

Glendale
by
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(Based on True Events)

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FADE IN:

EXT. GLENDALE - DUSK

AERIAL SHOT - Glendale, California.

Palm trees. Freeways. A dense strip of ARMENIAN-OWNED BUSINESSES:

Bakeries, body shops, jewelry stores. Neon signs in ENGLISH and Armenian

ASH (V.O.)
Back home, we learned to survive
the system.

Here, some of us learned to game it.

We PUSH IN toward a gaudy BANQUET HALL glowing with warm light.

CUT TO:

INT. GLENDALE BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

A CHARITY GALA in full swing.

Crystal chandeliers. Loud ARMENIAN MUSIC. Men in sharp suits. Women in sparkling dresses. Old ladies in black headscarves.

On the stage: a BANNER.

"THE VARDANYAN FOUNDATION - BUILDING A BETTER GLENDALE"

CAMERA FINDS:

MARA VARDANYAN (early 40s), elegant, charismatic, moving through the room like she owns it. She kisses cheeks, hugs elders, laughs big.

GUEST #1
Mara jan, you look like a movie
star.

MARA
Only if it's a big-budget one.

Quiet ripples of LAUGHTER around her. She's beloved and feared.

A WAITER passes with a tray of drinks. Mara slips an ENVELOPE into his free hand.

MARA (CONT'D)
(low, in Armenian;
subtitled)
This goes straight to Father Hovik.

Not the board. Understand?

He nods, hurries off.

AT A TABLE NEAR THE FRONT

YURIK "THE ACCOUNTANT" SAHAKYAN (50s), tired eyes, expensive watch, sits with a NERVOUS MAN clutching a folder.

NERVOUS MAN
I don't get it, Yurik.

All those claims... nobody checks?

YURIK
They check just enough to tell
themselves their checking

(leans in)
They see donations, not diagnosis
codes.

NERVOUS MAN
And if they do see?

YURIK
Then we tell them it was a mistake.
America forgives "mistakes."
They just charge interest.

ON STAGE

Mara steps up to the PODIUM. Applause erupts.

MARA
My family came here with nothing.
Like many of you.
We worked. We struggled. We held
each other up.

(beat)

Tonight, we're not begging anyone.
We're building our own future.

Applause swells. Some wipe away tears.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. STRIP-MALL "MEDICAL SUPPLY" OFFICE - NIGHT
FLUORESCENT LIGHTS. Cheap desks. Old COMPUTERS.
A SMALL CREW: WOMAN #1, WOMAN #2, a MAN. They sit surrounded
by PILES OF FILES and FOLDERS.

ON SCREEN - MEDICARE CLAIMS PORTAL.

They COPY-PASTE TEXT into different patient claims, change
dates, tweak numbers.

WOMAN #1
You know half these people can
still jog.

MAN
Yeah, but their knees might hurt
one day.
We're just... protecting the
future.

He clicks "SUBMIT." "CLAIM ACCEPTED" flashes.

BACK TO:

INT. BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

Guests line up to drop CHECKS and ENVELOPES into a CRYSTAL
BOWL.

A LOCAL TV CREW films B-ROLL.

REPORTER (O.S.)
...The Vardanyan Foundation, known
for its Generous support of clinics
and community centers across
Glendale...

Mara smiles at the CAMERA, the perfect philanthropist.

Her eyes flick briefly toward the EXIT, calculating.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI - FRAUD ANALYTICS UNIT - DAY

Drab federal office in Glendale. Cubicles. White noise.

AGHASI "ASH" KIRAKOSIAN (late 30s), Armenian-American, disciplined, clean-cut, sits at a dual-monitor workstation.

On one monitor: endless rows of CLAIMS DATA.

On the other: a DARK INTERFACE with the logo:

"LEDGER-EYE - BETA"

A small ARMENIAN FLAG and a PHOTO of his late father, ARAM, sit by his keyboard.

Ash types. CODE scrolls. A simple GRAPH appears, a few nodes and lines.

CO-WORKER (O.S.)
Yo, Kirakosian. You building Skynet again?

Ash ignores him, focused.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI - CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

A handful of SUITS. Coffee cups. A tired ENERGY.

At the head of the table: DEPUTY DIRECTOR ELAINE ROURKE (50s),

Sharp, political.

On the screen: Ash's SLIDE DECK.

TITLE: "AI-ENHANCED FRAUD DETECTION - LEDGER-EYE PILOT"

ASH
Right now we've got billions of claims and a handful of rules. Fraudsters learn the rules and walk around them.

He clicks. DEMO ANIMATION: claims turn into colored DOTS, connecting.

ASH (CONT'D)
Ledger-Eye cross-references claims,
provider registries, shell
corporations, shipping logs.
It builds a graph – how money,
people, and paperwork actually
move.

AGENT BAXTER (40S)
We already got edits. Audits.
Contractors. Why do we need your
toy?

ASH
Because edits catch what you
expect.
This finds what you don't know to
look for.

He pulls up a MINI-GRAPH.

ASH (CONT'D)
This cluster – twelve clinics, six
supply companies, three "church
charities." On paper, they're
unrelated. In reality, it's one
network.

Rourke leans back.

ROURKE
You want budget, bodies, and
patience.
I've got Congress yelling about
waste and "easy wins."

ASH
I'm not asking for years.
I'm asking for one real shot.
Give me data access and a small
team.

ROURKE
You bring me one solid case this
thing cracks open – one I can walk
into a U.S. Attorney's office –
we'll talk.
(beat)
Until then, it runs in the
background. You don't get to slow
real work down. Meeting over.

CHAIRS scrape. People stand.

Baxter claps Ash on the shoulder as he exits.

BAXTER
Nice light show, Kirakosian.

Ash stands in front of his frozen graph, jaw tight.

CUT TO:

EXT. LINA'S HOUSE - GLENDALE - EVENING

A modest stucco home on a tree-lined street. POMEGRANATE TREE in the yard. A small MARIAN STATUE by the door.

Ash walks up, carrying GROCERIES.

MOVE TO:

INT. LINA'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Warm. Homey. ARMENIAN MUSIC from a small RADIO.

LINA KIRAKOSIAN (60s), tough, loving, stirs a pot of DOLMA.

At the table, VAHE (mid-40s), Ash's cousin, in a cheap blazer, fills out FORMS. A STACK OF CASH sits near his elbow.

LINA
You're too skinny. Government
doesn't feed you?

ASH
You only get Fed if you solve
case's.

He kisses her cheek, starts unpacking groceries.

VAHE
Hye jan, you should see the clinic
now. We're packed. Appointments for
months.

Ash glances at the forms. We see the heading:

"MEDICAID - PROVIDER BILLING"

ASH
Business is that good, huh?

VAHE

You know how insurance works.
They make it impossible so people
give up. We don't give up. We push.

He pats the CASH.

VAHE (CONT'D)

God bless America.

Ash's eyes linger on a line that reads: "IN-HOME REHAB VISIT
x 10."

ASH

You doing house calls now?

VAHE

We "coordinate services," that's
what they call it.
Patients sign, we file, everyone's
happy.

LINA

Don't interrogate at my table.
Sit. Eat.

She sets plates. Ash sits, still eyeing the forms.

LINA (CONT'D)

You sit in that office all day with
no sun, no people. Here, there is
life.

(beat)

Don't forget where you come from,
Aghasi.

ASH

I know exactly where I come from.

VAHE

Then don't start acting like you're
something else.

