

GONE DARK

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY - DUSK

The basin from the air.

Red traffic west. White traffic east. Houses in pale rows.

Freeways crossing until the city becomes pattern.

A COMMUTER JET drops toward Burbank.

SUPER: 7:55 P.M.

INT. COMMUTER JET - CONTINUOUS

JESS ALMANZA, 33, watches the ground rise through scratched glass. Dark jacket. Canvas bag. Nothing about her asks to be remembered.

Across the aisle, a WOMAN photographs the terminal.

The man beside Jess removes his wedding ring and slips it into the coin pocket of his jeans.

The wheels HIT. Hard.

Phones wake throughout the cabin. Chimes, messages, the small reckonings of home.

Jess keeps hers dark.

EXT. BURBANK AIRPORT TARMAC - CONTINUOUS

Passengers descend into jet fuel and cut grass.

Jess crosses with them. Her right boot rubs against her anklebone. She does not reach for it.

INT. BURBANK AIRPORT - ARRIVALS - CONTINUOUS

A BALD MAN waits beyond the gate. Khakis. Pale shirt. Crown burned red.

No bag. No sign. No one to meet.

His phone hangs loose in his hand. The screen is black.

A family crowds past and steps on his shoes. He does not move.

Jess passes him.

Twenty feet on, she looks into the black glass of a closed shop.

The Bald Man turns after her.

INT. WOMEN'S RESTROOM - NIGHT

Jess enters the first stall and leaves the door open.

Shoes pass on tile. A hand dryer ROARS. A child cries.

Jess lifts her pant cuff.

A black DATA DRIVE is taped above her ankle.

She lowers the cuff.

JESS
(sotto)
Thirty-eight. Thirty-nine. Forty.

She steps out.

INT. BURBANK AIRPORT - BAGGAGE CLAIM - CONTINUOUS

A second man, GRAY POLO, waits beside a drinking fountain with a folded newspaper.

The Bald Man is gone.

Jess keeps walking.

INT. BURBANK AIRPORT PARKING STRUCTURE - FOURTH LEVEL -
NIGHT

A weathered BMW waits in the south-facing row.

Jess pulls a magnetic key box from the left rear wheel well.

The plate:

3MTA3

She turns her wrist. The same characters in faded ink.

Her phone lights.

ON SCREEN TEXT: U.S. PROBATION - CURFEW CHECK-IN 10:00 P.M.

She clears it.

A dark FORD EXPLORER rolls down the ramp. Tinted windows.

Two men inside.

Jess puts the bag in the trunk and gets behind the wheel.

INT./EXT. BMW / BURBANK AIRPORT EXIT - NIGHT

Jess feeds the ticket into the machine.

The gate rises.

Two lanes over, the Explorer reaches the booth.

Blue lights wink once behind its grille.

The attendant raises the arm without taking a ticket.

EXT. BURBANK STREETS - NIGHT

The BMW passes a small park.

Canada geese stand in the grass, all facing the same direction.

In Jess's mirror, the Explorer holds three cars back.

She looks at the burner in the cupholder.

One contact:

JAVIER

Her thumb hovers over CALL.

She sets the phone down and takes the freeway ramp.

A brown SEDAN follows the Explorer up.

EXT. 101 FREEWAY - CONTINUOUS

The sedan holds at Jess's left rear wheel.

Gray Polo looks across at her through dark glasses.

The Explorer draws even on the right. Begins easing toward her.

No impact. Only weight.

Concrete wall on the shoulder. A pickup stacked with ladders ahead.

Jess BRAKES.

The sedan swerves. The Explorer shoots ahead.

Jess cuts behind it across two lanes. Tires catch, let go, catch again.

Horns erupt.

She dives off at Riverside.

EXT. RIVERSIDE DRIVE - NIGHT

Jess shoots beneath the freeway.

The mirror is empty.

She checks it again.

Still empty.

Her foot eases off the gas.

She watches the dark behind her longer than the road ahead.

EXT. APARTMENT ROW - NIGHT

The BMW pulls into a space marked 11.

Jess picks up the burner. Opens a blank text to BETZ.

ON SCREEN TEXT: I'M BACK.

She deletes it.

ON SCREEN TEXT: I'M SORRY.

Deletes.

ON SCREEN TEXT: MEN ARE TRYING TO KILL ME.

Her thumb rests over SEND.

A horn sounds from the street.

Jess deletes everything.

She starts the BMW and pulls out.

EXT. 7-ELEVEN - VENTURA BOULEVARD - NIGHT

BETZAIDA TORRES, 35, comes out carrying bad coffee.

She stops.

Her MISSION TOW wheel-lift sits on both front rims.

SUPER: 8:36 P.M.

Betzaida scans the lot before she looks at the tires.

Storefront glass. Bus stop. Roofline. Parked cars.

She searches for a phone held upright.

Nothing.

Her own phone BUZZES.

ON SCREEN TEXT: RED ZONE. SHERMAN OAKS HILTON. AMBULANCE ACCESS.

She crouches at the tires. No cuts. The air has simply been let out.

BETZAIDA

Narek.

She opens a side box. Compressor, hose, gauge, baton.

Her phone rings. DOLLY.

BETZAIDA

Yeah.

DOLLY (V.O.)

Front tires?

BETZAIDA

Both.

DOLLY (V.O.)

Bergosian?

BETZAIDA

Middle one.

She clips on the hose. The compressor CHATTERS.

Across Ventura, a TEENAGER raises a phone toward the lot.

Betzaida looks straight at him.

The phone lowers.

DOLLY (V.O.)

Hilton called twice. Wedding. Fire lane's plugged.

BETZAIDA

Tell him city rate plus wait.

DOLLY (V.O.)

He said city rate only.

BETZAIDA

Then tell the city to move it.

EXT. 7-ELEVEN - MOMENTS LATER

The second tire rises off the rim.

Betzaida kills the compressor, coils the hose and throws it into the box.

DOLLY (V.O.)
I can send Ricky.

BETZAIDA
By the time Ricky finds pants, I'll be done.

DOLLY (V.O.)
He has pants.

BETZAIDA
Then he's improving.

She hangs up. Crushes the coffee cup. Gets behind the wheel.
The diesel catches.

EXT. VENTURA BOULEVARD - CONTINUOUS

The Mission Tow rig moves west.

