

INT. ABANDONED BRICK CAR PARK - NIGHT

\*Flashback\*

ELIJAH, male Late 30's, bordering stoic and sinister leader of a group of vigilantes known as THE PROPHETS, sits alone in a warehouse.

EXT. WOODS BY A LAKE - DAY

\*Flashback\*

LINDA(35), hair of fire, fit and desperate, is holding hands with a 10 to 12 year old little Chinese girl, YOUNG LAZARUS. They are running from gun shots. Up ahead is a boat with 2 men, Elijah(Younger) and YOUNGER RICHARD (Late 20's).

LINDA  
START THE BOAT! THEY'RE COMING!

Linda reaches the boat and hurls Young Lazarus into Elijah's arms. Elijah flings Lazarus to Richard. He catches her and sits her down. In slow motion we hear a gun shot. Elijah turns and catches Linda as she falls into his arms.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
Take care of my baby. Take care of

Alex.

ELIJAH  
We're getting you out of here.

With what strength she has left she pushes Elijah into the boat.

LINDA  
Drive Richard. GO!!!

Richard hits the gas and Elijah stands up in the boat. Linda turns and the chasers empty their guns on her.

INT. ABANDONED BRICK CAR PARK - NIGHT

\*Flashback\*

STILETTOS click on the concrete floor. Approaching Elijah, she comes to a complete halt. VIVIAN/RUTH(60's), very direct and Elder Woman to The Prophets. She has a strong dedication to tradition and the legacy of their organization. A mentor of sorts, dedicated to the histories of The Prophets.

VIVIAN(O.S.)

Why?

ELIJAH

You know why. I had her, Ruth. I had her in my arms.

Vivian steps into the light. She starts to lean in. She stops when she sees Elijah start to crumble.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

I FUCKING HAD HER RUTH!

VIVIAN

We all make choices. She made hers. You make yours.

MONTAGE- 20 YEARS LATER.

INT- COFFEE SHOP - AFTERNOON

ELIJAH (V/O)

Sometimes it takes someone from the dark to shine the light.

LAZARUS, Chinese Woman (30s) messenger of The Prophets, is sitting in the corner of a coffee shop. MARY, female(40s), brave through her bruises, walks to the counter. The Barrister, REBECCA (30-New Age Hippie Vibe) is behind the counter. Rebecca has a sympathetic smile on her face.

MARY

I would like a Blond Lite Roast and I would like to pay with this.

Mary slides a white piece of paper to Rebecca. We notice Lazarus is now paying attention.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

FOUR MEN aggressively put a black bag on the head of JOHN, dirt bag 50s.

JOHN

You dirty bitch!

Mary sobs as she is lead away by one man.

ONE MAN

You know what you need to do.

INT. ABANDONED BRICK CAR PARK - NIGHT

Lazarus and four men surround MARY as they look down at John strapped naked on a table.

JOHN  
You can't trust these people!

Mary winces in pain as she touches her face.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
You got the wrong guy!

LAZARUS  
You must choose.

Mary reaches out for the branding iron.

JOHN  
Mary, NO!!!

Mary sears John with "WOMAN BEATER."

EXT. LOCAL MAGAZINE OFFICE - DAY - LATER

A group of cops, forensics and reporters are gathered. A tape line borders the scene. LT. SID CAUSEY (50) is speaking with POLLY (50). Polly is the editor of the local arts magazine.

SID  
You found him like this and didn't think to call us earlier?

POLLY  
I thought it was just another homeless guy. We get a lot from New York this time of year.

SID  
I'll be sure to add just another homeless guy in my notes.

POLLY  
Look, Sid, we write the stories. I don't want the magazine to be the story.

SID  
I get it. We'll be in touch.

ALEX ABRAHAM, female(22), a new graduate of the police academy approaches.

ALEX

What do we have here, Lieutenant?

SID

Hey! What are you doing here?  
Aren't you graduating today?

ALEX

I'm on my way. Thought I'd check  
out the action. Think I could cross  
the  
line?

SID

Well, you're certainly a cop.

ALEX

How so?

SID

Lawyers don't ask permission. They  
ask forgiveness. Welcome to the  
Blue.

ALEX

Thanks, Sid.

Sid lifts the tape.

SID

He was given a tattoo.

ALEX

What do you mean?

Sid lifts the blanket covering John.

SID

He was branded. Apparently he beats  
women.

JOHN

Who the hell are you?

ALEX

(Sees the branding) Jesus! He's  
alive?

SID

Your dad would have my neck if I  
showed you a dead body.

ALEX

Wild guess, but noticing that wedding band, has anyone checked with his wife?

SID

Not as strong a lead as you might think. We've had a number of these cases lately.

ALEX

Are you glad I have a badge now. I get to deal with these dicks now.

SID

Easy grasshopper. Baby steps.

INT. ADELE'S KITCHEN - DAY

ESTHER, sweet and sassy 14 going on 21, scrolls social media over a waffle, untouched.

ADELE, Esther's mom and City Commissioner, 40s, calls out

ADELE (O.S.)

Esther, let's go!

Adele appears, finishing her hair.

ESTHER

I don't want to go.

Adele enters.

ADELE

It's Saturday! Shopping, right?

ESTHER

I was gonna spend the day with Tisha.

ADELE

Is there something going on?

ESTHER

It's just her mom, uh...

ADELE

Text her and we'll pick her up on the way.

ESTHER

Thanks mom. You're the best.

ADELE

Gonna need to write that down and date it.

ESTHER

Don't be so dramatic.

Adele and Esther grab their stuff to go.

ESTHER (CONT'D)

Just make sure you assure T's mom, we're teenagers now. We can go into stores by ourselves now.

Tisha gets up from the table, dumps the plate in the sink and both ladies head for the door.

EXT. LYDIA'S HOME - AFTERNOON

LYDIA, black young 40s stay at home mom, grips the open window of Adele's car.

LYDIA

Don't let them out of your sight.

TISHA, Lydia's daughter, 14, buckles up next to Esther in the back seat. Tisha seems demure around her mom. It's a front.

ADELE

Got it.

LYDIA

Sorry. Look at me, telling the commissioner what to do.

ADELE

I totally get it. Hey, do you want to come with us?

Tisha shoots her mom a look.

LYDIA

I have some stuff to do...

TISHA

Thanks mom. Love you bye.

ADELE

I will have her home by dinner. Enjoy your time off.

Adele backs out. Lydia calls after them.

LYDIA  
Don't talk to strangers. Be Safe!

Adele and the girls wave to Lydia.

LYDIA (CONT'D)  
(In a whisper) Just let them be  
safe.

INT. CARPET CLEANING VAN - DAY

A van is watching as the girls and Adele drive away. The van  
waits for Lydia to turn to the house. Follows Adele.

INT. CLOTHING STORE - DAY

Esther and Tisha are browsing stacks of blue jeans. Adele  
approaches with her own pair.

ADELE  
Oh my God, look at the stitching on  
this.

TISHA  
That's hot, Mrs. Reilly.

ESTHER  
Hot and Mrs. Reilly in the same  
sentence?

Adele holds the jeans up to herself.

ADELE  
I haven't worn a pair of jeans  
since you were in elementary  
school.

ESTHER  
You should try them on.

TISHA  
Just go ahead and buy them. You  
already want to.

ADELE  
Let me grab a couple more.

Adele smiles at the two girls.

ADELE (CONT'D)  
Stay here. I want your opinions.

Adele goes into the fitting room.

ESTHER  
She's weird.

TISHA  
All moms are weird.

ESTHER  
I guess.

TISHA  
I wish she was my mom.

ESTHER  
I like your mom.

TISHA  
No you don't. No one does. She's a  
coward staying with that man.

ESTHER  
He's never home, right?

TISHA  
I hate him. When he is he treats  
her like shit and she just takes  
it. I wish he'd leave for good.

ESTHER  
Yike.

TISHA  
He hit me on once. Every time I'm  
around him, I'm uncomfortable.

ESTHER  
You can't say stuff like that.

TISHA  
It's true. He's a scumbag.

ADELE (O.S.)  
I'll be out in a second girls. Just  
two more pair.

TISHA  
Hey, let's grab a mocha shake.

ESTHER  
Mom said to stay here.

TISHA

It's next door. We'll be right back. She's got two more pair, remember?

ESTHER

Ok...Real Quick!

EXT. ABRAHAM'S HOUSE - DAY

JAKOB ABRAHAM (50s) is hanging Christmas lights. He is on a ladder and Vivian is giving the orders. Alex gets out of her car and walks toward them.

ALEX

Still stuck on the white lights, huh?

Both Abraham and Vivian turn to see her in the driveway.

ABRAHAM

Hey stranger.

ALEX

Missed you at graduation, Attorney Abraham.

ABRAHAM

Yeah...Sorry about that. I had closing...

ALEX

I know, Daddy. Vivian told me.

Abraham climbs down off the ladder. Vivian breaks the pause.

VIVIAN

Lighten up, both of you. Welcome home, honey.

ABRAHAM

Heard where you're gonna be?

ALEX

Not yet.

ABRAHAM

Well...There's plenty of crime around here.

ALEX

Yeah, but there's this attorney I'd have to face in court, so...Next county over is better for me.

ABRAHAM

Can't blame a father for trying.

ALEX

Sure I can.

VIVIAN

Knock it off!

Alex approaches her dad and gives him a pat on the back.

Abraham smiles at his daughter and all three head inside.

EXT. DAY. COFFEE SHOP.

The girls come out of a coffee shop with their faces buried in their phones.

TISHA

Elliot is so smoky. Don't you think?(Shoves her phone in Esther's face)

ESTHER

He's a little too cool for me. I like the nerdy guys.

TISHA

You and that Duke Blue Devil Pedigree.

The guys from the carpet cleaning van, one BIG GUY(30) the other, GUN GUY(30-has a gun hidden in his belt), walk up.

BIG GUY

Hi ladies, wanna hang out?

TISHA

Um, no. We're 14.

The one with the gun shows the girls his gun.

GUN GUY

Just my type. Let's go for a ride.

The girls are silent from shock. They drop their coffees. They walk out of frame with the guy, leaving us to look at a promenade full of people.

INT. FITTING ROOM - DAY

Adele finishes zipping up the jeans. She turns to check herself in the mirror. She calls out the girls.

ADELE

Ok. Now I want the truth. And be harsh if you have to.

Adele opens the fitting room door.

ADELE (CONT'D)

I think my ass may be...

Tisha and Esther are nowhere in sight.

ADELE (CONT'D)

Girls? Damn it.

INT. CLOTHING STORE - DAY

The CLERK (20s, bored) is behind the register, scrolling her phone. Adele approaches the check out and places the jeans on the counter.

CLERK

These are cool.

ADELE

Did you see my daughter and her friend?

The clerk rings up the jeans.