The tension hangs for a beat. Lina crosses herself.

LINA

Enough! We eat. We thank God. Then
we fight.

They bow their heads, mumble a prayer in Armenian.

Ash eats mechanically, mind clearly elsewhere.

CUT TO:

INT. STRIP-MALL DME OFFICE - DAY

Same office seen earlier, but now in detail.

A dusty poster of smiling seniors reads: *"We Care So You Don't Have To!"*

Empty BOXES labeled "WHEELCHAIR," "OXYGEN," "BACK BRACE (DELUXE)" stacked carelessly like props from a low-budget hospital drama.

ARMAN (30s), slick, gold chain peeking out, leans back in his chair with the confidence of a man who's never filed a tax return.

Across from him: DELI (20s), Armenian-American in a pizza delivery shirt, holding a helmet like it's emotional support.

ARMAN

How much you make in tips on a good night?

DELI

Fifty, sixty... if the Lakers win.

ARMAN

I can pay you that in an hour.

Deli stares - not sure if he's being recruited .

ARMAN (CONT'D)

You take these forms. Knock on doors. Tell old people they get free equipment, free home care, free whatever. They sign, you bring the form back. That's it.

DELI

Is it... like... legal?

ARMAN

The forms are legal.
The equipment exists.
Whether they need it - that's between them, their conscience, and Medicare's blind spot.

DELI

I don't wanna screw anybody, bro.

ARMAN

Screw? You think the insurance companies don't already have their pants around their ankles?

(MORE)

ARMAN (CONT'D)
(leans in)
We're not stealing. We're...
redistributing paperwork.

Deli blinks, processing the absurdity.

DELI
So I just get signatures?

ARMAN
Yes! You're like Santa Claus – if
Santa billed Medicare for every
gift he gave.

DELI
I don't even own a clipboard.

ARMAN
Don't worry. I got one in carbon
fiber. Looks professional.

He pulls a clipboard from a stack – it's plastered with a Los Angeles Dodgers sticker and a half-broken pen taped to it.

DELI
What if someone asks who I work
for?

ARMAN
You tell them you work for Armenian
Social Security. They'll sign right
away!

DELI
Armenian social security? Does that
really exist?

Deli smirks despite himself. Arman slides over a STACK OF CASH.

ARMAN
You wanna be poor and "honest,"
that's noble. You wanna help your
family? Be a patriot. It's the
capitalist way.

Deli hesitates, then signs the bottom line.

ARMAN (CONT'D)
Atta boy. Welcome to healthcare –
where everyone's a patient,
and everybody is sick.

He claps Deli on the shoulder like a proud coach sending him into a rigged game.

ARMAN (CONT'D)
Now go make your country proud.
God Bless America!

He scurries him out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT. MARA'S OFFICE - ABOVE CHURCH - DAY

A modest office above an ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

ICONS on the walls, a faint smell of incense. Filing cabinets overflowing.

Mara sits at her desk, laptop open. On the screen: SPREADSHEETS listing multiple LLCs with innocuous names.

Yurik stands by the window, smoking, watching KIDS play in the churchyard.

MARA
Give me the quarter totals.

YURIK
Through which company?

MARA
(testy)
All of them, Yurik jan.

He flips through a notebook.

YURIK
Seventeen million billed.
Eleven paid.
Two flagged.
One under review.

MARA
"Under review" is money on layaway.

YURIK
It's also a spotlight, eventually.

MARA
Then we move. We split. We rename.
Same river, new channels.

She closes the laptop.

MARA (CONT'D)
Dial back durable equipment for a
while.
Too much plastic, they get
suspicious.
Push more rehab. More "behavioral
therapy."
It sounds soft, they don't question
it.

YURIK
Therapy means people. People mean
talking.

MARA
Then we choose good talkers.

Yurik studies her.

YURIK
At some point, the ocean notices
how many buckets you're taking.

MARA
Okay, we buy a yacht.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI - ANALYTICS UNIT - NIGHT

Most of the office is dark. Empty cubicles.

Ash sits alone, lit by the blue glow of his monitors.

On his screen: he loads fresh CLAIMS DATA from a recent minor
RAID.

Folder labeled "OP BLUE CROSS - RAW."

He feeds it to LEDGER-EYE. Code scrolls. A bare GRAPH
appears.

ASH
(murmurs)
Come on. Talk to me.

Dots connect. A small cluster forms.

He overlays additional datasets: denied claims, provider
registries.

More nodes light up. Addresses repeat. DIAGNOSIS TEXT
repeats.

On the side, META-DATA.

"VARDANYAN COMMUNITY CARE"

"VARDANYAN REHAB SERVICES"

Ash zooms out. MORE VARDANYAN ENTITIES appear across the web.

A central hub forms: "THE VARDANYAN FOUNDATION - GLENDALE, CA."

Ash sits back, heart pounding.

ASH

You've gotta be kidding me.

He takes a screenshot. Prints it. Pins it on his cubicle wall.

Photos of his father beside a neon spiderweb of fraud.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE CEMETERY - DAY

A simple Armenian section. Modest headstones with crosses.

Ash stands at ARAM KIRAKOSIAN's grave. He sets down FLOWERS.

ASH

You used to say the law was written
by people who never went hungry.

FLASHBACK - YEREVAN STREET MARKET - 1980s (GRAINY)

Young ARAM slips cash to a UNIFORMED OFFICER, loads flour into a sack.

ARAM (V.O.)

If the rules starve you, the rules
are wrong.

BACK TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Ash stares at the headstone.

ASH
Maybe you were right there.
(beat)
But this isn't stealing bread
anymore, Dad.
This is people stealing from the
ones that need it most.

His PHONE BUZZES. A notification from LEDGER-EYE:

"NEW CORRELATION FOUND."

Ash glances at it, disturbed.

CUT TO:

INT. GLENDALE COMMUNITY CENTER - EVENING

A bustling hall. Lina volunteers at a FREE DINNER for SENIORS and LOW-INCOME FAMILIES.

Big pots of food. Kids running. Elderly lined up with plates.

Vahe stands at a folding table, handing out FLYERS.

VAHE
(In Armenian W/ Subs)
Sign here, auntie. You get free
rides to the doctor. Home visits.
And five hundred dollars Very good.

The OLD WOMEN eyes light up she sign forms with out reading.

Ash enters, watching.

ASH
Hey.

Lina brightens.

LINA
Look who remembers his mother.

She hugs him. He watches Vahe collect a stack of signatures.

ASH
(to Vahe)
Do they know what they're signing?

VAHE
They know they're getting help.

You want me to explain "provider networks"
to a 78-year-old with no English?

ASH
There's a difference between help
and turning them into income
streams.

VAHE
Income stream, patient, voter –
Everybody's someone's number,
Aghasi. At least with us, they get
food.

An OLD WOMAN looks at Ash, smiling toothlessly.

OLD WOMAN
(in Armenian; subtitled)
These boys are angels. They take
care of us.

Ash forces a tight smile, turns away.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI - WAR ROOM - DAY

Maps on the walls. CASE FILES. A handful of AGENTS.

Rourke stands in front. Ash among the group.

ROURKE
We've got a dozen open rings and
the Hill wants numbers. Contractors
flagged a few small fish. We hit
those, we keep moving.

Ash raises a folder.

ASH
I've got something bigger.
Connected. Multi-state. Mostly
anchored right here.

