie notices the driver's taxi license.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
(in Arabic)
Iraqi?

His eyes meet hers in the rearview.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
(Arabic)
I'm not prying. I've been there many times. I love your country.

TAXI DRIVER
(in English)
This is my country now.
(MORE)

TAXI DRIVER (CONT'D)
My home there is no more. My family is gone. I start fresh here.

Through the rear window the Town Car looms into view.

EXT. PENN STATION - DAY

Crowded and busy with commuters. Jackie makes her way to a

TICKET WINDOW. The person ahead of her is finished. She steps up.

JACKIE
When’s the next train to Chicago, please?

TICKET AGENT
Three-forty-five this afternoon. Arrives in Chicago nine-forty-five tomorrow morning. And I’m afraid that’s been delayed two hours. So it won’t be arriving in Chicago until just before noon tomorrow.

JACKIE
Nothing earlier?

TICKET AGENT
That’s the only train we have serving that route. Sorry.

JACKIE
That’s like a twenty-hour trip.

The LINE OF PASSENGERS behind her is growing restive.

MAN’S VOICE (O.S.)
Rules me out, too.

She turns to see the man behind her. It’s the SHOOTER from the Town Car.

TICKET AGENT
Can you please step aside and let the others come forward?

JACKIE
Um, yeah, sure.

The Shooter steps out, as well.

SHOOTER
Me, I’m going to drive. I’ve got my car in a lot just off Eighth.
(MORE)

SHOOTER (CONT'D)
I missed my flight out this morning, I need to be in Chicago at eleven tomorrow for a rehearsal.

She’s about to rejoin the line at the ticket counter.

SHOOTER (CONT’D)
You know, I’d be happy for the company. Leave now and we’d be there, oh, maybe eleven tonight? Works perfectly for me. Get a decent night’s sleep before rehearsal.

JACKIE
I don’t know. Thanks, anyway.

She gets to the back of the line.

SHOOTER
Obviously I’m a total stranger, but-- look, I’m supposed to be soloing with the CSO--the Chicago Symphony Orchestra-- tomorrow night. I can’t miss rehearsal. Like I said, I’d be happy for the company.

She looks at him carefully. As if trying to read his face. He certainly looks honest and pleasant enough.

JACKIE
All right. Maybe. Okay.

They start to walk together. Until he realizes he’s walking alone. Jackie’s ten steps behind him. Not moving. He turns to her.

SHOOTER
Well. Sorry you won’t be joining me. But I completely understand. A woman travelling alone with a stranger. Now if my wife were with me, I’m sure it’d be different. But we just had our third child, and Alexis really can’t travel at the moment.

INT./EXT. TOWN CAR - DAY

Jackie now sits beside the man. A Beethoven piano concerto is on the stereo.

SHOOTER
Staying anywhere special in Chicago? Family, maybe, or a--

JACKIE
I'm there on business. So I'll grab a hotel room.

SHOOTER
Then back to New York?

She looks at him. He looks at her.

SHOOTER (CONT'D)
Sorry. I don't mean to pry. Wait--listen to this...

The pianist plays a cadenza.

SHOOTER (CONT'D)
It's a tricky passage. It's what I'm playing tomorrow night. The fingering is diabolical. By the way...

He holds out a hand --

SHOOTER (CONT'D)
I'm Stephen Taylor.

She takes his hand.

JACKIE
Jackie Seward.

SHOOTER
Noticed you have a camera bag back there. Hobbyist?

JACKIE
Listen--don't take this personally, but I'm really tired. Mind if get a few hours' sleep?

SHOOTER
Please do. I'm happy with my music.

BLACK.

INT./EXT. TOWN CAR - EVENING

She wakes abruptly with a gasp. They're parked in a brightly-lit SERVICE PLAZA. The neon flash of a fast-food restaurant, gas station.

She's alone. She sits up, looks around, tries to catch her bearings.

INT. SERVICE PLAZA - EVENING

FOOD COURT

The shooter takes his bags and cardboard tray full of food and drinks and heads for the door...

INT. TOWN CAR - EVENING

Jackie notices the glove box. She opens it. Lying on an owner's manual is the Glock with the silencer. A beat as she takes it in.

Which is when she sees the Shooter approaching the car. She shuts it fast as he opens his door.

SHOOTER
That's a long sleep you had there. Here, hold this while we get back on the road.

JACKIE
Where are we?

SHOOTER
Left Youngstown about an hour ago. We're making good time. I'm guessing we'll be in Chicago before eleven. There are a couple of nice hotels--I'd be happy to drop you off at whichever one you like. Me, I like the Langham. Especially when someone else is paying.

He laughs. Now they're back on the highway.

JACKIE
You know, I really need to--

SHOOTER
There'll be another service plaza in a few miles, I'm sure. Why don't you have something to eat. Unless you're a vegetarian.

JACKIE
I'm not hungry, thanks.

SHOOTER
Hand me one of those burgers, then, please, will you?

She does so. She tries to get her bearings. As the car gathers speed the doors automatically lock with a dramatic *CLUNK*.

Her eyes automatically go to the glove box.

JACKIE
So...you're a musician.

SHOOTER
I play all the notes.

He smiles.

SHOOTER (CONT'D)
Old joke.

It's dark out now, the traffic much lighter. A semi passes them. She glances in her wing mirror -- a few cars far behind them.

Then she glances at the space behind the driver's seat, where her backpack and camera bag are stashed.

JACKIE
You know, I really need to go to the bathroom. I'm a little embarrassed to say it, but I'm having my period.

SHOOTER
Well I can't pull over here. There's no place for you to go without being in plain view.

His headlights catch the green of an exit sign. He puts on his blinker.

SHOOTER (CONT'D)
Let's get off here. Should be a gas station nearby.

He drives down the ramp. There's nothing there. Just a road lined with dense woods. He puts on his blinker again.

JACKIE
What're you doing?

SHOOTER
Just finding a nice, quiet, private place for you. Should be a turn-off not too far from here.

JACKIE
You're not a musician.

SHOOTER
No, ma'am, I am definitely not a musician.

JACKIE
They sent you to get me, didn't they.

SHOOTER
The sooner we do this the less hurt there'll be.

She goes to open the door. Reaches for the lock. Nothing works.

SHOOTER (CONT'D)
Design flaw, I'm afraid.

She goes fast to open the glove box. The light inside it goes on.