CLERK

Um, I think they went outside, but I never saw them come back in. That'll be 74.69.

Adele hands the clerk her credit card, distracted.

ADELE

Thanks. I'll find them. Have a good day.

CLERK

Merry Christmas.

Adele hurries out the door.

EXT. PROMENADE - DAY

Adele looks around for Tisha and Esther. She sits down on a bench and takes out her phone. She texts Esther.

ALL DONE! WHERE ARE YOU?

EXT. PROMENADE - DAY - LATER

Adele dials Esther's cell but it goes to voicemail. She types out another text.

WHERE ARE YOU? I'M GETTING WORRIED.

She hits send. The text is the most recent of a thread of unanswered messages from Adele to Esther. Adele tries Tisha's number. No answer. Panic rising, Adele gets up and heads down the promenade.

EXT. PROMENADE - DAY - LATER

COPS are everywhere. Tape marks off the last place Tisha and Esther were seen. TV CREWS and REPORTERS have set up. Adele is speaking with a plain clothes cop, LT. BARR, overweight, beaten down by years of work, (50s). There is a crowd.

LT. BARR  
We'll find them.

ADELE  
Not standing here you won't.

LT. BARR  
Alderman, there is a process.

ADELE  
MADAME Alderman. I know, I know.  
I'm sorry Maxwell. I'm just sick to  
my stomach. They're two young  
girls.

Lydia approaches, frantic. A COP stops her and Adele waves him off.

LYDIA  
What the hell happened? I told you  
not

to let her out of your sight! This

town is sick with crime and you let my daughter disappear?

ADELE

I went to try on some pants and...

LT. BARR

Who are you?

LYDIA

The wife of Senator Richard Talment. Who are you? (To Adele)  
You of all people know what's happening in this town!

ADELE

Did you tell Richard?

LYDIA

He's flying in from New York now.  
Why weren't you watching them?

ADELE

I went to try on some clothes and they left the store.

LYDIA

Didn't you tell them to stay in the damn store? They're teenagers...

LT. BARR

And Richard is her father?

LYDIA

Step-Father. Who are you again?

LT. BARR

Lt. Max Barr. I'm the...

LYDIA

Shut up! She knows more than you.

ADELE

I don't know what to say, Lydia.  
It's my fault.

LYDIA

Damn right...(To Barr)Now what are you going to do?

LT. BARR

Why don't the two of you go home, do some digging. Call me if you find anything.

As Lt. Barr is speaking, Lydia notices a man(SOLOMON-45) standing against a wall. She recognizes him and her face starts to melt in horror. Solomon smiles at her.

ADELE

Lydia, are you ok?

LYDIA

What? yeah...We should go.

She looks back, Solomon is gone.

ADELE

(To Lt. Barr)You have my cell number. As soon as you hear anything, call me.

Lydia storms off. Adele is mortified.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

A squad room of COPS. Lt. Barr is holding a meeting while the COMMANDER Edith Cambridge (50), Black and strong, stands beside him at the podium.

LT. BARR

Unfortunately, we have nothing to go on. We need to take a look at the security cameras. We need everyone working over time here. The commissioner has been very good to us. Dismissed.

The cops start to disperse.

EXT. RIVERFRONT - AFTERNOON

Long since retired, Elijah is sitting watching the water move. Lazarus walks up.

LAZARUS

Busy?

ELIJAH

Lazarus! (He hugs her) Been a while.

LAZARUS

Yeah, well. I promised not to bother you unless it was important.

ELIJAH

And I said, it was never gonna be important enough. I quit, remember?

LAZARUS

This time is important.

ELIJAH

I went to Alex's graduation. She's doing fine. Can't imagine what more...

LAZARUS

Two girls have been picked up.

ELIJAH

Someone should call the cops.

LAZARUS

They've been called.

ELIJAH

I'm guessing there's more to it.

LAZARUS

One of the girls is Esther Reilly.

ELIJAH

Adele's kid...Cops should be all over that.

LAZARUS

There's more.

ELIJAH

Who's the second girl?

Lazarus pauses. Obviously, there's more to the story. Elijah turns and looks at her.

LAZARUS

It's Tisha, Eli.

Elijah looks resigned and disappointed. Elijah walks away and Lazarus is left to stare at the spot Elijah was in.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The Carpet Van drives up. THREE MEN pull Tisha and Esther out and take them through a door. They lead the girls to a cell. Other GIRLS are already there, eyes gaunt, staring up at the newcomers.

ESTHER  
My mother is the commissioner.

TISHA  
You probably know my father.

From the shadows, the man from the promenade, Solomon walks up.

SOLOMON (O.S.)  
We know who your step-father is.  
That's why you're here.

Solomon steps into view.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)  
Our clients will pay a great deal  
for you.

Solomon grabs Esther's chin and turns her head side-to-side, inspecting.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)  
We won't get as much for you, but  
we will get something.

TISHA  
Who are you, you fucking pig?

Solomon turns and slaps her. Esther screams.

SOLOMON  
You have your father's mouth.

INT. ABRAHAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Alex comes into the office and MARGARET (40s) is sitting at her desk. When Alex comes in, she jumps up and hugs her.

MARGARET  
Hey kiddo! Congratulations! I'm so  
proud of you!

ALEX  
Thanks. And thanks for the gym  
membership. That's too much.

MARGARET  
It's your dad's money. (Winks)

They chuckle.

ALEX  
Thought I'd take the old man out  
for lunch.

MARGARET  
Can I see it?

She whips out the shield.

MARGARET (CONT'D)  
So damn cool.

ALEX  
Wanna come with us?

MARGARET  
Somebody has to hold down the fort.

ALEX  
(to the back of the room)  
Hey old man...let's go eat!

ABRAHAM  
Margaret, can you...

MARGARET  
Go!

INT. DINER - DAY

A bustling local haunt. Alex and Abraham are having lunch at  
a booth by the window.

ALEX  
Have you heard from Adele?

ABRAHAM  
Not sure why I would.

ALEX  
Her daughter was kidnapped, are you  
kidding? You're like friends.

Abraham sips his tea, staring out the window. Alex presses  
further.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Who's the lead cop?

ABRAHAM  
I heard it was Barr.

ALEX

What? He's a dirty cop!

Patrons look over.

ABRAHAM

And why does this concern you?

ALEX

Why isn't Sid running this?

ABRAHAM

Heard you crashed his scene the other day.

ALEX

I was just passing by.

ABRAHAM

You know, that badge isn't a free pass to stick your nose in things.

ALEX

Sure it is. Barr's probably in on it.

ABRAHAM

Who are you? Alexandra, you shouldn't make assumptions.

ALEX

Don't defend him. Those girls will never be found.

Abraham shakes his head.

ALEX (CONT'D)

It's true.

Alex pushes her plate away.

ABRAHAM

Sometimes you have to wait until the right people are listening.

Abraham finishes his tea. Alex watches him.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Tisha, Esther and most of the other girls are sleeping. They are awakened by guttural male sex sounds. There is a loud "release", and a young woman begins to cry.

A THUG opens the door and throws a young girl, ALLIE (14/15) in. She lands beside Tisha and Esther. Her face is scared with cuts, but not a knife. The thug shuts the door. Esther pulls Allie in, trying to comfort her.

ESTHER  
(to Allie)  
Are you ok?

Allie frantically wipes her tears away. Scurries away.

ALLIE  
Who are you? What do you want?

TISHA  
Your face.

Esther is a little more subtle.

ESTHER  
Tisha. (To the girl) We don't want anything. How long have you been here?

ALLIE  
I don't know you.

ESTHER  
We heard...What was happening.

ALLIE  
My weekly raping.

ESTHER  
Jesus. How long has that been going on?

ALLIE  
It happens to all of us. They pass us around.

Allie starts to calm.

ALLIE (CONT'D)  
I've lost track of time. What month is it?

TISHA  
It's December.

ALLIE  
I've been here longer than 3 months.

TISHA

How did you get those scars?

ALLIE

I didn't want to be sold. I wanted a way out.

TISHA

How does that explain the scars?

ALLIE

I found a nail. I figured if I was ugly, they'd let me go.

ESTHER

Oh no.

ALLIE

I'm just a dish rag to them now, something to pass around.

Allie notices the girls are in horror.

ALLIE (CONT'D)

What year is it?

ESTHER

2025.

Allie nods. Tears form.

ALLIE

(quietly)

Two years. Two years of never turning off the lights.

ESTHER

What?

Esther begins to cry. Tisha looks around the room. In the corner, there is a LITTLE BOY. One boy. He sits there, alone, quiet. How long have the rest of these children been here?

EXT. ABRAHAM'S HOUSE - DAY

Loud, bright COLORED lights adorn the house. A garish inflatable Santa Claus and Reindeer flank the lawn.

INT. ABRAHAM'S HOUSE - DAY

Alex and Vivian are seated at the kitchen table. Alex is reading news articles on her phone, the remnants of a sandwich on a plate next to her.

VIVIAN  
Hey Kojak, you ok?

ALEX  
Who the hell is Kojak?

VIVIAN  
Hm? Sorry. I'm old.

Alex puts her phone down.

ALEX  
Found out Barr is leading the kidnapping case.

VIVIAN  
I don't believe that.

ALEX  
It's true. And dad defended him.

VIVIAN  
I think maybe your dad wants you to crawl before you run.

Alex eyes Vivian.

ALEX  
Yeah. I get that.

Vivian nods.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Hey, you think Sid can get him replaced?

VIVIAN  
Why Sid?(Pause) How much do you know about Richard Talment?

ALEX  
He's rich, that's about it.

VIVIAN  
I know you used to baby sit Esther, but the other girl, Tisha, she's Talment's stepdaughter.

Alex can't concentrate.

ALEX

Really?

Vivian avoids eye contact with Alex. Alex shakes her head.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Oh my God...

Vivian takes a deep breath.

VIVIAN

You think they wanted Tisha? Esther just got caught in the cross fire.

ALEX

They knew him.

VIVIAN

Don't assume. Maybe it's not a ransom.

Alex pauses. It couldn't be. Not in this small town. Then, it hits. Alex is in disbelief.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Alex, girls have been sold off this port as long as Wilmington has been a city. And they don't discriminate.

Vivian gets up and takes Alex's plate to the sink.

ALEX

You're not telling me everything.

Vivian finishes the dishes.

VIVIAN

No, I'm not.

Vivian turns to Alex.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Don't say anything to your father.

EXT. ABRAHAM'S HOUSE - DAY

Alex leaves the house and gets into her Jeep. As she pulls away, a cab idling across the street pulls out and follows her.

INT. ABRAHAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Alex is sitting next to Margaret, doing research on her laptop. Margaret looks up and eyes Alex.

MARGARET

Must be some article you found.

Alex rubs her eyes.

ALEX

It's these statistics. It's unreal.