Its doors carry a sun-faded logo and a phone number painted over an older phone number.

A Bergosian truck passes east.

The drivers see each other. Neither waves.

Ahead, the HILTON rises above Ventura.

EXT. HILTON SHERMAN OAKS - SOUTH DRIVE - NIGHT

Wedding traffic has swallowed the entrance. Valets run without keys.

A canary-yellow VIPER sits crooked across the fire lane.

The weathered BMW pulls in beside it.

Jess kills the engine.

SUPER: 8:38 P.M.

INT. BROWN COROLLA - ACROSS FROM HILTON - SAME

JAVIER JIMENEZ, 32, sits behind the wheel. Clean shirt. Tie loosened. Hands folded over a burner in his lap.

Through the glass, a wedding party floats near the elevators.

The dash clock changes.

8:39 P.M.

Javier keys a concealed radio.

JAVIER
Two, radio check.

Static.

JAVIER
Simmons, what's your twenty?

Nothing.

EXT. HILTON SOUTH DRIVE - SAME

Jess steps from the BMW. Leaves the canvas bag in the trunk.

One touch at her ankle. The drive is there.

The Mission Tow rig noses through traffic.

Betzaida leans on the horn until a valet moves.

A HOTEL MANAGER runs to her window, his suit dark beneath the arms.

HOTEL MANAGER
Yellow Corvette. First. Ambulance inbound.

BETZAIDA
Viper.

HOTEL MANAGER
What?

BETZAIDA
Nothing.

A PATROL OFFICER points toward the fire lane.

PATROL OFFICER
BMW's getting taped. Yellow one's clear. Get it out.

Betzaida rolls forward.

Jess reaches the south doors.

SUPER: 8:43 P.M.

INT. HILTON LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Music. Flowers. Marble. A bridal party crouches for a photograph.

Jess enters at the pace of someone meeting a friend at the bar.

She does not search the room.

INT. BROWN COROLLA - SAME

Javier sees her.

JAVIER
Two, she's inside. Confirm
corridor.

Static.

JAVIER
Control, confirm Simmons.

CONTROL (V.O.)
Two's phone shows on property.

JAVIER
Where on property?

CONTROL (V.O.)
Stand by.

EXT. HILTON SOUTH DRIVE - SAME

Betzaida circles the Viper with her phone.

Panels. Wheels. Dash. Seats. Cars boxed around it. Red curb.
Fire-lane sign.

She photographs everything before she touches anything.

INT. HILTON LOBBY - SAME

Jess passes the wedding bar.

The BALD MAN steps out ahead of her. Windbreaker gone. Pale shirt tucked into khakis.

He turns into the north corridor.

He never looks at Jess.

Jess stops with her back to the lobby.

Jess types on the burner.

ON SCREEN TEXT: BALD KHAKI

She sends it.

INT. BROWN COROLLA - SAME

The burner stirs in Javier's lap.

ON SCREEN TEXT: BALD KHAKI

He finds the man.

JAVIER
Control, possible unknown. North
corridor. Bald, khakis, pale shirt.

CONTROL (V.O.)
Copy. Interior, respond.

Nothing.

JAVIER
Simmons.

EXT. HILTON SOUTH DRIVE - SAME

Betzaida photographs the narrow space between the Viper and the BMW.

The BMW plate fills her screen.

3MTA3

She lowers the phone.

FLASH CUT - INT. POOL HALL - NIGHT - FIFTEEN YEARS AGO

A cheap phone lights on the rail beside a beer.

ON SCREEN TEXT: JESS - WHERE ARE YOU

YOUNG BETZAIDA, 20, sights down a pool cue.

The phone lights again.

ON SCREEN TEXT: JESS - 911

Young Betzaida flips it facedown.

BACK TO PRESENT

Betzaida's hand has tightened around the phone.

She sends the plate photo to MORALES.

ON SCREEN TEXT: RUN THIS. HILTON.

Across the drive, Jess moves deeper into the hotel.

The faded 3MTA3 tattoo shows as she pockets the burner.

INT. HILTON - NORTH CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The Bald Man pushes through the doors to the plaza.

Jess continues toward the service hall.

INT. BROWN COROLLA - SAME

Javier opens the car door.

Through the lobby glass: Jess going one way. The Bald Man another.

JAVIER
Control, I have eyes on the
unknown. Find Two.

CONTROL (V.O.)
Copy, Twelve.

Javier closes the door, starts the Corolla and pulls into traffic.

EXT. HILTON SOUTH DRIVE - SAME

Betzaida backs the wheel-lift toward the Viper.

The spreaders close around the rear tires.

The Viper ALARM screams.

Its OWNER, 40s, hair like fresh sod, charges from the hotel.

VIPER OWNER
What the fuck are you doing?

Betzaida keeps working.

VIPER OWNER
Drop my car.

He slaps the truck door.

Betzaida sets the brake. Steps down. Big through the shoulders.

She takes the baton from the door pocket. Snaps it open.

The Viper Owner stops.

Behind him, the north corridor doors swing shut.

Something METALLIC falls inside.

The alarm keeps screaming.

EXT. VENTURA BOULEVARD - NIGHT

The Bald Man walks north, unhurried.

Javier follows in the Corolla, one car back.

No look over the shoulder. No change of pace.

SUPER: 8:44 P.M.

Javier looks in the mirror toward the Hilton.

EXT. HILTON SOUTH DRIVE - SAME

The Patrol Officer drifts toward Betzaida and the Viper Owner.

PATROL OFFICER
You can let her finish or I can
write you something expensive with
a volunteer component.

The Viper Owner backs away.

An AMBULANCE turns into the drive, lights rolling, no siren.

Betzaida folds the baton and climbs into the rig.

The ambulance passes close enough to shake the mirror.

INT. HILTON - NORTH CORRIDOR - SAME

Wedding music leaks beneath the noise outside.

A brass stanchion lies on the marble.

Jess's burner rests nearby, screen cracked.

ON SCREEN TEXT: BALD KHAKI - DELIVERED.

A HOTEL EMPLOYEE rounds the corner and stops.

EXT. VENTURA BOULEVARD - NIGHT

The Bald Man crosses against the signal and disappears behind a delivery truck.

Javier edges forward.

The truck clears.

Empty sidewalk. A bar entrance. A garage mouth. Three possible doors.

Javier looks back toward the hotel.