He flicks on a SCREEN. A LEDGER-EYE GRAPH appears, zoomed
into GLENDALE

CLUSTERS.

ASH (CONT'D)
These clinics, these "foundations"
– they're not random.
(MORE)

ASH (CONT'D)
Same language in claims. Same bank
routes. Same signature appearing
hundreds of times.

Baxter chews gum, squints at the screen.

BAXTER
You got probable cause on any one
node?

ASH
Enough for subpoenas.

Enough to justify coordinated surveillance.

OURKE
Subpoenas don't get me a press
conference. Indictments do.

ASH
If we just pick off one clinic, the
rest pivot and survive.
We need to map the whole web, then
cut the center.

OURKE
You're talking "whole web," I'm
talking fiscal year. Different
languages.

She looks at the graph again – something about its density
spooks her.

OURKE (CONT'D)
Keep your... "Ledger-Eye" running.
But we move on what we can prove
now. Understood?

Ash nods, frustrated.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI - ANALYTICS UNIT - LATE NIGHT

Empty again. Just Ash and the glowing web.

He zooms in on GLENDALE ONLY.

New nodes appear as the system ingests more data.

Business names scroll:

"GLENDALE HOME REHAB"

"VARDANYAN COMMUNITY CARE"

"KIRAKOSIAN FAMILY HEALTH OUTREACH"

Ash freezes at the last one.

He clicks it. A SMALL PROFILE POPS UP:

DIRECTOR: VAHE KIRAKOSIAN

ADDRESS: GLENDALE, CA

CONNECTIONS: HIGH DEGREE NODE

ROLE: HUB ENTITY

LEDGER-EYE flashes a red outline around the node.

RISK SCORE: HIGH

ANOMALOUS REFERRAL PATTERNS

Ash stares at the screen, stunned.

ASH
(soft)
No...

He cross-checks. Same EIN. Same address as the flyers at the community center.

The GRAPH ripples, showing Vahe's non-profit as a bridge between Mara's

shell companies and dozens of patient claims.

Ash shuts off the monitor. Darkness.

He sees his reflection in the blank screen.

ASH (CONT'D)
Show me the truth, you said.
(beat)
Didn't say it'd be like this.

He turns the monitor back on. The web flares to life again, pulsing.

Ash just sits there, caught between the law he serves and the blood that sits at the center of the web.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. GLENDALE - NIGHT

The city glows. The streets hum with low conversation and the faint sound of oud music coming from small restaurants.

We find Ash driving through the narrow neighborhoods, passing rows of stucco houses, each with a flag - American or Armenian.

He slows near a café still open past midnight.

CUT TO:

INT. GLENDALE CAFÉ - NIGHT

A half-lit room filled with OLD MEN playing backgammon. Coffee cups. The smell of cardamom.

Ash walks in. The OWNER, GARO (60s), looks up, surprised.

GARO

Aghasi jan! Long time. Sit, sit.
You still catching bad guys?

ASH

Trying. Mostly catching paper.

GARO

Don't worry good always finds bad
especially in Glendale

They share a quiet laugh. Ash looks around. Familiar faces. Men who've been in Glendale since before the city was famous for anything.

ASH

You ever think about going back?

GARO

Back? To what? To bribes and gray
bread? I built my life here.

(MORE)

GARO (CONT'D)
Now my nephew wants to sell NFTs of
Mount Ararat. That's his
"heritage."

ASH
Times change.

GARO
But people don't.
Back home, we cheated the state to
survive.
Here we cheat it to feel alive.

He pours Ash another small cup of coffee.

GARO (CONT'D)
Tell me, Aghasi. You catch one of
your own, you turn him in?

Ash doesn't answer. The question lingers in the air.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE CHURCH - MORNING

SUNDAY SERVICE. Bells ring. Families file out.

Mara stands near the steps, all grace and composure, handing out flyers for a "Community Health Initiative."

A PRIEST blesses her, grateful. A NEWS CREW snaps photos.

Across the street, Ash watches from his car.

He's been surveilling her foundation quietly, documenting.

She looks directly at him - not startled, just amused.

Their eyes meet for the first time.

A flicker of something unspoken passes between them.

CUT TO:

INT. MARA'S OFFICE - LATER THAT DAY

Mara pours tea into ornate cups for Yurik.

MARA
The city's watching us, Yurik.

Every charity, every transaction.

They don't like when we succeed.

YURIK
You mean when you succeed.

MARA
When we succeed, I said.

She sets the cup down, eyes burning with conviction.

MARA (CONT'D)
I didn't come here to be invisible.
I came here to make sure every one
of us who crossed that border with
ten dollars and a fake smile never
has to beg again.

YURIK
You're starting to believe your own
mythology.

MARA
My mythology pays your mortgage.

He chuckles, but she doesn't.

MARA (CONT'D)
You think I enjoy the lying?
I built this because nobody would
hire us when our accents gave us
away. So we built our own system.
Same rules, just our language.

She looks out the window at the church courtyard below.

MARA (CONT'D)
America pretends it's clean.
We know better. We just don't
apologize for it.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI - BREAK ROOM - DAY

Ash stands by a vending machine, frustrated as the coffee
machine spits out half a cup.

A younger AGENT, SARAH (30s), cheerful, approaches with her
own cup.

SARAH
Still burning the midnight oil?

ASH
I think the midnight oil's burning
me back.

SARAH
You've got that look.
The "what if the bad guys are my
family" look.

He half-smiles.

ASH
What if the system's the problem?

SARAH
Then you'll fix it.
You're one of the good ones.

ASH
I don't even know what that means
anymore.

SARAH
It means you still ask that
question.

He takes his coffee, nods faintly, and walks out.

CUT TO:

INT. LINA'S HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

Lina sits on the couch, knitting. Armenian TV murmurs in the background - a news anchor speaking of "new federal investigations."

Ash enters quietly, jacket over his arm.

LINA
You work late again. They don't
have younger people for that?

ASH
They don't have enough people who
speak the language.

LINA
That's what they say before they
use you.

He sits beside her. She continues knitting.

LINA (CONT'D)

Your father, he thought America was paradise. He just didn't realize in paradise you pay taxes.

ASH

Dad knew exactly what paradise had. That's why he stayed in the gray.

LINA

And you want to live in the light. Be careful, Aghasi. Too much light burns the eyes.

He studies her – a woman who still carries the moral weight of two countries.

ASH

I just want people to stop confusing survival with success.

LINA

Maybe for us, they're the same thing.

She pats his hand, smiles gently, and goes back to her knitting.

Ash sits there, staring at the floor, lost between duty and blood.

CUT TO:

INT. LEDGER-EYE CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Ash works alone, screens glowing all around him.

On one screen, a new function blinks: "PREDICTIVE LINK MODE - ENABLED?"

He hesitates, then clicks YES.

The graph comes alive – data stretching across the country, expanding like neurons in a brain.

Nodes pulse. Patterns emerge.

VOICEOVER from Ash's earlier presentation echoes faintly:

ASH (V.O.)

It builds a graph.
It finds what humans can't see.

His reflection merges with the glowing map. For a second, he looks almost hypnotized by it.

Then his phone buzzes. A TEXT from Vahe:

"Need to talk. Tomorrow. Important."

Ash stares at the message, unsure if it's a plea or a trap.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE HILLS - MORNING

Ash hikes a small trail above the city - a ritual.

The view is vast: Glendale spread out below, the Armenian churches, the freeways, the homes.

SARAH (the younger agent) jogs up, breathless.

