

DARK LATITUDE

by

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ACT I

FADE IN:

- 1 EXT. U.S. NAVY DESTROYER STEAMING ACROSS OPEN OCEAN. EARLY MORNING.

SUPER: APRIL 1945 - OFF THE COAST OF WEST AFRICA.

Teletype noise hums in the background as SUPER letters are added.

- 2 INT. CIC (RED-LIT). NIGHT.

A young, clean-cut sailor in a white T-shirt and dungarees wears headphones and throat mike. A SG radar scope glows green. A man's voice rumbles over the ambient noise of Morse code, fans, and murmuring voices.

He swivels in his seat as CAPTAIN EDWARD MARKHAM approaches. A crewman records the radar contact's movement on the plexiglass plot board.

CAPTAIN EDWARD MARKHAM
This better be good, Jonesey. It's
two hours before Morning Watch. You
interrupted my favorite dream.

RADARMAN FIRST CLASS JONES moves the headphone on his right ear back to converse with the Captain. He smiles.

RADARMAN FIRST CLASS JONES
Sorry, Skipper. Rita Hayworth or Hedy
Lamarr?

CAPTAIN
Playing baseball with my son.

RADARMAN
You need to see this, Skipper.

The Captain leans in, both men peer at the green display. A large, luminous dot near the bottom of the screen moves from right to left. A sailor at the plot board extends a line, adds heading, altitude, speed information.

CAPTAIN
Let's see what you've got, Jonesy.

RADARMAN
Big, fast-mover moving east to west
bearing one-seven-zero degrees.
(MORE)

RADARMAN (cont'd)
 Present course takes it near Cape
 Verde Islands.

The radar operator snatches a chart, taps a cluster of marks. His voice drops.

RADARMAN (cont'd)
 Origin was East of R'gueiba,
 Mauritania. No airfields there, but
 the Baie de Saint-Jean is nearby.

CAPTAIN
 Interesting. No Nazi air activity
 around here since the Battle of Dakar
 in '41.

The Captain studies the plot board. His eyes fix on the
 airspeed: 275 knots. He exhales, thinks a beat. Something
 doesn't add up.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
 Not a fighter, cargo plane, medium
 bomber, or a Condor... no fuel for
 them this late in the game. Could be
 a seaplane with diesel engines that a
 sub could refuel.

The Captain pivots to a wall console, toggles two switches
 and speaks.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
 Captain to Bridge. All ahead full,
 right standard rudder, one-six-zero
 degrees. XO: Message grid position to
 Fleet with suspicious airborne radar
 contact. Send it.

Captain returns to radar console. The ship tilts with the
 turn. Multiple voices acknowledge Captain's orders.

VOICES ON VOICE POWERED PHONE
 (O.S.)
 Bridge, Aye. Sonar, Aye. XO, Aye.

CAPTAIN
 Good work, Jones. Maybe that's why
 they put us in this God-forsaken part
 of the North Atlantic.

That bogey came from Europe.

Rats don't swim toward sinking ships.

They swim away.
 (MORE)

CAPTAIN (cont'd)

I'll be on the bridge.

Captain turns, moves to the doorway of the CIC, makes his way to the ship's bridge.

3 INT. WILLOW BEND ASSISTED LIVING CENTER. DAY.

SUPER: PRESENT DAY - DALLAS, TEXAS

A slender young woman strides into an elegant lobby with a confident gait. She wears jeans, a bright-colored shirt, and has a backpack slung over one shoulder. The receptionist looks up with a smile.

LEXI BALESTRA
Morning, GAIL.

RECEPTIONIST
Good morning to you, too, LEXI.
(Serious tone)

RECEPTIONIST (cont'd)
Melanie wants to see you. She has something for you. Markus Lange passed away last night.

Lexi falls silent and looks away. A tear slips free. She brushes it aside, swallows hard, turns back to Gail.

LEXI
(Halting voice)
That is heartbreaking. I will miss him.

RECEPTIONIST
Melanie is trying to find a relative.

LEXI
I'll go see her. Thanks.

Lexi walks down the hallway to Markus Lange's room.

4 INT. MARKUS LANGE'S ROOM. DAY.

Lexi steps through the open doorway. Sunlight spills through the window, washing the room in a soft gold hue.

She moves to the writing desk. A framed photo of her and Markus lies out of place on the desk. Several drawers are open.

A family album rests on the lip of one of the open drawers, pages slightly askew.

Lexi frowns. Markus wouldn't leave things that way. She slips the photo into her backpack.

Something catches her eye—the bed pillow. Sunlight reveals a faint impression. Lexi takes a cautious step closer. Stops. Stares.

She hears the sound of a cleaning cart rolling into the room. She spins—a housekeeper enters the room.

LEXI

Clarice! Stop! Don't touch anything else. Go get Melanie. Now!

Clarice rushes out the door. Several beats pass. MELANIE ROGERS steps in. She's not alone. A man in a dark suit is with her. He is tall, blonde, with blue eyes, chiseled features. Everything about him reads ex-military.

MELANIE ROGERS

Lexi, what's wrong?

LEXI

Markus didn't die of natural causes. Don't touch anything!

Lexi takes Melanie's arm, guides her toward the bed. The man moves with them. They stop. Lexi points to the pillow. The man steps past them, leans in, looks at what Lexi sees.

LEXI (cont'd)

Markus Lange's face was pressed hard into that pillow.

AGENT WALTER CHRISTIANSEN

I'm Agent Christiansen with the FBI. Clear the room, shut the door, and lock it. Does the receptionist have your cell numbers?

Melanie nods, heads for the door. Lexi follows, a step behind. Christiansen pulls his phone out, speed dials. Lexi and Melanie walk slowly down the hallway. Neither speaks.

5 INT. MELANIE'S OFFICE. DAY.

MELANIE

(Whispered)

You're a real trouble-maker, Lexi.

Melanie sits down at her desk. Lexi takes a chair in front of the desk.

LEXI

Sorry. I freaked out when I saw the pillow.

MELANIE

I was just kidding about being a troublemaker. Something *is* wrong.

LEXI

It was the sunlight on the pillow. If I hadn't turned around for a last look, I would have missed it.

MELANIE

First Shift thought it looked like natural causes.

LEXI

How did the FBI get involved?

Melanie shrugs.

MELANIE

No clue—never happened before. I called the number for notification in his file. The person who answered took the information and didn't say much.

LEXI

Markus was old, but he seemed fit, except for the dementia.

MELANIE

Ninety-eight to be exact. He survived World War II. That's a long run.

Melanie opens a desk drawer, takes out a thick photo album, places it on the desk.

LEXI

That's his family album. He showed it to me more than once.

MELANIE

It's his only personal possession, other than the framed photo of you two in the courtyard. You were such good friends. He really looked forward to your visits.

(MORE)

MELANIE (cont'd)

He thought of you as a daughter, or a granddaughter. You should have the album.

LEXI

I took the photo of us together off his desk. May I keep it?

MELANIE

Of course.

LEXI

Are you sure it's OK for me to have the album?

MELANIE

Yes. Could be some clues in there about his family. There's no relative listed in his file. Maybe you can find one. I looked through it, but everything is in German.

LEXI

Question: It's expensive here. How did Markus afford it?

MELANIE

No clue. Money came from a trust every month. A well-dressed man would check on him. I thought he might be a trustee.

(beat)

They only spoke German. Markus would shake his head... over and over.

(beat)

Yesterday, the man reached for his shoulder. Markus pulled away fast.

(beat)

One of the few times I ever saw him angry.

LEXI

Family?

Melanie shakes her head.

MELANIE

Don't think so. His accent was German. Never gave his name—just kept dodging questions.

(MORE)

MELANIE (cont'd)

(beat)

Didn't blink. Not once.

(beat)

When I asked how he knew Markus, he
said he was "a friend of a friend."

(beat)

Didn't sound like an answer.

LEXI

That's not an answer. He's not a
friend.

MELANIE

He knew immediately Markus had passed
away. He showed up this morning.
Demanded to have his personal
effects.

(beat)

I told him he couldn't have anything
without paperwork. He just stared at
me.

(beat)

Doesn't blink. Not once.

(beat)

Like he already knew how this was
going to end.

(beat)

He said I'd made a mistake.

(beat)

Then he asked about you.

Then he turned and left.

LEXI

Markus knew too much.

(beat)

Two planes. Same markings... different
numbers.

(beat)

I missed it.

(beat)

It's not the second plane.

(beat)

(MORE)

LEXI (cont'd)
It's why they made that flight.

Melanie's phone buzzes. Lexi gives a small wave, tucks the album under her arm, walks out. Lexi smiles and waves at Gail as she passes the reception desk. Lexi pushes through the doors and steps into the sunlight.

6 INT. LEXI'S CAR. DAY.

A man in a nearby car watches Lexi leave with the album. He follows her to her apartment complex, parks nearby, picks up his phone. He has dark hair, a tan, and wears a khaki shirt with epaulets.

The man presses the phone to his ear. Lexi's apartment is visible through the windshield. A faint voice answers.

MYSTERY MAN

Wolf.

(beat)

I'm sending her address. It's the girl from the photo on his desk. She has it. Texting the address. Wait until she leaves, get it, and bring it to me at the hotel.

Don't cross the FBI. It complicates things. The organization will handle her... later. They cannot find out how the money moves. We survive because we run it like a business. History belongs to those who control the record.

VOICE ON PHONE

Copy that.

The Mystery Man disconnects the call.

7 INT. LEXI'S APARTMENT. DAY.

Lexi enters the apartment, sits down, and flips through the album. She takes photos of the contents and scans any writing for translation.

Hours pass. The clock across the room moves through time. She reaches the last page and sees it is much thicker than the front.

She uses a fabric steamer to soften the glue. She peels back the liner, sees a photo concealed under the liner.

The name Erich Lange is written in cursive on the back. Lexi turns it over.

LEXI

Oh, Markus.

Two men standing on a pier, dwarfed by a colossal seaplane marked with a black Nazi cross. One is a young Markus Lange, the other could be his twin.

LEXI (cont'd)

Did you have a brother?

(beat)

LEXI (cont'd)

1945...

(beat)

LEXI (cont'd)

Why did you hide this?

Lexi takes a photo, and sends it to her father. Then she types a quick text message:

Check email and comment on attachment. L-)

She presses send. A reply comes quickly.

Luftwaffe BV-238. Destroyed just before the end of World War II.

Lexi keys in the following reply:

R U sure? Talk in AM via computer?

The response to her message comes back seconds later:

AM good for me.

8 INT. LEXI'S APARTMENT BEDROOM. DAY.

SUPER: DAY 2

Alarm on phone wakes Lexi up. She silences the alarm, yawns, stretches, reaches for her laptop. She opens it, clicks the video call icon to connect with her father in London.

SPLIT SCREEN WITH LEXI'S FATHER FULL SCREEN; LEXI IN CAMEO AT UPPER RIGHT OF SCREEN.

LEXI

Hi, Daddy. Having fun in London?

MR. BALESTRA

Yes, and learning a lot. Mom says hello. We're getting ready to go to lunch.

LEXI

I just wanted to let you know I got the teaching job I wanted.

MR. BALESTRA

That's great! Are you excited?

LEXI

Yeah. I think so.

MR. BALESTRA

Now, tell me where you found the photo you sent.

LEXI

Long story. Are you certain there was only one plane? I looked at the photo of it online. Both of them have the black Nazi cross with a white outline on the fuselage, but the numbers don't match, and the engines look different.

MR. BALESTRA

History says fighter planes destroyed the only flyable BV-238 on Eisenhower's order. Officially, it never flew in combat.

LEXI

What if the intel is wrong? If it is, who got out?

MR. BALESTRA

Anyone's guess. Plenty of Nazis escaped. Some used the Rat Line from Italy, others by submarine. Why the sudden interest? History's never been your thing.

LEXI

A resident at Willow Bend passed away, probably not from natural causes.

(MORE)

LEXI (cont'd)
He left a family album full of
photos. The photo I sent was hidden
in the binding.

MR. BALESTRA
I'm curious about the engines. I'll
take a look. You said the man's death
might not be from natural causes?
Should I be worried?

LEXI
I don't think so. I'll know more
soon.

MR. BALESTRA
My contacts in Europe might be
helpful. Send me the info. I'll let
you know if I come up with anything.
Promise you'll be careful, and don't
go poking a bear.

Lexi's phone rings.

LEXI
I'll be careful, and I won't poke a
bear. There's a call I have to
answer. Love you both.

Lexi blows air kiss before closing video link, looks at the
Caller ID on her phone, and answers on speaker.

LEXI (cont'd)
Hi, Mel. What's up?

MELANIE (O.S)
Mr. X showed up here again a few
minutes ago, and wanted to know why I
gave Markus Lange's personal effects
away. Did you tell anyone that I gave
you the album?

LEXI
Only my father, but there's no way
anyone could have known that.

MELANIE
Then someone here told him, or he's
watching you.

LEXI
Do you want it back?

MELANIE

(Emphatic)

No. I do not want him to have it.

LEXI

I know why he wants the album. There was a photo hidden inside the binding.

MELANIE

Be careful. You are definitely in danger.

Lexi swings out of bed to get dressed.

9 EXT. FRONT DOOR OF LEXI'S APARTMENT. DAY.

Lexi steps out of her apartment. A man watches from inside a nearby car and follows her. Lexi's phone screen lights up with a new text from Melanie:

Can u come to WB? Someone needs to speak with you.

Lexi replies:

K - On my way.

Lexi parks, grabs her backpack, and walks toward the entrance. Across the street, the man parks, and waits.

10 INT. WILLOW BEND FACILITY. DAY.

Lexi walks to the reception desk.

RECEPTIONIST

Good morning, Lexi.

LEXI

Hi, Gail. Melanie texted that there was someone here who wanted to see me.

RECEPTIONIST

Yes, she's with that handsome FBI agent who was here yesterday. You know, the tall, tan, blonde one with blue eyes... and a nice silk tie. He asked to see Melanie. Kind of exciting.

LEXI

Talking to an FBI agent about murder isn't my idea of exciting.

RECEPTIONIST

Do you really think it was murder? He's been here for a bit. Probably shouldn't keep him waiting.

Lexi walks down the hallway to Melanie's office, knocks on the door.

MELANIE

Lexi, you remember Agent Christiansen?

Christiansen rises. She takes a seat in front of Melanie's desk. He opens his legal pad to take notes.

CHRISTIANSSEN

How are you, Ms. Balestra? There's no need to be nervous.

LEXI

"Miss." I'm not nervous. Why do you want to talk with me?

CHRISTIANSSEN

You were close to Markus Lange, and discovered a key piece of evidence.

LEXI

Not sure what I can tell you.

CHRISTIANSSEN

What do you know about him?

LEXI

He wasn't born here. He spoke German, and was fluent in a couple of other languages, including English. He was an engineer, and loved Shakespeare. I read sonnets and plays to him many times. He was guarded about his past, and talked little about himself. Repeated things, some of it in German. I don't speak the language, so I don't know everything he said.

CHRISTIANSSEN

Anything else?