EXT. VENTURA BOULEVARD / HILTON - CONTINUOUS

The Corolla cuts across two lanes.

Horns BLAST.

The Hilton comes up too bright and too near.

EXT. HILTON SOUTH DRIVE - CONTINUOUS

The Mission Tow rig merges into traffic with the Viper riding behind it.

In her mirror, Betzaida catches Javier abandoning the Corolla at the curb.

Then traffic takes her.

Javier crosses the valet lane.

Wedding guests stand in a loose crescent, flowers lowered.

A HOTEL SECURITY MAN blocks him.

SECURITY MAN
Sir. You can't go back there.

Javier looks past him.

Down the north corridor: two hotel radios talking at once. A woman in lamé crying without sound. A PARAMEDIC over someone Javier cannot see.

JAVIER
Jess.

His hand finds the badge in his pocket.

He leaves it there.

JAVIER
Where's Simmons?

No one answers.

INT. HILTON - NORTH CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

The wedding music has stopped.

Javier stands beyond the fallen stanchion.

A sheet now covers the body.

The cracked burner lies inside an evidence marker.

ON SCREEN TEXT: BALD KHAKI - DELIVERED.

Static spits from Javier's radio.

CONTROL (V.O.)
Twelve, status.

Javier cannot answer.

A HOTEL EMPLOYEE lifts the stanchion from the floor.

The wedding music starts again at half volume.

EXT. HILTON SERVICE DRIVE - NIGHT

A coroner's van backs toward the hotel.

Javier stands outside the tape, alone.

His phone remains dark in his hand.

EXT. MISSION TOW YARD - NIGHT

Low warehouses. Metal shops. Arc welders flash behind chain link.

The gate rattles open.

Betzaida backs the Viper into a yard of wrecks, lien cars and vehicles no one will ever claim.

FLACO, an old mutt, trots beside the rig.

RICKY, 19 and already tired, guides her with one hand.

DOLLY, 60s, sits behind the payment window, a word-search book beside the register.

DOLLY
You charge wait time?

BETZAIDA
Emotional damages.

DOLLY
Those aren't on the city sheet.

BETZAIDA
New management.

DOLLY
You're the old management.

Betzaida lowers the Viper and pulls the lift free.

Her phone rings.

MORALES.

Betzaida answers.

BETZAIDA
Tell me you ran the BMW.

MORALES (V.O.)
Was just about to call you.

Something in his voice stills her.

Betzaida steps away from the window.

MORALES (V.O.)
It's Jess Almanza.

The yard noise recedes.

MORALES (V.O.)
From school.

Betzaida looks at the faded characters inside her own forearm.

3MTA3

MORALES (V.O.)
She's dead. Coroner's moving her
now.

Betzaida says nothing.

MORALES (V.O.)
They found her phone. Last text
went to a burner they're running.

BETZAIDA
You know whose.

A beat.

MORALES (V.O.)
Your brother was at the hotel.

Betzaida turns toward the Viper. Canary yellow under the yard lights.

BETZAIDA
Doing what.

MORALES (V.O.)
Ask him.

The call ends.

Dolly watches from behind the glass but does not come out.

Betzaida finds JAVIER in her contacts.

Her thumb rests over the name.

Then presses CALL.

EXT. HILTON SERVICE DRIVE - NIGHT

Javier stands beyond the police tape. The Corolla still sits crooked at the curb behind him.

His phone rings.

The screen reads BETZAIDA.

He answers.

INTERCUT - MISSION TOW / HILTON

BETZAIDA
You were there.

JAVIER
Yeah.

BETZAIDA
Morales says her last text went to you.

JAVIER
It did.

BETZAIDA
What did she want.

JAVIER
To give me something.

BETZAIDA
What.

JAVIER
I don't know.

Betzaida looks at the plate photograph beside the yellow Viper.

BETZAIDA
Jess reached for me once.

Javier closes his eyes.

BETZAIDA
I let it ring.

At the Hilton, the coroner's van disappears beneath the building.

BETZAIDA
Tonight she reached for you.

JAVIER
Betz --

BETZAIDA
Tell me you were there.

Javier watches the last of the van go.

JAVIER
I was outside.

Silence.

At Mission Tow, Betzaida stands between the Viper and the dark office window, the old plate glowing on her screen.

BETZAIDA
Yeah.

She hangs up.

Javier lowers the phone.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. MISSION TOW YARD - MORNING

Cold light on wrecks and lien cars.

SUPER: DAY 1 - WEDNESDAY / 7:12 A.M.

FLACO sits ten feet from the yellow Viper, fixed on it.

Her rig waits curbside. Betzaida enters by the side gate. Stops.

The chain has been re-hung through the wrong link. The padlock faces inward.

The Viper's driver's door is not seated all the way.

Betzaida takes out her phone before she goes near it.

She photographs the chain, the lock, the tire tracks.

Then the door.

She opens it with two fingers on the edge.

Jess's CALIFORNIA DRIVER LICENSE lies face-up in the cupholder.

JESSICA ALMANZA. The same unsmiling face.

Betzaida does not touch it.

Her camera moves over the console. Seats. Floorboards.

Door pocket.

Dolly comes from the office carrying the first register drawer.

DOLLY
You lose something?

BETZAIDA
Who closed?

DOLLY
Me and Ricky.

BETZAIDA
Cameras.

DOLLY
Four-twelve to four-nineteen is
snow. Power dropped and came back.

She sets the drawer on the office sill.

DOLLY
Nobody called. Nobody came through
the front.

Betzaida looks past her.

The brown Corolla sits against the back fence, an orange tow tag on its windshield.

DOLLY
Your brother left that in the
ambulance lane.

Betzaida looks back into the Viper.

Betzaida opens the Hilton photo sequence.

ON SCREEN TEXT: 8:43 P.M.

Dash. Seats. Console. Empty cupholder.

She holds the clean image beside Jess's license.

Her face gives nothing away. Her thumb moves.

ON SCREEN TEXT: MORALES - SIDE GATE. ALONE.

EXT. MISSION TOW SIDE GATE - LATER

A plain sedan rolls in. Betzaida locks the gate behind it.

ERNIE MORALES, 50s, plainclothes, gets out with cold coffee.
Stops at the keypad.

Betzaida opens the gate from inside before he touches it.