SHOOTER (CONT'D)
Go ahead. It's not loaded.

He brings up a Glock with silencer from under his seat.

SHOOTER (CONT'D)
This one is.

He brings the car to a halt down a dark road. Nothing around. No lights, no houses.

He gets out, walks around to her side, and when he opens her door she's rummaging through her backpack.

SHOOTER (CONT'D)
Get out. I don't want to foul my car.

She gets out, hands up in the moonlit air. An owl hoots in the distance.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

SHOOTER
Get on your knees.

She does so. Slowly and deliberately. He stands in front of her.

SHOOTER (CONT'D)
I could make you do anything I like. I could have you completely. Imagine it. You and me. Here. With no one around, no one who could hear or see us. But I have a job to do. Hands behind your head. Fingers laced.

He aims the gun at her head.

SHOOTER (CONT'D)
Look at me. I want to see the moonlight in your eyes.

She looks up at him. Her father's Colt is stuck in her waistband in the back.

A beat, then...*BLAM!*

He staggers back, a look of shock on his face.

She holds her father's gun out in front of her, aiming at him. She'd blown a hole in his stomach.

She's as shocked as he is. Now her hands begin to shake. The gun seems like some alien creature -- too hot to handle. She drops it on the ground.

He lies there, breathing heavily, bleeding out, the headlights of his car shining on him. The whole thing repels her.

SHOOTER (CONT'D)
Please... Help me.

JACKIE
Please don't die... I didn't mean to do that. Please come back, please don't do this, please make this all go away...

His big scared eyes turn to her scared eyes. His breaths are fast and furious, getting shallower by the moment.

His gun lies beside him. She looks at it. And now it's suddenly dawned on her --

JACKIE (CONT'D)
But you would've shot me first, wouldn't you.

She picks up the Colt. Aims it at his chest. *BLAM!* Her first kill. And now it's done.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

On the interstate again. A thirty-year-old drives at a steady eighty, music blasting on his stereo, a 30-pack on the seat beside him. Wears a Cleveland Browns cap that's seen better days.

As he passes a well-lit exit sign he sees someone standing by the side, thumb out, as his headlights pick her out of the night.

He pulls up just ahead of her. She runs to the door. He rolls down the window, lowers the radio. Nice big smile for the lady.

EXT. INTERSTATE - NIGHT

PICKUP DRIVER
Need a ride?

JACKIE
No, sir. I need your truck.

PICKUP DRIVER
Say what?

JACKIE
I said I need your truck.

PICKUP DRIVER
Did I hear you right? You need my--

The Colt's suddenly pointed right at him. Big long barrel full of threat.

JACKIE
GIVE ME THE FUCKING TRUCK!

INT./EXT. PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

Jackie pulls away, leaving the driver standing by the side of the road.

She reaches into her jacket pocket and takes out the Shooter's cellphone. She clicks it on, scrolls through. Hits speed dial.

JACKIE
This the New York office of the CIA? Can you put me in touch with someone in charge there? Yeah, I'll hold.

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - NIGHT

OPERATIONS ROOM

Stan runs out of the office, down a

HALLWAY

Where a few AGENTS are chatting.

STAN
Anyone know if Keyes or Farmer are around?

CIA AGENT
Dave Farmer’s taking a leak.

STAN
Get him. Now.

The Agent rushes down the hall. Throws open the MEN’S ROOM door.

Dave’s at the sink, washing up. He turns to look at us.

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - NIGHT

Dave’s on the phone.

DAVE
Where are you?

JACKIE (V.O.)
That doesn’t matter.

DAVE
We can do this peacefully and calmly and to everyone’s benefit.

He looks at the number display.

DAVE (CONT’D)
Whose phone is this?

JACKIE
The dead guy’s. One of yours, I’m pretty sure.

INTERCUT:

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

DAVE (V.O.)
The best thing you can do right now is turn yourself in.

JACKIE
Why? Because I have something you want? You sound like every man I’ve ever met. But you don’t get what I have. No way. Not anymore.

DAVE
Why make things difficult for yourself? There really are laws involved here. The more stubborn you are, the more trouble you'll get into.

JACKIE
It was about Latifiya, wasn't it. Something happened there. Something involving Pete. Something maybe I shouldn't have seen.

DAVE
Seeing isn't believing.

JACKIE
Not until we can put a name to it. Trust me. I know how it works.

DAVE
That's never going to happen. It was all too complicated. Be satisfied you got anything out of it--I'm sure the Times paid you handsomely. What we need to do now is debrief you. Then you'll be free to go.

JACKIE
And if I don't?

DAVE (V.O.)
We'll catch up with you soon enough.

JACKIE
I don't think so.

She tosses the phone out the window. It bounces off the road behind the truck, smashing to pieces.

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - NIGHT

STAN
GPS tracker shows her westbound on eighty, just about to pass under two-seventy-one.

DAVE
How about our guy with the truck?

STAN
(amused)
Ray? He just called.
(MORE)

STAN (CONT'D)
He’s stuck by the side of the road. Sounds like she scared the shit out of him.

DAVE
All right. We need a clean-up crew ASAP to deal with Marty and the Town Car. They can catch up with Ray afterwards. She already has a lot to answer for.

EXT. SERVICE PLAZA - DAWN

Behind the plaza, where the trucks spend the night. The pickup is at the very end.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAWN

Jackie rouses herself. The first thing she sees is a TRUCKER, taking a leak in the woods just outside her truck.

JACKIE
(to herself)
And a good morning to you, too, Uncle Wiggily.

He’s done. Zips up as he walks back. She opens the door...

EXT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAWN

...stretches. And grabbing her backpack and camera bag heads for the building.

INT. FOOD COURT - MORNING

Over a coffee and the empty wrappers from a breakfast sandwich she studies the print-outs of her photos from Latifiya. The two shots of Pete, especially.

She puts them side-by-side. Then she takes out a third print.

A STREET IN LATIFIYA. A few Army vehicles. Local ambulances. Kind of a wasted shot. She puts her finger on an SUV in the deep background. Brings her face close.

Rummages in her camera bag for a photographer’s LOUPE. Slides it till she gets the SUV centered.

It’s slightly blurred, but an ARMY MAJOR recognizable by the six stripes on his sleeve sits next to a CIVILIAN.

JACKIE
Wiltz. And Pete.

She slides the loupe a bit more to the right. There's a MAN walking behind the car, an M16 in his hand.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
And then there's you. Whoever you are.