SARAH
You ever stop working even when
you're off?

ASH
My brain's unionized. I can't stop
it.

She looks out over the city with him.

SARAH
It's beautiful from up here.
Doesn't look like a place where
people rob the government blind.

ASH
Glendale's just a mirror.
You point it at any city, you'll
see the same reflection.

SARAH
You sound like you still care.

ASH
I do.

That's what scares me.

CUT TO:

INT. VAHE'S CLINIC - DAY

A small, freshly painted office with inspirational posters and a half-broken water cooler. Vahe greets Ash warmly but guarded.

VAHE

Didn't think the FBI did family visits.

ASH

I'm not here as FBI.

VAHE

That's what they all say before they ask for paperwork.

Ash glances around - notices shredders humming in the back, nurses typing furiously, boxes labeled "ARCHIVES."

ASH

You're cleaning house?

VAHE

Renovating. New system. More digital. It's the future.

Ash sets a FILE on the table - a printout from Ledger-Eye showing his cousin's clinic linked to multiple flagged entities.

ASH

Tell me the truth, Vahe.
Are you in with the Vardanyans?

Vahe looks at the sheet, then laughs.

VAHE

You make it sound like the mafia.
We just help people who help us.

ASH

You're laundering claims through her foundations.

VAHE

"Laundering." Listen to yourself.
It's paperwork, Aghasi.
Numbers. Everyone gets paid.
Nobody gets hurt.

ASH

Except the taxpayers. The patients.
The people who actually need care.

VAHE

You think the government cares
about your mother? About mine?

They give scraps, we make meals out of it.

Ash's jaw tightens.

ASH

You can justify anything when you
lie and cheat.

VAHE

And you can excuse anything when
you hide behind laws.

A long, silent standoff between them.

VAHE (CONT'D)

You gonna arrest me, cousin?
Go ahead. I'll wave to mom on the
news.

Ash turns, walks out. Vahe calls after him.

VAHE (CONT'D)

You think you're clean because you
work for them?
Wait until they use your work to
crush the same people you're trying
to save.

Ash stops in the doorway, doesn't turn around.

ASH

Maybe someone needs to draw the
line.

VAHE

Lines get erased, brother.
Especially in Glendale.

ASH

Don't worry, the Vardanyans are not
a threat, but Armenian Power is.

Ash exits. Vahe watches him go, suddenly less confident.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE - SUNSET

Ash drives home, exhausted, the city glowing outside his windshield.

He passes the same banquet hall from the opening.

A NEW BANNER reads: "VARDANYAN FOUNDATION - THANK YOU, COMMUNITY HEROES."

He keeps driving, his face unreadable.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. GLENDALE - EARLY MORNING

Street sweepers hum down Brand Boulevard. Shop owners lift steel doors, start another day. A subtle tension lives in the air - business as usual, but the ground is shifting.

CUT TO:

INT. MARA'S MANSION - KITCHEN - MORNING

Sunlight through glass. Marble counters. Mara sits with her teenage daughter, ANI (16), over breakfast.

ANI

Are you coming to my debate
tonight?

MARA

Of course. Wouldn't miss it.

ANI

Last time you said that, you were
"on a call."

MARA

(gently)

I'm on a lot of calls.
That's what pays for this roof.
What's your topic?

ANI

"Is America a fair society?"

Mara's smile falters. She sips her coffee.

MARA

That depends on who's grading you.

ANI

You sound like you don't believe in it.

MARA

I believe in winning.

Everything else is decoration.

Ani studies her mother - admiration and unease.

ANI

Be careful Mom I read an article on the internet saying they are using AI to track Medicare claims.

MARA

AI Shmay I ! I'm just helping my patients!

CUT TO:

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - GLENDALE - DAY

Ash scrolls through claim data on his monitor.

He stops, spotting something: Mara Vardanyan - Donor Record, City Council Charity Program.

SARAH

That's her again?

ASH

It's all her. She's woven into every file.

Clinics, rehab centers, nonprofits, donations.

SARAH

Then get a warrant.

ASH

I can't prove intent yet.

SARAH

You think she's stupid enough to sign her name on stolen money?

ASH

I think she's smart enough to build
a wall of good deeds around it.

Sarah looks at him – she sees the obsession forming.

SARAH

When was the last time you slept?

ASH

The more I uncover the less I
sleep.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - AFTERNOON

Lina supervises a children's art class.

Local parents smile, chat, proud of their small haven.

Vahe enters, cheerful, dropping off envelopes.

VAHE

Donations from the foundation.

LINA

They're good to us.

VAHE

They're good for business too.

A COMMUNITY MOTHER overhears, frowns slightly.

Lina senses tension in the room.

LINA

It's all to help the community.
Don't start gossip.

The mother nods but doesn't look convinced.

CUT TO:

INT. GLENDALE CAFÉ - NIGHT

Ash sits with Garo again. The older man lights another cigarette.

GARO

(In Armenian W/Subs)

You're digging holes in a
graveyard, son.
Nothing down there but bones.

ASH

Bones tell stories.

GARO

Maybe not ones you want to hear.

Garo leans forward, voice lowering.

GARO (CONT'D)

There was a time, back home,
you couldn't survive without the
black market. You know that.

ASH

Survival isn't supposed to become
an industry.

GARO

(In Armenian W/Subs)

Tell that to people who survived
starvation. Fraud? That's not evil.
It's trauma with a bank account.

Ash's phone buzzes. He looks at the screen:

*Unknown Number: "Stop digging."

He freezes. Looks around the café – faces turn away.

CUT TO:

INT. MARA'S CAR – SAME TIME

Mara drives through the city, calm but watchful.

Through her rearview mirror, she spots an unmarked SEDAN
trailing her.

She smirks, turns sharply into a parking structure.

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE – CONTINUOUS

She parks, waits. The SEDAN passes by, doesn't follow inside.

Mara exhales, tension leaving her body – until she notices a
NOTE tucked

under her windshield wiper.

She steps out, retrieves it.

"THEY KNOW. MOVE FAST."

CUT TO:

INT. FBI - ASH'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Ash stares at the printed message on his own phone.

Same wording. Same format.

He looks at the wall of graphs. The red lines pulsate faster
-

Ledger-Eye is live-monitoring thousands of new claims.

He mutters under his breath.

ASH
Somebody's in the system.

He begins typing commands. Lines of code scroll.

The AI interface blinks: "Foreign IP Access Detected -
GLENDALE."

He locks his screen, grabs his coat.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT - NIGHT

Ash's car stops near a row of quiet warehouses.

He gets out, flashlight in hand.

Through a window, he spots men loading BOXES into a truck.

All marked "Patient Equipment - Community Relief."

He recognizes one of them - Vahe.

Ash ducks behind a dumpster, takes photos with his phone.

A MAN steps outside for a smoke, glances around.

Ash stays still, heartbeat pounding.

The men drive off. Ash watches the tail lights disappear.
He looks down at his phone. The photos are clear.
His cousin, part of the network.
He leans against the dumpster, conflicted.

ASH (V.O.)
It's always the ones you think
you're saving.

CUT TO:

INT. LINA'S HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

Lina hears the door open. Ash enters, pale.

LINA
You look like a ghost.

ASH
I saw Vahe tonight.

LINA
And?

ASH
He's in it, Mom. Deep. Moving
product, documents, everything.

LINA
He's family. Don't talk like that.

ASH
Family doesn't steal from the sick.