MARGARET

There are nearly 170 million women in this country. 1 in 6 are either raped or sexually abused. And those are just the ones reported. This article says it's more like 1 in 4.

Alex shakes her head.

ALEX

It makes you wonder how many are abducted.

MARGARET

Zena Reynolds did a whole piece on it last night. Apparently traffickers bring in 150 billion dollars a year.

ALEX

How does this get overlooked?

MARGARET

Buying off businessmen, officials... Presidents.

ALEX

What was her evidence?

MARGARET

We've had a President who was "associates" with a pedophile. Claims are, he would buy girls for his "friends." When there was a chance to find out the truth, the associate ended up dead.

ALEX

I remember baby sitting Esther Reilly.

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)

She always wanted me to keep her safe until her mom came home...What is it?

Margaret slowly rises. She looks through the window and a woman is standing across the street with her back to the office. She has one hand behind her back. She repeats the sign for I'm Not Safe with her hand.

MARGARET

Do you know the sign for I'm Not Safe?

ALEX

Yeah...Why?

Alex looks.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Hold that thought...

Alex gets up and hurries out the door.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Alex comes out and walks up to Mary. Mary is still holding her hand up. Alex notices bruises on her face.

ALEX

Hey, Holy God... Are you alright?

MARY

You're the attorney's daughter, right? The cop?

ALEX

Did someone hurt you?

MARY

Are you Alex Abraham?

ALEX

Yes.

MARY

I've done something terrible.

Mary looks around.

ALEX

Do you want to come in?

MARY

No. Can we go somewhere?

She wrings her hands.

ALEX

Sure. Wanna grab a cup of coffee?

MARY

What?

ALEX

I can take you somewhere. Home,  
or...

MARY

I'm really scared.

ALEX

Ok. No pressure, but I'll listen.

Mary fidgets.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Why don't I call my dad...

Alex grabs her phone. Mary stops her.

MARY

Sunset Park. I live in Sunset Park.

ALEX

Ok. Let me grab my stuff.

MARY

Please hurry. I burned a man.

Alex hurries off.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Elijah walks into the warehouse after a long absence. Lazarus as well as a few others are there including GABRIEL(35/40) Hispanic Trans Male and NICODEMUS (25) A mountain of a man, Jack Reacher type.

ELIJAH

Guess the cleaning crew doesn't  
come in everyday.

LAZARUS

Go slow. They may be wary of you.

ELIJAH

I would be too.

Lazarus walks him over. He knows everyone but Nicodemus.

LAZARUS

This is Nicodemus.

ELIJAH

Awfully big fella.

NICODEMUS

I've heard a lot about you, Sir.  
Good and bad.

ELIJAH

Trust the bad.

Gabriel responds and he talks VERY FAST.

GABRIEL

Oh you can't continue to beat yourself up. You made a mistake. We all make mistakes. Although yours got someone killed. Of course, that would worry me to join a team you were on, but we must try and overcome our...

LAZARUS

Gabby, I swear, I'll strangle you myself.

GABRIEL

Sorry.

ELIJAH

Any information on the girls?

NICODEMUS

We're trying to find out where they are hiding. I have a friend with Promenade security.

ELIJAH

And?

GABRIEL

We saw the kidnapppers, but pretty sure they were a front. Just the heavies. There's someone else behind it.

ELIJAH  
Lazarus?

LAZARUS  
You're in charge, Elijah. I've just  
been keeping a seat warm.

Elijah forces a smile. Lazarus smiles back.

ELIJAH  
Nicodemus, how well do you know the  
docks?

NICODEMUS  
I grew up on the docks, Elijah.

ELIJAH  
Go talk to some folks...Please.  
Laz, do we still have the coffee  
shop?

LAZARUS  
Yep.

ELIJAH  
Who's there?

LAZARUS  
Rebecca.

ELIJAH  
Rebecca is 10 years old!

LAZARUS  
She was 20 years ago.

EXT. MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

Alex pulls up on the road in front of the house. Mary stares  
at Alex in a look of fear.

MARY  
Does your father know how bad a  
driver you are?

ALEX  
Twelve speeding tickets in high  
school, I think he got it.

Mary looks down at her hands.

MARY  
Would you like to come in?

ALEX

Only if you want. I don't want to make you uncomfortable.

Mary nods.

She gets out of the car, followed closely by Alex.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

Mary is coming into the room with a couple of beers. Alex is sitting on the couch.

ALEX

How long was he beating you?

MARY

I don't know. It started in college.

ALEX

How do you mean?

MARY

When we started dating, everything was great, until we moved in together.

ALEX

What changed?

MARY

After a few months, he said he wanted to experiment. He called over a friend for a threesome.

ALEX

Did you agree to that?

MARY

I didn't say no, but it bothered me. He started calling other friends.

ALEX

How many?

MARY

I lost count. When I said I wanted to stop, that was the first time he hit me.

ALEX

I guess the dumbest thing is to say why didn't you leave.

MARY

I was scared to lose him. It's been happening for years now.

ALEX

What changed?

MARY

I found he was making money on me a couple years ago. It built up so much, I snapped.

Mary stands and goes to the window to see if anyone has followed them. Alex remembers her research.

ALEX

You do know, that's trafficking, right? The most common in Wilmington.

Mary hesitates.

MARY

You have to understand, I didn't think there was any other way.

ALEX

What happened?

Mary holds back tears.

MARY

You wouldn't believe me if I told you.

ALEX

Try me.

Beat. Mary leans forward.

MARY

I was outside the post office and a woman walked by.

ALEX

How old?

MARY

I don't know. Older. Anyway, she asked if I was ok.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

I didn't trust her at first, but she seemed genuinely concerned.

ALEX

Go on.

MARY

Then she handed me a piece of paper. She asked me if I like coffee.

ALEX

What?

MARY

Weird, right?

ALEX

What did the paper say?

MARY

Two words, help her. She told me where the coffee shop was and said to pay with the piece of paper.

ALEX

I believe you.

Alex considers.

MARY

I wish I could find that older woman. I'd like to thank her.

ALEX

Yeah...I wonder if I know where she is.

INT. ABRAHAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Alex, Abraham and Vivian are watching the news coverage of John being hauled off in a cruiser. Abraham has a concerned look on his face. It's a look Alex has seen before but didn't think of it until now.

ALEX

Daddy, are you ok?

ABRAHAM

What? Yeah, I'm fine. Just thinking about something at work.

ALEX

Were you in a fraternity?

VIVIAN

(Looking at Abraham) Your father  
didn't believe in secret societies.  
But they sure wanted him.

ALEX

Never wanted to be an Elk?

ABRAHAM

Never really interested me.

ALEX

Think we have secret groups around  
here? Not like the Elks, but like,  
underground groups.

The hair on Abraham's neck stands up. Vivian is wide eyed.

ABRAHAM

Why would you ask that?

ALEX

Something I heard about, a group of  
people who help when the cops  
won't.

Vivian's head snaps to Alex.

ABRAHAM

I thought this vigilante crap had  
stopped. Now, he's back in the  
news.

VIVIAN

He's not around.

ABRAHAM

I sincerely doubt that.

ALEX

Who?

VIVIAN

(softly)  
Jakob.

ALEX

Who do you...

ABRAHAM

What did you hear?

ALEX

This guys on the news, I heard he  
beat women and...

ABRAHAM

They're not good people, Alex.  
They're dangerous.

ALEX

Daddy, why are you...

ABRAHAM

They're nothing but criminals.  
Remember what you've worked for.

Abraham gets up and walks out of the room.

ABRAHAM (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I need a shower.

Alex turns to Vivian.

ALEX

He knew.

VIVIAN

He's been here his whole life, of  
course, he knew.

ALEX

Who are they?

Vivian looks away.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Viv... You helped Mary, didn't you?

VIVIAN

Shh. Shh. This stays between us.

Vivian check to see if Abraham is out of ear shot. Alex is  
captivated, putting the pieces together.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

They're called Prophets.

ALEX

Prophets?

VIVIAN

They believe their actions are  
taught in the Bible. Hence their  
namesakes.

ALEX  
Do they kill people?

Vivian eyes begin to well up. She quickly steadies her emotions.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Grandma?

VIVIAN  
I love you, Alexandra. Think before you approach these people.

Vivian gets up.

ALEX  
How do you know all of this?

Vivian leaves Alex to her thoughts.

INT. TALMENT'S OFFICE - DAY

The office of SENATOR RICHARD TALMENT (50s). He sits behind his desk across from Lt. Barr, standing as 4 "techs" walk out.

LT. BARR  
Adele is speaking out. Why isn't Lydia with her?

TALMENT  
She's in bed, sick with worry. I'm the strong one.

It hits Barr, it wasn't his business.

LT. BARR  
We're gonna monitor the phone. We just need you to trust us.

TALMENT  
It's already been 3 days. Do you think they're still alive?

LT. BARR  
We have no reason to believe the girls have been harmed.

TALMENT  
They were kidnapped you moron. They've already been harmed.

LT. BARR

Mr. Talment, we believe it to be a ransom situation. When they contact you, we will...

TALMENT

Of course it's a ransom situation. How stupid are you?

Barr looks away.

BARR

I understand your fee...

TALMENT

I have a press conference to prepare for. Now, get out of my office and do your job.

LT. BARR

Mr. Talment...

TALMENT

Out!

Lt. Barr walks out. Talment recovers himself.

From a door adjacent to the office, Solomon appears.

TALMENT (CONT'D)

Thoughts?

SOLOMON

Not bad. I must say, Barr is a pretty easy mark. I've always thought he was retarded.

Satisfied, Talment turns to Solomon.

TALMENT

What are the buyers saying?

SOLOMON

They like her looks.

TALMENT

Where is Esther going to end up?

SOLOMON

We're getting the best prices from Colombo. Sri Lanka likes the whiteys.

TALMENT

You've been with me ten years. I'm ready to walk. One more job and I get out.

SOLOMON

Why the change?

TALMENT

I'm bored.

SOLOMON

Where ya gonna go?

TALMENT

Maybe live on a boat.

SOLOMON

And what about Lydia?

TALMENT

A tragic accident. She's gonna get really drunk and slip off into the sea. I'll be very sad...For a while.

SOLOMON

Seems you have a plan.

TALMENT

You should get one too.

EXT. COMMUNITY CENTER IN AFRICAN AMERICAN NEIGHBORHOOD- DAY

Richard Talment along with a number of police officers are standing behind a podium with a crowd of African Americans standing, listening to a speech.

TALMENT

You know, my wife grew up not far from these streets. She was the one that first brought your struggles to me. And I made the decision, RIGHT THEN, to make Creekwood MY FAMILY! Now, I'm asking you, My Creekwood Family, ask your friends, ask you neighbors...Help us...Help us find our daughter so I can keep helping you! Thank you and God Bless Creekwood!

Talent walks off the podium and heads for his car. He's stopped by a REPORTER (30).