MORALES
RHD has the tow log. Your name. Her
name. Somebody already found the
school connection.

BETZAIDA
Fast morning.

MORALES
They're coming for the car.

She walks him to the Viper.

MORALES
You touch it?

Betzaida shows him the clean interior at 8:43. Then the
license in the cupholder.

Morales looks from one to the other.

MORALES
Send me the originals.

BETZAIDA
They are the originals.

MORALES
Then make copies before somebody
calls them evidence.

He leans toward the open door without crossing it.

MORALES
This helps you.

BETZAIDA
It better do more than help.

MORALES
It slows the machine.

EXT. MISSION TOW YARD - CONTINUOUS

Morales studies the gate chain, the breaker box, the tow
sheet clipped beside the office window.

MORALES
Hotel knew the route. Dispatch knew
the yard. Whoever watched you leave
knew both.

BETZAIDA
And you.

MORALES
And me.

A rideshare stops outside the gate.

Javier gets out. Sees Morales. Sees the Viper.

MORALES
RHD's five minutes out.

He heads for his sedan.

MORALES
Copies, Betz. Not your phone.

Morales leaves. Betzaida opens the gate for Javier and
closes it behind him.

She points to the Corolla.

BETZAIDA
Your car.

JAVIER
I need to talk to you.

BETZAIDA
You're standing in it.

She takes him to the Viper.

Javier sees Jess's license.

JAVIER
Don't touch anything else.

BETZAIDA
They came through my gate, killed
my power and put a dead woman's
license in a car on my lot. You're
late with don't.

She shows him the Hilton photograph.

BETZAIDA
Empty at eight-forty-three. Power
gone seven minutes. License here at
seven-twelve.

Betzaida pockets the phone.

BETZAIDA
Now you.

JAVIER
This is an active homicide
investigation.

BETZAIDA
What was Jess bringing you?

Javier says nothing.

BETZAIDA
Not who. Not why. The thing.

JAVIER
A drive.

BETZAIDA
What was on it.

JAVIER
She didn't say.

BETZAIDA
You put people around her for
something she didn't say.

JAVIER
I put people around a protected
exchange.

BETZAIDA
Then where were they.

Javier doesn't answer.

BETZAIDA
I let it ring. You stayed outside.
We did that part already.

JAVIER
I followed the man she identified.

BETZAIDA
She identified him because somebody
inside was supposed to have her.

A beat. She watches him not deny it.

BETZAIDA
Who was inside.

JAVIER
An agent.

BETZAIDA
Where is he.

JAVIER
I can't reach him.

BETZAIDA
Name.

JAVIER
Simmons.

BETZAIDA
Your safe little operation wasn't
safe.

JAVIER
It was compartmented.

BETZAIDA
That's a longer word for the same
dead woman.

Javier looks into the Viper again.

JAVIER
Did you find anything else.

BETZAIDA

No.

Javier looks at the console. Then at Betzaida.

Javier takes a pair of nitrile gloves from a box by the window.

Betzaida takes them from him. Puts them on herself.

BETZAIDA

You don't get the car without me.

She opens the passenger door.

Javier's burner rings. CONTROL.

He answers.

CONTROL (V.O.)

Twelve, stand down pending review.

JAVIER

Where's Simmons.

CONTROL (V.O.)

His device is no longer reporting on property.

JAVIER

Put Rivera on.

CONTROL (V.O.)

Stand down means stand down.

The line goes dead.

Javier calls RIVERA. Voicemail before the first ring finishes.

Behind the office glass, Dolly stares at her computer.

DOLLY

Betz.

Betzaida goes to the window.

ON SCREEN TEXT: CITY OF LOS ANGELES - DISPATCH ACCESS
SUSPENDED. REVIEW PENDING.

BETZAIDA

For what.

DOLLY

They left that part free.

Betzaida's phone rings. Morales.

BETZAIDA
Yeah.

MORALES (V.O.)
Warrant request went upstairs at
six-fifty. Same time somebody
flagged your license.

BETZAIDA
Before anybody found Jess's
license.

MORALES (V.O.)
That's what I called to not say.

Two unmarked sedans turn onto the block.

Javier watches them approach.

JAVIER
You need to get out of here.

BETZAIDA
It's my yard.

JAVIER
That's why.

She strips off the gloves. Hands him the Corolla keys.

BETZAIDA
Then keep up.

They start for the Corolla.

The first sedan stops outside the gate.

INT. GENESIS MEATPACKING - CUT FLOOR - MORNING

White tile. Steel tables. Drains running pink beneath a
moving chain of beef.

SUPER: 7:31 A.M.

IMELDA JIMENEZ, 62, compact and quick, trims silver skin
from a flank without looking at her hands.

PAZ, 30s, works beside her. She slides a glucose meter
across the steel.

PAZ
Your daughter said before lunch.

IMELDA
My daughter says many things from a
tow truck.

PAZ
Your son said write it down.

IMELDA
My son thinks paper makes things
true.

Paz holds out the lancet. Imelda gives her a finger without
stopping the knife in her other hand.

The meter BEEPS. Paz shows her the number.

IMELDA
Tell them two hundred.

PAZ
It says two-eighty-seven.

IMELDA
Then tell them it was beautiful.

Paz smiles despite herself.

At the far end of the floor, four MEN enter in dark
windbreakers marked ICE / POLICE.

Someone drops a knife.

WORKER
La migra.

The floor breaks apart. Workers run for side doors, flatten
behind equipment, pull off aprons as if cloth could change a
name.

The four men do not look at any of them. They walk straight
toward Imelda.

No lists. No questions. No one checking papers.

One man flashes a badge too quickly to read.

ICE MAN
Imelda Jimenez.

Imelda sets the knife flat on the steel.

IMELDA
If you know my name, you don't need
the jacket.

Two men take her arms.

PAZ
She needs her insulin.

An ICE Man turns his head. That is enough to stop Paz.

Imelda looks at her.

IMELDA
Call Betzaida.

INT. GENESIS MEATPACKING - LOADING DOCK - CONTINUOUS

The men walk Imelda to an unmarked white van with its side door open.

They put her inside. The door slides shut.

Paz reaches the dock as the van pulls away between refrigerated trucks.

She takes out her phone with a bloody glove still on.

Raises it. Catches three seconds of the van between the refrigerated trucks.

Then she calls.