She sits back, takes it in. She notices a MAN looking her way from another table. Then another, at a separate table.

She packs her backpack, gets up and walks towards the LADIES' ROOM.

When she turns she sees that one of the men has gotten up and is walking her way.

INT. LADIES' ROOM - DAY

She locks herself in a STALL, falls to her knees and pukes up her breakfast into the toilet.

In that small space she's a trapped woman, and her face shows it.

She gets up and washes her face at one of the sinks.

WOMAN IN LADIES' ROOM
You okay, honey? Can I help?

Jackie looks at her. Starts backing away.

INT. GIFT SHOP - MORNING

Where they sell newspapers, caps, sunglasses and go-phones. She browses the racks of phones. GRABS 5 OF THEM, goes to the register, where the CASHIER is talking to a FEMALE CUSTOMER.

CASHIER
I just told you. I can't discount the cap, it's a new item.

FEMALE CUSTOMER
I don't see why I should have to pay that much for--

JACKIE
Excuse me--can I just pay for these? I'm in a hurry.

FEMALE CUSTOMER
You just wait your turn, girly.

Jackie ignores her.

JACKIE
How much? HOW MUCH?!

The customer backs off.

CASHIER
Hundred and four thirty-nine.

Jackie throws down five 20s and a $5 bill. Stuffs the phones into her backpack.

JACKIE
I don't need a bag.

CASHIER
Hey, your change!

JACKIE
Don't need that either.

And she's gone.

EXT. SERVICE PLAZA - DAY

She opens the truck, is about to get in, then -- a second thought -- looks underneath the truck.

She reaches, feels around it...and brings out a magnetized GPS Tracker. She walks around to the general parking area and the big wastebins...

When she spots the Female Customer getting into her Chevy an aisle away. She approaches. Squats down beside the car. The woman lowers the window.

FEMALE CUSTOMER
What is it now?

JACKIE
I want to apologize for what just happened in there. I was in a rush, and meant no disrespect to you--

FEMALE CUSTOMER
Oh, don't worry about it. I got a daughter just like you.

She starts the car.

FEMALE CUSTOMER (CONT'D)
She'll be out of juvie in another month.

And -- *click* -- the tracker's on the woman's car. Jackie watches her drive away. She walks to the main parking areas.

She looks at the line of license plates, from all over the country. Then she sees one from ILLINOIS. An OLDER COUPLE is about to get into it.

JACKIE
Excuse me?

They're deaf. Or deafish.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Excuse me? Sir?

Now he looks at her.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Are you by any chance going to Chicago? My car's broken down and I'm supposed to be at the hospital. My mother's in intensive care and I have no way of getting there.

OLDER MALE
I'm sorry, but...we're stopping over at Gary before we head home to Joliet.

JACKIE
Close enough. I'll even pay you something. Please?

He looks at his wife. She looks Jackie over.

OLDER MALE
What do you think?

OLDER FEMALE
You're not going to talk on the phone the whole time, are you?

JACKIE
I promise I'm not going to talk on the phone at all.

INT./EXT. OLD GUY'S BUICK - DAY

Jackie sits in the back seat, taking in the scenery. They're moving slowly on the interstate -- car after car passes them.

OLDER FEMALE
How old's your mother?

JACKIE
Sixty-three.

OLDER FEMALE
What she have?

JACKIE
Stroke.

OLDER MALE
That's young.

OLDER FEMALE
My mother had a stroke at fifty-one.

OLDER MALE
She was a difficult woman, your mother.

His wife just stares at him. He looks up at the rearview.

OLDER MALE (CONT'D)
So you're from Chicago?

JACKIE
She was visiting her sister in Oak Park when she fell ill.

OLDER MALE
Three yawns, and bang, you're a helpless cripple drooling like a baby.

JACKIE
Something like that.

OLDER MALE
My Uncle Fred had a stroke. Happened just that way, and the doctor said--

OLDER FEMALE
You don't have to tell her everything, Lester.

The old woman's eye meets Jackie's in the wing mirror.

OLDER FEMALE (CONT'D)
What do you do to pass the time?

JACKIE
I teach ballroom dancing.

The old guy looks at his wife. Seems impressed.

OLDER FEMALE
Like foxtrot. Waltz, that kinda thing?

JACKIE
Cha-cha-cha. Mambo. Can-can.

OLDER MALE
People your age really do that?

JACKIE
More than you can imagine.

OLDER FEMALE
Bet you're good.

JACKIE
Oh, I'm the best.

The old guy turns his head to check out Jackie's chest.

OLDER MALE
Just bet you are, too.

OLDER FEMALE
Eyes on the road, Lester.

JACKIE
You've been very kind. Kinder than most I've met.

She spots a service area up ahead.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
I wonder... Could we stop here, please? I need to use the...facilities.

He puts on his blinker. They pull up to the building.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Can I buy you both some lunch? Coffee, maybe?

OLDER FEMALE
No thank you.

JACKIE
Please let me do something for you.

OLDER FEMALE
No, no, we're just fine as we are.

OLDER MALE
You're very kind to ask, though.

Jackie gets out of the car. The old guy grabs her camera bag, opens it.

OLDER FEMALE
Anything?

OLDER MALE
Just cameras.

His wife shrugs. He opens Jackie's backpack. Rummages a bit. Slowly pulls out her Colt .44. Husband and wife just look at one another.

INT. FOOD COURT - DAY

Jackie walks out of the ladies' room and out the door. She heads for the curb when she spots her two bags on the sidewalk. And no Buick.

She walks up to them, crouches, makes sure her cameras are intact.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Someone left you in the dust, yes?

A tall, blond 30-year-old man stands grinning down at her. This is BJORN. He wears a knapsack on his back and looks like he's spent his life hiking in the hills.

JACKIE
Looks that way.

BJORN
Is there anything I can do...? Maybe find you a ride?

JACKIE
You're obviously not from around here. We don't just find rides. Either we get lucky or we walk.

BJORN
And you'd be walking to...?

JACKIE
Chicago.

BJORN
That's where I'm going. A once-in-a-lifetime trip, I'm seeing America.

He holds out a hand. Helps her up.

BJORN (CONT'D)
Bjorn.

JACKIE
Lisa.

BJORN
Pretty name.

JACKIE
You're, what, Swedish?

BJORN
Right first time!

JACKIE
I was originally going to say Norwegian.