LEXI

That's all that I can think of.

CHRISTIANSEN

Here's my card. Please call me if you think of anything else.

LEXI

Why the FBI interest?

CHRISTIANSEN

Markus Lange was part of Operation Paperclip.

LEXI

He was a former Nazi?

CHRISTIANSEN

He wasn't an ardent Nazi. Can you tell me exactly what got your attention when you went into Markus Lange's room?

LEXI

The light from the window. I almost missed it.

CHRISTIANSEN

Noted. Thank you both for your help.

He walks out of the office. Lexi turns to Melanie.

LEXI

Melanie, what the hell is going on?

MELANIE

No clue. I did not know that Markus Lange was a former Nazi.

LEXI

I have chills thinking he might have been involved in atrocities.

MELANIE

Your last name doesn't sound Jewish. What's the story there?

LEXI

My great-grandfather was Romanian. He and his two brothers deserted the army because Jews were basically cannon fodder. They made a run for it, risked a firing squad, and made it to Germany.

MELANIE

How did they get to America?

LEXI

They decided that the oldest brother would stow away on a ship bound for America, go to work, and bring the other family members over.

MELANIE

Without a passport?

LEXI

An Italian man passed away from Typhus, so he took his passport. That's how Moshe Finkel became Filippo Balestra. He passed thru Ellis Island, traveled to Texas, settled in Fort Worth, and anglicized his given name to Phillip.

MELANIE

That's quite a story.

LEXI

My father heard about it as a child.

MELANIE

Oh, God. Look what time it is. I'm going to be late for Mikey's soccer game.

LEXI

Go. Tell Mikey I hope he has a good game.

11 EXT. LEXI'S APARTMENT BUILDING. DAY.

Lexi drives to her apartment, parks, and sees her door is open. She nervously fumbles for her phone, and dials 911.

Two rings. A voice answers.

911 OPERATOR

911, what is your emergency?

LEXI

My apartment door is open. It shouldn't be. Someone may be inside. I live alone. No one else has a key.

911 OPERATOR

What is your address and apartment number? Do not go in. Wait for an officer to arrive. What is your name and phone number?

LEXI

My name is Lexi Balestra. I live at
The Westbrook, 5700 Terrace Way,
Apartment 24A. My cell number is 469-
771-1010.

Lexi backs away from her apartment building to wait for a
police officer to arrive. When he does, Lexi walks to him.

POLICE OFFICER

Did you call 911?

LEXI

Yes. My door is open. I locked it
when I left. There wasn't a call from
the management office, so it's not
them.

POLICE OFFICER

OK, wait here while I check it out.
I'll let you know when to come in.

The officer places his right hand on his holstered pistol,
and walks to the open door.

POLICE OFFICER (cont'd)

Police. Anyone here?

The officer steps into the apartment, and repeats his query.
He appears in the doorway, and gestures for Lexi to come in.

She approaches, hesitant. Inside, the apartment is
chaos—couch cushions, papers, drawers strewn everywhere.

LEXI

They didn't find what they were
looking for.

Lexi moves to the desk-top. The framed photo of her and
Markus lies shattered on the floor.

Lexi pulls the album closer to her body.

POLICE OFFICER

What makes you think they were
looking for something?

LEXI

Nothing's missing.

She looks to the officer, uneasy.

LEXI (cont'd)

Should I file a report?

POLICE OFFICER

Yes. Call the number on this card tomorrow, and give them the details. You might want to find somewhere else to stay for a while.

LEXI

I plan to. Would you mind waiting a few minutes while I grab my bug-out bag?

POLICE OFFICER

Take your time. I'll wait.

Lexi walks to the front closet, opens it, and pulls out a large bag. She and the officer walk out the door to the parking lot.

12 INT. INSIDE LEXI'S MINI COOPER. DAY.

Lexi uses her dashboard control to dial Melanie's phone at Willow Bend. The phone is in speaker mode. Melanie answers on the second ring.

MELANIE

Hi, Lexi. What's up?

Lexi drives, talking on the phone to Melanie.

LEXI

Someone broke in to my apartment while I was at breakfast. They didn't find what they were looking for.

MELANIE

Are you OK?

LEXI

Yes, and no. Someone is after the album. I took it with me when I came to Willow Bend this morning.

MELANIE

What are you going to do now?

LEXI

Find somewhere else to stay for a while. I'm calling that FBI agent on my way back to Willow Bend now. See you in a few minutes.

Lexi ends the call. Her car slows to a stop at a red light. She pulls Agent Christiansen's card from her bag, dials. The line rings.

VOICEMAIL
(Christiansen's voice)

You've reached Agent Christiansen. Leave a message.

Lexi exhales, fingers tightening around the phone. Silence, then a beep.

LEXI
Agent Christiansen, this is Lexi Balestra. I may be in danger. I'm going back to Willow Bend now. Please meet me there or call back; your choice.

Christiansen's voicemail saves the message. Lexi swings into the Willow Bend parking lot, spots an opening, and slides in. A dark sedan glides in a few spaces over. She walks to meet Christiansen.

13 EXT. WILLOW BEND FACILITY. DAY.

CHRISTIANSSEN
What's going on, Miss Balestra?

LEXI
Can we go inside?

He opens the door. Lexi slips inside. She takes a seat in the reception area. Christiansen beside her.

LEXI (cont'd)
Someone broke into my apartment. I'm pretty sure it has something to do with Markus Lange's family album.

Lexi hands him the album.

CHRISTIANSSEN
What makes you think that?

Lexi's right eyebrow arches.

LEXI
I scanned and translated everything. I found this hidden inside.

Lexi pulls the photo out and hands it to him.

CHRISTIANSSEN
Interesting.

He takes a long look at the photo.

CHRISTIANSSEN (cont'd)
What am I looking at? Why did you
scan the contents?

LEXI
I thought there might be something in
the album to help me find relatives.

CHRISTIANSSEN
You said that you found this hidden
in the binding?

LEXI
Yeah. It was glued under the liner on
the back cover. It, or one like it,
was destroyed by the Allies. The
other person in the photo looks just
like Markus. They could have been
twins.

CHRISTIANSSEN
Markus Lange had a twin brother. He
disappeared, and was presumed dead
near the end of the war. There's very
little information about him.

LEXI
There's probably more to the story,
and the hidden photo might be the
key. Someone either wants the photo,
or wants to destroy it.

CHRISTIANSSEN
Is that why you think you are in
danger?

LEXI
Yes. I don't believe in coincidences.
And, I'm pretty sure someone is
watching me.

Her eyes dart toward the window. Lexi exhales, shaken,
scared, and pretty sure she poked a bear.

LEXI (cont'd)
Melanie said a man used to visit
Markus, but never gave his name.

She looks back at Christiansen.

CHRISTIANSEN

I'll look into it. Someone else may have been watching him.

Lexi's voice changes from matter-of-fact tone to a more demure tone, builds up to the ask.

LEXI

Can Melanie and I go through the security footage?

CHRISTIANSEN

We're still analyzing what we found in the room. Could be helpful if you view the videos. Can I have a copy of what you scanned?

LEXI

I'll send you a link. Now I just need to find a safe place to land.

Christiansen nods, stands up, turns, and walks out the door of the building. Lexi walks down the hallway to Melanie's office, knocks on the door.

LEXI (cont'd)

May I come in?

Melanie smiles, and laughs as she swings around in her chair.

MELANIE

(Smiling)

Yes, you troublemaker. What's going on?

Lexi sits down in front of the desk.

LEXI

Not sure, but it has something to do with the album. I scanned and translated everything looking for clues about Markus Lange's family. Then I found a photo hidden in the album binding. I told Agent Christiansen about the break-in, that someone is after the album, and may be watching me.

MELANIE

What now?

LEXI

Can we look at the security videos from the night that Markus was murdered? Agent Christiansen said it could be helpful.

MELANIE

Sure, why not. I gave him a copy of everything. Want to start now? I have time. Drag a chair around.

LEXI

When we're done, I need to find a place to stay. I can't go to my parent's house. They might think something's wrong, and come home early.

MELANIE

Come stay with us. I'd enjoy the company. My gated townhouse is safer than a hotel. I'll email you the details. The fridge is stocked, thanks to Mikey, the bottomless pit. Once he and I get back, and we have dinner, we'll get you settled in the guest room.

LEXI

Are you sure?

MELANIE

Absolutely.

LEXI

Where do we start the videos?

MELANIE

Before third shift. Things slow down then. Most of the residents are in their rooms by eight watching TV, or getting ready for bed. We'll focus on the hallway with Markus Lange's room.

Melanie cues up the file, adjusts the playback speed. The footage races forward, time-stamps flicker across the bottom of the screen. Residents and nurses drift through the hallway, doors open, close.

Time-stamp shows 9:45 p.m. Markus Lange appears. He walks to his room, opens the door, and steps in. The door shuts.

MELANIE (cont'd)

You OK?

LEXI

(Softly)

Just... sad. I miss Markus. He wasn't family.

(beat)

Didn't matter.

MELANIE

Want to stop?

LEXI

No. Keep going. Let's see what happens.

Melanie fast-forwards the footage, hallway images flicker. A figure in dark clothes enters the frame, walks to Markus Lange's door. Lexi leans in. At high speed, his stride looks wrong, off-balance, and uneven. His face stays hidden.

The figure enters Markus Lange's room, door closes behind him. Lexi and Melanie watch clock time elapse. At 1:54 a.m. the door opens, the man leaves.

Tears spill down Lexi's face. She slams her fist on the desk. Melanie flinches, then reaches out, placing her hand on Lexi's wrist. No words, just contact.

Melanie grabs a tissue from a box on the credenza, offers it to Lexi. She takes it, trembles.

Melanie rolls through the footage. She switches to a third camera. A figure in dark clothes slips into the frame, and moves down the hallway. His head turns just enough to catch light, but not enough to reveal his face. Lexi leans in.

MELANIE

Damn it. He's been to this rodeo before. The door alarm didn't go off. Let's check it out.

14 INT. EAST HALLWAY AT WILLOW BEND ASSISTED LIVING. DAY.

Melanie uses her cell phone, calls the reception desk.

MELANIE

Gail, does the east hallway light show open?

RECEPTIONIST

No, ma'am.

Lexi looks up at the top of the door. She stands on her tip toes to get a closer look.

LEXI

Wait! There... look. The magnetic sensor on top of the door has been bridged.

Melanie leans in, shakes her head. Lexi uses her elbow to open the door. She looks at the door jamb, and points at the strike plate.

LEXI (cont'd)

There... clear tape over the strike plate. The door can't lock.

Melanie leans closer and frowns.

MELANIE

(Authoritative)

Now we call Agent Christiansen. I put his number on speed dial this morning. Who knew that I would need it this soon?

Melanie speed-dials Christiansen. He answers after two rings.

CHRISTIANSSEN

Agent Christiansen, how may I help you?

MELANIE

This is Melanie at Willow Bend. We looked through the videos, and found something interesting.

CHRISTIANSSEN

Listening...

MELANIE

There's someone on the videos who shouldn't be there. Wrong time, dark clothes. A door is rigged. Someone can get in without being noticed.

CHRISTIANSSEN

I'll be there in 20 minutes. Don't touch anything.

MELANIE

We'll be here.

Melanie dials Gail at the front desk.

MELANIE (cont'd)

Gail, Have the security company send a car over right now. When they arrive, send the guard to the east hallway.

RECEPTIONIST

Will do.

The pair return to Melanie's office. Agent Christiansen walks in with an evidence tech.

CHRISTIENSEN

Ladies, meet BRAD BARKER. What do you have for us?

MELANIE

Someone entered Markus Lange's room at 1:43 a.m.

Christiansen opens his notepad and writes.

MELANIE (cont'd)

Lexi caught the rigged door.

Melanie glances at her.

CHRISTIENSEN

(Amused)

Of course she did.

Christiansen shakes his head, and stifles another laugh. The group leaves Melanie's office, and walks to the east hallway. Christiansen sees the security guard.

CHRISTIENSEN (cont'd)

That your idea, Melanie?

MELANIE

I thought it best to make sure that no one went in or out, until you got here.

CHRISTIENSEN

Let Mr. Barker work on what you found. Miss Balestra, are you a criminology major?

LEXI

No. BA in English with a minor in Japanese, and an MA in Language Arts. My father was a criminal justice major with history minor.

(MORE)

LEXI (cont'd)
He worked for attorneys as an investigator in college.

CHRISTIANSEN
He's in law enforcement?

LEXI
No. He thought about law school, but wasn't keen on three more years in a classroom. He worked with high-tech corporations, and later managed a special projects group for a famous CEO. Started his own company 25 years ago.

CHRISTIANSEN
I'd like to meet your dad.

LEXI
I get that a lot.

15 INT. MELANIE'S OFFICE. DAY.

Barker remains in the East hallway. The others return to Melanie's office, sit down around a conference table.

MELANIE
Coffee, anyone?

CHRISTIANSEN
Black for me.

LEXI
Same here, please. Melanie serves the coffee, settles into a chair.

CHRISTIANSEN
We looked through the video, and saw the same things you found.

LEXI
There's something else. The way he walks—it's off. Been stuck in my head since I saw the video.

CHRISTIANSEN
You caught that in one viewing?

Christiansen shakes his head, opens his notepad, and writes.

CHRISTIANSSEN (cont'd)
 I'll look into it. Anything else that
 might have been missed? Would you
 care to wager which foot?

Lexi smiles, and giggles.

LEXI
 How about five bucks? That'll get me
 most of a cup of coffee at a fancy
 coffee shop. It's his right foot. If
 I think of anything else, I'll let
 you know.

Melanie and Christiansen laugh. This time, Christiansen
 laughs out loud. Lexi's response to their laughter is a
 smile. Christiansen stands, walks out of the office.

16 EXT. MELANIE'S TOWNHOUSE COMPLEX. DAY.

Lexi pulls up to the gated entrance, enters the guest code,
 and drives in. She parks in a guest spot outside Melanie's
 townhouse. Lexi punches in the lock code, opens the door,
 steps inside. She sits down on the couch, pulls out her
 laptop, connects to Melanie's Wi-Fi, and checks her email.

Lexi opens an email from her father. It shows their
 itinerary until they depart Heathrow. She reaches for her
 phone, sends a text to her father.

PHONE SCREEN WITH TEXT:

R U UP?

SCREEN VIEW OF LEXI'S COMPUTER SHOWING EMPTY SEARCH ENGINE
 QUERY.

She types: "Nazi fugitives after World War II" into the
 search bar. One entry catches her eye:

The Nazi Rat Line: How Many Got Out.

She clicks, the page loads. Lexi scrolls to the author bio:
 Dr. Katherine Hershey and reads. Lexi copies the author's
 email address, opens her email, types:

Question about undocumented Nazi Fugitive

COMPUTER SCREEN SHOWING BODY OF TEXT TO DR. HERSHEY:

Dear Dr. Hershey:

I found new information about a Nazi who may have escaped Germany before the end of World War II. I was not able to find his name anywhere in existing records. May I share this information with you?