REPORTER

Senator, is it true you voted against the aid package that would increase Human Trafficking Victims' research.

TALMENT

That bill didn't go far enough. You can't keep nickel and diming aid packages. We need real research and that cost money.

REPORTER

Yes, but Senator...

Talent escapes to his car.

INT. TALMENT'S LIMO- DAY

Talent doesn't lose his cool. His AIDE(25-30) is sitting across from him in the car.

TALMENT

Find out who that reporter works for and have her fired.

AIDE

Certainly, sir. I'm curious, do you think these people will help find your daughter?

TALMENT

Frankly, I don't give a damn if they do or don't. As long as I have their vote. A republican winning in a Black District, that's big. And who cares what these savages do to each other.

Talment smiles an evil smile.

AIDE

Did you want lunch? I can order something and have it delivered to the house.

TALMENT

Whatever is fine.

AIDE

Ok. Let me message the house to expect it.

The aide types on his phone the word "Look Here". He hits send.

EXT. A PARK BENCH- DAY

Lazarus sits watching the river. Her phone buzzes. She looks and reads "Look Here".

INT. ABRAHAM'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Vivian sitting in the living room, reading. Abraham comes in, shaking off the day's work. He looks around the room.

ABRAHAM

Where's Alex?

Vivian doesn't look up from her book.

VIVIAN

She's out.

Abraham sets his briefcase down.

ABRAHAM

Where?

Vivian turns a page in her book. Abraham hesitates, then picks up his keys and goes for the door.

VIVIAN

What are you gonna do? Go save her?

Abraham stops. He slowly turns back to face Vivian.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Nothing is going to happen to that girl. He promised. It's time.

ABRAHAM

Time for what?

VIVIAN

She knew the truth.

ABRAHAM

What truth? The one you taught her mother?

VIVIAN  
Listen to me...He's not the  
problem.

ABRAHAM  
Hell he's not!

VIVIAN  
Alex is head strong, she's  
stubborn. Just like Linda.

Abraham heads for the kitchen.

ABRAHAM  
I don't need this.

VIVIAN  
You're such a coward. Afraid to  
soil your spotless career?

ABRAHAM  
Vivian!

VIVIAN  
This entire town thinks you're  
fucking Atticus Finch when your  
hands are just as dirty as everyone  
else's. At least Linda wasn't a  
coward.

ABRAHAM  
Don't say something you'll regret!

VIVIAN  
She broke the law to service  
justice. Real justice.

ABRAHAM  
I WASN'T THERE!!!

Vivian is getting choked up. She barely gets out...

VIVIAN  
Neither was I.

Abraham, after all this time, breaks.

ABRAHAM  
I miss her so much.

VIVIAN  
We have to live with her death.  
Now, my granddaughter is just like  
her.

There is a dead silence. Abraham stares at her.

ABRAHAM

I see her every day. I see Linda  
everyday in my little girl.

VIVIAN

You have to find a way to forgive  
yourself. That way, you can forgive  
him.

Vivian gets up and walks passes Abraham and kisses his head.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

I love you, Knucklehead.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - EARLY EVENING

Alex walks into the coffee shop. Lazarus is sitting at a  
corner table while Rebecca is sweeping.

ALEX

Lazarus?

Lazarus does not move.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Lazarus, I'm Alex Abraham.

Lazarus doesn't respond. Alex waits. When she gets no reply,  
she turns to walk away.

LAZARUS

I know who you are.

Lazarus pushes out a chair. Alex turns back. Rebecca stops  
sweeping.

REBECCA

I'll be in the back.

Rebecca walks out.

ALEX

I just want to talk.

LAZARUS

About?

She is taken aback by the honesty in Lazarus' eyes. It's  
almost as if she is a spirit, not a human.

ALEX  
I need to know what it is you do.

LAZARUS  
Why?

ALEX  
Maybe I could learn some thin...

LAZARUS  
You're just getting started with  
your career, Alex. Why risk that?

ALEX  
How do you know that?

Lazarus stares at her. Alex starts to get uncomfortable, but  
presses on.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
The man. With the brand. I know  
that was you.

LAZARUS  
I would go easy here, Alex. Things  
you may not want to hear.

ALEX  
I don't want...

LAZARUS  
Did she tell you he would come home  
drunk and beat her when he couldn't  
get it up?

ALEX  
She did.

LAZARUS  
Did she tell you we gave her a  
choice. (Alex pauses) Oh, Missed  
that bit. She chose to brand him

ALEX  
(Horrorified) No.

LAZARUS  
We offer a chance for you to look  
at yourself. You always have a  
choice.

ALEX  
You hurt people.

LAZARUS  
We're an alternative.

ALEX  
John wasn't given a chance.

LAZARUS  
Sure he was...The day he made that first call to a friend, and turned Mary into property.

ALEX  
You're saying it's the same?

LAZARUS  
Who's damaging trust? The victim or the cop?

ALEX  
That's not an answer.

LAZARUS  
What is?

ALEX  
You know about the girls?

LAZARUS  
A bit naive, Alex.

Lazarus pulls out a bag from under the bench. She reaches in to the bag and pulls out two photos. She shows Alex one photo at a time.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)  
Esther Reilly. 3.7 Grade Point Average. Numerous places of volunteer work as well as her own podcast. Schools such as Duke, Chapel Hill and Virginia are already impressed. Why would a kidnapper want her? Upper middle class income won't get you a return on investment.

Lazarus places Tisha's photo aside.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)  
LaTisha Robison. Stepdaughter of Senator Richard Talment, A man with money and power...Enough to buy off cops.

ALEX  
Who came to you?

Lazarus just smiles.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Let me help.

LAZARUS  
Two minutes ago we were the enemy.

Alex falls silent. Lazarus softens.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)  
Alex, this isn't a good plan for  
you. We know your dad...It's not  
safe for you.

Alex flips through the photos of the two girls. Alex nods.  
She looks back at the photos.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)  
I recommend you be careful.

Lazarus stands and walks away.

ALEX  
I can come back.

Alex rises. Lazarus doesn't answer.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Elijah hands Gabriel a box of yellow folders. Lazarus and  
some others are sitting around.

LAZARUS  
Why are we doing this again?

GABRIEL  
Elijah believes that if we expose  
the evil in the police dept...

ELIJAH  
Gabriel. Thank you. Look, Barr is a  
delay guy. A fat sack of shit that  
will do just enough to get by. If  
we get him out, he may lead us to  
who is paying him.

LAZARUS  
Or, he stays on and...

ELIJAH  
Cambridge won't let that happen.

INT. SQUAD ROOM - DAY

The room is full of COPS sitting at their desks, going through folders they have all been left. Lt. Barr walks through and heads straight for his office.

INT. BARR'S OFFICE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

One of the yellow folders glares up at Barr from his desk. He sits down and opens it. There are photos inside. One is a photo of him taking money from a pimp. Another of him headed down an alley with one of the hookers. Another of a hooker blowing him. Another of him holding a gun up to the pimp's head, laughing. One more of him walking away. On the last one, written in a sharpie:

"WANT MORE PHOTOS OF THIS DIRTY PIG?"

Lt. Barr turns to look at the squad room and the cops are all staring at him. In walks Lt. Sid Causey, Commissioner Edith Cambridge and two UNIFORM COPS. They all head straight for his office. The two uniforms enter and flank Barr at his desk. Commissioner Cambridge approaches, her presence dominating the room.

COMMISSIONER CAMBRIDGE  
Gotta minute, Maxwell?

LT. BARR  
Commissioner...

COMMISSIONER CAMBRIDGE  
Shut up. We're gonna jump through the hoops and do the investigation, but I really think we have enough. I have a cop going to pick up the pimp and the talented young lady in the photo. Also, your wife called my office. She's none too pleased. Wants me to keep it out of the press. Should we strip you of your pension now or wait for your next layout?

Barr is speechless. Slowly, he gets to his feet.

INT. SQUAD ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The two uniforms escort Barr out of the office. The commissioner addresses the squad room.

COMMISSIONER CAMBRIDGE  
Ladies and gentlemen, Lt. Barr has been relieved of duty. Lt. Causey will be here on an interim basis until we find a permanent replacement.

Murmurs fill the squad room as she exits.

38 INT. TALMENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Talment is standing, gazing out the window. Behind him, a groveling Lt. Barr stands beside a chair. He keeps looking at the chair hoping that Talment will ask him to sit.

LT. BARR  
...And they left photos or something and it was me with a hooker.

TALMENT  
Why are you coming to me?

LT. BARR  
I just thought since I was working on your daughter's...step daughter's...case, I should let you know that I'm no longer able to pursue any leads.

TALMENT  
Do yourself a favor. Let it go. Do your wife a favor, kill yourself. You're worthless. Accept it.

Barr is completely lost.

INT. BARR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lt. Barr walks in, a shell of his former self. He calls out for his wife, Juanita.

LT. BARR  
Nita?

There is no answer. Barr looks around. The house is half-empty.

On the coffee table are the pictures the entire world has seen at this point. A framed photo of himself and Juanita lies on the floor, crushed. From the back of the house, Elijah enters.

ELIJAH  
She's gone, Maxwell.

Elijah walks over to Barr. Elijah puts a pen and paper in front of Barr. Barr looks up at Elijah. Elijah, in a comforting way, smiles. Barr writes on the paper. Barr stands with the paper in his left hand. Barr walks up the steps.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)  
I wish you luck with your next decision. May it be the blessing that frees you of your Earthly wants.

INT. BARR'S HOUSE - LANDING - NIGHT - SAME

Barr look down the hallway to an open window at the far end. Elijah at the bottom of the stairs.

ELIJAH  
You chose that prostitute. Do you think she chose her life? Do you think a young person, like Esther or Tisha deserve a choice? Or should they be sold into that life? Did you consider their choice?

Lt. Barr stares into the empty space that leads to the window. He steps in front of Elijah. Slowly, he walks down the hallway until he reaches the window. The breeze hits his face. He takes a final look back over his shoulder at Elijah before flinging himself head first out the window.

The hallway is empty. It is silent.

EXT. CITY HALL- DAY.

Adele is in front of a podium, surrounded by officials. A crowd is gathered.

ADELE  
If anyone has information, we have set

up an anonymous hotline. We need to bring our girls home.

A WOMAN (40) in the crowd screams out.

WOMAN

We're with you, Madame Reilly.  
We're praying for you. Trust in  
God, he will send his messenger...

Adele pauses and ponders her next words.

INT. ABRAHAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Abraham is at his desk, watching a news story of Barr's death by suicide. Margaret walks in.

MARGARET

Mind if I change the channel?

Margaret grabs the remote. The channel switches to Adele at a podium, giving a speech.

Abraham sits up in his chair.