BJORN
But then you'd be wrong.

She returns his big honest smile. They walk towards the parking area until they reach a big Harley-Davidson.

JACKIE
Bike.

BJORN
You're afraid?

JACKIE
You joking? I love these things.

He tosses her a helmet.

BJORN
Let's travel, yes?

She gets on the back as he kicks it into life. They get onto the interstate.

EXT. INTERSTATE - EVENING

Bjorn pulls off onto an exit ramp. When they reach the bottom he takes off his helmet.

BJORN
Tomorrow...

She takes off her helmet.

JACKIE
What?

BJORN
Chicago. In the morning.

JACKIE
Why not now?

INT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE - NIGHT

They've finished eating. The WAITRESS arrives with two more drinks. Jackie, of course, has a double bourbon.

The atmosphere is charged with erotic potential. His blue eyes sparkle in the candlelight.

BJORN
You know, I'm very glad I met you, Lisa.

JACKIE
I'm glad I met you and not someone else.

BJORN
You running from something, maybe?

JACKIE
Maybe just to something.

BJORN
I'm running from something. My job. My home. The woman I've been living with.
(shrugs)
Life. You know, I think you're running from something, too.

JACKIE
What makes you think that?

BJORN
Because you don't trust me. I can see it in your face.

JACKIE
I don't trust a lot of people these days.

BJORN
But you can trust me.

JACKIE
(beat)
Where is this all leading, Bjorn?

His hand brushes hers. And she doesn't wave it off after he leaves it there.

BJORN
Where would you like it to go?

JACKIE
Part of me would like it to go away. But I need to get to Chicago--

BJORN
And I'm your ride, as they say here.

JACKIE
So what's the deal? I sleep with you and then we hit the road at dawn?

BJORN
And afterwards? After Chicago?

JACKIE
I'm heading for the coast.

BJORN
Hitchhiking?

JACKIE
I'll probably pick up a car.

BJORN
Just like that?

JACKIE
When I want something I usually get it.

He smiles broadly. Holds up his glass.

BJORN
Skål!

JACKIE
Happy days, Bjorn.

They drink. She sits back. Aims her gaze at him.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
So far you've done all right. It's a good accent, you have the looks for it. So tell me who you really are. I'll put in a good word to your boss back in New York.

BJORN
But I have already told you.

JACKIE
Okay, I'll play. What happens after tonight, Bjorn?

BJORN
I'm going to Montana. Then Washington state. Then up to Vancouver. I have a friend who owns an art gallery there. I haven't seen her in years.

JACKIE
From one woman to another. That sounds about right.

He leans in.

BJORN
Look. I gave you a ride. I watched over your bags when those fucking old idiots dumped them on the ground.

JACKIE
And you think a simple thank you from me is insufficient?

He can't believe what he's hearing.

BJORN
I thought you American girls were--

JACKIE
I'm not a girl. And, unlike you, I'm not a cliché. An accent and a mop of blond hair, a pair of killer blue eyes and a cool bike parked outside. I have to say, it's a helluva lot better than that shitkicker in the pickup.

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - NIGHT

Stan rises quickly from his cubicle. Fran's across the room.

STAN
They've got her! She's been tracked!

FRANK
Call Dave Farmer. My office. Now.

EXT. SUBURBAN RANCH HOUSE - NIGHT

A typical Midwest neighborhood. The porch light's on. There's a car in the driveway. A MAN walks up the few steps and the path to the house.

INT. SUBURBAN RANCH HOUSE - NIGHT

The door bell rings.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
I've got it.

It's the Female Customer from the service area. She opens the door. A man holds a CIA ID straight out in front of her.

2 MEN STREAM out from behind him and push their way in.

INT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE - NIGHT

JACKIE
They sent you to get me, didn't they. Where's the tracker on your bike, or are they just triangulating with your cellphone?

BJORN
I have no idea what you're talking--

JACKIE
All right. Maybe I'm wrong, maybe you're really Swedish. You're a nice guy to help me out, but right now I'm kind of in mourning for my husband.

BJORN
(beat)
Ah. Hence the need to travel.

JACKIE
I need to get away, visit family and friends, just...be in a different place. Away from everyone.

BJORN
I understand. Two rooms at the nearest motel, then. I can respect that.

JACKIE
Really?

He smiles.

BJORN
I'll be right back.

She watches as he heads for the men's room. He's left his jacket behind. The bike key on the table.

She just stares at it. She looks at the men's room door. She has to make her mind. In about three seconds.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Bjorn pushes open the door, walks to the table...and she's gone.

He looks out through the window just as she zooms away on his bike.

He rushes out the door...

WAITRESS
Hey, your check--!

Only to find that Jackie's in the far distance, picking up speed. He looks at the check. Scribbled across it is one word: SORRY!

EXT. CHICAGO - DAY

Jackie turns into the worst neighborhood in Chicago. She drives slowly down one boarded-up house after another. BLACK KIDS stare at her as her shiny Harley moves past them.

Finally she pulls up to a playground. Gets off the bike. Hangs the helmet on the handlebar and goes to the fence.

JACKIE
Hey!

BLACK KIDS play basketball. They notice her, one after another.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Any of you guys want a Harley?

BASKETBALL KID
You fuckin' jokin', bitch?

She dangles the key off a finger.

JACKIE
It's all yours.

Now everyone's interested.

BASKETBALL KID
What's the deal?

She takes a slip of paper from her pocket. Presses it against the fence.

JACKIE
Just tell me how to get to this address.

INT. JESSE BROWN V.A. MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

Busy with VETERANS with artificial limbs. Some have severe tics. A sad place full of the walking wounded.

Jackie's at the INFORMATION WINDOW.

JACKIE
Like I said, I'm his sister-in-law. Just got in from Atlanta. I'm trying to get in touch with Tyler. I know he's a patient here.

INFORMATION WOMAN
Tyler Wiltz. That's what you said.

JACKIE
Yes, ma'am.

INFORMATION WOMAN
Just a moment.

She goes to a MAN at a far cubicle...whose face leans out to take Jackie in. He gets up and approaches.

V.A. MAN
Major Wiltz is an outpatient here. Normally we don't give out contact information, but we feel it's important that our servicemen and women have as much family contact as possible.

He slides a piece of paper under the window.

EXT. SUBURBAN CHICAGO - DAY

Jackie gets out of a taxi, walks up to a small, well-tended white house. A curtain in a window flickers as she walks to the door.