Lexi, Dallas TX

She presses send just as her phone lights up with a text message from her father.

SCREEN SHOWING TEXT TO LEXI'S FATHER.

See what you can find out about twin brothers, Markus & Erich Lange. Born in 1924. Both aeronautical engineers. Markus came to U.S. via Operation Paperclip. Erich is a twin brother. No idea if he is still alive. Love you both! L-)

Lexi settles on the couch with her laptop and continues to read more about the Rat Line. Another email notification appears in her inbox.

LEXI'S COMPUTER SCREEN SHOWING EMAIL FROM DR. HERSHEY

Lexi

Happy to talk with you about this. Classes at the university don't start until next week, but I'm keeping office hours. I'm on Eastern time. Where are you? My office hours are from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Call my cell phone at 917-444-2150. Look forward to your call.

Katy Hershey

17 INT. MELANIE'S TOWNHOUSE COMPLEX. GUEST ROOM. DAY.

SUPER: DAY 3

Sunlight spills through the window. The 8:00 a.m. alarm on Lexi's phone goes off. She stirs, stretches, and reaches for her laptop, powers it on. Then, she swings out of bed, crosses to the bathroom, brushes her teeth, and looks in the mirror. She rakes a hand through her hair. Back on the bed, she props a pillow against the headboard and settles in, laptop on her lap.

ON SCREEN: EMAIL INBOX POPULATES WITH A LIST OF NEW ITEMS, ONE MARKED DAD. SHE SCROLLS PAST IT, OPENS A BLANK MESSAGE, ATTACHES PHOTO OF THE MYSTERY PLANE.

To: Dr. Katherine Hershey. Subject: Photo I found

She adds a short greeting and explanation, then clicks Send.

Lexi opens the email from her father.

Lexi:

My genealogy contact in Germany found that Erich Lange died on April 28, 1945. He was buried in Friedhof Mölln cemetery outside of Hamburg.

The brothers attended the Technical University of Berlin. Received degrees in aeronautical engineering with honors.

Erich Lange had an eidetic memory.

Parents died during the week-long Allied bombing of Hamburg in 1943.

D-)

Lexi stares at the screen for a moment, then gets dressed.

18 EXT. DALLAS GALLERIA PARKING LOT. DAY.

Lexi's Mini Cooper glides into the lower level of the Dallas Galleria parking lot. She is unaware that the man in a car several lengths behind is following her.

MYSTERY MAN

Wolf.

(beat)

She has it. Check the car. If it's in her backpack, take it.

It's early, the garage is mostly empty. She finds a spot near an entry crosswalk, parks. Lexi grabs her backpack, gets out, locks the car with key fob, and walks toward the mall entrance.

Dallas traffic hums past on the Dallas North Tollway. Horns and distant sirens add to the noise. The Galleria office towers reflect the mid-morning sun.

The man waits until Lexi enters the mall before he gets out and looks in the windows of Lexi's car. Nothing interesting is visible. He follows—a faint hitch in his step—then loses her at the entry doors.

19 INT. GALLERIA MALL. DAY.

Lexi blends into the early morning shoppers. People shuffle toward stores and escalators. She steps onto a nearby escalator to the second level.

Something catches her eye as she looks back toward the mall entry. A man halfway between the entrance and the escalator walks with a familiar gait. Lexi takes a second look to confirm the man's gait, stiffens, walks off the escalator quickly toward a crowded store.

20 INT. CLOTHING STORE. DAY.

Lexi ducks behind a display near the front window. The man doesn't appear at the top of the escalator. She spots a maintenance worker pushing a cart toward the restrooms. Lexi walks out of the store, keeps pace a few steps behind the woman with the cart.

The worker stops the cart by the restroom entrance and disappears inside. Lexi slides into the narrow space between the cart and the wall. She grabs a dust mop, flips it upside down, wedges it between the cart's handle and frame, gives it a quick pull to break it off.

(CRACK!) The wooden handle breaks cleanly a foot above the mop head. Lexi steps out from behind the maintenance cart, mop handle placed snug against her leg. She moves toward the entry doors.

21 EXT. GALLERIA GARAGE. DAY.

Lexi walks into the garage to her car. Suddenly, her body shudders from a violent jerk upward. A hard shove from behind slams her into the side of a parked SUV. Lexi gasps in pain. She twists, plants her feet. The attacker claws at the backpack's straps. She bends her knees, leans forward, and spins hard left.

THUD! The backpack slams into the SUV, followed by her assailant. He stumbles, off balance, releases his grip on the backpack.

Lexi whirls, raises the mop handle using both hands. The attacker freezes, startled at the sight of a weapon. She lowers the mop handle to his chest and lunges—a bayonet thrust.

ASSAILANT

(In pain)

Ahhhgh!

The man staggers, breathless, arms dropping to his sides. Lexi pivots left, resets her stance, raises the handle high as she moves, brings it down in a brutal arc. The handle connects with his right knee.

THUD! He buckles, head drops.

Lexi raises the mop handle vertical again with a quick, precise move. She shifts her grip, pivots to her right side—and swings a final time.

THUD! The blow lands against his left ear. He crumples to the floor. Blood spreads across the concrete.

Lexi steps back from the pooling blood.

SCREECH! Lexi's concentration is broken by skidding car tires. She looks over her shoulder. Behind the wheel, a woman stares, eyes wide, at the scene. Lexi steps forward holding her weapon, and looks at the driver.

LEXI

(Shouts)

Call 911! Now! We need police and an ambulance.

The woman grabs her phone, and dials 911. She can be heard in the background conversing with the emergency operator. Lexi leans against the SUV, breathing heavy, hands trembling.

Flashing lights wash across the concrete as an ambulance pulls in, siren echoes. Her attacker lies motionless on the floor.

A police cruiser screeches to a stop. The officer steps out. His right hand rests on his holstered weapon. He scans the scene. He stops ten feet away and locks eyes with Lexi. She slowly lowers the mop handle to the concrete floor. The officer moves closer, cautious, his hand still on his weapon.

POLICE OFFICER

Miss, are you all right?

LEXI

Yes, but he's not.

POLICE OFFICER

I can see that.

The officer motions to the paramedics. They move in.

POLICE OFFICER (cont'd)

Step over to me so the paramedics can work.

LEXI

Yes, sir.

She moves toward him as instructed.

LEXI (cont'd)
May I reach for my ID?

POLICE OFFICER
Is it in your backpack?

LEXI
No, sir. It's in my front pocket.

POLICE OFFICER
Slowly, please. Do you have any other
weapons on your person, or in your
backpack?

LEXI
No, sir. May I take my backpack off?

POLICE OFFICER
Yes. Drop it on the ground beside
you.

LEXI
I'd rather not drop it. My laptop is
inside. May I just set it down?

POLICE OFFICER
Fine.

Lexi slips her arms free of the backpack straps, and lowers it gently to the ground. She turns, lifts the back of her shirt, shows her empty back pockets. She turns to face him, and takes her keys, phone, and ID wallet out.

She opens the wallet, removes her driver's license, holds everything out, palms up, for the officer. The officer keeps his eyes on her hands, stone-faced, his hand still hovering near his weapon.

POLICE OFFICER (cont'd)
You may keep your keys and your
phone. Why did you raise your shirt?

LEXI
Seemed appropriate, so you would know
you were safe.

He nods, facial expression doesn't change. The officer looks at Lexi's driver's license. She slips her keys, wallet, and phone back into her pocket. The second officer steps forward to check her backpack. The first officer hands the second officer her license. He takes it back to his patrol car.

The paramedics work on her attacker. He groans as they fit a cervical collar around his neck, then press and fix a bandage to his bloody ear. He groans again as they slide the backboard under him. They struggle to lift him onto the gurney.

Lexi watches. Her adrenaline rush fades. She gets a good look at him. His shaved head, and the blood seeping through the bandage makes her shiver.

Paramedic turns to police officer.

PARAMEDIC

We're taking him to Parkland in
Dallas. LBJ Freeway will be too slow.
The Dallas North Tollway is faster.

POLICE OFFICER

Now, Miss: What happened here?

LEXI

I was walking to my car. He jumped
out, and tried to steal my backpack.

She points at the two cars next to her Mini Cooper.

POLICE OFFICER

Got it. Why you were carrying a
sawed-off broomstick?

LEXI

I would rather not say anything else.
Am I under arrest?

POLICE OFFICER

No, not at this time. My partner will
talk to the witnesses, and take their
statements. I will take you to the
station, but you are not under arrest
at this time. A detective will take
your statement. Do you understand?

LEXI

I understand. May I have my backpack,
please?

POLICE OFFICER

No. A detective will return it to you
at the station. I am going to put
you, and your backpack in my vehicle.
You will not be in handcuffs. Again,
you are not under arrest. Would you
like to call someone before we leave?

LEXI

No.

22 EXT. SUBURBAN DALLAS POLICE STATION. DAY.

The patrol car parks near the police station entrance. The officer gets out and opens the door for Lexi.

POLICE OFFICER

A detective will take your statement.
Someone will take you back to your
vehicle afterwards.

LEXI

I understand.

23 INT. POLICE STATION INTERROGATION ROOM. DAY.

Door opens with a metallic click. The officer guides Lexi inside, gestures to a chair. She sits, eyes tracing the dull gray walls. The officer steps aside as a woman enters.

LT. MARQUEZ

I'm Detective ANDREA MARQUEZ. The
detective takes the seat across from
her, sets down a folder, and opens
it.

Lexi is visibly apprehensive.

MARQUEZ

I work in the violent crimes unit.
How are you?

LEXI

Been better.

MARQUEZ

I'm sure. Are you hurt?

LEXI

Bruises, likely, from being slammed
into an SUV.

Lexi pulls up her sleeve to reveal her wrist and forearm.
Marquez looks closely.

MARQUEZ

No lacerations. That's good. The
other person wasn't as lucky.

LEXI
(Blurts)
I fought back...

MARQUEZ
You did. The club is the issue here.
Care to explain?

LEXI
I'd like to invoke my rights.

MARQUEZ
Your choice. You're not being
charged.

LEXI
No comment. May I reach in my pocket
and get something?

MARQUEZ
Yes.

Lexi rises from her chair, calm but deliberate. She pulls her ID wallet from her pocket, flips it open, and slides out a single card. She places it on the table.

Detective Marquez leans forward, studies the card, looks up, meets Lexi's eyes. A long beat passes before she speaks.

MARQUEZ (cont'd)
Is this a "Get out of jail free"
card?

LEXI
(Emphatic)
No. Agent Christiansen can answer
your questions. I'll wait...

Lexi watches Lt. Marquez closely; she does not blink. The lieutenant's expression tightens. A long, uneasy pause. Marquez takes the card, rises without a word, and walks out. The uniformed officer follows Marquez out. Lexi sits alone in the room. Marquez reappears in the doorway, her tone and posture are different. Cell phone is at her ear.

MARQUEZ
Miss Balestra, Agent Christiansen
wants to know if your assailant had a
limp?

LEXI
Yes, but it's a lot worse now.

Marquez snickers. Lexi can hear Agent Christiansen laughing on the phone.

MARQUEZ
(Softer tone)
You're free to go.

Marquez hands Lexi Agent Christiansen's card.

(Grins)
I'll keep the mop handle in the
interest of public safety. The
sergeant will take you back to your
car.

MARQUEZ (cont'd)
Keep it. You may need it again.

Marquez smiles, hands Lexi her backpack. Lexi walks to the front door where the Sergeant waits.

ACT II

24 INT. MELANIE'S TOWNHOUSE. DAY.

Lexi opens the front door, enters, resets the alarm, and crumples down on the couch with her backpack. She pulls out her phone, dials Agent Christiansen's number, presses the speaker button.

CHRISTIENSEN
Agent Christiansen...

LEXI
I should put you on speed dial.

CHRISTIENSEN
Do you plan on getting arrested again?

LEXI
Not planning on it. Technically, I was detained for questioning, not arrested. I need a favor.

CHRISTIENSEN
Listening...

LEXI
He was after the album. If I have it, I'm going to continue to be a target. Do you have any suggestions?

CHRISTIENSEN
I'll book it in as evidence.

LEXI
Can we do it today?

CHRISTIENSEN
Five o'clock OK? You, and your mop handle, generated some paperwork I have to finish.

LEXI
Sorry.

CHRISTIENSEN (O.S)
I'm not. It's what I do, and I get paid to do it. Where would you like to meet?

LEXI
Do you know The Good Egg?

CHRISTIANSSEN (O.S)

I do.

LEXI

See you there.

Lexi slumps back on the couch to relax before her call with Dr. Hershey. At two o'clock, Lexi dials Dr. Hershey's office number. Dr. Hershey answers on the third ring.

DR. HERSHEY

Dr. Hershey.

LEXI

Dr. Hershey, this is Lexi. Thank you for taking my call.

DR. HERSHEY

Oh, I am so glad that you called. I have questions about the photo that you sent me!

LEXI

What would you like to know?

DR. HERSHEY

Can we make this a video call, so I can see you? Would you mind?

LEXI

Let me switch modes on my phone.

FRAME GOES TO SPLIT SCREEN MODE FOR VIDEO CALL.

DR. HERSHEY

Where to start... first, did the photo you sent come from an archive?

LEXI

No. Someone hid it in an old family album.

DR. HERSHEY

It was hidden? Fascinating. How?

LEXI

It was behind the binding paper on the back cover of the album. I documented everything in the album, and noticed the back cover was thicker than the front cover. There was something under it, so I steamed it open.

(MORE)

LEXI (cont'd)

The paper curled away from the glue,
and I saw the back of the photo with
a signature.

DR. HERSHEY

Interesting.

LEXI

(Fast paced; nervous)

I knew a man in the photo, and my
father told me that the plane is a
BV-238. This doesn't agree with the
historical record. A man attacked me
this morning, probably to get the
album, and get the photo. The FBI is
investigating.

DR. HERSHEY

Wait... this is a lot to parse. Your
father? Is he a historian? And, the
FBI? Why are they involved? Someone
attacked you?

LEXI

I'm so sorry. I probably sound like
an idiot. Let me start over. My
father isn't a historian, but he is
very interested in World War II.

DR. HERSHEY

I'd like to meet your father.

LEXI

He has that effect on people.

DR. HERSHEY

May I call you Lexi?

LEXI

Yes, please do.

DR. HERSHEY

Please call me Katy. I am so pleased
that you contacted me. Now, tell me
how the FBI got involved.

LEXI

I knew one of the men in that photo.
His name was Markus Lange.

He was an aeronautical engineer in
Nazi Germany. He came to the U.S. via
Operation Paperclip.

Lexi's voice softens.

That's how he ended up here. I met him through a volunteer reading program at an assisted living center.

She pauses as the weight of Markus' memory catches up to her.

LEXI (CONT'D)

Someone murdered him in his sleep.

DR. HERSHEY

Well, there's the FBI connection. So, how did you come by the album?

LEXI

The administrator at the center gave it to me because Markus and I became good friends. He didn't have any family on record. She thought I might be able to find a relative, and give them the album.