LINA
You don't know what people need to
survive.

ASH
That's the same excuse Dad used for
everything. These people are
driving Mercedes-Benzes and using
food stamps at the grocery store.

She stiffens.

LINA
Your father did what he had to.
You wouldn't be here if he hadn't.

ASH

Maybe he should've done less
surviving and more living honest.

LINA

Careful, Aghasi.
You talk like a man who's never
been hungry.

He looks at her, eyes wet.

ASH

I've been hungry my whole life.
Just not for money.

He turns to leave.

Lina stands in the doorway, torn between love and shame.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE OVERLOOK - NIGHT

Ash drives to the hillside, parks overlooking the glittering city. He gets out, wind in his hair, phone in his hand. He speaks quietly into his recorder.

ASH

Personal note, day one hundred
ninety.

Ledger-Eye confirmed multi-state network.

Central hub, Glendale.

Estimated hundreds of millions in claims.

Including... family.

He stops recording. Looks down at the glowing city.

ASH (CONT'D)

God help me.

I don't even know whose side I'm on anymore.

CUT TO:

INT. MARA'S LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Mara sits alone. The house is dark.

She flips through an old photo album – Yerevan, 1988.

Her family standing in line for bread.

A tear rolls down her cheek, but she wipes it away with irritation. She closes the album, grabs her phone.

MARA
(into phone)
Yurik, listen to me.
We move all assets by morning.
And find out who "Kirakosian" works
for. He's coming for us.

She ends the call.

Outside, faintly, a siren wails through the night.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. GLENDALE – PRE-DAWN

Darkness over the city. Streetlights flicker.

A slow drone shot moves across the rooftops, down to a GOVERNMENT VAN

idling in an alley behind a strip mall.

Inside, ARMED AGENTS adjust gear, check watches.

AGENT (IN RADIO)
Operation White Cross – green light
in sixty seconds.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE – WAR ROOM – SAME TIME

LEDGER-EYE pulses across a massive screen – red nodes
flashing

throughout GLENDALE and the SAN FERNANDO VALLEY.

Ash watches, exhausted, eyes hollow.

SARAH
They approved the raids. All units.

ASH

It's too early. We don't have confirmation on half of these entities.

SARAH

They want headlines. You gave them fireworks.

Ash stares at the screen as lines link between clinics, homes, and churches – the network glowing alive.

ASH

I wanted proof. Not chaos.

SARAH

Same thing to them.

CUT TO:

INT. MARA'S MANSION – MASTER BEDROOM – SAME TIME

Mara sleeps.

Her PHONE vibrates on the nightstand – an alert.

ON SCREEN: "FBI RAIDS REPORTED – VALLEY REGION"

Her eyes snap open. She sits upright, instantly composed.

MARA

(In Armenian W/Sub)

Mother Fucker

She throws on a robe, dials a number.

MARA (CONT'D)

Yurik, wake everyone. Move the drives. Burn anything with patient data. Right now.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE STRIP MALL – DAWN

Black SUVs skid into position.

FBI AGENTS storm "COMMUNITY CARE REHAB." Glass shatters.

WORKERS freeze, hands in the air. Boxes marked OXYGEN EQUIPMENT spill fake invoices across the floor.

AGENT
Federal warrant! Hands where I can
see them!

A CLERK sobs.

A NEWS CREW already on scene – camera rolling.

CUT TO:

INT. GLENDALE APARTMENT – SAME TIME

Vahe opens his blinds to SIRENS outside.

Phone ringing nonstop. He answers, pale.

VAHE
Mara, what's happening?

MARA (V.O.)
Containment. Don't panic.

VAHE
Containment? They're outside the
building!

MARA (V.O.)
Then burn it, Vahe. Burn the
bridge.

We'll rebuild somewhere else.

Vahe looks at a stack of folders labeled KIRAKOSIAN FAMILY
OUTREACH.

VAHE
That's my name on this, Mara.
My mother's name. I can't–

MARA (V.O.)
Your name bought you a life.
You want to keep it? Do what I
said.

The call disconnects.

Vahe stands trembling, torn between fear and loyalty.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - WAR ROOM - MORNING

Big screens flicker with live feeds - helicopters circling Glendale.

The map pulses with hundreds of blinking red targets.

ROURKE

Good work, Kirakosian. You just made history.

ASH

This isn't history. You're not stopping them; these are the most resilient people on the planet.

ROURKE

We warned them. They chose the game.

Ash turns toward her, furious.

ASH

You think this is a game? Those aren't mob bosses. They're old people. Families. Half of them don't even know what they signed.

ROURKE

Then they shouldn't have signed. You wanted exposure. Now you've got it.

Ash storms out.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE CHURCH - MORNING

A RAID TEAM bursts through the door mid-service.

Elderly WOMEN in headscarves scream, clutching crosses.

Priests raise their hands in confusion.

Lina is among them - frozen as AGENTS shout orders.

AGENT

Everyone stay calm! Step back!

She spots Ash across the street - standing motionless as the chaos unfolds.

LINA
Aghasi... what have you done?

Ash can't move. He looks shattered.

His own creation has turned into a wrecking ball.

CUT TO:

INT. MARA'S OFFICE - DAY

Yurik bursts in, panicked.

YURIK
It's over. They're hitting
everything even the Church.

Mara remains eerily calm, typing on her laptop.

MARA
No, Yurik. It's just beginning.

YURIK
You don't understand - they froze
the accounts!

MARA
Not all of them.

She spins her screen toward him - a crypto wallet, millions moving offshore.

MARA (CONT'D)
I graduated from the University of
Yerevan. You think I didn't see
this coming?
They think they're burning what I
built.

YURIK
Mara, people are going to prison!

MARA
Maybe. But not me.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Vahe sits under fluorescent lights, eyes red, hands shaking.

Ash enters.

The two men stare across the table - family divided by glass.

ASH

You should've come to me.

VAHE

I tried to call you. You were busy
saving America.

ASH

You laundered millions. You dragged
Mom's name into it.

VAHE

We didn't build this system,
Aghasi.
We just stopped pretending it was
fair.

Ash slams the folder on the table - photos, charts, evidence.

ASH

Fair? You used sick people's names.
You forged signatures of the dead.

VAHE

And you built a machine that
arrests the living for being
related to them. Who's cleaner?

Ash freezes - guilt creeping in.

VAHE (CONT'D)

(In ArmenianW/Subs)

You think you're different?
You gave them the map, cousin.
Now they're burning the village.

He leans forward, voice cracking.

VAHE (CONT'D)

You didn't destroy the fraud.
You destroyed your own people.

Ash can't answer. He turns and walks out.

CUT TO:

INT. MARA'S MANSION - NIGHT

Mara sits with Ani on the floor, hugging her tight.

TV flickers with footage of arrests, protests, outrage.

ANI

Mom, they're saying you did this.
That you stole from old people.

MARA

I gave them dignity. I gave them
life.

ANI

You lied.

Mara's face hardens - the mask cracking.

MARA

I lied so you wouldn't have to.
So you could stand on a stage and
talk about fairness while I made
sure you never needed to live
without it.

Ani starts crying. Mara's composure finally slips.

MARA (CONT'D)

Everything I did was for you.

ANI

Then stop lying and stealing!

She storms out, slamming the door.

Mara stays frozen - alone for the first time, surrounded by
silent wealth.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - NIGHT

The war room is empty now. Only Ash remains, watching the
data feeds fade.