EXT. MISSION TOW YARD - SAME

RHD agents crowd the gate.

Betzaida and Javier reach the Corolla.

Her phone rings. PAZ.

She answers.

INTERCUT - MISSION TOW / GENESIS LOADING DOCK

BETZAIDA
Paz.

Paz watches the white van disappear.

PAZ
They took your mother.

Betzaida looks at Javier.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. MISSION TOW YARD - MORNING

SUPER: 7:46 A.M.

RHD comes through the gate in pairs. Gloves. Boxes. A photographer already circling the Viper.

Ricky stands against the fence with Flaco's collar in his fist.

Betzaida meets Dolly at the office door. Puts the yard keys in her hand.

BETZAIDA
Don't sign anything. Photograph
what they take. Morales before you
answer questions.

DOLLY
I know how to be old and slow.

Flaco barks once per photograph.

An agent carries the register drawer past the window.

Dolly watches her word-search book go into an evidence bag.

A DETECTIVE pins the warrant to the payment window.

DETECTIVE
Premises and Viper. Corolla isn't
named. Move it now or it stays
inside.

Betzaida walks past him.

EXT. MISSION TOW YARD - STREET - CONTINUOUS

The brown Corolla and Betzaida's rig sit nose-out at the curb.

Javier at one door. Betzaida at the other.

Neither speaks.

The Corolla goes east. The rig goes north.

EXT. ANTELOPE VALLEY FREEWAY - MORNING

The rig climbs out of the basin. Joshua trees replace billboards.

INT. MISSION TOW RIG - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

The phone rides in a dash mount, on speaker.

AUTOMATED VOICE (V.O.)
...para español, oprima el dos. For
detainee location information,
enter the subject's alien
registration number, followed by--

Betzaida presses zero.

AUTOMATED VOICE (V.O.)
We're sorry. That is not a valid--

She presses zero again.

BETZAIDA
A person. I'm looking for a person.

Hold music.

A road sign passes:

ADELANTO 26

The music cuts. An incoming call takes the line. MORALES.

BETZAIDA
Tell me where they book federal
holds out here.

MORALES (V.O.)
They don't.

A beat.

MORALES (V.O.)
There was no ICE operation at
Genesis. No transport order. No
booking. No federal record. Nobody
has her, Betz. Nobody official.

The desert runs past the glass.

BETZAIDA
The men had jackets.

MORALES (V.O.)
Anybody can buy a jacket.

EXT. HIGHWAY 14 - CONTINUOUS

The rig slows. Swings across the turnaround, gravel popping
under the tires.

Joshua trees wheel through the windshield.

Southbound.

She passes the back of the ADELANTO sign. The reverse side is blank.

EXT. FEDERAL BUILDING - DOWNTOWN - DAY

SUPER: 10:52 A.M.

Inside the glass lobby, Javier badges the security turnstile again.

Red.

He badges again.

Red.

A SECURITY OFFICER, apologetic, points him toward the visitor desk and its line.

Javier looks at the line. Then walks out.

EXT. FEDERAL BUILDING - CURB - CONTINUOUS

The Mission Tow rig sits in the red zone, flashers going.

Javier sees it. Stops.

Then crosses and climbs into the passenger seat.

Neither of them says anything about why she came back.

INT. MISSION TOW RIG - PARKED - CONTINUOUS

The burner lights in Javier's hand.

A video attachment. No number.

Neither of them moves.

He plays it.

ON THE PHONE: the frame too close, badly lit. IMELDA, still in her blood-marked Genesis apron. A fresh bruise on her cheekbone. Somebody's hand steadies the phone from behind.

She looks straight into the lens.

IMELDA (ON PHONE)
Tell them it was beautiful.

The video ends. Her face freezes on the screen.

BETZAIDA
That's her.

Javier looks at Betzaida.

She doesn't explain.

The burner sounds again.

ON SCREEN TEXT: TWO WEEKS. TWO MILLION. YOUR BROTHER COMES HOME EMPTY-HANDED.

Javier reads it.

Then turns the screen toward her.

Betzaida reads. Looks at him.

Nobody says the number out loud.

BETZAIDA
Who had that number.

JAVIER
Jess. The operation.

The burner sounds again.

ON SCREEN TEXT: SEALED COOLER. THREE DAYS' SUPPLY. DELIVERY WINDOW 12:30-12:40. DO NOT FOLLOW. NEXT WINDOW WILL BE PROVIDED.

A map pin follows. A gray square of warehouses east of the river.

Betzaida looks at the pin. Then at the dash clock.

JAVIER
Twelve-thirty.

BETZAIDA
Then get out.

Javier sets the burner in the cupholder. Gets out.

Through the windshield, he walks back toward his building and the visitor line.

The rig pulls away.

INT. IMELDA'S KITCHEN - DAY

SUPER: 11:38 A.M.

A clean kitchen. A radio murmurs a novela to nobody.

On the counter, a tub of washed cilantro. A pan soaking from breakfast.

Betzaida opens the refrigerator.

Insulin pens in the butter compartment, rubber-banded in bundles. A strip of masking tape on each band, dated in Imelda's hand.

Betzaida counts out three days' worth.

Folds a dish towel around the pens and packs them into a soft cooler, a gel pack on either side, the towel between.

She takes the meter's carrying case from the drawer where it always is.

She stops. Looks at the dates on the tape.

Then zips the cooler shut.

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - RIVERA'S OFFICE - DAY

A VISITOR badge clipped to Javier's shirt.

RIVERA, 50s, silver at the temples, stands behind a desk he keeps between them.

Javier puts his phone on Rivera's desk.

On it: photographs of the ransom demand and the medication instructions.

JAVIER

They gave us a medical window.
Twelve-thirty.

RIVERA

Sit down, Javier.

Javier stays standing.

RIVERA

You're on stand-down. This meeting
is a courtesy.

JAVIER

They have my mother.

RIVERA

Which is why there's a framework.
The Bureau has the referral. HSI
has equities. Everything moves
through one channel or none of it
is usable.

JAVIER
The demand came to my operational
burner. The people who had that
number fit in this room.

RIVERA
Careful.

JAVIER
Count them.

RIVERA
Which is why you can't be anywhere
near it.

JAVIER
Her medication--

RIVERA
Has been accepted into the channel.

Javier stares at him.