EXT. WILTZ HOUSE - DAY

She rings the bell. Nothing. Rings again.

JACKIE
(to herself)
I know you're there.

Then steps back to show herself to a WOMAN watching her from an upstairs window.

The curtain drops, then the door opens. A WOMAN in her 60s -- Wiltz's sister MARILYN -- looks suspiciously at Jackie.

MARILYN
You selling something?

JACKIE
I just want to talk to Major Wiltz.

MARILYN
Who said he was here?

JACKIE
I met your husband before. In Iraq.

MARILYN
He's not my husband. He's my brother.

INT. WILTZ HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jackie sits alone in the gloomy, sparsely-furnished room. A crucifix hangs on the wall by the TV.

She turns her head and notices a man with a shaved head, in flannel shirt and khaki trousers, standing and watching her from the shadows of the adjoining dining room. Just a silhouette.

She gets to her feet.

WILTZ
I'm sorry. I frightened you.

He steps out of the shadows. There's something a little "off" about him. His manner is stiff and unsure. And there's a tremble in his hands and his head. Whatever military bearing he once had has grown pear-shaped with age and medication.

WILTZ (CONT'D)
My sister said you wanted to talk to me.
That you know me...

He looks at her carefully.

WILTZ (CONT'D)
I don't know you. I don't know your face. I don't know who you are.

JACKIE
I saw you...in Latifiya--

WILTZ
Iraq. Yeah. Okayyyy. Right.

He takes a seat across from her on the edge of an armchair. His sister appears in the entryway of the dining room.

MARILYN
Everything okay, Ty?

He doesn't even look at her.

WILTZ
Just fine, Marilyn, doin' just great.

MARILYN
You took your pills?

WILTZ
Yes I did, Marilyn. I took my pills.

MARILYN
You want anything?

Her eyes shift to Jackie.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
Coffee? Iced tea? Something else?

Jackie shakes her head.

JACKIE
Thank you, anyway.

Jackie looks at her until Marilyn gets the hint and leaves. She takes a beat to get her bearings.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
I was married--very briefly--to a man named Pete Archer.

WILTZ
CIA guy, right?

JACKIE
He's--he's dead now. His own people murdered him.

He takes it in.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
When I married him I thought he was someone else. Now I know. There was no coincidence in our meeting. It was all set up in advance.
(off his look)
You know what I'm talking about, don't you. I didn't realize I'd met him--seen him before--in Latifiya. I'm a photographer, I do photojournalism--

WILTZ
War pictures--

JACKIE
And something happened in Latifiya that I wasn't supposed to see, that I wasn't supposed to photograph, that--

WILTZ
Something bad.

JACKIE
People had been shot--women and children, old people--almost the entire village. All gone. I got there after it happened. I saw enough. Probably more than anyone wanted me to... I just don't know what it was.

He nods. He looks like his mind is elsewhere. He lowers his head, rubs his head. As if he only wants to escape his own skin.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Do you remember me?

He doesn't even look at her.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Major Wiltz? Please look at me.

He lifts his head.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Remember?

WILTZ
(beat)
Yeah. Maybe. No, not really.

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - DAY

Frank and Dave and other AGENTS cluster around Stan. On the monitor above him a collage of surveillance shots -- grainy and monochrome for the most part -- of Jackie.

STAN
There was a delay. Someone caught on we were hacking into these cams--

DAVE
Who?

STAN
Guy I know at the NSA. He tipped me off. Their algorithms caught the pattern, the search for Jackie Seward.

DAVE
That tracker led us to some other woman's house. She went apeshit, thought our agents were going to murder her.

FRANK
Jackie's good. She's learning fast.

DAVE
That's going to be a problem.

STAN
She would've been declared a person of interest--

DAVE
Until your friend--?

STAN
Now I owe him, big-time.

FRANK
So where is she now?

STAN
A highway cam in Indiana picked her up at a service area just outside South Bend. That was this morning at approximately 0200 hours.

The shot takes over the screen. Jackie stands by the bike, pumping gas.

FRANK
Where the hell did she get the chopper?

He looks at Dave.

FRANK (CONT'D)
One of ours?

Dave shakes his head.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Sure she doesn't have a police record?

On screen, again, various cam shots. Crossing a street. Buying water at a convenience store.

DAVE
It that even her?

STAN
She fits the algorithm exactly. And we know she's in Chicago. Or at least was until an hour ago.

Dave sees Frank's look.

DAVE
What?

FRANK
Wiltz. She's found Wiltz.

DAVE
That was never supposed to be part of this.

INT. WILTZ HOUSE - DAY

MARILYN (O.S.)
What do you want from my brother?

She's in the entryway again, arms crossed.

WILTZ
Go away, Marilyn--

JACKIE
I just want to know why my husband is dead.

MARILYN
Well, he didn't do it!

WILTZ
Go upstairs, Marilyn! Now!

Marilyn withdraws. A beat. Then:

JACKIE
Six months after troops were withdrawn from Iraq Americans showed up in Latifiya. Lots of them. You were there. Pete Archer was there. Other civilians. Soldiers like yourself. I was the only photojournalist there that day. It was...like a mopping-up operation.

WILTZ
Yeah. Yeah. Something like...

She takes the photos out of her bag.

JACKIE
That's Pete. See? He's looking right at me.

WILTZ
(beat)
I can't talk about this.

JACKIE
Are you afraid you'll be...punished somehow?

WILTZ
I don't know.

He wrings his nervous hands.

JACKIE
Whatever you say will go no further than this room. All I want to know is why this man Pete Archer came into my life. And why he was taken from me.

It seems to take him forever to get the words out. He can't bring himself to look her in the eye.

WILTZ
There were American contractors--

JACKIE
Halliburton?

WILTZ
Not just, no. A company down...south, I think. Maybe Texas. Alabama. Something. Maybe not. They were left-behinds. The reconstructors. I was stationed in Afghanistan.

JACKIE
Bagram?

He nods.

WILTZ
Yeah.

JACKIE
What unit were you in?

WILTZ
I was a JAG.

He smiles with a semblance of pride in what he once was.

JACKIE
Advocate General?

WILTZ
I joined the army after law school.

JACKIE
And they called you back to Latifiya. To do what? Give your seal of approval?

He just nods this time.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Something very bad happened there.

He nods again.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Tell me what happened, Major Wiltz.

She takes hold of his hands. The trembling ceases.