LEXI (CONT'D)

I scanned and translated everything inside. Including the photo I sent you. There must have been a reason why Markus hid the photo.

DR. HERSHEY

The only writing on the photo was a signature?

LEXI

Yes, just the name, Erich Lange. Are you thinking about invisible ink?

DR. HERSHEY

Yes, exactly. Clever girl! The old way to check for it would be to use a cloth and a warm iron to bring it out. Female prisoners in the Ravensbruck concentration camp used that technique. It was how they communicated with the Polish Underground.

LEXI

Should I do that?

DR. HERSHEY

No, there's a better way. Talk with the FBI agent, and ask him to run a multi-spectrum light analysis on the back of the photo.

LEXI

I'll ask. I'm meeting with him later today to give him the album and the photo. It's dangerous for me to have them.

DR. HERSHEY

I agree. Will you let me know if they find anything?

LEXI

Of course.

DR. HERSHEY

Now, let me tell you something interesting. What you found may link to something that came up in an interview I had with a retired U.S. Navy captain years ago. His ship may have encountered a BV-238.

LEXI

I thought it was destroyed.

DR. HERSHEY

There might have been two planes. We called it "Markham's Bogey."

LEXI

Oh God, Katy—I just realized something.

(beat)

That might've been what Markus was trying to tell me before he died.

(beat)

He wanted the photo to be found.

She leans forward, excitement and dread mix in her voice.

LEXI (CONT'D)

He said "Da war zwei."

Lexi's breath quickens. She hesitates.

LEXI (CONT'D)

Katy... If there were two planes... then someone's been hiding the truth since 1945—and they're still killing to keep it buried.

DR. HERSHEY

Maybe. Anything else you can share?

LEXI

Markus Lange's brother, Erich, died in April 1945. His grave is near the Blohm & Voss factory east of Hamburg, Germany.

DR. HERSHEY

Have to go. Student waiting. Let's talk soon. Let me know if the FBI finds anything on the back of the photo.

LEXI

I will.

Lexi disconnects.

25 EXT. THE GOOD EGG. DAY.

Lexi parks near the front door of The Good Egg. Christiansen parks nearby and walks to the door. She gets out of her car, backpack in hand, and meets him at the door.

BOTH AT FRONT DOOR.

CHRISTIENSEN

Hello. How are you?

LEXI

Oh, I've had better days.

CHRISTIENSEN

I'm sure. Glad you weren't hurt. I got some information about the person who attacked you from Lt. Marquez. He's got a record that includes violence.

LEXI

Does it include murder?

CHRISTIANSEN

Until now, no. Why don't we go inside?

LEXI

Good idea.

Lexi swivels her head as a dark van moves slowly past them. Neither the driver nor a passenger is visible. Lexi watches the van park in a spot with a view of the restaurant door. Christiansen opens the door.

26 INT. THE GOOD EGG RESTAURANT. DAY.

A hostess leads Lexi and Christiansen to a table near the front window.

They sit across from each other. Lexi places her backpack on the chair between them, unzips it, and pulls out the album. She slides it across the table to Christiansen.

CHRISTIANSEN

I'll take good care of it.

LEXI

There may be something interesting about the photo, but I need your help to find it.

CHRISTIANSEN

And that would be...

LEXI

I spoke with someone about the photo today. Her name is Katy Hershey. She's a World War II historian.

She opens the album, and pulls out the photo of Markus Lange, his brother Erich, and the BV-238.

CHRISTIANSEN

What's the ask?

LEXI

I think there might be something on the back of the photo besides the signature that we can't see. A clue that explains why Markus hid the photo. Could you run a spectral analysis to see if there's any hidden writing.

CHRISTIANSEN
Seems reasonable. I'll put in a request. Anything else?

LEXI
Yes. Did the man who attacked me kill Markus Lange?

CHRISTIANSEN
Too early to say for sure, but he looks good for it.

LEXI
Lt. Marquez said they might keep him in jail without bond.

CHRISTIANSEN
I did the paperwork on that this afternoon before I left the office. But, you should know: he's muscle for hire. He's not the problem—he's the receipt. Someone paid for this, and they're still in business.

LEXI
(With dread)
As in Nazi Skinhead?

CHRISTIANSEN
Yes. I'll know more about him after I get a briefing from the Domestic Terrorism Task Force.

LEXI
Is that van a protective detail?

Christiansen shakes his head, and grins.

CHRISTIANSEN
Didn't think you'd miss it. Bickers and whoever hired him got ahead of me once. That won't happen again. They're both going down for the murder.

Christiansen takes out his phone, starts typing.

CHRISTIANSEN (CONT'D)
I'm sending you a number. If anything feels off, call it. Put it on speed dial. Be very descriptive with the operator.

He leans in slightly.

CHRISTIANSSEN

It's live twenty-four seven, and connects straight to the team in the van.

LEXI

I probably shouldn't stay at Melanie's. It would be dangerous for them.

CHRISTIANSSEN

She said you would say that...

Lexi interrupts.

LEXI

I should go to my parent's house. They're in London...

She pauses for a beat, and looks directly at Christiansen.

LEXI (CONT'D)

Wait a minute! You already talked to Melanie about this, didn't you?

CHRISTIANSSEN

Guilty as charged. She's fine with it. It's a gated property, has an alarm system, and Melanie has a weapon on the premises.

LEXI

Anything else I need to know?

CHRISTIANSSEN

No, but now I have a question. How did you come up with a weapon between the time you left your car, and came back to it?

LEXI

Spur of the moment. An equalizer could keep him out arm's reach. I grabbed a dust mop off a maintenance cart in the mall, and snapped it off at a length that I thought would work.

CHRISTIANSSEN

Quick thinking under pressure.

You continue to amaze me, Miss Balestra. Now, would you like some coffee, or tea?

LEXI

Tea would be nice. I can't stay long.
Melanie and Mikey are bringing
dinner. I'm pretty sure it will be
served with a generous helping of
"What the hell is going on?"

Christiansen chuckles at Lexi's remark. This one is nearer a real laugh. They sip their drinks. The check arrives. Lexi grabs it, slips some bills out of her pocket, and sets them neatly on the table.

He takes the album, tucks it under his arm. Lexi lifts her backpack, shoulders in a smooth motion. They share a look; the calm before whatever comes next.

CHRISTIANSSEN

Just remember—he's not working alone.

You should let me cover this.

LEXI

Consider it a bribe for the lab work.
And, you're paying for my protection.

She smiles. He surrenders with a small nod. They part ways at the door, go to their cars. She watches the rear-view mirror and sees the FBI van pull out behind her.

27 EXT. MELANIE'S TOWNHOUSE. LATE AFTERNOON.

Lexi enters the gate code. It slides open, she drives through, pulls into a guest spot near the townhouse.

The FBI van pulls up, driver enters code, pulls into the parking lot, parks with a clear line of sight to Melanie's townhouse.

Lexi grabs her backpack, steps out, and walks toward the townhouse, the sound of the gate closing behind her.

28 INT. MELANIE'S TOWNHOUSE. EVENING.

Lexi and Melanie are on the couch.

MELANIE

Now, Miss Drew... dish. And, I don't
mean the food.

LEXI

Oh, please, not that again. I am so sorry I dragged you and Mikey into this.

MELANIE

We wouldn't have it any other way...

LEXI

(Interrupts)

But, Mikey...

MELANIE

Oh, stop... Mikey and I discussed it. The FBI has the gate code, and the combo for the door lock. I have a registered weapon, and I've been trained to use it. They put a camera up to watch the back door.

Lexi leans back on the couch, moves the curtain to check for the FBI van in the parking lot.

MELANIE (cont'd)

Now, Missy, tell me what happened at the mall.

LEXI

It wasn't a big thing. I went to the mall. When I got off the escalator, I thought someone was following me, and I recognized the gait we saw on the videos.

MELANIE

Excuse me, but Agent Christiansen told me a slightly different version.

Lexi grins.

LEXI

I was pretty sure he would rat me out.

MELANIE

He said you managed to come up with a weapon, and proceeded to beat the living crap out of a dude more than twice your size. Now he's recovering in a hospital, handcuffed to his bed.

LEXI

Yeah, that's pretty much it.

MELANIE

When he called me, he wanted to know if you were going to stay with us. I said yes, of course. He told me what they had planned. Fits right in with my Mama Bear instincts. I know you're tired. Do you want to turn in early?

LEXI

I should. A hot shower should help. I will definitely be sore tomorrow, with some awful bruises.

MELANIE

By the way, I forgot to mention there is a fire escape ladder in the closet. You can use it to go out the window. All the bedrooms have them. Ever used one?

LEXI

Yes. My dad bought me one for my apartment at college.

MELANIE

Smart man. Knows how to protect his family.

LEXI

He does. See you in the morning.

Lexi slowly climbs the stairs with her backpack and bug-out bag. When she gets to the guest room, she sets them down on the bed.

29 INT. AGENT CHRISTIANSEN'S OFFICE. DAY.

SUPER: DAY 4

Agent Christiansen's computer screen announces a connection request. He clicks to acknowledge. A pretty young woman with blonde hair appears on-screen.

SPLIT SCREEN VIDEO CONFERENCE WITH CHRISTIANSEN AND TOOMEY.

CHRISTIANSEN

Christiansen here.

DARLA TOOMEY, DTF ANALYST

Good morning, Agent Christiansen. I'm DARLA TOOMEY, DTF.

CHRISTIENSEN

Good morning. Thanks for the fast response. Appreciate the detail on my suspect.

TOOMEY

Glad to help. The summary should hit your inbox in a moment. Broken home, no close family, juvenile record, misdemeanors, a few low-level felonies. Bad boy since junior high.

Christiansen leans back.

TOOMEY (cont'd)

Want me to unseal his juvenile record?

CHRISTIENSEN

Yes. Why is the DTTF interested in him?

TOOMEY

Here's the eye-opener: He has ties to a Neo-Nazi podcaster in Dallas. That bad boy has a stack of outstanding warrants, including Charlottesville in 2017.

He pauses, scans the file.

TOOMEY (cont'd)

Both are connected to the Patriot Front. He's not just a follower: he's an enforcer.

CHRISTIENSEN

Major felonies?

TOOMEY

None that stuck. He wiggled out of several. We suspect witness intimidation. Crashed the door and stuck his foot in. The victim shot what he could see. Now he walks funny.

CHRISTIENSEN

Let me guess: Right foot, big toe.

TOOMEY

You've read the report already?

CHRISTIENSEN

No. A very observant witness spotted his gait on a videotape, and tagged it as an issue with his right big toe. Cost me a bet.

TOOMEY

Very observant. A lot of people would have missed it.

CHRISTIENSEN

This one doesn't miss anything. Nancy Drew wasn't this good. She's got heart, too.

TOOMEY

Ah, a young lady. Are you her knight in shining armor?

CHRISTIENSEN

Far from it. She didn't need to be saved. He attacked her in a mall parking lot, and she beat the crap out of him with part of a mop handle.

Then she flashed my card to local LEOs. She defended herself, so they didn't hold her. Played hell with the odds in an ongoing office pool.

TOOMEY

That's too funny. Can anyone play?

CHRISTIENSEN

Check with Adrienne Gautier in our office. She's an analyst, and the office pool meister. I'm sure she can loop you in. Thanks for your help on this.

TOOMEY

Any time. May I ask: What's your interest in this case?

CHRISTIENSEN

Bickers may be the hit-man in a murder for hire of a former Paperclip member.

TOOMEY

Wow! Interesting. I know someone who is very familiar with Paperclip. Would you mind keeping me in the loop on this one?

CHRISTIENSEN
Will do. The case has interesting
connections.

Christiansen ends call, writes notes in his notebook.

30 INT. MELANIE'S TOWNHOUSE, GUEST BEDROOM. DAY.

Lexi's phone rings, wakes her. She puts the call on speaker
without looking at the screen.

LEXI
(Sleepy)
This is Lexi.

CHRISTIENSEN (O.S)
How do you feel today?

LEXI
Oh, Agent Christiansen. I didn't look
at Caller ID. Sorry. Sore, otherwise
OK. Nothing an aspirin and coffee
can't fix. Why the call?

CHRISTIENSEN (O.S)
Interesting stuff.

LEXI
Did the lab find anything on the back
of the photo?

CHRISTIENSEN
Yes. Two groups of numbers. Sending
to your email now. It's the latitude
and longitude for Manaus, Brazil. The
scan was a good idea.

LEXI
Dr. Hershey gets some of the credit.
By the way, Erich Lange supposedly
died on April 28, 1945 in Germany.

CHRISTIENSEN
Interesting.

LEXI
Makes me wonder if anyone is buried
in Erich Lange's grave.

CHRISTIENSEN
Good question. Only one way to find
out. I'll let you know if there's
anything, or nothing, there.

LEXI

One more question, if I may...

CHRISTIANSEN

Ask away...

LEXI

Find anything else about the man who attacked me?

CHRISTIANSEN

Still not talking, but we know a lot about him. He has a record. Petty stuff, and a couple of assaults. He's in the big leagues now. The DA is about to charge him with murder, and the assault on you. They might amend the charge to murder for hire.

Phone buzzes in background.

CHRISTIANSEN (cont'd)

Sorry... I need to take a call.

Christiansen disconnects. Lexi opens her computer to check email. She opens Christiansen's email, forwards it to Dr. Hershey with a note in the subject line:

NEW INFO. CALL WHEN YOU HAVE TIME.

31 INT. MELANIE'S TOWNHOUSE DOWNSTAIRS LIVING ROOM. DAY.

Lexi reads email. Her phone rings, she puts it on speaker.

LEXI

Hi, Katy. I have news.

DR. HERSHEY

Sorry I couldn't call sooner. I'm knee-deep in graduate conferences.

LEXI

No problem. You were right about looking for hidden writing. There is writing on the back of the photo. It's a latitude and longitude.

DR. HERSHEY

Oh, wow. Where?

LEXI

Manaus, Brazil. Maybe Erich Lange is alive.

DR. HERSHEY

I'm not surprised. The SS and the Abwehr put fake headstones in cemeteries, faked death certificates, and grave registrations.

LEXI

Agent Christiansen is looking into it.

DR. HERSHEY

Good. The bureau will work with German Intelligence.

LEXI

Why would Erich flee to Brazil? It doesn't seem like he, or Markus, were ardent Nazis who wanted to escape.

DR. HERSHEY

It's a puzzle, especially since Markus was part of Operation Paperclip. His unclassified dossier might tell us more.

LEXI

It would be amazing if Erich is alive and living in Brazil.

DR. HERSHEY

That might answer, and pose questions.

LEXI

All of this makes me wonder if someone didn't want Markus to know that Erich was still alive.

DR. HERSHEY

Now you're thinking like an analyst. What are you doing today?

LEXI

Resting, trying to recover, and reading a book on the Rat Line.

DR. HERSHEY

Get some rest, and let me know what you find out about Erich Lange. I have to ask. Christiansen has become quite an asset for you. Anything going on there?

LEXI

Not sure what you mean.

DR. HERSHEY

Does he have a personal interest?