JAVIER
She's a diabetic in a room
somewhere and her insulin has been
accepted into the channel.

RIVERA
Three jurisdictions are moving
information right now.

JAVIER
Moving it where?

Rivera sits. Folds his hands.

RIVERA
Kinshasa is still on the calendar.
Wheels up Thursday. As far as this
building is concerned, that's the
only piece of your job you still
have.

Javier doesn't move.

RIVERA
Go do it, come home, and let the
framework work.

Javier looks down at the visitor badge on his own chest.

Then unclips it and sets it on the desk.

INT. MISSION TOW RIG - MOVING - DAY

The cooler rides belted into the passenger seat. Phone on speaker.

MORALES (V.O.)
Hospitals, nothing. County intake,
nothing. Every detention contract
bed in the state, nothing. Traffic
cams had the van southbound on
Alameda, then a gap, then no van.

BETZAIDA
Cameras don't gap.

MORALES (V.O.)
They do if you know where they are.

A beat.

MORALES (V.O.)
You're not going to tell me where
you're driving.

BETZAIDA
No.

MORALES (V.O.)
Then I didn't ask.

The call ends.

EXT. WHOLESALE PRODUCE MARKET - LOADING LANES - DAY

SUPER: 12:27 P.M.

Forklifts. Pallet stacks. Trucks nosed into a row of dock
doors.

The Mission Tow rig eases down a lane between produce trucks
and idles.

A forklift crosses. Two drivers argue over a clipboard.

The burner sounds in the cupholder.

ON SCREEN TEXT: DOOR 9. LEAVE IT. RETURN TO YOUR VEHICLE.

They can see her.

Betzaida scans the lot. Rooflines. Cab mirrors. Parked cars.
A phone held upright.

Nothing.

She angles her phone in the dash mount. Starts video.

EXT. WHOLESALE PRODUCE MARKET - DOOR 9 - CONTINUOUS

Betzaida sets the cooler on the dock edge beside a pallet of melons.

Walks back to the rig. Gets in. Hands on the wheel.

SUPER: 12:33 P.M.

A white TRANSIT VAN with a roof-mounted refrigeration unit turns down the lane. No markings. Fresh paint over old paint on the cargo doors.

A MAN in a produce-company polo steps out. Forty, sunglasses, a lanyard with no card in it.

He collects the cooler without hurry. He never looks at her and never looks anywhere twice.

The mounted phone records what she watches:

The roof unit.

A fleet number stenciled at the bumper, half gone: 7 3 _ _ A faded service decal low on the cargo door. A snowflake inside a hexagon.

Three digits of a carrier number under the new paint: CA 2 4 8 -- The van pulls out. Merges into truck traffic.

SUPER: 12:36 P.M.

Betzaida's hands stay on the wheel.

She watches the lane until the van is gone.

Then she stops the recording. Scrubs back through it.

INT. IMELDA'S KITCHEN - DAY

SUPER: 1:52 P.M.

Javier lets himself in with a key from the frame over the door.

Betzaida at the table. Her phone in front of her, face up, dark. The radio is off now.

Javier fills two cups from the pot without asking.

BETZAIDA
Your building?

JAVIER
The framework has equities.

Betzaida doesn't ask.

JAVIER
The drop?

BETZAIDA
Window was ten minutes. They used
six.

Javier sits. The burner lies between them.

They both look at it and pretend not to.

INT. IMELDA'S KITCHEN - LATER

SUPER: 2:41 P.M.

The coffee is gone. Nobody made more.

The burner lights. A video.

He plays it.

ON THE PHONE: a folding chair against an unpainted wall.

Imelda, seated. The apron is gone. Someone off-frame hands her a rubber-banded bundle of insulin pens.

She holds the bundle up to the lens. The masking tape. The date in her own handwriting.

She looks into the camera until the video stops.

Betzaida settles back into the chair.

JAVIER
Two weeks.

BETZAIDA
What do you have?

JAVIER
A government salary. A frozen
badge. Maybe sixty grand if I break
the retirement.

BETZAIDA
Yard's sealed. The accounts follow
the yard.

She looks around the kitchen. The coupon envelope by the radio. The dated masking tape on the table.

BETZAIDA
I can raise a tow truck.

Javier almost smiles. Doesn't.

JAVIER
Thursday they fly me to Kinshasa.

BETZAIDA
Then you go. You come home the way
they said.

A beat.

JAVIER
And you?

BETZAIDA
I have to tell Jasmine.

JAVIER
She's sixteen.

BETZAIDA
She's ours.

The refrigerator hums. In the butter compartment, the remaining bundles sit with one space empty.

EXT. PACOIMA STREET - DAY

SUPER: 4:15 P.M.

Stucco fourplexes. A dry fountain full of planters.

Betzaida climbs an exterior stair.

INT. JASMINE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The door opens before she knocks twice.

JASMINE, 16, Betzaida's niece. Her father Janson is doing time at Lompoc. She holds the door with one hand, her phone in the other.

JASMINE
Tía. I know.

On the refrigerator behind her: a visiting-room photograph. Jasmine, small, between a younger Betzaida and JANSOIN in prison blues. Nobody looks at it.

The apartment is small and serious. Schoolbooks in one stack. A monitor on the floor, cables coiled and tied.

BETZAIDA
Where's your mom.

Jasmine is already back at the kitchen table. A laptop.
A second phone propped against a cereal box.

JASMINE
Not since yesterday.

ON THE LAPTOP: Paz's video, paused. The white van at the
Genesis dock, framed between refrigerated trailers.

JASMINE
Paz put it in the Genesis group.
Somebody's cousin clipped it into
two more. It got to me before
eight.

BETZAIDA
Before eight.

JASMINE
Police bulletin went up at eleven.
If you were waiting on official.

Betzaida is still in the doorway.

JASMINE
Look.

Jasmine zooms the paused frame. The van's roofline. A boxy
unit above the cab.

JASMINE
That's a reefer. Transport
refrigeration. Nobody bolts a
reefer on a van to move people.

BETZAIDA
Meaning what.

JASMINE
Meaning the van has a day job.

Betzaida comes around the table. Looks at the screen
properly.

BETZAIDA
Whose job.

JASMINE
That's the question I sent out.

A beat. Betzaida hears it. Sent.

BETZAIDA
Stay out of it.

Jasmine doesn't answer.

She turns her phone around instead.