The AI continues processing - silent, steady, unstoppable.

A NEW ALERT flashes: "CORRUPTION DETECTED IN FBI DATA
STREAMS."

He leans closer. Ledger-Eye is flagging its own agency.

ASH
(to himself)
Oh no... what did they plug you into?

He types commands – access denied.

The machine keeps building links, this time connecting government contracts, political donors – a hidden web far beyond Glendale.

Ash's horror turns to realization.

ASH (CONT'D)
You weren't made to stop fraud.

You were made to find power.

He steps back from the screen, breath heavy.

CUT TO:

INT. MARA'S OFFICE – SAME TIME

Her PHONE BUZZES.

A cryptic text from an UNKNOWN NUMBER: "Ledger-Eye is turning on them."

She smirks faintly, whispering to herself.

MARA
(In Armenian W/Subs)
Bravo! That's my boy.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE – NIGHT

Helicopters hover over a divided city – half celebration, half protest.

News tickers flash:

"FBI TAKES DOWN MASSIVE MEDICARE FRAUD NETWORK"

"COMMUNITY CLAIMS RACIAL PROFILING IN SWEEP"

"LEDGER-EYE UNDER ETHICS INVESTIGATION."

Ash drives through the empty streets – broken glass, American flags, and

handmade Armenian banners flapping in the wind.

He stops at a red light and stares at his reflection in the windshield.

ASH (V.O.)

Oh your Armenian? What kind of
fraud do you do? Who me? FBI fraud.

The light turns green. He doesn't move.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE – MORNING

A day after the raids.

Ash enters to a standing ovation – applause from fellow agents,

camera crews in the hallway. A banner on a monitor reads:

"OPERATION WHITE CROSS – SUCCESS"

Rourke shakes his hand for the cameras.

ROURKE

You wanted recognition, now you're
a hero.

ASH

I didn't ask for this.

ROURKE

You built the weapon. You own the
victory.

The flashbulbs pop. Ash forces a hollow smile.

CUT TO:

INT. NEWSROOM – SAME TIME

TV MONITORS show BREAKING NEWS: community backlash.

"FBI OVERREACH IN GLENDALE?"

"ARMENIAN-AMERICANS TARGETED IN FRAUD SWEEP."

Anchor voices overlap.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)
While authorities claim over \$300 million recovered, community leaders allege ethnic profiling and AI bias.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE CITY HALL - DAY

Hundreds protest - Armenian flags, handmade signs:

"NOT FRAUD - FAMILY."

"LEDGER-EYE = RACISM."

Reporters swarm.

Lina stands near the crowd, silent, holding a candle.

A YOUNG JOURNALIST approaches her.

JOURNALIST
Mrs. Kirakosian, are you related to Agent Ash Kirakosian?

LINA
He's my son.
And he's still learning what justice means.

Her words ripple through the crowd.

CUT TO:

INT. MARA'S SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

A dimly lit room. Computers hum. Yurik paces.

YURIK
You brought down the whole valley.

MARA
I woke it up.

Now let's see who else bleeds when the light stays on.

She nods toward a TECH WOMAN (20s, hacker-type) at a terminal.

TECH WOMAN
I cloned their AI framework.

Ledger-Eye's open-source core was hiding in the cloud.

We can rebuild.

MARA
Don't rebuild. Corrupt it.

TECH WOMAN
You want us to feed it false positives?

MARA
I want them chasing ghosts while the truth hides in plain sight.

Yurik looks uneasy.

YURIK
Mara, this isn't survival anymore.

This is war.

MARA
Good. Because I'm done surviving.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

Ash, Sarah, and Rourke in tense discussion.

SARAH
We've got an issue.

Ledger-Eye's cross-referencing our own field expense data.

It's flagging Bureau contracts.

ROURKE
Shut it down.

ASH
You can't just unplug it - it's
cloud-based, self-learning.

ROURKE
Then teach it to forget.

ASH
It doesn't forget. That's the
point.

Rourke slams the table.

ROURKE
You built a monster. Now you're
going to leash it.

Ash just stares at her.

ASH
Maybe it's not the monster.

CUT TO:

INT. GLENDALE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Mara meets a local politician, COUNCILMAN TERZIAN (50s),
nervous.

TERZIAN
You think leaking Bureau data helps
you?

They'll bury you alive.

MARA
(In ArmenianW/Sub)
Maybe. But if I burn, I'll light up
every name that took my money.

TERZIAN
You'd destroy your own people?

MARA
My people? They already sold their
souls.

She slides him a small drive.

MARA (CONT'D)
Get this to the press.

Proof the FBI's targeting donors for political gain.

He hesitates. She locks eyes.

MARA (CONT'D)
History belongs to whoever owns the
story.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - SERVER ROOM - NIGHT

Ash enters quietly. The hum of servers surrounds him.

He connects his personal laptop, typing furiously.

On screen: "LEDGER-EYE - DEEP ACCESS REQUESTED."

The interface hesitates, then accepts.

A web of names and bank transfers emerges - this time, all government.

Ash scrolls, stunned: campaign finance data, defense contractors,

Rourke's name on a list of consulting payments.

ASH
Jesus Christ...

He exports the data, encrypts it, hides the drive inside a coffee mug.

SARAH (O.S.)
What did you find?

He spins - Sarah's at the doorway.

ASH
You shouldn't be here.

SARAH
You're about to make yourself the enemy.

ASH
Maybe it's time someone did.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE - NIGHT

Riots. Fires. News vans. Protestors clash with riot police.

Ash drives through, seeing his community breaking apart.
He parks near the same café where it all began – now smashed windows,
sign reading CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.
Inside, Garo sweeps glass off the floor.

GARO
In Armenian/Subs)
So this is justice, huh?
You won, Aghasi. You buried us.

ASH
I was trying to save it.

GARO
(In Armenian W/Subs)
Save what? The system that eats its
children? You turned the mirror too
close. Nobody likes what they see.

Ash helps him sweep.

Outside, a protester shouts, "SHAME ON THE FBI!"

Ash watches, guilt swallowing him whole.

CUT TO:

INT. MARA'S SAFE HOUSE – LATE NIGHT

The hacker's screens light up – streams of encrypted data.

TECH WOMAN
It's working. We're in their
system.

MARA
Good.

Let's give Ledger-Eye something new to learn.

They feed fake datasets – random names, small crimes, false
trails.

Mara smiles as confusion ripples across FBI terminals
citywide.

MARA (CONT'D)
You call it fraud.
I call it Justice

CUT TO:

INT. FBI - WAR ROOM - SAME TIME

Screens flash erratically. Nodes multiply uncontrollably.

AGENT
Sir, the AI's identifying new
threats - hospitals, police unions,
even our payroll division.

ROURKE
Pull the plug!

TECH (SHOUTING)
There is no plug!

Ash runs in, watching chaos unfold.

ASH
It's been hijacked. Someone's
feeding it data.

SARAH
Who?

ASH
Vardanyan.

Rourke turns, furious.

ROURKE
Then find her.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE HILLS - NIGHT

Ash pulls up at a viewpoint overlooking the city again - the same spot

But now the skyline glows with fire.

He calls his mother.

LINA (V.O.)
You shouldn't call me. They're
watching everything.

ASH
I'm sorry, Mom.

LINA
For what?

ASH
For thinking truth and peace were
the same thing.

She pauses – distant explosions echo.

LINA (V.O.)
They never were, Aghasi.
Truth hurts. Peace lies.