LEXI

No. He's very professional, and our worlds are completely different. He's older, too.

DR. HERSHEY

Call me anytime you need to talk. You don't have to wait for office hours. I mean that.

32 INT. AGENT CHRISTIANSEN'S OFFICE. DAY.

Christiansen pulls up Melanie's number, dials.

MELANIE

This is Melanie.

CHRISTIANSEN

Good morning, Melanie. This is Agent Christiansen. Do you have a moment?

MELANIE

For you, of course. You're taking care of my favorite girl. What's up?

CHRISTIANSEN

I have contact information for Markus Lange's twin brother.

MELANIE

What? He's alive?

CHRISTIANSEN

Yes. Living in Manaus, Brazil.

MELANIE

Oh, my God! Lexi will be thrilled.

CHRISTIANSEN

Should she be there for the call?

MELANIE

Yes. How do I get the information?

CHRISTIENSEN

I'll come to your office. If I got there at one o'clock, it would be mid-afternoon in Brazil. Good time to call.

MELANIE

Are you going to call Lexi, or do you want me to do it?

CHRISTIENSEN

Why don't you let her know. I have information on Erich Lange I can share before we make the call.

MELANIE

I'll call her as soon as we hang up.

CHRISTIENSEN

Fine. I'll see you both at one.

Melanie disconnects, and dials Lexi's number.

LEXI

Hi, Mel. What's up?

MELANIE

Well, I got a call from tall, blonde, and handsome.

LEXI

Oh, come on, Melanie. That's not a thing. Just say it was Agent Christiansen.

MELANIE

You never know. A girl can hope, can't she? Can you come to the office at one o'clock?

LEXI

Sure, why?

MELANIE

Christiansen has contact information for Erich Lange in Brazil. He wants me to provide notification about Markus. We thought you should be here for the call.

LEXI

I'll be there.

33 EXT. MELANIE'S TOWNHOUSE COMPLEX. DAY.

Lexi steps outside, scans the driveway, sees FBI van is there, watching. She walks to her Mini Cooper, gets in, and leaves. The van rolls out behind her.

Lexi arrives at Willow Bend and parks. The van parks a few spaces away. She gets out, slings her backpack over one shoulder, walks quickly to the door.

34 INT. WILLOW BEND RECEPTION AREA. DAY.

Lexi waves to Gail as she passes the front desk, continues down the hall.

35 INT. MELANIE'S OFFICE. DAY.

The door is open. Lexi raps twice on the frame, steps inside.

LEXI

I'm early. Did you want me to wait in the reception area?

MELANIE

No, of course not. I called the coroner to let them know we may have found a relative.

LEXI

What would have happened if we hadn't found a relative?

MELANIE

Burial in a Potter's Field, or cremation, and no ceremony. Thanks to you, he'll be properly buried. Every person deserves dignity at death.

Agent Christiansen walks in.

LEXI

Melanie said you found Erich Lange.

CHRISTIENSEN

Yes, and I have more information on Rodney Bickers. He was muscle for hire. We think it might be the mystery man who visited Markus here.

LEXI

I'm still worried about Bickers getting out on bail. This gets worse by the minute.

CHRISTIANSEN

Let's talk about Erich Lange. Your instincts were correct. He didn't die in Germany. The grave was empty. There's no death certificate, or grave registration document.

LEXI

They opened the grave?

CHRISTIANSEN

No. That would take time and a court order. Ground Penetrating Radar showed the grave marked Erich Lange was empty, but others around it are occupied.

LEXI

Interesting.

CHRISTIANSEN

There's more. I asked the FBI liaison in Manaus to run a check on Erich Lange. The liaison asked why someone else was requesting information. There is an Erich Lange living in Manaus, and he is 98 years old. We have a phone number. Melanie can make the call.

LEXI

Thank you! I didn't expect this.

Christiansen hands a sheet of paper to Melanie. She looks at it, picks up the phone, dials the number. They hear a different type of ring tone. Melanie puts the phone on speaker.

WOMAN'S VOICE

(Spanish)

Ola. Residencia Lange.

SUPER: HELLO. LANGE RESIDENCE.

Christiansen and Melanie look at each other. Lexi steps into the conversation.

LEXI

(Spanish)

Ola, senora. Podemos hablar con el
Senor Lange? Alguien en la casa habla
inglés?

SUPER: HELLO, MADAME. CAN WE SPEAK WITH MR. LANGE. DOES
ANYONE IN THE HOUSE SPEAK ENGLISH?

WOMAN'S VOICE

Yes, I speak English. May I ask who
is calling?

LEXI

My name is Lexi. We are looking for
the brother of Markus Lange from
Hamburg, Germany.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Your Spanish is very good. Many in
Manaus speak it, though most speak
Portuguese, and some speak English. I
am Erich's wife, ASTRUD.

LEXI

Hello, Astrud. Very nice to speak
with you, I am here with Melanie, the
director of the care center where
Markus lived.

ASTRUD LANGE

You said 'was' and 'lived.' We did
not know Markus survived the war.
When did he die?

LEXI

Earlier this week. Would it be
possible to speak with Erich?

ASTRUD LANGE

Yes, of course. He also speaks
English. Let me get him. He must hear
this.

Astrud puts the phone down. They hear footsteps, Erich Lange
picks up the phone.

ERICH LANGE

Hello, this is Erich Lange. Who is
speaking?

MELANIE

My name is Melanie Rogers. I am the director at Willow Bend Center near Dallas, TX. Markus Lange lived with us for four years.

ERICH LANGE

He survived the war? We searched everywhere. Never found a trace. Every inquiry came back unanswered. My wife, Astrud, was told he died before the surrender. Was there a funeral?

MELANIE

No. That is why we're calling. Would you care to give us instructions?

ERICH LANGE

(Emotional)

We'll come to you, and make the arrangements for his funeral. My wife will handle the flights. Please give her the details, where we should go, and where to stay. It's six hours from Manaus to Miami, then another three to Dallas. We'll let you know our arrival times once the flights are confirmed.

MELANIE

Yes, of course.

Astrud takes phone from Erich.

ASTRUD LANGE

My email address is Astrud at LangeAire dot com dot br. You have our phone number, if there is a problem with email.

MELANIE

I will send all the information to you immediately.

ASTRUD LANGE

Thank you so much for calling. We look forward to meeting you.

The line clicks, and the overseas dial tone sounds briefly before Melanie hangs up.

MELANIE

Well, Lexi, you saved the day once again. I had no idea that you speak Spanish.

LEXI

I took a chance. My Portugese is weak.

MELANIE

I'll send the email right away, and let you both know when I get a reply.

CHRISTIANSEN

I have questions for Erich Lange. I'd like to attend the funeral, and talk with the Langes afterwards. I'll keep it informal.

LEXI

I have questions, too. I want to hear how he ended up in Manaus.

CHRISTIANSEN

That may be quite a story. We'll know more about Erich Lange soon from the authorities in Manaus. I'll read you both in when I get it. He's not on any FBI, BND, or Interpol list. I checked those before I came here.

Christiansen walks out, Lexi follows. She pulls out her phone, calls Katy Hershey, stops in reception area, sets up a video call.

SPLIT SCREEN TO SHOW LEXI AND KATY HERSHEY.

DR. HERSHEY

Hi, Lexi. Find out anything new?

LEXI

Lots! Agent Christiansen found Erich Lange. He and his wife live in Manaus. They are flying in to bury Markus.

DR. HERSHEY

I would love to hear his story. Can I listen in via phone when you talk with him?

LEXI

Yes, of course.

LEXI (cont'd)

Melanie plans to host lunch after the funeral. That will be a good opportunity to talk informally with the Langes. I'm just happy that Markus will get a proper funeral.

DR. HERSHEY

You're a good person, Lexi. Most people, wouldn't care, all things considered.

LEXI

Oh, I'm still wrestling with everything. I hope Agent Christiansen will help me learn more about Markus.

DR. HERSHEY

He will. He may have a soft spot for a damsel in distress.

LEXI

Are you saying that I need a knight in shining armor?

DR. HERSHEY

Do you read Neil Gaiman? He says the best stories are where women save themselves. But, it doesn't mean that you can't have an ally, or two.

LEXI

I suppose. I'll text you as soon as the Langes arrive.

DR. HERSHEY

Talk to you soon.

Lexi ends the call, walks out of Willow Bend.

36 INT. MELANIE'S TOWNHOUSE COMPLEX. GUEST ROOM. DAY.

SUPER: DAY 5

CUT TO LEXI ASLEEP IN BED.:

Lexi's phone rings, wakes her up. She reaches for it, sees it's Melanie requesting a video call.

LEXI

(Whiny)

Hi. I'm bored. Save me.

Melanie laughs at Lexi.

MELANIE

You'll live. The Langes arrived late last night, and went straight to their hotel. She glances at her phone. Erich managed to set up a graveside service for eleven tomorrow morning. I invited them to come back here afterward for lunch. They should see where Markus lived, and we can talk.

LEXI

Great idea! Did you let Agent Christiansen know?

MELANIE

Yep. Spoke with him before I called you.

LEXI

Dilemma alert. I either go to my apartment, and get some clothes, or go shopping. I don't have anything to wear to a funeral.

MELANIE

Neither. Taking a security team to the mall for shopping is out of the question. What size do you wear? I'll find some suitable things at the mall. You pick out what you want, and I'll return the rest.

LEXI

Bummer. I was hoping to get some fresh air, and sunshine. Four to six is my usual starting point. Depends on the item.

MELANIE

Open a window on the second floor. No open windows on the ground floor. Not safe.

LEXI

So, now you're part of the security team, and my personal shopper?

MELANIE

Damn straight. I'll pick up Mikey at school, and go shopping.

(MORE)

MELANIE (cont'd)
He hates shopping, so I'll bring something special home for dinner. Dessert, too. That should soothe the savage beast known as Mikey's stomach.

LEXI
This could get old.

MELANIE
Not for Mikey. He says he eats better when we have company. Definitely not a four star recommendation for my cooking. See you later.

Melanie ends the call. Lexi gets up, opens the guest room window.

37 INT. MELANIE'S TOWNHOUSE DOWNSTAIRS LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

Lexi, Melanie, and Mikey are eating dinner.

LEXI
Awesome performance, Mikey. I've never seen crepes disappear from a plate so fast.

Mikey grins.

MIKEY
Thanks. Shopping with Mom always makes me hungry.

LEXI
I'll bet. How many stores did she drag you through?

MIKEY
At least a dozen.

MELANIE
Not true; it was four, you little extortionist. You got one crepe for each store, plus dessert.

MIKEY
Yeah, but all that walking between stores. It should have been more.

MELANIE
Don't you try that with me, Bozo.

They all laugh. Mikey excuses himself, and goes upstairs. Lexi and Melanie sit at the bar and sip coffee laced with Kahlua.

LEXI
Oh, I needed this.

MELANIE
Me, too. It's a chaser. Tomorrow is going to be a long, strange day.

LEXI
I should go try on what you bought for me. I'm paying for this, no exceptions.

38 INT. MELANIE'S TOWNHOUSE DOWNSTAIRS LIVING ROOM. DAY.

SUPER: DAY 6

Lexi walks downstairs to the living room, sits down at table with Melanie and Mikey.

MELANIE
Want a cup of coffee?

LEXI
Yes, please, and a roll, too. They smell delicious.

MELANIE
Only one?

LEXI
Two, if there are enough.

Lexi looks at Mikey. He nods.

MELANIE
Done.

LEXI
Good morning, Mikey.

Mikey nods again, and mumbles a reply through a half-chewed roll.

LEXI (cont'd)
So, what's the plan for today?

MELANIE

Take Mikey to school, then go to Willow Bend to get some things done before the service for Markus. Come to the office at 9:45. That will give us plenty of time to get to the cemetery, even if traffic is heavy.

LEXI

Which one?

MELANIE

Morrow. It's on the south side of the Tollway at Central. Erich Lange made arrangements for a graveside service at the mausoleum. He found a funeral home, Lutheran minister, and scheduled a funeral on short notice.

LEXI

I haven't been to many funerals. Only family. I don't do sadness well.

MELANIE

Grief is the price of love, and friendship. Best you learn how to manage it while you're young.

LEXI

I really want to know more about the life Markus led after the war. I hope he did good things.

MELANIE

He did. I had a discussion with Agent Christiansen about it. He has a surprise for you.

Mikey goes upstairs to get his backpack for school.

MELANIE (cont'd)

You know, Mikey wants you to stay with us for a while.

LEXI

Being protective? That's sweet.

MELANIE

Purely self-serving. He says he eats better when you're with us. Growing boys think with their stomachs until they start thinking with other things.

Lexi rolls her eyes, they both laugh. She finishes eating, takes the last sips of her coffee, puts her dishes in the dishwasher, and goes upstairs.

39 EXT. MORROW CEMETERY MAUSOLEUM. DAY.

Lexi's car rolls to a stop in a small parking area outside the mausoleum. A black hearse and a limousine sit nearby. The FBI van parks at a discreet distance.

Lexi steps out, joined by Melanie. They walk together toward the portico.

The funeral director has arranged a dozen folding chairs in the portico. A large photograph of Markus Lange rests on an easel beside the casket. A Lutheran minister stands nearby, Bible in hand. Mourners take their seats.

The Langes sit on the front row. Behind them, a few Willow Bend residents who knew Markus fill the remaining chairs.

Agent Christiansen sits alone on the back row.

She and Melanie exchange a glance, then walk slowly toward him.

LEXI
May we join you?

CHRISTIENSEN
Of course.

He stands. Lexi sits next to him, Melanie takes the next seat. She turns to talk to him.

LEXI
Thanks for coming. I appreciate the gesture.

CHRISTIENSEN
Least I could do. You helped make this happen. There should be some solace in that.

LEXI
No good deed goes unpunished. I am living proof. What hurts me the most is that the brothers weren't reunited. Things would have been very different.

CHRISTIENSEN
Let's see how it plays out.

Lexi smiles at the crack in Christiansen's facade. The pastor introduces himself.

LUTHERAN PASTOR

I am Reverend Borchow, and I am honored to minister to the family of Markus Lange in their time of sorrow. The family asked for a Committal with a passage from Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

"There is nothing that can replace the absence of someone dear to us, and one should not even attempt to do so. One must simply hold out and endure it. One bears what was lovely in the past not as a thorn but as a precious gift deep within, a hidden treasure of which one can always be certain."

The Lord bless you and keep you. Mr. Lange's brother would like to speak now.

Erich Lange and his wife, Astrud rise from their seats.

ERICH LANGE

I didn't know Markus survived the war. We were separated just before the end. Our parents were killed in the bombing of Hamburg, 1944. After that... we were all that was left of our family.

He swallows hard, eyes glistening as memories surface.

ERICH LANGE (cont'd)

The Abwehr arrested me. I was made part of an operation that took me out of Germany. I had no choice. I never stopped hoping I'd find Markus.

(Voice breaks)

They told me he died in a raid on the factory where he worked. So... I stopped looking.

Hans looks toward the casket, his voice barely a whisper now. He stops briefly to steady himself.