WILTZ
I can't--

JACKIE
Please do this for me.

WILTZ
I told them, I promised, I'm gonna get in so much trouble--

JACKIE
No. No one's going to know about this. That I was even here. What happened in Latifiya? What took place before I came with my cameras?

WILTZ
They were doing this...test. They chose the village...because...it was kinda out of the way. Downwind, you know?

JACKIE
Downwind--why?

He just breathes. Heavily. As though gathering his thoughts.

WILTZ
This test--

JACKIE
What test?

WILTZ
It was this...germ, this...spray they had. The company--

JACKIE
Not the soldiers?

WILTZ
The company, the company--!

JACKIE
Shhh. Relax. Take a deep breath. Look at me. Tell me what happened.

He composes himself.

WILTZ
They were testing this germ, this, I dunno, something like anthrax. But different. They needed to see if it worked.

JACKIE
(beat)
On the village--?

WILTZ
Uh-huh, yeah.

FADE IN:

FLASHBACK: EXT. LATIFIYA - NIGHT

The lights of 3 helicopters as they swoop in low over the buildings and squares of the village.

And then comes the smoke out of them, billowing out down the lanes and streets, through the open windows... As the pilots tersely radio back and forth.

JACKIE (V.O.)
Who was doing this?

INT. WILTZ HOUSE - DAY

WILTZ
The company, the one from Texas. Or someplace like that. Ala--whatever.

His hands and head begin to tremble. He looks at her. Mad, sad eyes.

JACKIE
But we were out of there by then. The war was over. The occupation was over. Troops had been pulled out.

WILTZ
Nothing's as simple as that.

JACKIE
I'm not really understanding this. Because when I was there, I took these photos. A lot of people had been shot. They'd been massacred. Nearly the entire population. Look...

She reaches into her backpack for the prints. He leafs through them. Barely takes any notice.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Someone told me there'd been an attack, that the whole village had been shot up by Al Qaeda--

WILTZ
(beat)
It wasn't. It was the Company.

JACKIE
The company that made the poison...?

FLASHBACK: EXT. LATIFIYA - MORNING

Dawn over the village. Bodies lie everywhere. Clearly they had died an excruciating death. The bodies are twisted, contorted -- bodies of women, children, the elderly.

The SOUND of arriving vehicles -- all civilian. SUVs. PLAINCLOTHESMEN carrying M16s jump out. One by one they begin spraying bullets into the bodies.

WILTZ (V.O.)
The CIA. Once the air cleared they just came in and shot everyone who'd died. It was their plan, their...idea.

INT. WILTZ HOUSE - DAY

WILTZ
They called me in to see it. When...they were all done.

JACKIE
You filed--

WILTZ
Yeah, I wrote a report. It looked like a terror attack.

He just looks at her. Waits for her to connect the dots.

JACKIE
They did it to make it look--

WILTZ
So everyone would--

JACKIE
I got a call in the middle of the night. I was in Damascus, covering something else.

WILTZ
So they called you before...?

Now he laughs for a moment. A dry, silent laugh.

WILTZ (CONT'D)
Don't you see? Your photos made it all...legit. Made it history. Al Qaeda had shot up the whole place. Blood. Bodies. Done. It's why you were the only...photography person. And I...was the legal guy.

JACKIE
They co-opted both of us... If this is true--if these people were used as guinea pigs for some kind of...biological weapon...that breaks--

WILTZ
Uh-uh, yeah. Every law in the books. National, international. It's a war crime. It...was a kind of test. And then they turned it into this tactical thing. They used it to show anyone else in Iraq what Al Qaeda was really like.

JACKIE
And that was the CIA's mission.

WILTZ
Yeah. Yeah. And there was money. Lots of it, I'm sure.

JACKIE
A cover-up. My god...

She takes his hand again. He holds it between his two big paws. He sits back, rocks a little, shuts his eyes.

WILTZ
Those photos of yours, that's the whole story right there. You saw stuff that wasn't supposed to be seen.

JACKIE
That's why Pete married me. To make sure I kept my mouth shut.

WILTZ
They'll catch up with you.

JACKIE
I know that.

WILTZ
You could just take everyone down with those. The CIA. The government.

JACKIE
And you.

And now he looks her right in the eye.

WILTZ
How much worse can it get than...this?

JACKIE
(beat)
Major Wiltz... Who is Mariano Lopez? Is that name familiar to you?

He sort of smiles, mostly to himself.

WILTZ
That you don't want to know. No, ma'am.

JACKIE
How can I find him?

WILTZ
Ask the people at CIA. They'll take you right to the sonofabitch's front door.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CHICAGO - DAY

Jackie crosses a busy street with a crowd of PEDESTRIANS. She steps onto the sidewalk -- when a MAN appears ten paces behind her. Jeans, jacket, sunglasses, wool watch cap.

It's obvious he's following her.

She comes to a curb to wait for a WALK sign. A TAXI pulls up to the crosswalk, and she spots the follower in the window's reflection.

As the light changes and she steps off, she turns suddenly and returns to the previous block.

She stops in front of one of NEIMAN MARCUS's windows. The Man following her steps into her peripheral vision.

Now she enters the store.

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS - DAY

She takes the escalator up to the women's department. Without wasting any time she grabs a few items -- jeans, blouses, a jacket -- and heads for a dressing room.

The DRESSING-ROOM CHECKER checks the number of items and unlocks a dressing-room for her.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Jackie tosses the clothes onto the bench. She takes the 5 go-phones she'd bought out of her backpack. She roughly pulls them from their packaging and stuffs the packaging back in her bag.

There's a knock at the door, and Jackie freezes.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
You need another size or style?

JACKIE
No, I'm okay, thanks.

EXT. NEIMAN MARCUS - DAY

Still carrying her backpack and camera bag she steps out, walks down the street and enters BLOOMINGDALE'S.

Which begins the MONTAGE:

1. She exits Bloomingdale's...

2. And enters Macy's...

3. She exits Macy's...

And the same pattern with RALPH LAUREN and ANN TAYLOR.

MONTAGE ENDS...

When she enters

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - DAY

STAN (V.O.)
We've just picked up a signal...

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - DAY

STAN
It's the first time she's used her phone in days.

DAVE
Still in Chicago?

STAN
I have her pinpointed on North Michigan Avenue.

FRANK
That's where all the department stores are, right?

STAN
Maybe she's doing a little shopping.
(off their looks)
I don't know, it sounds right to me.