The line goes dead.

Ash looks down at the encrypted drive in his hand – the one with the

FBI corruption data. His choice clear but unbearable.

CUT TO:

INT. MARA'S HIDEOUT – SAME TIME

Mara watches live feeds of the riots – her face reflected in the glass.

YURIK
This isn't what you wanted.

MARA
It's what they made.

YURIK
You became what you hated.

MARA
(In Armenian/Subs)
No. I became what they feared.

He looks at her, lost for words.

CUT TO:

INT. NEWSROOM – NIGHT

A late-night ANCHOR reports breaking news:

ANCHOR

In a stunning development,
anonymous data leaked from

the FBI suggests internal corruption tied to private
healthcare contracts – allegedly exposed by their own AI
tool.

Flash images: Rourke leaving HQ under investigation, protests
doubling,

Ledger-Eye logo spinning behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE – ROURKE'S OFFICE – NIGHT

Rourke smashes a framed photo on her desk.

ROURKE

Find Kirakosian!

He's the only one who had that level of access!

Agents scatter.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED LIBRARY – LATE NIGHT

Ash meets Sarah secretly, handing her the encrypted drive.

ASH

If anything happens to me, leak it.

SARAH

You're not built for exile.

ASH

None of us are. But someone has to
tell the truth.

She takes the drive, eyes full of fear.

SARAH

You realize this makes you a
target?

ASH
 Good. Maybe they'll stop shooting
 at everyone else.

CUT TO:

INT. MARA'S SAFE HOUSE - FINAL NIGHT OF ACT II

Alarms blare. The hacker shouts over the noise.

TECH WOMAN
 Ledger-Eye's back-tracing the
 source!

It's coming for us!

MARA
 Let it look.

The screens flicker - the AI's visualization now showing Mara's own location as a glowing red node.

TECH WOMAN
 It's got us pinned!

MARA
 Then it's time to go dark.

She smashes the server's main power switch.

Everything goes black.

A beat of silence... then the low hum of emergency lights.

MARA (CONT'D)
 You can't kill what's already
 everywhere.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE - DAWN

The city smolders. Smoke rising from burned storefronts.

Voice-over from Ash:

ASH (V.O.)
 (In Armenian W/Sub)
 Light to my eyes, God knows I
 tried!

Ash drives away from Glendale, the FBI tailing him.

He looks back once – his home, his past, burning in the rearview mirror.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. FREEWAY – DAY

Ash's car races down the 5, FBI SEDAN still in the mirror.

His PHONE RINGS – unknown number.

ASH

Yeah?

VOICE (V.O.)

You keep driving, they'll box you in.

Take the next exit.

Ash frowns. Checks his mirror again.

ASH

Who is this?

VOICE (V.O.)

The woman you've been hunting.

He glances at the GPS.

MARA (V.O.)

Exit. Now.

He hesitates, then yanks the wheel to the right.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED MOTEL – EDGE OF GLENDALE – DAY

Ash pulls into the cracked parking lot of an old MOTEL with faded

letters: "VAC NCY."

The FBI sedan ROARS past on the freeway above, unaware.

Ash parks, scanning the empty lot.

A beat-up SEDAN pulls in across from him.

Mara steps out, sunglasses on, calm as if meeting for coffee.

MARA
You built quite the bonfire.

ASH
You lit the match.

They stand between cars, neither fully trusting the other.

ASH (CONT'D)
The Bureau thinks I leaked their
dirt.

MARA
Did you?

ASH
Not yet.

She studies him, intrigued.

MARA
So why call the arsonist?

ASH
Because you're the only one who
knows where the rest of the
evidence is.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Cheap, stained carpet. Drawn curtains. A table between them.

Ash and Mara sit facing each other, two generals after a war.

MARA
You wanted to save your people.

Now half of them are in custody.

ASH
You wanted to save them too. Your
way.

MARA
I never said "save." I said "arm."

ASH
You armed them with fraud.

MARA
I armed them with leverage.

The fraud was just the language America understands.

Ash pulls out his phone, opens a graph - LEDGER-EYE, stripped down.

ASH
Look. This is what's left of the core model. It still has your networks. My family. But it also has this.

He expands. NEW CLUSTERS appear: lobbyists, contractors, politicians.

ASH (CONT'D)
These aren't Armenians, Mara.
These are the people who sold the laws you learned to break.

She leans in, eyes narrowing.

MARA
So your machine finally found the top floor.

ASH
The Bureau will bury it.
They'll bury me. You. Glendale. The story.

MARA
So don't let them.

ASH
I need everything.
Your ledgers, offshore accounts, communications.

MARA
You want me to hand you the knife?

ASH
I want you to point it up instead of sideways.

A tense silence.

MARA
Why should I help you?

ASH

Because they'll pin all of this on
"Armenian fraud." You'll become a
cautionary tale, not a symptom.
And your daughter will live her
life apologizing for a dark-haired
villain on the evening news.

That lands. She looks away.

FLASH CUT:

INT. MARA'S HOUSE - EARLIER

Ani on the couch, eyes red.

ANI

You lied so we could live on lies.
I don't get it, Mom. You have a
Master's Degree in business; you
could have done all this legally.

BACK TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Mara's composure cracks - just for a second.

MARA

What happens if I say yes?

ASH

You testify. Against the bigger
machine.

You give me a map my AI can't get alone.

MARA

And my people?

ASH

I push for leniency. Diversion.
Restitution instead of max
sentences for the small fish.
I can't promise, but I can fight.

MARA

You're asking me to betray
everyone.

ASH
You already did the day you put
your name on their debt.

He lets that hang. She exhales, shaky.

MARA
I built a ledger no one can erase.
Every payment, every kickback,
every "consulting fee."
Not just ours. Theirs.

ASH
Then let's balance it.

She thinks. Long, heavy beat.

MARA
If I do this...
Ani gets immunity. Full protection.
Away from all this.

ASH
Done.

MARA
You don't have the authority.

ASH
Then I'll start afire and watch it
burn until someone with authority
give it to you.

For the first time, she seems
almost impressed.

MARA
(In ArmenianW/ SUBS)
Maybe you are Armenian after all.

CUT TO:

EXT. U.S. COURTHOUSE - DOWNTOWN L.A. - DAY

TV VANS. PROTESTORS. FBI SUVs.

The steps are packed.

Chyrons flash:

"FBI AGENT TURNED WHISTLEBLOWER?"

"VARDANYAN AGREES TO COOPERATE WITH FEDERAL PROBE."

Ash walks up the steps in a suit, flanked by two U.S. MARSHALS.

He looks like a man headed to execution.

Lina stands in the crowd, eyes wet. She doesn't wave, but she doesn't turn away.

CUT TO:

INT. COURTHOUSE - HOLDING ROOM - DAY

Mara in cuffs sits across from Ani, supervised by a MARSHAL.

ANI
Is this really helping?

MARA
This is me finally paying for what
I took.
(beat)
The right way.

Ani grabs her hands, chained together.

ANI
I don't want your money.
I want you to be my Mom..

Mara swallows hard, tears threatening.

MARA
(In Armenian W/Subs)
Don't worry, I'm still your mom!

The MARSHAL opens the door.

MARSHAL
Time.

Mara squeezes Ani's fingers one last time.

CUT TO:

INT. CONGRESSIONAL-STYLE HEARING ROOM - DAY

A packed chamber. Government SEALS. Cameras. FLASHES.