ERICH LANGE (cont'd)

Please forgive me, dear brother. I see now that not only did Markus survive, he thrived. He had friends, some of whom are with us here today.

(MORE)

ERICH LANGE (cont'd)
 We have never met, but I am thankful
 for your friendship with my long-lost
 brother. May he rest in peace. Thank
 you all for coming. Erich and his
 wife sit down.

LUTHERAN PASTOR
 Would anyone else like to speak for
 Markus Lange?

Melanie looks at Lexi. She whispers...

MELANIE
 You should say something.

Lexi hesitates, but steadies herself, and stands up.

LEXI
 I met Markus two years ago. He was
 one of the residents I read to at
 Willow Bend. We had great times
 together. He always asked how I was
 doing, what I was working on, and
 what it was like traveling to Japan,
 Australia, and New Zealand.

A small smile flickers across her face.

LEXI (cont'd)
 He called them "my adventures."
 Sometimes I wondered if he thought of
 me as a daughter.

Her eyes drift toward the photo of Markus.

He loved Shakespeare, and I loved
 reading those words to him. One
 sonnet was his favorite. I'd like to
 recite the last lines of it now... in
 his memory.

Lexi pauses and takes a long breath.

LEXI (cont'd)
 Sonnet 60 by William Shakespeare:

 "Time doth transfix the flourish set
 on youth

 And delves the parallels in beauty's
 brow,

 Feeds on the rarities of nature's
 truth,
 (MORE)

LEXI (cont'd)

And nothing stands but for his scythe
to mow:

And yet to times in hope my verse
shall stand,

Praising thy worth, despite his cruel
hand."

Lexi sits down, begins to cry. Melanie put her arm around her as she sobs. The Langes stand up, and walk back to her.

Agent Christiansen stands up, and moves to make space. The Langes each put a hand on her shoulders to console her. Erich looks straight into her eyes.

ERICH LANGE

That my brother had such a friend is
a consolation beyond words. Thank
you.

Erich nods to the pastor, and the funeral director. The funeral director and assistant roll the casket slowly down the marble corridor.

The pastor follows behind them, Bible in hand. The Langes walk close behind, with Lexi, Melanie, and the others in a quiet procession.

They stop at an open vault. The director and his assistant guide the casket into place. The director fits the outer shutter back onto the vault, sealing it with a soft metallic click. The pastor offers a silent prayer.

The mourners turn and make their way toward the the mausoleum entrance. Melanie stops for a moment to talk to the Langes.

40 INT. WILLOW BEND GUEST DINING ROOM. DAY.

Melanie shows the Langes to their seats. Lexi takes a seat next to Astrud.

MELANIE

We are so happy to have you both
here.

ASTRUD LANGE

You, have made us feel very welcome.
Thank you.

Melanie turns to Agent Christiansen. He carries Markus Lange's album.

MELANIE

Sit next to Lexi.

CHRISTIENSEN

I will.

MELANIE

I have someone putting together food for Lexi's security detail, if that's OK.

CHRISTIENSEN

It is. They'll appreciate it. I'll let them know.

Plates clatter. The Langes begin to eat, whispering in Portuguese. Astrud realizes they should be speaking in English. Erich glances at Lexi, then at Melanie.

ERICH LANGE

I again want to say thank you for doing all this. We never dreamed this would happen; that so many people would step forward to help us.

MELANIE

We're so glad we found you. Markus was a part of our community, and Lexi played a big part in his life here. We wouldn't have found you without her.

Erich looks at Lexi.

ERICH LANGE

May we ask exactly how you found us?

LEXI

It's complicated. You understand?

ERICH LANGE

Yes, but does anyone know why?

LEXI

We don't know everything, but it may have something to do with a photo I found hidden in his family album. Agent Christiansen brought the album for you. He is investigating your brother's murder.

Christiansen nods, smiles to acknowledge Lexi's remarks, passes the album to Lexi. She takes the photo she found out of the album, passes it to Erich. He stares at it, and takes a deep breath.

ERICH LANGE

Oh, mein Gott!

SUPER: OH, MY GOD!

He puts the photo on the table.

Markus found it. He didn't remember that we used to send secret messages to each other when we were children. Before the plane took off, I asked one of the ground crew to put the photo in Markus's locker at the factory.

I hoped he would remember our childhood, and use the secret writing to find me after the war. If you will indulge me, I would like to tell you the story about how I got to Manaus, and why I was sent there.

LEXI

Erich, would you mind if someone joins us by phone? She is very interested in your story.

ERICH LANGE

That would be good. It is time for the world to hear the story. I have never told these things to anyone except Astrud. That someone tried to hurt you to get the photo is proof to me that these people must be stopped. Markus and I hated the Nazis.

Lexi goes to the hallway, and calls Dr. Hershey. Katy she answers on the first ring.

LEXI

It's Lexi. Erich Lange is telling everyone about his escape from Germany. My phone is on speaker. Mute your end.

Lexi activates her speaker phone, and returns to the table. When she sits down, Astrud leans over to whisper to her.

ASTRUD LANGE

Erich told me the story many years ago. It is fascinating, and frightening. He is furious about his brother's murder. At his age, he doesn't fear retribution. It is quite a story.

Lexi's face reacts to Astrud Lange's words. She looks at Agent Christiansen. His face acknowledges he understands something big is coming. Christiansen pulls out his notepad, a small recorder, presses a button on his phone. Erich Lange begins to speak.

ERICH LANGE

In January 1945, we were certain Germany would lose the war. The Russians were closing in, and the Allies crossed the Rhine. The war would be over in weeks.

Markus and I were good seaplane pilots. We planned take a small seaplane, and fly it at low altitude from Germany to Switzerland using the rivers for navigation. It was less than a thousand kilometers, so it was a reasonable risk.

The weather in January and February was very bad, and there weren't any cloudless, moonlit nights so we could navigate. Then, the Abwehr broke into my bungalow at the factory, and arrested me.

I was interrogated for hours. During the interrogation, I was told I would be a part of a secret mission that would take me out of Germany.

I had no choice, and the interrogator made subtle threats about Markus. They knew I had an idetic memory, and gave me six pages filled with letter groups to memorize. It did not take long to memorize.

The next afternoon, I was taken to a nearby lake, and saw the prototype BV-238 under camouflage nets. It was equipped with slower, diesel engines, but capable of flying a long distance away from Germany.

(MORE)

ERICH LANGE (cont'd)

I thought it had been scrapped for parts. The Allies destroyed the updated version of it a few days later.

CELL PHONE SHOWING TEXT EXCHANGE BETWEEN LEXI AND KATY HERSHEY.

Lexi texts Katy Hershey:

Are you getting this?

Katy's reply:

OMG. Yes. There are NO accounts of this in any OSS archive I know about.

ERICH LANGE (cont'd)

The plane took off at sunset. The pilots were very skilled. We got out of Germany flying low and fast.

The flight along the borderlands between France and Switzerland to the Mediterranean was rough. We crossed the Mediterranean, and entered North Africa in Western Algeria.

Hours later, near sunset, we landed at a bay in Mauritania. The plane was refueled by a submarine waiting in the bay. During refueling, the members of the Africa team disembarked with cargo that included equipment in crates, and weapons.

We took off before dawn, and headed West for South America. During my interrogation, I saw a map behind the interrogator's desk, and memorized it. There were twelve pins with different colors placed on the map.

The ones for Africa, and South America were the same color. Those two teams would travel by air; the others would go by sea after the war. That is how I ended up in Manaus. Now, I have something to share.

Erich reaches in his coat, pulls out six sheets of paper folded together.

He unfolds them, and lays them on the table. Each page is covered with hand-written rows and columns of letters. He looks at Christiansen.

ERICH LANGE (cont'd)

These are for you, Agent Christiansen. I am certain the FBI has the ability to decode them. The Abwehr sent twelve teams to countries all over the world to continue their despicable conspiracies. They must be stopped. Astrud and I will stay here as long as necessary. I want to provide what is needed to stop these monsters.

Lexi gets a quick look at the top sheet. Her eyes open wide, she texts Katy Hershey:

CELL PHONE SHOWING LEXI'S TEXT TO KATY HERSHEY.

ENIGMA!

Katy replies:

Can you get photos of those pages? I know someone who can decode them. What happened to the plane?

Lexi replies:

Will try to get pix, and ask about the plane. We have to talk. I have serious questions. L-)

Christiansen looks at Markus Lange.

CHRISTIANSSEN

Mr. Lange, I will see that your information gets to the right people.

ERICH LANGE

I made copies, and hid them in various locations around Manaus. If you can provide secure transit for them, I will turn them over so you can check them against what I just gave you. I am 98 years old, after all.

CHRISTIANSSEN

Consider it done. Would you be willing to talk to others in my agency about your experiences?

ERICH LANGE

We will stay until you have everything you need.

CHRISTIANSSEN

This has been one of the most interesting experiences in my career. Thank you.

Lexi picks up her phone, and leaves the table. She walks out of the dining room into the hallway to talk with Katy Hershey.

DR. HERSHEY

Lexi, this was an amazing experience. I can't thank you enough!

LEXI

You're welcome. But, now it's time for you to fess up.

DR. HERSHEY

Fess up?

LEXI

Yes. I spent some time on the Internet to find out about you. Your on-line presence has been sanitized. It only shows that you worked with a think-tank before you started teaching at NYU. Think-tank is code for intelligence organizations, right?

DR. HERSHEY

Busted. Guilty, as charged. I still consult with three-letter agencies.

LEXI

You mean like the FBI and CIA?

DR. HERSHEY

Among others. You don't miss much, do you, Miss Drew?

LEXI

That's why you want the code sheets. You have access to Fort Meade. What I don't know is why you want to know about the location of the plane.

DR. HERSHEY

Once again, correct. One of my contacts can access a program that emulates Alan Turing's Colossus computer.

I also have a friend who does satellite work with LIDAR. If it's out there, he can find it.

LEXI

Those are serious resources. Let me see if I can work some magic with Agent Christiansen. This is a big deal.

DR. HERSHEY

Oh, you have no idea.

41 INT. MELANIE'S TOWNHOUSE COMPLEX. GUEST ROOM. DAY.

SUPER: DAY 7

Lexi's phone rings. She looks Caller ID and answers in a sleepy voice.

LEXI

Hi, Katy.

DR. HERSHEY

How about a video call?

LEXI

Really? I just woke up, and probably look like a police mug shot.

Lexi sits up cross-legged in bed.

SPLIT-SCREEN OF LEXI AND KATY HERSHEY ON PHONE.

DR. HERSHEY

(Playfully)

Give me a profile, so I can see if it works for a mug shot.

LEXI

(Sarcastically)

Very funny.

DR. HERSHEY

I got the photos. Nice work. I take it Agent Christiansen let you copy them.

LEXI

Yes. He's used to me, by now. He knows, if he didn't let me copy them, I'd just ask Erich Lange to make another set. Found out something interesting about the plane.

DR. HERSHEY

Please don't tell me they destroyed it.

LEXI

Nope. The plane was moored in a cove northwest of the city on the Tamara Acu River. The site is less than an hour's flight from Manaus.

The crew taxied into a cove, covered it with camouflage nets, and returned to Manaus by boat. It's probably been overgrown by the jungle.

DR. HERSHEY

My guys will be thrilled to hear this.

LEXI

I'm going back to sleep. Bye.

42 INT. OFFICE OF DR. KAY HERSHEY AT NYU. DAY.

Katy Hershey is at her desk. She dials a number on her desk phone, puts it on speaker, and waits for an answer.

KEN PRICE - CRYPTANALYST

Price, here.

DR. HERSHEY

Ken, it's Katy Hershey.

KEN PRICE

Haven't heard from you in a while. Hope all is well.

DR. HERSHEY

Oh, better than well. I have something you need to see. May I send you a Dropbox link?

KEN PRICE

Sure. What type of file?

DR. HERSHEY

PDFs of what is probably World War II era Enigma ciphers. Didn't come from an archive.

KEN PRICE - CRYPTANALYST

Interesting. Send the link. I'll take a look.

DR. HERSHEY

Thank you. Let me know what you find.

Katy Hershey hangs up the phone, and dials a second number. It is answered by SCOTT HANSEN.

SCOTT HANSEN, SATELLITE
PHOTOANALYST (O.S.)

Scott speaking.

DR. HERSHEY

Scott, this is Katy Hershey.

HANSEN

Hi, Katy. What's going on?

DR. HERSHEY

Are you in the middle of something? I found something you might find interesting.

HANSEN

I hope it's a mystery. Things have been a bit dull around her lately.

DR. HERSHEY

It is. Close to the end of World War II, a very large airplane made it out of Europe, and flew to Brazil. At the time, it was the largest seaplane in the world.

It landed near Manaus in the northern Amazon basin, and beached in a tributary Northwest of the city. The occupants covered it with camouflage netting. If I sent you a photo and dimensions, do you think you could use some LIDAR satellite time to locate it?

HANSEN

Send me the information, and I'll get it on the schedule. Give me 48 hours.

(MORE)

HANSEN (cont'd)
Got someone in mind for recovery if
we find anything?

DR. HERSHEY
Yes, but a couple of three-letter
agencies, and the Brazilian
government may get involved.

HANSEN
Just bear in mind that rivers and
tributaries change course over time.
The plane might be near the water, at
the river's edge, under water, or
some distance inland.

DR. HERSHEY
Thanks. Check your email for the
details.

She ends the call, pours a cup of coffee.

43 INT. MELANIE'S TOWNHOUSE COMPLEX. GUEST ROOM. DAY.

Lexi's phone rings. She reaches for it, looks at the Caller
ID.

LEXI
Hi.

CHRISTIENSEN
Sorry to bother you. Can you to come
to my office. Be here by ten?

LEXI
I can, if I set the land speed record
for getting dressed, and putting on
warpaint.

Christiansen laughs at the warpaint reference.

CHRISTIENSEN
We need to meet briefly, then attend
a video conference.

LEXI
Is there a problem?

CHRISTIENSEN
No. I need to update you about
Bickers. The video conference is a
separate issue.

LEXI

So, I get no clue as to what's happening?

CHRISTIANSEN

It's not a phone conversation. Things are moving fast.

LEXI

I'll be there at ten. Coffee and donuts would be nice.

CHRISTIANSEN

Copy that.

Lexi hangs up, jumps out of bed, heads for the bathroom.

44 INT. OFFICE BUILDING WITH FBI OFFICE. DAY.

Lexi steps out of the elevator, enters a glass-walled reception area with a security window. She slides her driver's license through the slot to a guard behind the glass.

He looks at the license, picks up the phone, murmurs a few words, then nods. The guard slides a visitor badge under the glass. Lexi takes it, slips the lanyard over her head.

The entry door buzzes. Agent Christiansen opens it. He gestures for her to follow.

CHRISTIANSEN

Come in. Sorry for the short notice, Miss Balestra. The meeting doesn't start until eleven o'clock. Let's go to my office.

He walks down a hallway, Lexi follows. He opens the door, they enter. She sits down in a chair in front of his desk. He sits down at his desk, opens a folder.