ON SCREEN: a message thread. Three outgoing texts,
unanswered. A fourth contact has replied:

ON SCREEN TEXT: box like that runs cold produce out of
wilmington. subs for the big yards. they stage off alameda.

BETZAIDA
Who is that.

JASMINE
Marisol's brother. He checks
container seals at the terminal.

BETZAIDA
Jasmine--

JASMINE
He's legit. Everybody I ask is
legit.

A silence.

JASMINE
What do they want?

Betzaida looks at the photograph on the refrigerator.

The first person to look at it.

BETZAIDA
Money.

Jasmine studies her.

JASMINE
Okay.

Betzaida looks at the frozen van on the laptop.

Then, privately, at her own phone. Her thumb scrubs through
the drop video.

Paused: the faded decal. A snowflake inside a hexagon.

On Jasmine's laptop, at the edge of the frozen frame, the
same hexagon ghosts under the van's rear-door paint.

The same hexagon under different paint.

Betzaida says nothing.

Jasmine's phone lights again. A new message coming in.

Jasmine reaches for it.

Betzaida lets her.

Jasmine opens the message.

ON SCREEN TEXT: CAL-MERIDIAN REFRIGERATED SERVICES. ALAMEDA STREET YARD. NIGHT FLEET STAGES 8:30-10:00.

A photograph follows. The hexagon, clean and new, on a service-truck door.

Jasmine sets her phone beside Betzaida's. The faded hexagon and the fresh one, side by side.

Another message arrives. A different sender. The contact reads DAWES.

Profile photo: the same lean face under a work light.

ON SCREEN TEXT: west service gate. don't use the front.

BETZAIDA
Who's Dawes.

JASMINE
Somebody who knows gates.

Jasmine leaves it there.

BETZAIDA
You're staying here.

Jasmine closes the laptop.

She is already putting on her shoes.

She kills the lamp on her way to the door.

EXT. PACOIMA STREET - NIGHT

SUPER: 8:04 P.M.

A Mission Tow rig idles at the curb, running lights on.

Not hers.

MANNY VELASQUEZ, 40s, Mission's senior driver. Heavy, patient, built for waiting beside broken machinery. He leans on the fender like the fender needs him.

One look at Betzaida. One at Jasmine. One at the laptop bag over Jasmine's shoulder.

MANNY
We working or arguing.

BETZAIDA
How is this still ours?

MANNY
Overnight impound. It was out working when they took the yard.

Betzaida looks up the block at her own rig.

BETZAIDA
We take yours. Mine's been seen.

Manny takes the wheel. Betzaida rides shotgun. Jasmine climbs in between them.

EXT. WILMINGTON - ALAMEDA CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Container stacks under sodium light. Cranes working the basin beyond.

Reefer units idle behind chain link, a hundred small engines running.

EXT. CAL-MERIDIAN YARD - PERIMETER - NIGHT

SUPER: 8:52 P.M.

The rig parks among waiting bobtails across from a fenced yard.

The hexagon repeats until it stops meaning anything. Van doors. A service truck's tailgate. The back of a mechanic's shirt.

Betzaida scrubs her drop video to the bumper frame. The half-gone stencil: 7 3 _ _ Through the fence, a white Transit sits on a service jack, front wheels off. Its fleet number full and fresh:

7342 A FOREMAN crosses the lot with a thermos, checking reefer readouts van by van.

She looks from the screen to the jacked van. Back to the screen.

MANNY
Same van?

BETZAIDA
Same number.

Jasmine leans across her to see the screen. Nobody stops her.

At the yard, the night fleet begins to move. Vans out the main gate in an unhurried line, thirty seconds apart.

Down the block, a service gate stands open to the terminal access road. A GATE CHECKER, 60s, works a clipboard inside a lit booth, a terminal screen on the wall behind him.

The passenger door clicks.

Jasmine is out before Betzaida's hand can close on her sleeve.

BETZAIDA
Jasmine--

Already gone. She crosses at the pace of someone late for something ordinary.

Betzaida reaches for her own door.

MANNY
Alone she's nobody. With you she's
somebody's kid.

Betzaida's hand stays on the handle. But she stays.

At the booth, Jasmine arrives with her phone already lit and turned outward.

JASMINE
Sir-- sorry-- my tio's load got
split. Dispatch says Pier 11 but
the seal sheet says something else,
and he's the one who eats the fine.
Not them.

The checker looks at her. Sixteen, worried, ordinary.

She holds the phone closer.

He takes it.

In the rig, Betzaida's hand has not left the door handle.

He squints at the screen. Turns to the terminal monitor on the wall.

Two DRIVERS drift toward the booth window, drawn by the small problem. One reads over the checker's shoulder.

Behind all of them, a CAL-MERIDIAN tractor rolls through the service gate. Nobody looks at it twice.

Manny watches the mirrors. Betzaida watches only Jasmine.

Jasmine's second phone rises no higher than her waist.

ON ITS SCREEN, in the gap past the checker's elbow: the gate board.

ON SCREEN TEXT: CAL-MERIDIAN -- PIER 11 / REEFER SERVICE --
ALAMEDA ACCESS

The checker hands her phone back with an answer she doesn't need. She thanks him twice.

He points up the access road, giving directions to a delivery that does not exist.

Near the fence line, apart from the drivers, a LEAN MAN watches. Not the gate. Not the tractor. Jasmine.

Jasmine clocks him. One beat too long.

In the rig, Betzaida sees the recognition cross her niece's face.

Manny is already reversing.

Jasmine climbs in flushed with it.

JASMINE
Pier 11. They service Pier 11.

Betzaida isn't looking at the phone. She's looking at Jasmine.

BETZAIDA
The one by the fence.

A beat.

JASMINE
That's Dawes.

Manny pulls out. In the mirror, the gate light holds steady. Nobody follows.

INT. LAX - INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL - GATE - DAY

SUPER: DAY 2 - THURSDAY

Javier in the boarding line with a carry-on and no badge.

STEVE MERCER, 40s, supply-chain consultant, the kind of pleasant that has been rehearsed. He appears beside Javier holding two coffees. One of them is for Javier.

MERCER
Long legs, this one. Kinshasa, then
the charter down to Kolwezi. You
been?

JAVIER
No.

MERCER
You'll be glad it's the dry season.

Javier takes the coffee he did not ask for.