ADELE

...When Elijah was lifted to  
heaven, he left behind his staff,  
promising Elisha his spirit would  
always be with him. I pray Elijah  
hears this and returns on his  
chariot of fire, returns our  
daughters and leaves you to ponder  
your evil deeds. The Lord works for  
the good of those who love him.

Margaret turns off the TV.

ABRAHAM

We've arrived here. Calling on a  
criminal for help.

MARGARET

She's desperate. How long has it  
been hidden?

ABRAHAM

Almost 6 years.

MARGARET

Why show up now?

ABRAHAM

The trafficking of young girls has  
increased... A lot.

MARGARET

What was it like growing up with  
Elijah?

ABRAHAM

He was enigma at a very early age.  
He could read people, really read  
people.

MARGARET

(Tenderly) Jealous?

ABRAHAM

Kinda. He was fearless. Why he  
chose to live in the shadows, I'll  
never know.

MARGARET

He's kinda mythical.

ABRAHAM

I can't argue with you, but I can  
say...his mystique grows when he  
stays away for a while.

MARGARET

Barr was a cop.

ABRAHAM

A dirty cop. And he wasn't killed.  
It was Barr's choice.

MARGARET

Do you believe that?

ABRAHAM

There are always options.

MARGARET

Like what?

ABRAHAM

Repentance.

Margaret crosses her arms.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)

Every creature is given the option  
of change.

MARGARET

Except Elijah...he may not be wrong  
criminally, but how about morally.

ABRAHAM

He does what we think should be done.

Margaret tilts her head.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)

That's the same look I've had my whole life.

Margaret smiles.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Buyer 1(50's) and BUYER 2 (40's) are with Solomon and his THUGS. They are walking through the catacombs of the warehouse, stopping at various rooms. They look in on Esther and Tisha.

BUYER 1

This is her?

SOLOMON

The black one, yes.

BUYER 1

And the other?

SOLOMON

An add on. Wrong place, wrong time. I'm happy to add her for another 30%.

BUYER 1

Sure, I like a little vanilla in my morning coffee.

SOLOMON

These two are just off the assembly line, if you get my meaning.

BUYER 1

Tasty.

SOLOMON

So, we have a deal.

BUYER 1

I think so.

SOLOMON

We can have the girls ready 3 days from now. We'll drop the girls at the bottom of Queen Street.

BUYER 2

Simple enough.

SOLOMON

I must tell you, the minute you get out of your car, three lasers will be on your chest. A body dropped in the river down there will float all the way to the intercostal. Do we understand each other?

The two buyers look at each other. Then back at Solomon.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

Once we confirm the money has been dropped, we will deliver the packages.

BUYER 1

Accepted.

SOLOMON

Very well. We have deliveries to make.

One of the thugs indicates the way out of the warehouse. The two men go.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Elijah sits at the bar of a local haunt, finishing his lunch. The place is empty except for Lazarus and NOAH(70), who goes about his business. The door opens, and Abraham enters. He approaches Lazarus, but Elijah doesn't turn. He continues with his meal. Lazarus steps toward Abraham. They stare at each other for a second. Then Lazarus embraces Abraham.

Abraham looks around Lazarus to Elijah.

Lazarus steps aside. Abraham looks behind the bar at Noah. Lazarus exits to stand watch outside the cafe.

NOAH

Are you hungry, Jakob?

ABRAHAM

No thank you, Uncle. How are you?

NOAH  
I'm old and bitter.

ABRAHAM  
Mind if we have a second?

NOAH  
I'll go smoke.

ABRAHAM  
Thank you, Noah. (To Elijah) Hey.

Elijah doesn't turn to face him.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)  
Is everyone ok?  
(beat)  
Are you ok?

ELIJAH  
We're doing fine. Been a while  
since I've heard your voice.

ABRAHAM  
Yeah, well.

Beat.

ELIJAH  
She's not here.

Elijah wipes his mouth with a napkin and turns to Abraham.

ABRAHAM  
Vivian told me she already  
contacted you.

Elijah looks puzzled.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)  
Ruth. Ruth told me.

Elijah nods.

ELIJAH  
I didn't realize she had given up  
her name.

Abraham walks around and stands in front of Elijah.

ABRAHAM  
I mean this. I stay out of your  
business...Now, I'm asking you keep  
Alex out of this.

ELIJAH  
You missed her graduation.

ABRAHAM  
I mean it.

ELIJAH  
Since we were kids, Big Brother,  
this has been a dirty town. Even  
farther back than that. And it's  
always been us. Doing what the law  
won't do for the victims.

ABRAHAM  
She's my daughter, Eli!

ELIJAH  
Why weren't you there?

Abraham shakes his head.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)  
Why?

ABRAHAM  
Ruth and I already had this  
conversation.

ELIJAH  
And?

Abraham rounds on Elijah.

ABRAHAM  
I'm not sure I'll ever forgive  
myself for not being there the  
night Linda was killed.  
Silence.

ELIJAH  
Funny...I was talking about Alex.

Lazarus walks in.

LAZARUS  
(to Elijah)  
We should make moves.

Abraham stares at her. There's a reason.

ABRAHAM  
(to Elijah)  
Please. Bye, Laz.

Abraham leaves.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Alex approaches the barista, Rebecca.

REBECCA  
What can I get you?

ALEX  
Um... May I get an Americano and a  
chocolate chip muffin?

REBECCA  
Sure thing. Want room for cream?

ALEX  
Nope. Just black.

REBECCA  
Ok, \$5.37.

Rebecca turns the register toward Alex and starts the order. Alex swipes her card and waits. Rebecca hands Alex a magazine. Alex is confused.

REBECCA (CONT'D)  
I'll bring it to you.

ALEX  
Great?

Alex grabs the magazine from Rebecca and a muffin from the rack. She turns to have a seat. She starts thumbing through the magazine.

Rebecca comes to the table and drops off the coffee and walks back to the bar. Alex flips to an article near the centerfold. A note is waiting:

"GET IN THE PURPLE TACOMA. DON'T FORGET YOUR COFFEE. - E"

Alex glances up at Rebecca, who winks and smiles. Alex turns around and looks out the window. Sure enough, there is a purple Tacoma idling a block away. Slowly, Alex rises, grabs her coffee and muffin and walks out the door.

INT./EXT. TACOMA - DAY

Alex opens the back door of the truck. She looks in and sees the driver, Gabriel.

GABRIEL

Come in, come in, don't leave me hanging.

Alex hesitates. There's only one way to know what this is all about. She slides in and shuts the door.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

Forgive me, I speak really fast. Some say it's annoying. But, sometimes I just have a lot to say and I'm not sure there is always enough time to say it.

ALEX

I...eh...

GABRIEL

It's fine. It's a gorgeous day and we're all just lucky to be alive. I think on days like this when an opportunity offers itself up, we should take it. I hate we have to be inside for a few minutes, don't you?

ALEX

Have I met...?

GABRIEL

I mean, we've never met, but I certainly think we can be friends. And the time has come...

ALEX

WHAT do you want?

GABRIEL

It's not what I want. It's what you want.

ALEX

And what do I want?

GABRIEL

You want to meet Elijah, right?

Alex is thrown. She's not sure how this is happening, but she's going with it.

ALEX

Is this how it works?

GABRIEL

No. Not one ever meets with him. He really only shows up when you have to make your choice. But, he seems to really like you.

ALEX

What do we do?

Gabriel smiles, rapidly raises his eyebrows and starts the truck.

GABRIEL

Vroom, Vroom!!!

EXT. PAGODA - LAKE - DAY

Alex gets out of the truck. In the distance, Elijah sits on a bench, looking out over the lake. Gabriel appears from the other side of the truck and nudges her forward. Slowly, Alex approaches Elijah. A few others, including Lazarus are standing or sitting near him.

ELIJAH

Alexandra. Please, sit.

Alex is taken aback, but she follows his direction.

ALEX

Who are you?

ELIJAH

We're no one. We have lives and go through the motions everyone else does.

ALEX

I don't understand.

ELIJAH

You've seen our faces many times. Especially you. Through the years, we've dropped a breadcrumb here and there.

ALEX

Like the kidnapping?

ELIJAH

Trafficking.

ALEX

I knew it. Can you get them back?

Elijah turns to Alex for the first time.

ELIJAH

Asks the cop. Congratulations, by the way. Graduation was fun. A lovely ceremony.

ALEX

You were there...

ELIJAH

Of course, Officer Abraham. You proved we all have choices.

ALEX

The girls didn't.

ELIJAH

(Pause)No, they didn't.

ALEX

Why get involved?

ELIJAH

You're going to be a grand Peacemaker. You are more like us than you know.

ALEX

I don't think I'm anything like you.

ELIJAH

Your father and I walk on different sides of the street when it comes to finding truth...but our goal is the same. Maybe you are the pivot point.

A man approaches from behind Alex and Elijah. It is Buyer 2 from the sell, Nicodemus. Elijah doesn't look at him.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

Nic. What news?

NICODEMUS

We have the place and we're waiting on the time.

ELIJAH

Who did you meet with?

NICODEMUS

His name is Solomon.

There is an uncomfortable pause. Elijah turns to Nicodemus.

ELIJAH  
Solomon. My darling little brother.

NICODEMUS  
What? I didn't know. I'm truly  
sorry, Elijah.

ELIJAH  
Thought he had quit too. We make  
our own choices, right, Alex?

Elijah turns to her, sensing Alex's reservation.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)  
As much as we want to live in a  
perfect world, it doesn't exist.

Elijah gets up, and the group disperses. Alex is left to  
watch them.

EXT. ABRAHAM'S HOUSE - EVENING

Vivian and Alex sit on the back deck.

ALEX  
He's not at all what I thought.

VIVIAN  
What did you think he'd be?

ALEX  
Some wise man from the mountain  
top. I don't know.

VIVIAN  
You weren't afraid at all, were  
you?

ALEX  
It didn't seem like something to be  
scared of. He's like, I don't  
know...A family member.

VIVIAN  
Sincerity has a way of doing that.

Beat.

ALEX  
Are you going to tell me the truth?

Vivian side-eyes Alex.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Were you one of them?

VIVIAN

Alex, you'd be surprised how many lives can exist in a person my age.

Alex sits back and stares at Vivian, waiting.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Here is what you should know. It's all rumor, but the stories have common threads.

ALEX

I'm listening.

VIVIAN

There were three brothers. All chosen to take over the group in different capacities. One, a defender. One, a healer and one, an enforcer. The enforcer was chosen by the father to lead the next generation. The youngest, Solomon, was supposed to be a healer. He learned how to heal a body, but he also learned what hurts a body. He wanted to use his gifts for gains, and when his older brothers resisted, Solomon was pushed out.

ALEX

When did he leave?

VIVIAN

Years ago. No one in the group has seen him since.

ALEX

And no one's heard from him?