FRANK
Tap into the conversation.

STAN
Yeah, I'm just about there.

He's tapping his keyboard frantically.

STAN (CONT'D)
We have a tower on North Michigan that I'm trying to get into. And...here we go.

He puts the speaker on.

VOICE ON SPEAKER (V.O.)
If you want to make a call, hang up and dial again...

INT. NEIMAN MARCUS DRESSING ROOM - DAY

The phone is in the pocket of jeans lying on the bench.

VOICE ON PHONE (V.O.)
If you want to make a call...

INT. BLOOMINGDALE'S - DAY

LADIES COATS

A circular rack of coats. A glimpse of the phone just peeking out of one of the pockets...

VOICE ON PHONE (V.O.)
...hang up and dial again. If you want to--

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - DAY

DAVE
What the fuck is this?

STAN
I'm getting this from one originating and four secondary locations. I don't understand--

DAVE
All on North Michigan?

Stan sits back. Stunned by...whatever the hell is going on.

STAN
It's her number. Her cellphone. It's where it's coming from.

FRANK
Just figure it out, will you?

SECRETARY
Sir? Call on line four.

FRANK
I'll take it in my office.

INT. FRANK KEYES'S OFFICE - CIA

Frank hangs up the phone as Dave steps in.

FRANK
Tyler Wiltz is dead. Shot himself about an hour ago. His sister said some woman came and talked to him. Apparently he was completely calm afterwards. She said it was the first time in years he really seemed at peace with himself. Then he goes up to his bedroom and blows his brains out.

Stan enters --

STAN
I just worked it out. Four secondary prepaid cellphone units are connected to her own phone by way of conference call. She's got us chasing four prepaids and a main phone that is not on her person. All on a single call. She's placed them all over the place.

FRANK
Whose number is she calling? I mean, this is *one* person we're talking about!

STAN
Looks like she left herself a message at her own cell number. And didn't hang up. She's created a looped network of five different phones. And has evaded our surveillance.

INT./EXT. GREYHOUND BUS - NIGHT

Jackie sits by a window, writing on a yellow pad as the highway lights pass over her, one at a time. She's focused. Intent. Time's running out.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - DAY

Coming into it from the east. The air holds the milky Pacific light as a Greyhound bus comes into view.

INT./EXT. GREYHOUND BUS - DAY

It pulls into a bay at the GREYHOUND STATION. Jackie gathers her things and prepares to get off.

EXT. ATM - DAY

She withdraws some cash. Glances up at the lens of the security cam.

INT. BEVERLY CENTER - DAY

She rides up the escalator, looks at the overhead security cam.

STAN (V.O.)
She's reached L.A....

INT. CIA OPERATIONS ROOM NYC - DAY

STAN
She even used an ATM for the first time in a week. Seems she emptied her account. And then she checked into the Universal Hilton about an hour ago. And rented a car from Hertz.

DAVE
She's out in the open.

FRANK
Then let's finish it.

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

Jackie stands by a counter. She addresses a label for an EXPRESS MAIL mailer.

COLETTE DESIMONE
PHOTO EDITOR
NY TIMES
620 EIGHTH AVENUE
NEW YORK, NY 1001

She takes the photos from Latifiya, a sheaf of yellow legal pages with writing on them, and slides them into the envelope.

She goes to a CLERK for weighing. Her eyes are drawn to the security cam above and beyond the Clerk.

POST OFFICE CLERK
...and ninety-five cents.

Jackie seems to waver. She passes a twenty, gets back a nickel. The woman stamps it.

JACKIE
That can go out anytime, right?

POST OFFICE CLERK
Just drop it off at any post office or mailbox.

EXT. POST OFFICE - DAY

As Jackie exits from it, mailer in hand, a slim, well-dressed BLOND WOMAN (32) begins to follow her.

INT./EXT. JACKIE'S RENTAL CAR - DAY

Jackie gets into her rental car. Adjusts her rearview. Spots the blonde. Who is getting into her own car four vehicles back.

Jackie starts her engine. As does the Woman.

EXT. UNIVERSAL HILTON - DUSK

Jackie pulls into the garage...

INT. UNIVERSAL HILTON PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

...and follows it all the way down to the lowest level. She finds a space in a deserted corner of it. Turns off the engine.

And then just waits.

INT./EXT. JACKIE'S RENTAL CAR

She checks her cellphone: *NO SERVICE.* And smiles to herself. Now the SOUND of squealing tires as another car makes its way down to the lowest level.

And a car enters...pauses...and backs into a space directly opposite Jackie, all the way across the space.

The two cars just sit there.

INT./EXT. BLONDE'S CAR

She checks her cellphone: *NO SERVICE.*

BLONDE
Shit...

Jackie's door opens, and the Blonde sits up.

INT./EXT. JACKIE'S RENTAL CAR

Carrying nothing, Jackie walks to the middle of the space. She holds her empty hands out. The door to the blonde's car opens.

The blonde gets out, stops when she's twenty feet away. Does likewise with her hands.

BLONDE
Jackie Seward? I'm not here to arrest you. That's not within my power.

JACKIE
Then you'll either kidnap me or kill me. Isn't that how it works in what my husband used to call the Company?

BLONDE
Only in the movies.

JACKIE
Hey--we're in the right place, aren't we?

The Blonde smiles.

BLONDE
The thing in Chicago--

JACKIE
The phones--? I did that once in Cairo. Got me out of there safely. Worked again, didn't it.

BLONDE
Look. I'm not even armed. All I want is to drive you to my office and debrief you surrounding the death of Peter Archer.

JACKIE
There's not much to say. He parked the car. He asked me a question. And then he was dead.

BLONDE
We need to know exactly what he told you during the time of your courtship, engagement and...marriage.

JACKIE
He told me he was in love with me--

BLONDE
You know what I mean--

JACKIE
That he thought I had a great body--

BLONDE
Come on--

JACKIE
And that I was the best fuck he'd ever had.

The Blonde just looks at her.

BLONDE
Let's do this in my office, okay? The agency has a regional location here in Los Angeles. Not a lot of people, not a third-degree, just two people talking--

Jackie now holds her big Colt .44 out in front of her.

JACKIE
I can either kill you and drive away, or I can ask *you* a few questions and let you go.

BLONDE
(beat)
What do you want to know?

JACKIE
How I can find Mariano Lopez? And don't play coy. Everyone in the Company knows who he is.