At the long table: Ash under oath, sweating under the lights.

Opposite him: a PANEL of OFFICIALS.

On a side table sits Rourke with counsel, stone-faced.

Another table: victims, Glendale community representatives, including Lina.

LEDGER-EYE's logo is displayed on the big screen like a defendant.

PANEL CHAIR

Agent Kirakosian, you oversaw the deployment of the AI system known as Ledger-Eye. Correct?

ASH

Yes.

PANEL CHAIR

And you used it to identify fraud in federal healthcare programs?

ASH

Yes.

PANEL CHAIR

Do you consider its use in Glendale a success?

He glances at Lina, then at images on the monitor – raids, handcuffs, churches, old women.

ASH

It identified fraud.
It didn't understand people.

Murmurs in the room.

PANEL CHAIR

Please explain.

ASH

Ledger-Eye doesn't know hunger. Or history. It sees patterns. That's all. We gave it data poisoned by decades of inequality, then acted shocked when it flagged the same neighborhoods we've ignored for generations.

Rourke glares.

PANEL CHAIR

Are you saying the system was biased?

ASH

I'm saying the data was.
And we built a weapon around it without brakes.

He taps the microphone, steadyng himself.

ASH (CONT'D)

But it did something we didn't expect.

He looks to the tech screen operator.

ASH (CONT'D)

Bring up Exhibit K.

ON SCREEN - a NEW GRAPH. Not Glendale.

NODES labelled: PRIVATE CONTRACTORS, CONSULTING FIRMS, FOUNDATIONS.

Some nodes glow with familiar political names.

Gasps ripple through the room.

ASH (CONT'D)

Ledger-Eye followed the same patterns into our own house. Misused contracts. Kickbacks. Donor influence over healthcare policy.

PANEL MEMBERS shift uncomfortably.

PANEL CHAIR

Agent, this goes beyond the scope-

ASH

That's exactly the problem. We wanted an AI that only looked down. It learned to look up.

He meets Rourke's eyes.

ASH (CONT'D)

And when it did, my superiors ordered me to shut it down.

A beat. The room crackles.

ROURKE
(into her mic)
That is a mischaracterization-

ASH
Director Rourke approved operations
built on incomplete data.
We hit Glendale hard, fast, with
the full weight of the federal
government. But when Ledger-Eye
showed us bigger fraud higher up
the chain...
(beat)
We called it a glitch.

Silence. The truth hangs there, heavy.

CUT TO:

INT. WITNESS ROOM - LATER

Mara takes the stand, in shackles but composed.

MARA
My name is Mara Vardanyan.
I ran a network that stole from
Medicare and Medicaid.
I won't dress it up.

Some gasp. Others lean in.

MARA (CONT'D)
I justified it because I grew up in
a place where you either cheated
the state or died obeying it.
When I came here, I found a new
state. Same game. Better market
potential.

She glances at Lina and other community members.

MARA (CONT'D)
I used my own people as cover.
I told myself I was helping them.
Building clinics. Paying bills.
But the truth is, I built an empire
that depended on their desperation.

She looks straight at the panel.

MARA (CONT'D)

I am guilty.
So are the people who took my
donations and closed their eyes.
So are the contractors who wrote
the rules I twisted. You want to
clean this? You can't just punish
the neighborhoods where the money
ended up. You have to punish the
rooms where the schemes began.

Her words land like blows.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE HEARING ROOM - LATER

Chaos. Press. Shouting.

Ash steps out, momentarily alone in the noise.

Lina approaches. They stand face to face.

LINA

You embarrassed them.

ASH

I embarrassed us too.

LINA

Sometimes that's the only way a
family changes.

She reaches up, touches his cheek.

LINA (CONT'D)

I was angry.
I still am, a little.
(softening)
But I'm proud you didn't look away.

He exhales, shoulders lowering for the first time .

CUT TO:

EXT. DETENTION FACILITY - YARD - DAY

Mara walks in a fenced yard, prison uniform on.

She looks smaller, but not broken.

Across the yard, Yurik sits on a bench, reading a legal document.

He's flipped, clearly working deals.

Mara smirks.

MARA

How's it feel to be an informant now?

YURIK

Less romantic than you made fraud sound.

MARA

Tell them everything.

Top to bottom.

Don't leave my name out.

YURIK

Why not?

MARA

Ani needs to see the whole story, not a sanitized one.

She looks up at the sky – a sliver of blue behind chain-link.

CUT TO:

INT. GLENDALE COMMUNITY CENTER – DAY

Months later.

Renovated. Bright. New signage:

“GLENDALE CARE CO-OP – COMMUNITY-LED HEALTH SUPPORT”

Workshops in progress. Legal aid. Health education.

No shady sign-up forms.

Ash walks in with a BOX of old case files.

Lina manages a table with volunteers. She sees him and waves him over.

LINA

We have a new program.

Teaching people what they're signing now.

ASH
About time.

He opens the box - stamped files from Operation White Cross.

ASH (CONT'D)
Reduced sentences. Restitution
agreements.
Some of the smaller fish are out.
They'll work off what they took
here.

LINA
Community service?

ASH
Community repair.

She nods, approving. A start.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL FBI SATELLITE OFFICE - DAY

A stripped-down version of the old war room.

On the main screen: a NEW INTERFACE.

"LEDGER-EYE 2.0 - OVERSIGHT BUILD"

Citizen OVERSIGHT REPS sit with TECHS and AGENTS.

Sarah presents to the room.

SARAH
This version doesn't deploy without
human review.

Community panels, bias scanning, public reporting.

No more black-box decisions.

Ash stands in the back, not in charge this time - an advisor,
not a god.

OVERSIGHT REP
And if it flags our own agencies
again?

SARAH
Then it goes to you first.

Not just upstairs.

Murmurs of agreement.

Ash watches, quietly hopeful and deeply wary.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

A banner: "CITYWIDE DEBATE FINALS."

Inside, a full audience. On stage, Ani stands at a podium, poised.

ANI
The resolution is:
"Technology can create justice in
an unjust world."

She looks out - sees Ash and Lina in the crowd.

In the back, a GUARD stands with a monitor on a cart - Mara watching via secure video link from prison.

Ani takes a breath.

ANI (CONT'D)
I stand in opposition.
Technology can reveal the truth.
Sometimes brutally.
But justice is a human decision.

Images cut in quick flashes:

- LEDGER-EYE's pulsing map.
- Raids in Glendale.
- The hearing.
- Mara in cuffs.
- Lina at the community center.
- Ash shutting his laptop.

ANI (CONT'D)
A machine can show us where we
failed.
(MORE)

ANI (CONT'D)
It can't tell us how to love the
people we failed. That part is
still our job.

Scattered applause grows into a stronger one.

Ash smiles, just a little.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLENDALE OVERLOOK - DAWN

The same hill as before.

Peaceful now. The city below is quieter, but alive.

Ash stands alone, coffee in hand, watching the sunrise over Glendale.

His PHONE BUZZES. A notification from the new system:

"LEDGER-EYE 2.0: COMMUNITY REPORT READY - FRAUD INCIDENTS DOWN 32%"

He reads it, then locks the phone, slips it in his pocket.

He looks out at the city.

ASH (V.O.)
(In Armenian W/Subs)
I will take your pain away!

He takes a deep breath - not peaceful, but determined.

As the sun rises, the city of Glendale glows flawed, wounded, and trying.

FADE OUT.

THE END