VIVIAN

There are whispers here and there. Drugs, theft...Assault. No one can prove it, but...Some say he's a seller of parts. An HH Holmes of sorts.

ALEX

And the third brother?

VIVIAN

He took his responsibility very seriously. He does his own thing, but never benefits from others. Only benefits for others.

ALEX

You like Elijah.

VIVIAN

It's a fine line. And his older brother worries he crosses it from time to time, but...I agree with Elijah.

Alex shakes her head.

ALEX

Who's the third brother?

VIVIAN

That's something you will have to learn on your own. Passion looks good on you.

ALEX

Thanks for getting me this far.

Vivian stands.

ALEX (CONT'D)

It feels like I've been paving one road for so long, believing so hard in the justice I was taught, that I've become blind.

VIVIAN

Sometimes you have to find your own justice.

ALEX

I worry it'll be too late.

VIVIAN

So do they.

Vivian smiles at Alex.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

You're so much like your mother.

Beat.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)  
It's getting late. Dinner?

ALEX  
Ok, but I'm taking you out this  
time.

VIVIAN  
No way. You're not working yet,  
remember?

Vivian winks. Alex smiles, lost in thought.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Two thugs are with a BUYER (60). One of the thugs is carrying  
clothes. They approach Tisha and Esther.

THUG 1  
Which one?

BUYER  
That one.

The thug grabs Tisha.

ESTHER  
No!

THUG  
(to Esther)  
Shut up.

BUYER  
No. Not that one. She's too old.  
The little one.

The thug throws Tisha to the ground and grabs Allie.

THUG 1  
(to the girl)  
Here. Put this on.

The men watch as the young girl changes, her delicate frame  
trembling. Tisha lunges forward.

TISHA  
No, you can have me.

ESTHER  
Tisha, stop. What are you doing?

One of the thugs steps forward and slaps Tisha. She crumples to the floor. Esther hugs her. The young girl finishes dressing until she resembles a doll.

BUYER

Yeah, that's good. Bring her.

The buyer bends down.

BUYER (CONT'D)

Let's go for a test ride, Baby Doll.

The buyer turns and walks out of the cell. The thugs grab the young girl. Tisha watches her go, maintaining eye contact the whole time.

EXT. A PARK BENCH- DAY

Adele is sitting, staring at nothing. She's in an awful daze. Vivian walks up with a bag of popcorn.

VIVIAN

Do you like popcorn?

Adele doesn't immediately answer.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

I love it. I don't even mind having to floss an extra time. Get's stuck in my teeth.

ADELE

What? Oh, Vivian. I'm sorry. I was somewhere else.

VIVIAN

I know. I saw.

ADELE

How have you been?

VIVIAN

I'm certain, better than you. So, let's start there.

ADELE

Honestly, I tell myself show strength, but it's my kid. I can't imagine the horror she's going through.

VIVIAN

I know.

ADELE

And I hate myself for having to be strong.

VIVIAN

You don't need be with me.

ADELE

I feel if I let my guard down for one second, the kidnappers will know and take advantage of it.

Adele grabs the popcorn bag.

VIVIAN

You know, I never had to deal with the public or the press, but when I heard Linda had died, my first thought was how will they spin it. Beautiful, young doctor, killed in a boating accident. No damage to the boat and no one else hurt.

ADELE

The first time we met, she gave me half of her lunch. 3rd grade I think.

VIVIAN

I've done some terrible things in my life, but I hit the jackpot with Linda. So did you, with Little Esther. Your daughter is gonna be ok.

ADELE

I suppose Elijah is your reasoning.

VIVIAN

He's a good person.

ADELE

He's a criminal.

VIVIAN

He got Barr to apologize.

ADELE  
That's really dark,  
Vivian. (Pause) And how the hell do  
you know about that.

Adele looks at Vivian.

ADELE (CONT'D)  
Never mind. I wonder if he...

VIVIAN  
He's not part of it. He's just a  
dumb cop that lost his way.

ADELE  
Go on.

VIVIAN  
Elijah saw the emptiness in his  
eyes. He wouldn't have gone so  
easy.

ADELE  
Gone? He killed himself.  
(Pause) I've looked the other way  
for a long time, mainly because my  
friend, Linda. I never thought I'd  
be part of Elijah's world.

VIVIAN  
You're not.

ADELE  
I am, Vivian.

VIVIAN  
His world is very black.

ADELE  
Vivian, it doesn't...

VIVIAN  
You protect the people of this  
town. Who protects you?

ADELE  
My daughter has been kidnapped,  
Viv...

VIVIAN  
Not kidnapped.

ADELE  
What do you mean?

VIVIAN  
Solomon is a trafficker. A slave  
trader.

ADELE  
Esther...

VIVIAN  
No more secrets. You deserve  
better.

ADELE  
(Pause)And I will once again look  
the other way. Because of her.

VIVIAN  
Linda?

ADELE  
Esther.

The silence is almost painful.

VIVIAN  
I have to go. My son in law is  
worried about his daughter. Why, oh  
WHY couldn't we have had BOYS!!!  
I'll see ya.

As Vivian walks away, Adele realizes she has Vivian's  
popcorn.

ADELE  
Oh, wait, your popcorn.

VIVIAN  
I hate popcorn.

ADELE  
You said...

VIVIAN  
I lied.

Adele smiles.

INT./EXT. SOLOMON'S CAR - RIVER FRONT - NIGHT

Solomon is in the passenger seat of a car. One of his thugs  
is in the driver's seat. They have radios. A car passes them  
and stops near the river.

SOLOMON

Ok, gentlemen. We know the plan.

Nicodemus gets out of the driver's side of the other car. Elijah gets out of the passenger side, turns to Solomon's car and smiles.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

Oh no... Drive!!!

Solomon's car tries to pull away, but another car pulls up and blocks their way. They're trapped. Lazarus appears and puts a drill gun to the driver's head. Solomon is staring at his driver when a figure walks up beside the car. Solomon looks up. It is Elijah.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Solomon sits in a chair. He's not restrained, just sitting. Elijah sits across from him.

SOLOMON

I thought you quit.

ELIJAH

Funny, I was gonna say the same.

SOLOMON

Can we get on with what you're gonna do with me?

ELIJAH

Do?

SOLOMON

You're gonna trick me into killing myself, right?

ELIJAH

You're very angry.

SOLOMON

Am I?

ELIJAH

There's something inside you that burns with hate.

SOLOMON

Eh, the zen speech. It was boring when we were kids and I'm sure nothing has changed.

ELIJAH

Who got you into this sickness?

SOLOMON

Don't give me that. These girls...most of them are looking for it.

ELIJAH

What if it were your daughter or your cousin...or your niece?

SOLOMON

I have none of those.

ELIJAH

Ok, so how do you see this playing out?

SOLOMON

I'm not sure. I'm not gonna kill myself.

Elijah shakes his head.

ELIJAH

No...I don't imagine you would.

SOLOMON

Hey, I've made no secret about what I do. I'm true to my pod.

Solomon catches himself and realizes he's slipped. Elijah stops for a second. He thinks.

ELIJAH

Haven't heard "pod" in a long time.

Solomon's face starts to melt a bit.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

Lazarus, call Gabby. Have him meet you on Old Wrightsboro Rd. There are a series of run-down warehouses there. Start searching. And bring me back something.

SOLOMON

Don't you do it. Dad left that to me. It's my property.

ELIJAH

Go, Lazarus.  
(to Solomon)  
(MORE)

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

Now, I will ask you one more time...Who got you into this business?

SOLOMON

Eli, stop this...

ELIJAH

Bart, get a nail and a hammer. Take off his left shoe.

Bartholomew takes off Solomon's shoe. Bartholomew puts the nail under the cuticle of Solomon's left big toe and prepares to strike. Solomon looks at Elijah.

SOLOMON

You don't have the fuckin' stones.

ELIJAH

Bartholomew.

SOLOMON

I'm your brother.

ELIJAH

Who?

Bartholomew looks back at Elijah. Elijah nods. Bartholomew crashes a hammer down on the nail. It plunges into Solomon's foot. He screams in pain. Elijah looks the other way.

SOLOMON

Talment!

Solomon grits his teeth through the fear and pain.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

It's how he makes his money.

ELIJAH

Why you?

SOLOMON

He knows you won't show your head if I'm involved.

ELIJAH

And you believed him?

SOLOMON

He was right.

ELIJAH  
Have him look at your foot the next  
time you see him.

There's a long pause.

SOLOMON  
He wants you dead.

ELIJAH  
And you?

SOLOMON  
What do you want, Eli.

ELIJAH  
You're gonna help me take him down.

SOLOMON  
I won't.

ELIJAH  
You have a choice. Talment or life  
in a cage.

Solomon stares at Elijah.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)  
Think he knows the deal didn't go  
through?

SOLOMON  
Once the police find that body he  
will.

ELIJAH  
They won't find the body. He's  
gonna want answers.

SOLOMON  
The first thing he's gonna want is  
to kill me. He'll think I fucked it  
up.

ELIJAH  
Safer with us.

SOLOMON  
He is a United States Senator,  
Elijah! I don't think you  
understand how powerful this guy  
is.

ELIJAH

I guess we're gonna find out.  
Bartholomew, have Rebecca look at  
that toe.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Lazarus and Gabriel walk out of the warehouse with Esther and Tisha under their arms. Following behind them are 13 YOUNG GIRLS. They're all dirty, worn out and scared. Aaron and David are there to help with a van. Some girls cry silently.

LAZARUS

(to Esther and Tisha)

Ladies, we're gonna have to ask for  
your trust. We're gonna take care  
of you and return you to your  
homes, but...We need you to trust  
us for a bit of time. Can you do  
that?

They both nod. Lazarus releases them to the rest of the group, who are being fed by Aaron and David.

INT. TALMENT HOUSE - OFFICE - NIGHT

Talment sits in his office, going over some paperwork. Lydia appears in the doorway. She is drunk and wobbly.

TALMENT

You know not to come in here.

Lydia walks in and leans against the bookshelf, shooting daggers at Talment with her eyes. He eventually looks up.

TALMENT (CONT'D)

Yes?

LYDIA

(softly)

How could you?

Talment ignores her.

TALMENT

You're drunk.

LYDIA

I know, Richard.

Talment darts his eyes at Lydia.

LYDIA (CONT'D)  
What did you do with our daughter?

Talment is silent.

LYDIA (CONT'D)  
Answer me.

TALMENT  
She's your daughter.

LYDIA  
Alright, you arrogant prick what  
the fuck have you done with my  
daughter?

TALMENT  
The police are handling it. I'm not  
getting involved.

Lydia lurches forward.

LYDIA  
Where is Tisha?

TALMENT  
What makes you think I have any  
idea where that little brat is?

Lydia is pacing the perimeter of the room. Predatory.

LYDIA  
I got into this knowing what you  
do, because you said my daughter  
was off limits.