LEXI BALESTRA

So, what's up?

CHRISTIANSEN

A lot. Rodney Bickers is still in jail.

Lexi nods.

CHRISTIANSEN (cont'd)

That may change.

LEXI

Is he getting out on bail?

CHRISTIANSEN

No. He's agreed to give testimony in the murder for hire of Markus Lange. Bickers gave us a name--Wolfram Samiri.

(beat)

He had a message for you.

LEXI

What?

(beat)

CHRISTIANSEN

You should have left the photo buried.

(beat)

LEXI

Shit.

(beat)

CHRISTIANSEN

I know you will have strong feelings about this.

LEXI

(Emphatic)

Strong feelings? There's an understatement.

He's getting away with murder. He must have a damn good attorney.

CHRISTIANSEN

He gave up the person who hired him.

(beat)

That's what matters. You made this happen.

LEXI

(Emphatic)

He should pay for the murder of Markus Lange. I settled my personal score with him, but that's *not* enough.

CHRISTIANSEN

No disagreement. He *should* pay for the murder of Markus Lange. Keep in mind, he's hired muscle.

(MORE)

CHRISTIENSEN (cont'd)
There are people in Washington, and elsewhere, who now have a big interest in the man he implicated. That's what the call at 11 is about.

LEXI
Doesn't look like there's a pony in all of this for me.

Christiansen shakes his head, laughs.

CHRISTIENSEN
Bickers pleads guilty to the murder, and the assault on you, The WITSEC agreement is adjudicated probation. The charges are second-degree felony murder, and assault.

The sentences equate to 40 years. If he violates the plea agreement, or WITSEC provisions, he goes straight to jail to serve the remainder of the sentences. The upside is you don't have to appear in court for a trial.

LEXI
(Emphatic)
Still no pony. I was hoping for something where that rat bastard gets wrapped up in barbed wire, and serves his sentence in a very dark place for the rest of his miserable f-bombing life.

She feigns a pout on her face. Christiansen stifles a second laugh.

CHRISTIENSEN
If it's any consolation, prisons in Texas are far worse than Club Fed. Time for the call. Shall we?

He stands up, walks to the door.

LEXI
When do I find out about the man Bickers ratted out?

CHRISTIENSEN
That's what the video call is about. We need to go.

Lexi nods, stands up, follows him out of his office. They walk down the hallway and enter a large conference room.

45 INT. FBI CONFERENCE ROOM. DAY.

Six people sit around a long rectangular table, folders and laptops neatly arranged. At the far end, a large video screen displays the FBI seal on one side. Dr. Hershey is seated at her desk on the other side. Lexi's eyes lock on the screen. Her posture stiffens. Christiansen notices, leans in.

CHRISTIANSSEN

It's OK. Take a breath.

Lexi looks at him, flexes her hands to steady her nerves. The left side of the screen changes to show a man seated behind a desk. The nameplate on the desk reads: JOHN RENTON, SAIC.

SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE, JOHN
RENTON

Good morning to everyone. For those who don't know me, my name is John Renton. I will direct this task force. Some of you at the table know each other. The new faces are appointees.

We will add others, as necessary to focus on the murder of Markus Lange, and the information regarding a long-term, international conspiracy provided by Erich Lange.

Dr. Hershey...

Renton pauses to let Dr. Hershey speak.

DR. HERSHEY

Most of what we found with dates back more than seventy years. For context: I'm a World War II historian, intelligence analyst, and currently a professor at NYU.

The guest with us today is Lexi Balestra. She uncovered a key piece of evidence that led to the formation of this task force. Questions?

Brief pause, there are no questions.

RENTON

Let's continue. Agent Christiansen will lead the investigative team, and report directly to me.

(MORE)

RENTON (cont'd)
Dr. Hershey will be on call for anyone on the team who needs background, or requires period research.

We investigate. We deal in facts. If you need historical background contact Dr. Hershey. This saves valuable time.

Miss Balestra will be her intern, and the liaison with Erich Lange. Our target is a man named Wolfram Samiri. Agent Christiansen has the most current information on him. A warrant is active. We want to find him fast.

Lexi's face shows total surprise.

RENTON (cont'd)
Now, go to work. Files are in front of you. Now, please give us the room. I want to speak with Agent Christiansen, Dr. Hershey, and Miss Balestra.

The others leave the room. Renton continues...

RENTON (cont'd)
Now, Miss Balestra, I probably said something that surprised you. Correct?

LEXI
(Softly)
Yes.

RENTON
Dr. Hershey posed a condition when I approached her about the task force. Her condition is that you work as her intern. You will remain under our protection until we apprehend Wolfram Samiri. Do you intend to stay with Melanie Rogers?

LEXI
I'll ask.

RENTON
Good. Agent Christiansen will determine the level of protection required.

(MORE)

RENTON (cont'd)

Remember: You are important to the task force because you have an intimate connection with Erich Lange.

Dr. Hershey tells me you are very intuitive, and can increase our chances of finding, and arresting, Wolfram Samiri. Let's see what you can do.

That's all for now. I look forward to a first progress report. The screen goes black.

Lexi turns to look at Agent Christiansen.

LEXI

Totally unexpected. Seeing Katy Hershey on the screen was a shock.

CHRISTIENSEN

You'll be an asset to the team. I ended up with a great opportunity because of you. Investigative Lead on a task force with this size and scope is a step up.

He opens the file on the desk. The photo of Markus, his brother, and the BV-238 is on top.

LEXI

I'm not sure how to explain all this to my parents. This is nowhere near my expected career track.

CHRISTIENSEN

And that was?

LEXI

Teaching language arts.

LEXI (cont'd)

I've already accepted a job. I'd have to walk away from it to join the task force.

She looks at the photo, touches it.
(beat, quieter)

This doesn't end here.

CHRISTIENSEN

Kind of tame based on the abilities I've observed.

(MORE)

CHRISTIANSSEN (cont'd)
We have some business to attend to right now. The agency is already running a deep background check on you. They will talk with your parents, of course, and everyone you have ever known.

LEXI
Oh, no. If they're contacted, they'll be on the first flight back from London.

CHRISTIANSSEN
The FBI liaison in London will call them tomorrow morning. You need to let them know. I'll show you to your office so you can do that.

LEXI
My office?

Christiansen stands, and walks out the door. Lexi follows. They go down a hallway to a door that already has her name on it. He opens the door, both enter.

CHRISTIANSSEN
All yours. The sheet on the desk has your login and phone info. Memorize it, then shred it. Let me know if you need anything. After you finish talking to your parents, come to my office. We need to talk about your security detail.

Lexi nods, and walks to her desk. She pulls her phone from her purse, dials her father's cellphone. He answers.

LEXI
Hi, Daddy.

MR. BALESTRA
Hello, Lexi. Everything OK? We noticed you hadn't checked on the house.

LEXI
About that. I'm fine. I need to talk with you, and Mom. Is she with you? Can we make this a video call, please.

Split screen with Mr. and Mrs. Balestra, and Lexi.

MR. BALESTRA

We've been walking around Picadilly Circus.

LEXI

Listen carefully, please. You're going to receive a call tomorrow morning from the FBI liaison at the U.S. Embassy in London. He has to meet with you.

MR. BALESTRA

Lexi, what the hell is going on? Are you in trouble?

LEXI

No. Far from it. The FBI offered me an internship on a multi-agency task force. I accepted. I'll give you all the details when you get back. It's way too difficult to explain over the phone.

You have to talk to the FBI so I can get a security clearance. I have an office, and I get paid.

MR. BALESTRA

Wait a second, Lexi. I need to ask your mother to do something for me.

(Lighthearted)

Honey, pinch me. This is the part of the dream where I usually wake up.

Lexi's mother laughs in background.

LEXI

This isn't joke, Daddy. What I'm working on is really important. It has origins in World War II. Have you ever heard of Dr. Katherine Hershey?

MR. BALESTRA

Yes. I've read her books.

LEXI

I am working with her. She is my mentor.

MR. BALESTRA

Wait a second, Lexi. Honey, pinch me again... I still don't think I'm fully awake.

Her mother's laughter spills through the speaker.

LEXI

Mom, can you please settle him down.

MRS. BALESTRA

I'll try. You look tired, honey. What are you into now?

(beat, curious)

What about that job you accepted?

(leans in, teasing)

And why do I feel like there's more to this?

(then, playful)

Any handsome FBI agents involved?

LEXI

Mom--Too many questions. Help me out here.

I promise I'll tell you everything when you get home, except for the classified stuff.

MRS. BALESTRA

Classified? Oh, my. Promise we'll talk again before our flight home. Will you pick us up at the airport?

LEXI

I promise, and yes, I'll pick you up. Please call my little brother. Let him know to expect a call. He might think it's a prank.

And Daddy: yes, I poked a bear.

Lexi ends the call, and walks to Agent Christiansen's office. He is on the phone, quickly ends the call.

46 INT. CHRISTIANSEN'S OFFICE. DAY.

She sits down in front of desk. Agent Christiansen's eyes scan a piece of paper on his desk.

CHRISTIANSEN

Like your office?

LEXI

It's nice. I thought it might be a closet somewhere. A couple of framed "wanted" posters of Bickers and Samiri will probably spruce it up.

He laughs. She smiles.

CHRISTIANSEN

It's time to meld you into the task force. Most of what we need you to do is ensure a good flow of information between Dr. Hershey and Erich Lange. I plan to involve you in some field work, too.

LEXI

Field work?

CHRISTIANSEN

Yes. As soon as we finish here, we're going to interview someone who might know something about Wolfram Samiri. First, we need to talk about Rodney Bickers.

LEXI

Are we going to play good news, bad news?

CHRISTIANSEN

No. We're playing "It is what it is." I just got word that Bickers inked a plea deal. He's entering WITSEC.

LEXI

So, he walks free?

CHRISTIANSEN

Yes, but, the terms are very strict. He will have to wear an ankle monitor for years, and report in daily. Only the U.S. Marshall Service will know his location, and new identity. He will be very far away from here, and if he does anything that violates his parole terms, the Marshall's Service will remand him to the Texas penal system to serve out his sentences.

LEXI

How do we catch the big fish?

CHRISTIANSEN

Getting to that. About your protection detail: they stay in place until Bickers enters WITSEC, and the U.S. Marshalls transport him to another location.

(MORE)

CHRISTIENSEN (cont'd)
Anytime you leave this building, go
anywhere, or are at Melanie's,
they'll be with you.

LEXI
How long? It will freak my parents
out.

CHRISTIENSEN
A couple of weeks, max.

LEXI
Does the Marshall's service take
suggestions? I was hoping for the
center of the Mojave Desert where his
closest neighbors would be vicious
rattlesnakes, and Gila Monsters.

Christiansen laughs out loud.

CHRISTIENSEN
(Amused)
Remind me not to get on your bad
side. By the way, that's three.

LEXI
Three what? Did I strike out?

CHRISTIENSEN
It's not baseball. You've manage to
cost me my stone-face rep.

Lexi smiles at Christiansen's mock irritation.

LEXI
(Devilish)
Sorry. Didn't mean to tarnish your
rep. Anything else?

Christiansen places a small gray box with recessed push
button in front of Lexi.

CHRISTIENSEN
Yes. When the protection detail
stops, we want you to carry a panic
button. That will be for the duration
of your work with the task force.

It's not a tracker. If you think
there's trouble, and there are no
broom handles around, press the
button. Once you carry this, you're
not a bystander anymore.

LEXI

Very funny. You should try stand-up comedy.

CHRISTIANSEN

Now. Ready for a field trip?

LEXI

Yes. Where are we going?

CHRISTIANSEN

A small hotel near Love Field. The canvas found where Samiri was staying.

47 EXT. AERIE HOTEL NEAR LOVE FIELD. DAY.

Christiansen and Lexi get out of the car, walk toward the hotel entrance.

LEXI

Who are we interviewing?

CHRISTIANSEN

A desk clerk. The hotel manager responded to a canvas. The clerk remembers Wolfram Samiri.

LEXI

Good, old-fashioned police work?

CHRISTIANSEN

Yes. We got lucky. Every police department in the Dallas area joined in. Lt. Marquez was a big help. She has plans to bronze your mop handle.

LEXI

Very funny. There's a comedy club nearby, if you need to attend a meeting.

He laughs.

CHRISTIANSEN

Marquez was disappointed when she found out you were joining the task force. She wanted to recruit you for her department.

LEXI

Not going to happen.

48 INT. AERIE HOTEL. DAY.

They enter the hotel, walk to the registration desk. A well-groomed, well-dressed man greets them.

CHRISTIENSEN
Mr. Freel, I'm Special Agent
Christiansen with the FBI.

BERT FREEL, DESK CLERK
How can I help you?

CHRISTIENSEN
Did you check this man in, or out?

Christiansen places a photo of Wolfram Samiri on the counter in front of Freel.

FREEL
Both.

CHRISTIENSEN
Anything you can tell us about him?

FREEL
He looked like an investment banker at check-in. Expensive suit, tie, and shoes. He looked completely different at check-out.

CHRISTIENSEN
Can you be more specific?

FREEL
Yes. He had shaved his mustache, but left a stubble beard. Clothes were down-scale, except for his shoes.

CHRISTIENSEN
Very observant. By chance, do you remember what he was wearing when he checked out?

FREEL
Yes. A flowered tropical shirt over khaki pants. He was wearing cordovan huaraches.

CHRISTIENSEN
Very helpful. Any idea about his flight time?

FREEL
He paid in cash. Didn't say much.

CHRISTIENSEN

Did he check in with a credit card?

FREEL

That's required. Would you like the information?

CHRISTIENSEN

Yes, please.

FREEL

I'll print it out for you.

Freel prints the information, and hands it to Christiansen.

CHRISTIENSEN

Thank you. Again, very helpful.

LEXI

I have question, Mr.Freel. You seem to know quite a bit about men's fashion. Do you have any idea about the brand of his huaraches.

FREEL

Yes. Armos. Very expensive.

Christiansen turns and walks away. Lexi follows. They walk out the door.

CHRISTIENSEN

Miss Balestra, what did I miss in there? Care to enlighten me.

LEXI

Shoes are more important to women than most men. Armos huaraches cost over \$400 a pair.

CHRISTIENSEN

Noted. Now we know what Samiri was wearing at check-out, and he's changed his appearance. He'll be easier to spot in the security footage, and we may narrow down the flight time.

49 INT. FBI OFFICE WORKROOM. DAY.

Christiansen and Lexi enter the workroom. Christiansen walks over to an analyst screening security footage.

CHRISTIENSEN
Anything?

MALE ANALYST
Nothing yet.

Christiansen and Lexi move to another cubicle.

CHRISTIENSEN
ADRIENNE GAUTIER, this is Lexi
Balestra.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER, ANALYST
Nice to meet you, Lexi.

Adrienne offers her hand, Lexi accepts it.

LEXI
Nice to meet you, too.

CHRISTIENSEN
Adrienne is your data analyst, and
the office pool meister. She will get
you setup on the computer system.

LEXI
Got it. I have a question. Can your
systems scan charter flights?