BLONDE
(beat)
I'll need to ask one of my--

JACKIE
Except you can't do that here. No cell service. This is the bottom line, right here, right now. Mariano Lopez. I've had about enough of the CIA, enough of being lied to, enough of having to see others suffer because of your creepy little extracurricular activities.

BLONDE
Wiltz is dead.

Jackie lowers the gun a little. The news has added a few more pounds to the weapon.

BLONDE (CONT'D)
We know you talked to him. He shot himself in the head after you left. That's one big weight on your conscience now, isn't it.

JACKIE
And who's carrying the weight of the dead of Latifiya? Because, right now, I think that's one hell of a story.

BLONDE
There's no need to tell it.

JACKIE
Just sweep it under the rug, huh.

BLONDE
There are nicer ways of putting it.

JACKIE
Then here's the deal: what will you give me in return for my silence?

BLONDE
(beat)
What do you want?

INT./EXT. JACKIE'S RENTAL CAR - LATE AFTERNOON

ON HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD

Passing all the usual tourist spots, the buses, the Spidermen... She's looking for an address written on a piece of paper, and now she pulls into a parking space in front of:

EXT. TATTOO 22 - LATE AFTERNOON

Place seems empty. A radio plays rock music. The walls are covered with hundreds of tattoo designs. Jackie enters.

A LATINO steps out of the back, from behind a curtain. He's wiry, with a mustache and goatee. Early Carlos Santana.

LOPEZ
Help you?

JACKIE
Mariano Lopez?

LOPEZ
Who's looking for him?

She holds out a hand.

JACKIE
Jackie Seward.

He ignores the hand. But she looks carefully at him.

FLASHBACK: INT. IRAQI HOUSE - DAY

Jackie holds out a card and document.

JACKIE
These are my credentials--

CIVILIAN
Your job's done, okay? Time to leave.

LOPEZ (V.O.)
You remember now, don't you.

Same voice. Same man.

INT. TATTOO 22 - DAY

LOPEZ
So how'd you find out where I work?

JACKIE
A pretty blonde in good shoes from the Company told me. I probably would've found you anyway. I mean, you're just hiding in plain sight. Like--

LOPEZ
Yeah, yeah, I know. I've heard that before.

JACKIE
Will you help me, like Pete said you would?

LOPEZ
I don't do freebies, lady. Sorry.

JACKIE
What do you want?

LOPEZ
The photos would be nice. Memory cards, archives, whatever. Anything with me on it. I'm the last guy who was there. All the others...? You give me those photos, I'll get you what you need.

JACKIE
Here's the deal. I want a new name, a new passport, and I have to leave the country. Quietly and discreetly.

LOPEZ
And you'll give me all the things I want.

JACKIE
Yes.

LOPEZ
You'll probably never come back.

JACKIE
I've thought it all through.

He goes to the door, turns the OPEN/CLOSED sign around. Locks the door.

LOPEZ
Let's talk in the back.

BACK ROOM

Where the tattooing equipment and table are. He pulls the curtain shut.

LOPEZ (CONT'D)
The thing in Paris... That was supposed to be Pete's last hit. Once they realized Pete had fallen for you, that he'd really started to take this whole marriage thing seriously, he was told that plans had changed. His last hit was still to come.

He looks pointedly at her.

JACKIE
It was me. Wasn't it.

He nods.

LOPEZ
They figured you'd start putting things together sooner or later. What happened back in Latifiya. Which is when you became a security risk, big-time. Even though he was the best hitman around he couldn't do it. He was too crazy about you. He told the Company that he wouldn't do it--

JACKIE
--and sacrificed himself for me. Jesus.

LOPEZ
Me, I haven't done a hit in maybe three years. They bring me in for special ops, kinda different stuff. Just like they did with Pete.

JACKIE
Just tell me... Were any of the villagers still alive when you got there?

LOPEZ
The poison--the germs--they got the old ones first.

JACKIE
The children...

LOPEZ
I took care of them. And now here you are, finally. You're a lot prettier than they said.

JACKIE
They knew I was coming here all along.

LOPEZ
Oh yeah.

JACKIE
They could have taken me in Chicago.

Her hands are behind her back. She's already fingering her Colt.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
You're not going to get me a passport, are you.

LOPEZ
Like I said, the Company calls me in for one-off jobs.
(beat)
This is my last hit.

He reaches for something under the table -- but she's faster. The explosion is deafening. He staggers back, his pistol falls from his hands like it's red-hot, a look of total surprise on his face. There's a large hole where his stomach once was.

She lowers the Colt. All her fear is gone.

JACKIE
And that was mine.

INT. LAX SECURITY LINE - NIGHT

Jackie hands her own passport and boarding pass to one of the TSA AGENTS.

The woman looks at the passport. Looks at Jackie. She keys something into her computer. Jackie watches her intently. Glances up at the security cam above them. Then behind. No one's coming.

JACKIE
Anything wrong?

TSA AGENT
Just a moment more, ma'am.

A beat, then the Agent looks at Jackie. It could go either way. It seems like eternity. She hands back her passport and boarding pass:

TSA AGENT (CONT'D)
(with a smile)
Have a pleasant trip, Ms. Seward.

Jackie starts to walk away, then...

JACKIE
I have a question. I have something to mail. It's already stamped, it's an Express Mail envelope--

TSA AGENT
Just ask the agent at the gate. They'll be happy to take care of it for you.

INT. CAR - DAY

Jackie sits in the passenger seat of what looks like an older car. She's thoughtful as the landscape passes by her. We don't see the driver, much of the car, or where she is. They're moving fast, though.

MOTHER (V.O.)
Where are you, sweetheart?

JACKIE (V.O.)
At the airport, mom. In L.A.

MOTHER (V.O.)
You're going to take a rest, I hope.

JACKIE (V.O.)
Yeah. Just gonna take it easy for a few weeks.

Now we see the driver, an ARAB, bearded and in a keffiyeh. And their destination:

EXT. MIDDLE EASTERN VILLAGE - DAY

A chaotic scene after a car-bombing. People scrambling to find loved ones, body parts, corpses, smoke and flames. Emergency vehicles everywhere.

INT./EXT. CAR - DAY

Jackie grabs her camera.

JACKIE
I'll just be a minute.

And throwing open the door of the car, racing into the devastation, she's already taking photos as she disappears into the dust and smoke of another tragedy.