Lydia approaches the desk, standing over Talment.

LYDIA (CONT'D)  
You know exactly where she is. And  
you're going to tell me.

Lydia flings one of the desk drawers open and pulls out a  
hand gun. But Talment is faster. He grabs the gun from Lydia  
and snatches her by the throat.

TALMENT  
Your daughter, along with her  
little friend, will be on a boat to  
someplace that has paid me a lot of  
money to rape and own these two  
girls.

(MORE)

TALMENT (CONT'D)

Shame Adele's daughter got in the way...But that bitch daughter of yours will be passed around like a dirty wash rag in prison. Of course, after I have my go at her.

He throws her off of him. Lydia is shaken, stunned.

She stares at him for a second. Then she hurriedly backs out of the room.

EXT. RIVERWALK - DAWN

Alex is sitting alone on a bench, staring at nothing. Quietly, Lazarus sits beside her.

LAZARUS

Best part of the day, isn't it?

ALEX

I like watching the sky grow pale.

LAZARUS

It's amazing how quiet it gets right before the sun appears. It's mythical.

ALEX

Mythical is a great way to describe it.

Beat.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Someone is gonna die, aren't they?

LAZARUS

I hope not. Elijah will sacrifice everything for those girls.

ALEX

Where is it going down?

LAZARUS

The less you know the better.

Beat.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)

Talment assaulted his wife last night.

Council Woman Reilly has called your father to her house to speak to her.

ALEX  
You don't think he'd get involved?

LAZARUS  
No chance. He likes to keep clean.

ALEX  
What do you want me to do?

LAZARUS  
Nothing...Just be yourself.

Lazarus stands and walks away. Alex doesn't speak out. She knows it will do no good.

INT. ADELE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Abraham is sitting on the couch, nursing a mug of coffee. Adele walks in with two more cups, freshly brewed. They are both worn out.

ADELE  
I'm sorry I called you so late,  
Jakob. I just thought while it was  
fresh, maybe...

ABRAHAM  
It's fine.

She sits hangs in the doorway for a moment then comes to sit down. Adele hands her a cup of coffee.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)  
(To Lydia) How are you?

LYDIA  
Shaken, but holding up.

Adele notices the causal tone in Abraham's voice.

ABRAHAM  
Have you spoken to him?

LYDIA  
Not in years. I thought he'd  
forgotten me.

ADELE  
What the hell are you talking  
about? He tried to strangle you.

ABRAHAM

Adele, you don't really know the whole story. Lydia knows Elijah.

Adele's face drops.

ADELE

What?

LYDIA

I'm a whore, Adele. A street whore that lived under a bridge. I was given a second chance and I chose wrong. I chose a lie.

Lydia is obviously in shock with her revelation. Adele does her best to find Lydia comfort.

ADELE

He'll find them. He'll find Tisha.

Lydia looks to Abraham, a far-away trance in her eyes.

LYDIA

He named her. He named her LaTisha.

Lydia manages a desperate smile. Adele throws her arms around Lydia. Lydia has the same blank smile.

INT. TALMENT HOUSE - DAY

A heated Buyer 1 blows up at Talment, with Solomon standing by.

BUYER 1

...And your guy says he's gonna deliver my package. I don't have my package. You have my money, but I don't have my package. Are you fucking me? Cause one of those girls should be fucking me...But they're not. Know why? I don't have my package.

TALMENT

Maybe you should have gone to the drop with your partner.

BUYER 1

Maybe you should give me my money back.

TALMENT  
(to Solomon)  
Do you have the girls?

SOLOMON  
I do.

TALMENT  
Can we deliver them?

SOLOMON  
I can.

TALMENT  
(to Buyer 1)  
I will return 10 percent of your  
money for the delayed delivery.

BUYER 1  
25 and I'll consider it.

TALMENT  
That's my final offer.

BUYER 1  
You pull my chain and you expect me  
to just bend over and take it up  
the ass.

Talment calmly reaches in his desk and pulls out a gun. He  
SHOOTS Buyer 1 in the head.

TALMENT  
I really hate chatter. Can you find  
me new buyers?

SOLOMON  
I can.

TALMENT  
Good. Clean my carpet.

INT. ABRAHAM'S HOUSE - DAY

Abraham sits at the kitchen bar. Vivian makes coffee.

VIVIAN  
...She met Elijah.

Abraham looks up.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

He called her in. I think she liked him.

ABRAHAM

What did he say to her?

VIVIAN

He told her he'd be in touch.

ABRAHAM

Seems like him.

VIVIAN

I believe he's worried she'll get hurt if she gets more involved.

ABRAHAM

Have you heard what he's planning?

VIVIAN

No. But I do know he has Solomon.

ABRAHAM

How?

VIVIAN

He showed up the night of the exchange.

ABRAHAM

What's next?

VIVIAN

Talment.

ABRAHAM

Why Talment?

VIVIAN

Talment's behind it all.

Abraham takes this in.

ABRAHAM

It fits. Talment's the money behind it?

VIVIAN

He's been doing it for years. Solomon is his top captain. He's made millions on young girls. I hope he's killed.

ABRAHAM

I'll pretend you never said that.  
Does Eli have a plan?

VIVIAN

I'm sure. And I'm sure it involves  
Solomon.

ABRAHAM

What are your thoughts?

VIVIAN

I think we wait.

ABRAHAM

I've never known you to be very  
good at that.

VIVIAN

Hello pot, this is kettle.

Vivian hands Abraham his coffee.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - EVENING

Tisha and Esther sit in front of Elijah. Lazarus, Gabriel,  
Aaron and David are in the room.

ELIJAH

What I am asking you, ladies, could  
be very dangerous. We'll be there  
but...we're not police.  
We're...different. The person that  
walks in this room is going to  
cause discomfort.

Solomon walks in and stands behind Elijah. Esther begins to  
cry and Tisha jumps up. Gabriel grabs her, Solomon bows his  
head in shame. Elijah doesn't move.

TISHA

You son of a bitch! Let me go! I  
want you to die! I want you dead!  
You monster! You animal!

She falls on to Elijah. Gabriel stands over her and Elijah  
tries to comfort her.

ELIJAH

This is what we plan...Feel free to  
say no.

Tisha's eyes are locked on Solomon. Esther stands up, shaky but determined.

ESTHER  
What do we do?

INT. TALMENT HOUSE - NIGHT

Talment is in his den. His cell phone rings.

TALMENT  
Yes.

SOLOMON (V.O.)  
I have a buyer.

TALMENT  
Who is it?

INT. A SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

SOLOMON  
The Spanish Engineer.

TALMENT (V.O.)  
Return customer. Impressive. And what is he looking for?

SOLOMON  
He's looking for whatever I tell him he's looking for.

INT. TALMENT'S OFFICE - DAY

TALMENT  
There he is. Welcome back...thought I'd lost you. And he's paying?

SOLOMON (V.O.)  
For both.

TALMENT  
Sounds like my last deal is going out with a bang. I want the exchange here.

SOLOMON (V.O.)  
You think that's safe?

TALMENT  
This time, I control what happens.

SOLOMON (V.O.)  
He'll be here in two days. When do  
you want the drop?

TALMENT  
Hand to hand this time. I want the  
buyer to put the bag in my hand.

INT. A SAFE HOUSE -NIGHT

SOLOMON  
When?

TALMENT (V.O.)  
The drop will be at my house. 11PM.

SOLOMON  
I'll set it up.

TALMENT (V.O.)  
Don't fuck it up this time. I'll be  
watching.

Talment hangs up.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

Solomon hangs up.

SOLOMON  
Exactly what you wanted. His house.

ELIJAH  
When?

SOLOMON  
Two days.

ELIJAH  
Hide in plain sight. Strange move  
for Talment. I thought he liked  
shadows.

SOLOMON  
What do you want me to do next?

Elijah stares at his brother.

EXT. PARK BENCH - NIGHT

Alex approaches Lazarus on her bench. She's come for answers.

ALEX

Did you find the girls?

Lazarus opens her eyes.

LAZARUS

We did.

ALEX

Why are they not back with their families?

LAZARUS

Elijah needs them to end this thing.

ALEX

What?!

LAZARUS

Talment doesn't know Solomon was caught.

ALEX

And you believe that?

LAZARUS

We have to.

ALEX

So, you're putting these girls in harms way to satisfy a hunch?

LAZARUS

Alex...

ALEX

I'm a cop, Lazarus! You think I can let this happen?

LAZARUS

You need to decide...

ALEX

You're putting two victims in danger.

LAZARUS

This is what I warned against.

ALEX

I want to see him.

LAZARUS

You can't.

Beat.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)

Alex, I have known this man my whole life. He made one mistake. He lives with that fuckin' mistake everyday. Alex, you have to understand. If we return Esther and Tisha, there is a chance we'll never get to Talment. We need them.

ALEX

Can you at least guarantee these girls will be safe?

LAZARUS

No. Step outside of your opinion and look at the greater good. Try to keep your feelings in check.

Alex stares at her.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)

I can guarantee that our people will be with them the whole time. I can also tell you Elijah will take responsibility for everything.

ALEX

These are lives at stake.

LAZARUS

Life is a risk...Even when you're doing the right thing.

ALEX

Hell of a start to my career. Fuck.

LAZARUS

Trust yourself, Alex. You're stronger than you think.

Alex turns and leaves Lazarus to her post.

INT. ABRAHAM'S HOUSE - DAY

Alex eats breakfast. Vivian walks through the kitchen. They look at each other. Vivian walks by her, touching her hair.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - DAY

Solomon stares out a window. After a long gaze he starts to walk around the room.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - EVENING

The girls sit with Gabriel, eating dinner and talking.

EXT. RIVERFRONT - EVENING

Alex sits in her favorite place. She watches the sunset on a bench. She starts to get lost in her thoughts when...

ELIJAH

It sure is beautiful, isn't it.

ALEX

It is.

Elijah sit on the bench with Alex.

ELIJAH

It was once a slave trading port. Slaves would be brought in and taken to places like Fayetteville to be sold in the middle square farm market. Hard to believe we were one of the last to join the confederates. We didn't want to be those people, but we didn't, for some reason want to buck the system.

ALEX

I guess we haven't changed much.

ELIJAH

Lazarus told me you don't like what I'm doing.

Alex shakes her head.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

Esther and Tisha...they're both stronger than you think.

ALEX

Stronger than their mothers?

ELIJAH  
 Much, maybe, who can really tell? I  
 hope so.

ALEX  
 And if something goes wrong?

ELIJAH  
 I wish there was another way. This  
 is  
 a disease, Eve...Not a crime.

Alex's ears perk up.

ALEX  
 What did you call me?

Elijah brushes past it.

ELIJAH  
 How about you coming?

ALEX  
 Are you serious?

ELIJAH  
 I am.

ALEX  
 I could lose my job.