GAUTIER
Yes, but, why?

LEXI
It was something that Melanie Rogers
said about the suspect. She thought
he had a beach tan.

GAUTIER
Why do you think it might be a
charter flight?

LEXI
My father has friends with second
homes in Central America. They're
frequent flyers on charters out of
Love Field. By the way: Might be a
good idea to include a photo of some
cordovan Armos huaraches when you
send out a description.

CHRISTIANSEN

Good thinking. Smaller data set, and
charters deal with deal with fewer
people. Better chance of a witness
ID.

GAUTIER

I'm on it.

CHRISTIANSEN

You've had quite a first day on the
job. Want to pack it in?

LEXI

Yes. I need to check in with Dr.
Hershey before I go.

50 INT. LEXI'S FBI OFFICE. DAY.

Lexi sits down at her desk. She calls Katy Hershey.

SPLIT-SCREEN WITH LEXI AND KATY HERSHEY.

DR. HERSHEY

Hi. Busy day?

LEXI

Unbelievably. After the meeting, I
talked with my parents, did field
work, and met my analyst.

DR. HERSHEY

That *is* busy. Ready fo some good
news, and some bad news.

LEXI

Can't be any worse than mine. Rodney
Bickers is going into WITSEC.

DR. HERSHEY

My bad news isn't nearly that bad.
The good news is that my contact at
Fort Meade broke the ciphers provided
by Erich Lange. It's banks, account
numbers, passcodes, and contacts for
the twelve sites on the map Erich
Lange saw.

LEXI

So, what's the bad news?

DR. HERSHEY

Running the cipher at Ft. Meade
alerted the spook brigade. Flags went
up.

LEXI

Spook brigade?

DR. HERSHEY

NSA, CIA, and MI6, so far.

LEXI

And that's bad because... ?

DR. HERSHEY

It complicates things a lot.

LEXI

As usual, no good deed goes
unpunished. What now?

DR. HERSHEY

Listen to your instincts.

LEXI

I'll try. Going to Melanie's to
crash. Talk to you tomorrow, OK.

DR. HERSHEY

Get some rest.

Lexi disconnects, and turns off her computer.

ACT III

51 INT. LEXI'S OFFICE. DAY.

SUPER: DAY 8

Lexi checks email. Adrienne Gautier walks in.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER
Time to talk?

LEXI
Sure. Have a seat.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER
Your idea paid off. Facial rec got a hit at a charter airline. Christiansen is checking it out now.

LEXI
Good! Now we know where he went. Maybe we can get ahead of him.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER
That's the plan. If Samiri has an office, or a residence in Belize, we'll find it. Do you always think on your feet like that?

LEXI
No. I changed after the attack. I'm hyper-vigilant.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER
Well, whatever it is, it's working big-time.

Keep doing what you're doing

LEXI
Just trying to fit in. You're trained. I'm not.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER
You're definitely a fit, and the subject of a new pool.

LEXI
That sounds ominous. Christiansen already told me I ruined his stone-face rep.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

Yeah, and you have to dish on what you said to make him laugh. He's a very serious fellow.

LEXI

So, what's this pool about?

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

The forces for good in the community.

LEXI

The forces for good? You lost me.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

Seduction.

A grin lights up Adrienne Gautier's face.

LEXI

Seriously? The whole office is gambling on whether I'm going to lose my virtue. That's really sad. You'd think there would be more to do than gamble on the new intern's sex life.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

It keeps salacious gossip to a minimum, and my earnings up.

Both laugh.

LEXI

There's nothing there. He's being protective, and he's older than me.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

Seven years, to be exact.

LEXI

My paternal grandfather was seven years older than my grandmother.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

Interesting coincidence. He's not dating anyone.

LEXI

Well, he's way above my league, and I know nothing about him.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

He's just your typical "golden boy."
Graduated from college in three years
pre-law with a 4.0 GPA. ROTC stand-
out. Enlisted in the Marines after 9/
11. Served two tours in Iraq as a
field intelligence officer.

LEXI

Admirable.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

Saw action in the battle zone,
received multiple decorations for
bravery, and a Purple Heart. Rumors
say he has some gnarly scars.
Volunteers for veteran causes. A real
slacker.

LEXI

Definitely a "golden boy." Why did he
leave the Marines.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

Renton recruited him; became his
mentor.

LEXI

Ah... there's the connection.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

And, don't underestimate yourself
where Christiansen is concerned. He
enjoys the company of smart, funny,
athletic women.

Lexi's phone buzzes. She picks it up.

LEXI

Lexi Balestra...

CHRISTIANSSEN

On my way back. I'll give you the
details when I get there. There's a
video call you need to attend at one
o'clock.

LEXI

OK.

Christiansen hangs up. Gautier leaves to return to her
office, Lexi resumes reading email.

52 INT. LEXI'S FBIOFFICE. DAY.

Agent Christiansen appears in Lexi's office door way.

CHRISTIANSSEN

Ready?

LEXI

Yes. Finished an email to Dr. Hershey. Dakar was the headquarters location after World War II.

CHRISTIANSSEN

That's progress. Renton will use it to keep the spooks at bay.

LEXI

Are you going to tell me what's going on?

CHRISTIANSSEN

You'll see... It's not an ambush, if that's what you're thinking.

LEXI

Didn't think it was.

53 FBI OFFICE. VIDEOCONFERENCE ROOM. DAY.

AGENT GENE HILL

Good afternoon, Miss Balestra. I'm Gene Hill with Operation Paperclip. I understand you have an interest in Markus Lange.

LEXI

Yes.

She smiles at Agent Christiansen

AGENT GENE HILL

Markus Lange was an interesting person. He wasn't a rocket scientist, but his expertise with flying boats was critical to America during the Cold War. He was married, but lost his wife to cancer. No children. Lived a quiet life, attended church, and volunteered in community projects.

Lange made a great deal of money, and built a nest egg for his retirement.

(MORE)

AGENT GENE HILL (cont'd)
He donated money to charities for war orphans, especially those for Jewish survivors. Money also went to the families of the Navajo Code Talkers, and the Tuskegee Airmen of the 332nd Squadron.

LEXI
Please go on.

AGENT GENE HILL
He supported the families of black American servicemen because they fought fascism, yet faced unfair discrimination in America. They served honorably, and sacrificed life and limb for people who denied them rights. During his interview, he said: "Where else should I give my money?" That's word for word.

LEXI
We never spoke about those things. I wish I had known.

AGENT GENE HILL
If you like, I will send you all the unclassified information I have.

LEXI
Please do. I want to share it with his brother. Thank you very much.

AGENT GENE HILL
You are quite welcome.

Hill ends the video conference. Lexi looks at Christiansen.

LEXI
Thank you.

CHRISTIENSEN
You are welcome. You needed to hear it. Sometimes, people get caught up in things that they can't control. They're not bad people. Markus survived to become a model citizen and philanthropist. That's rare.

LEXI
Yes, it is.

54 INT. CHRISTIANSEN'S OFFICE. DAY.

Lexi walks into Christiansen's office. He looks up from his computer terminal.

LEXI

I have something. Can we talk?

CHRISTIANSEN

Of course. We lost Samiri after Belize.

LEXI

He knows how to disappear. The man at the hotel said he changed from investment banker to tourist. He could've switched identities again--headed for the docks, got a boat, and went to Cuba.

CHRISTIANSEN

Is there more?

LEXI

Samiri's mother was terrorist royalty with links to Yasser Arafat and the PLO. Her name is also linked to the Black September faction of the PLO. They kidnapped and killed Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

CHRISTIANSEN

Anything else?

LEXI

Yes. Everything we found screams he's a high-level money man; not into wet work. The best place to hide money in the Caribbean is the Caymans. He could easily get there from Cuba without being observed.

CHRISTIANSEN

Money man, or not, he commissioned a felony, and someone died as a result. He's just as guilty as Bickers.

LEXI

(Smiling)

Finally... a pony for me. One more thing: He has extensive knowledge of, and forged links with Middle-Eastern Hawalah money networks in Central and South America. His next move may be more predictable than you think.

CHRISTIANSEN

Listening. The diversion to Cuba is interesting; no one else thought of that.

LEXI

He won't stay there long. He could take a boat from Cuba to the Caymans, then get on a direct flight to the Canary Islands. Once he's there, he can easily get on a boat to Dakkar. That was the original hub for the conspiracy.

CHRISTIANSEN

Interesting...

LEXI

If we get to the Canary Islands first, we could intercept him.

CHRISTIANSEN

Time to call Renton. Stay here for the call.

LEXI

(Tentatively)

OK...

Christiansen speed dials Renton's number. His admin answers.

CHRISTIANSEN

Is he there? It's urgent.

RENTON'S ADMIN

Yes. I'll put you through.

RENTON

What's up, Walt?

CHRISTIANSEN

Miss Balestra thinks he went to Cuba, and is trying to get to Dakkar.

(MORE)

CHRISTIANSSEN (cont'd)
We should put fly teams in the air to
Grand Canary, Cape Verde, and Dakkar.

RENTON
That's thinking outside the box. I'll
let you know when they're wheels up.

CHRISTIANSSEN
Thanks.

Christiansen disconnects the call, and looks at Lexi. She is
wide-eyed.

LEXI
No punches pulled there. Why no Red
Team?

CHRISTIANSSEN
Your conclusion makes sense. Red
Teams take too much time. The
diversion to Cuba has be why we
completely lost track of him after
Belize. Putting fly teams in the air
right away is the smart move.

LEXI
You do remember, I'm just an intern,
right? Not a trained investigator.

CHRISTIANSSEN
I do, and so does Renton, but you're
instinctive, and this is an ongoing
international conspiracy. No one else
thought of a Cuba connection. Renton
has been following your work with Dr.
Hershey. The fact you two cracked
Erich's code sheets while there was
an inter-agency measuring contest
going on didn't go unnoticed.

LEXI
What now?

CHRISTIANSSEN
The really hard part... we wait.

Lexi nods, walks out.

55 INT. LEXI'S OFFICE. EVENING.

Lexi works at her terminal. Christiansen walks in.

CHRISTIENSEN
You're working late.

LEXI
Almost finished with my report to Dr. Hershey. Then I'll grab dinner before I go back to Melanie's.

CHRISTIENSEN
May I suggest Italian?

LEXI
What did you have in mind?

CHRISTIENSEN
If you're free for dinner, I'm buying.

Lexi responds with a wry smile.

LEXI
(Matter-of-fact)
Didn't your mother ever tell you that nothing is more expensive than a girl who's free for dinner.

Christiansen laughs out loud.

CHRISTIENSEN
It's just dinner.

LEXI
You should know the expensive part first. I have to pick up my parents tomorrow night at the airport, and I need a bigger car. My mother will come back with more bags than she took. Her Native American name is "Shops with a Fist."

Christiansen laughs again.

CHRISTIENSEN
That's hilarious. I'm glad there's no pool active on me at the moment. I'm ready when you are.

56 INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

Lexi and Christiansen sit at a table near the front window of the restaurant. Both have menus. She looks over the top of her menu at him.

LEXI

There's another reason I want you to go with me tomorrow night.

CHRISTIANSEN

Listening...

LEXI

Explaining to my parents what went on while they were gone won't be easy. Protection might come in handy.

CHRISTIANSEN

So, Miss Balestra, I'm hired muscle?

LEXI

Kind of. Have you ever heard the old Desi Arnaz line: "Lucy, you got some 'splainin' to do."

He nods, and laughs.

LEXI (cont'd)

It's going to be a lot like that. And, no more Miss Balestra. It's Lexi, now.

CHRISTIANSEN

That's really going to enhance the office pool odds. Are you telling me that your parents are more than a hand-full?

LEXI

You have no idea. I warned you it would be expensive.

57 INT. LEXI'S FBI OFFICE. DAY.

SUPER: DAY 9

Lexi sits at her desk. Adrienne Gautier walks in.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

You're in early. We heard Renton put fly teams in the air based on your assessment. Good job! There's a pool going on Samiri's capture.

Lexi looks up from her computer terminal at Adrienne.

LEXI

Couldn't sleep. We'll find out soon enough.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

You know, Christiansen said you were "Big Thunder" when you first came on board. Everyone on the team agrees.

LEXI

Big Thunder? What does that mean.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

It's a reference to the Native American Thunderbird legend. The Thunderbird is wrathful toward those who are evil, and greedy.

LEXI

Not sure I measure up to a Thunderbird, but Samiri is evil. How many people know about this?

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

Everyone, including Renton, and Dr. Hershey.

LEXI

I just make connections.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

You do. Solid, intuitive connections with big, diverse data sets. If hyper-vigilance is infectious, I want to catch it.

LEXI

Christiansen and Native American legends. That's interesting.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER

Great-Grandmother was Choctaw. Rumor has it that he carries a photo of her with the inscription: "Hattak Achukma Chia." Looked it up. It means "Be a good man." Definitely an honorable talisman to carry in a war zone.

LEXI

Interesting. Spiritual, but not necessarily religious.

ADRIENNE GAUTIER
You might be more alike than you
think.

Lexi looks at Gautier, arches an eyebrow. An email suddenly
pops up on her computer terminal marked with a high-
importance notification. She scans it, then stands straight
up.

LEXI
It's Christiansen. Something's up.

58 INT. CHRISTIANSEN'S OFFICE. DAY.

Lexi enters.

LEXI
Saw your email about the fly team.

CHRISTIANSEN
Just got details from Renton. I
wanted you to hear it before it's
posted to the team.

LEXI
Did we get him?

CHRISTIANSEN
Yes. We got him. It's the end of the
beginning.

LEXI
Great! Anyone get hurt?

CHRISTIANSEN
No. The team took him down without
incident.

Lexi sinks into the chair in front of Christiansen's desk.

LEXI
Where...

Christiansen interrupts her.

CHRISTIANSEN
Exactly where you said he would be. A
fly team caught him in the terminal
at Tenerife International, Canary
Islands.

LEXI
Definitely a pony for me.

She smiles, he laughs.

CHRISTIANSEN

Now, for the best part: the team read the witness report we took from Bert Freel, and remembered the comment about expensive shoes. Samiri was disguised in a nun's habit, wearing makeup, thick-lensed glasses, and a \$400 pair of cordovan huaraches. An agent saw the shoes, remembered the photo, and cuffed him on the spot.

Lexi smiles again.

LEXI

See... shoes are important. Ask any woman.

Both laugh. Christiansen shakes his head.

CHRISTIANSEN

By the way, Renton asked that you call his office this afternoon. He plans to offer you a place in the next analyst cohort.

LEXI

Really? That's unexpected.

CHRISTIANSEN

Shouldn't be. You did good work.

Lexi glances at the photo of Markus, his brother, and the BV-238 on her desk. She touches it... then lets her hands fall. Lexi closes the album.

(beat)

Then stops.

She opens it again—slides the photo out—and sets it on top. She glances at the map on the wall—its location pins precisely placed.

LEXI

(soft, steady)
I've got it from here.

A distant cry of a bird of prey.

FADE TO BLACK.