ELIJAH  
 It could be a hell of a start to,  
 how did you put it, an illustrious  
 career.

ALEX  
 I don't know what that means.

ELIJAH  
 Give us an hour. If we're not out,  
 call for backup.

Alex doesn't speak. She looks back over the river.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)  
 This was always my favorite place  
 when I was a kid. We lived a few  
 blocks from here and to get away  
 from my brothers, I would come  
 here. There were no benches then.  
 Just a bank and crickets.  
 (MORE)

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

The breeze, I always imagined, was  
ancestors touching me, giving me  
guidance.

The sun sets beautifully over the dark river.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Elijah is in the back of a car, a plug in his ear. Aaron  
drives. They are pulling up to the Talment house.

ELIJAH

Alex, start your watch and do not  
come to the house.

ALEX (V.O.)

I've started the clock. Get in and  
get out.

ELIJAH

Be safe, my dear.

INT. TALMENT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Talment faces the window. Solomon comes in with the young  
ladies.

ESTHER

Tisha, we're at your house. We're  
safe!

TALMENT

Darling, we've been so worried.

TISHA

You fucking bastard! I hope they  
kill you! You fucking...

As she reaches arms length, Talment slaps her. She hits the  
ground and Solomon picks her up and puts her beside Esther.

TISHA (CONT'D)

Don't touch me Scum!

TALMENT

All set are we?

SOLOMON

Yes. They just pulled in the  
driveway.

TALMENT

It will all be over in a few minutes.

(to Solomon)

I will guarantee this is the last one.

There is a pause.

TALMENT (CONT'D)

Oh, and Solomon...I'm going to kill you and your brother.

Solomon stares at Talment.

Elijah walks in the room. Talment remains looking out the window.

TALMENT (CONT'D)

Hello, Elijah.

ELIJAH

Hello, Richard.

He turns to Elijah.

TALMENT

You know, I still believe your father made a mistake.

ELIJAH

Is that why you left?

TALMENT

It doesn't work on me, Elijah.

ELIJAH

No tricks. I'm just curious.

Talment scoffs.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

You've made your flesh money. Now, it's time you pay for your sins.

TALMENT

Do you ever get tired of your prose?

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Alex monitors the conversation from her outpost.

ALEX  
(under her breath)  
Careful, Elijah...

INT. TALMENT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Talment grins at Elijah.

TALMENT  
How is the prodigal daughter?

ELIJAH  
Just pay the butcher's bill.

TALMENT  
Oh, I will. My way.

Talment pulls a gun from his back. The young ladies scream.

TALMENT (CONT'D)  
Shhhhhh. Stop screaming. It bothers  
my head.

He shoots Aaron.

TALMENT (CONT'D)  
(to Elijah)  
First, I think I'll do your  
brother. Then, the girls. They've  
cost me enough money. Then, it'll  
just be you and me. We'll all die  
together today.  
Sort of a reunion and family outing  
all together. Right, Lydia?  
Lydia has appeared behind.

LYDIA  
Coward.

SOLOMON  
Lydia, what the hell are you doing  
here?

TALMENT  
If Reilly's daughter hadn't been  
picked up by this idiot, well, I'm  
not sure we would be having this  
problem.

LYDIA  
What has she ever done to you?

TALMENT

Enough.

(to Lydia)

I wish you could see things the way  
I do.

LYDIA

You're a monster.

TALMENT

That's enough out of you.

Talment shoots his wife. As Lydia falls, she reveals Alex standing in the doorway, gun drawn. Solomon reaches into his boot and pulls a gun. Before he can get a shot off, Alex fires and shoots Talment in the head. Solomon turns toward Alex, gun drawn. The girls run to Elijah as Alex and Solomon point the guns at each other.

ELIJAH

Go easy, Solomon.

SOLOMON

(To Alex) Did you know, the day you  
were born, I died.

ELIJAH

Solomon, breathe. It's nothing we  
can't work out.

SOLOMON

I knew from that moment, I would be  
a footnote in this family's  
history.

ALEX

What are you talking about?

SOLOMON

I've built my life on the flesh  
innocent kids, because I was  
jealous of you. You were all our  
future and I wouldn't see it.

ALEX

Elijah?

ELIJAH

Solomon, she doesn't know. She's  
never known.

ALEX

Known what?

SOLOMON

I could end my jealousy now by putting a bullet in your head... But at what cost? My life, I can never get back. I'm your uncle...And you deserve better than us.

Solomon falls to his knees, puts the gun under his chin.

ELIJAH

No.

BANG! Esther and Tisha cover their eyes. Elijah turns to Alex. Alex is still standing, gun pointed at where Solomon was. Elijah pushes the girls to the side and grabs Alex's gun.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

We're done. It's over.

As Elijah takes the gun out of her hands, Alex falls into Elijah's chest.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

Look at me...LOOK AT ME. I have to go. Sid is on his way. You just need to follow his lead. You're gonna do great.

Alex looks up at Elijah, a million emotions tumbling through her all at once. She snaps to...Like a Prophet.

ALEX

Go. I can take care of this. Leave the girls.

Elijah hands Alex Solomon's gun. He goes.

EXT. TALMENT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Tisha, Esther and Alex are surrounded by a swarm of COPS, EMTs and SPECTATORS. Rebecca is on the scene in work out clothes. Missing is Elijah. Sid approaches Alex.

SID

May I speak with you for a second?

ALEX

Yeah.

They walk away from Tisha.

SID  
What happened?

ALEX  
According to the young woman, she was on her morning jog when she heard gun shots. The girls say they were rescued by the two unknowns. Talment, according to them, was the kidnapper. I got a tip this was where they'd be.

SID  
Who's the dead woman?

ALEX  
Talent's wife. The other girl's mother.

SID  
And they're positive it was Talment?

ALEX  
Yeah, why?

SID  
Several young girls just showed up to the precinct. Their descriptions matched Talment.

ALEX  
That does it, then, right? I mean, maybe that's the end.

SID  
Maybe. Who was your tip?

Sid looks at Alex. He sees something in her eyes.

SID (CONT'D)  
Never mind.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Down the street from Talment's house, Elijah and Lazarus watch the scene. In the distance, Adele jumps out of a cop car, grabbing Esther. Tisha runs over to Adele. The three grab each other like they'll never let go.

Resigned, Elijah turns and pats Lazarus on the shoulder as he walks away from the commotion. Lazarus watches him go.

EXT. RIVERFRONT - MORNING

Alex and Lazarus sit on Alex's bench. The sky is paling in the coming daylight. Lazarus is telling the story.

ALEX

What was Lydia's connection?

LAZARUS

She was young and had no prospects. Selling herself to get by. She got pregnant, didn't know the father.

ALEX

And Elijah found her?

LAZARUS

She was living on the streets. He took her in. She even gave birth at the house.

ALEX

And that's how she met Talment. Sure is a large web.

LAZARUS

We should never have been involved this way, but it was Lydia and Tisha. That's Elijah.

ALEX

What will Elijah do?

LAZARUS

I've never seen him like this before. It's more than sadness. It's...emptiness.

ALEX

I need to ask you something. It's about my mother.

Lazarus turns to Alex.

ALEX (CONT'D)

She was one of you, wasn't she?

Lazarus looks off over the river.

ALEX (CONT'D)

My father never talks about her. All I know is allegedly she died in a boating accident.

Lazarus takes a deep breath.

LAZARUS

I was 14 years old when I had come here with my family, illegally. My father was killed and my mother raped and taken. Elijah found out about the ring and wanted to put a stop to it. Your mother, Sarah - or Linda as you'd know her - did what I do now.

ALEX

Really?

LAZARUS

The night they rescued us, your father was supposed to be there, as the lookout. He was late, and Eli made the call to go ahead without him. I was told to run through the tunnel. Your mother was on the other side. There were shots and all I remember is her body colliding into mine with this force... I'll never forget that feeling. Gabby grabbed both of us. Elijah fired back. When Gabby reached the John boat, your mother was barely breathing. The bullet had hit her spinal column. She passed away in Elijah's arms.

Lazarus takes a moment, holding the weight of the memory.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)

I don't know if it was the grief or the guilt that broke Jakob, but he's never forgiven Elijah.

ALEX

Been that way my whole life.

LAZARUS

The funeral was very difficult on Eli.

ALEX

You were there?

LAZARUS

I gave you the white rose to put on her grave.

Alex is stunned. Pause.

ALEX

I miss him.

LAZARUS

Don't. It's just his way. Two stubborn men have kept it from you for a long time. It shouldn't have been my place to tell you...

Alex leans forward on the bench, deep in thought.

LAZARUS (CONT'D)

So, Pender County, huh?

ALEX

Yeah.

LAZARUS

That's not really our jurisdiction, so it's all on you. When do you start?

ALEX

Next week.

LAZARUS

Your father must be proud.

ALEX

Maybe. That's not why I'm doing this though.

Lazarus smiles. She gets up.

LAZARUS

You are your mother's daughter.

Lazarus leaves Alex to enjoy the final sunset.

INT. ABRAHAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Abraham comes in to his office. He sets his briefcase on the chair beside his desk and notices a note on his desk. He sits in his chair and grabs the note. He opens it. "I don't tell you enough...But I love you big brother- E"

Abraham musters a smile through a tear.

INT. A SAFE PLACE -DAY

Esther and Tisha walks out of a building with DAWN (40's) Director of the victims shelter, A Safe Place. The girls are cleaned up and look like they've been given new life.

ESTHER

How many women do you have here?

DAWN

It varies. But, we're getting more notice...Thanks to friends.

TISHA

You mean Elijah.

DAWN

I mean Elijah.

TISHA

He works in dark places, but I think I can speak for Esther, we owe him our lives.

DAWN

I believe I understand your feelings.

ESTHER

How often can we come in and help? Lord knows, I'd be here all the time.

DAWN

Well, you have classes too. Volunteering isn't just pushing a broom or changing linen.

TISHA

I'm ready to learn...

Tisha keeps talking and Dawn catches a figure out of the side of her eye. Across the street is Elijah. He just stares. Dawn mouths "Thank you". Up walks Alex

ALEX

Not bad. You did good.

ELIJAH

Your dad still mad at me?

ALEX

More at me. Vivian, or should I say Ruth, says hello.

ELIJAH

You know the whole thing now, huh?

ALEX

I'm a sucker for history. And my family history is pretty unique.

ELIJAH

Think your father agrees?

ALEX

I don't know. He loves you, you know?

ELIJAH

I know. I think he loved Solomon too.

ALEX

I'm really sorry about your brother.

ELIJAH

I have another brother. You have a great father, Eve...

ALEX

Yeah, but I got a really cool uncle.

Camera pulls away to a drone shot of Wilmington. A listing of statistics with a series of photos of survivors start to cover the screen. End with a black screen with a "Thank you, A Safe Place" with the phone number.

Fade Out.