MERCER
They put us together through Addis.
Easier.

Mercer hands him the folder with his free hand.

The trip packet: AURIX -- SUPPLY-CHAIN DILIGENCE.

KINSHASA / KOLWEZI.

A route map folds out. Mine to smelter to port. At the far right edge of the map: SAN PEDRO / LONG BEACH.

Javier's phone lights. A photograph from Betzaida: a gate board. CAL-MERIDIAN -- PIER 11.

ON SCREEN TEXT: FOUND WHERE THE VANS GO.

Javier looks at the right edge of the map. Then at the photograph.

The Congo folder and the port photograph sit beside each other on his knee.

Mercer watches him put the phone away.

MERCER
Family?

JAVIER
Work.

INT. AIRCRAFT - CLIMBING - DAY

The basin falls away through scratched glass.

Red traffic west. White traffic east. The city becoming pattern again.

Across the aisle, Mercer is already asleep. Or being asleep.
Javier does not look outside.

On his phone: a photograph of the burner's screen, shot at an angle, the kitchen table under it.

ON SCREEN TEXT: YOUR BROTHER COMES HOME EMPTY-HANDED.

INT. CHARTER PLANE - OVER KATANGA - DAY

SUPER: DAY 4 - SATURDAY

Red country through scratched glass. Open pits. Haul roads cut through scrub and vanish under dust.

Javier watches from the window. Mercer works through the Aurix packet with a yellow highlighter.

Javier opens his carry-on. The sunglasses sit in a molded retail case, a receipt folded beneath the coiled cable.

Below them, a convoy of ore trucks moves north in a single file.

EXT. KOLWEZI AIRSTRIP - DAY

The aircraft door opens into heat and red grit.

A baggage cart waits beside a white LAND CRUISER. No terminal. No shade.

PATRICE MUKENDI, 40s, Aurix compliance director, pressed field shirt and polished boots, takes Mercer's hand before Javier's.

MUKENDI
Welcome to the formal side.

MERCER
That is the side we came to see.

Mukendi smiles as if Mercer has completed a familiar joke.

INT. AURIX LAND CRUISER - MOVING - DAY

An itinerary rests on Javier's knee:

AURIX COMMUNITY INVESTMENT / FORMAL CONCESSION / CLINIC /
COOPERATIVE INTAKE COMPLIANCE LUNCH - BERNARD KASONGO -
SUNDAY

Every stop has a time beside it.

Outside: motorbikes, copper traders, children selling water from reused bottles. The Aurix clinic sign appears before the mine does.

MERCER

We stay on schedule, Monday charter stays ours.

Javier looks up from the paper.

Outside, a loaded truck leaves the paved road and takes an unmarked track toward the hills.

EXT. AURIX CONCESSION - DAY

Fresh safety paint. New helmets. A clinic wall white enough to hurt the eyes.

Workers stand in two rows for an audit photograph.

Nobody smiles until Mukendi asks them to.

Mercer checks boxes on the itinerary while Mukendi walks backward, talking.

MUKENDI

Zero lost-time incidents this quarter. Complaints are logged independently.

He gestures to a locked complaint box. The slot is barely wide enough for a coin.

Javier looks past it.

At the rear fence, another loaded truck turns onto the same unmarked track.

JAVIER

Where does that road go.

MUKENDI

Secondary processing.

MERCER

After lunch.

JAVIER

You certify the concession. I need to see what enters it.

Mukendi looks at Mercer.

MERCER
The diligence scope is downstream
exposure.

JAVIER
Then upstream intake is the
exposure.

A camera FLASHES behind them. The workers hold their smiles.
Mukendi checks his watch.

MUKENDI
Depot 1818 is fifteen minutes.

Mercer closes the itinerary.

EXT. DEPOT 1818 - DAY

A wide steel gate for company trucks. Fifty yards down, a
break in the fence for everyone else.

Javier steps from the Land Cruiser and puts on dark
sunglasses against the glare.

Mercer follows reluctantly.

An Aurix tipper rolls through the steel gate without
stopping.

At the break in the fence: men, women and children carrying
feed sacks darkened with ore dust.

A BOY, maybe twelve, drags a sack to a platform scale.

The CLERK weighs it.

An adult HANDLER slides his identity card across the desk
without looking at the boy.

The clerk records the handler's name.

The handler takes the cash. Passes a folded note back to the
boy.

Nobody treats this as unusual.

MERCER
Cooperative intake.

JAVIER
Which cooperative.

Mercer does not answer.

INT. DEPOT 1818 - CONTINUOUS

Separate sacks arrive with separate paper tags.

A worker cuts them open over one steel hopper.

Red ore. Gray ore. Black stone. All of it becomes one moving pile.

A sample goes into a clear bag.

The original tags go into a waste bin.

The clerk writes one new lot number across the sample bag:

1818-A

Javier follows the bag to a scarred desk.

INT. DEPOT 1818 - DESK - CONTINUOUS

A clipboard under the clerk's hand.

Two columns:

PRE-SORT POST-SORT

Numbers rise from left to right.

A source line marked ARTISANAL is crossed out.

The clerk stamps the replacement:

CONCESSION VERIFIED

He does it without looking up.

Javier takes in the page. The stamp. The common hopper.

The children at the fence.

Mukendi steps between Javier and the desk.

MUKENDI
The lunch is waiting.

INT. AURIX LAND CRUISER - MOVING - LATER

The depot falls behind them.

Beyond the fence, two barefoot boys share a length of rebar beneath a kapok tree.

The tinted window passes between them.

MERCER
Everybody needs the depots.

JAVIER
Who's everybody.

MERCER
Cooperatives need buyers. Exporters
need volume. Investors need
distance.

JAVIER
From what.

MERCER
From where the volume comes from.

At a checkpoint, the driver passes an envelope through the window.

The barrier lifts. The Land Cruiser never fully stops.

EXT. WHOLESALE PRODUCE MARKET - DOOR 9 - DAY

SUPER: DAY 4 - SATURDAY / 12:27 P.M. LOS ANGELES / 9:27 P.M.
KOLWEZI

The burner displays the next instruction:

SECOND WINDOW. DOOR 9. 12:30-12:40.

Another soft cooler sits on the dock edge beside another pallet of melons.

Betzaida waits in Manny's rig. The burner in the cupholder. Her phone recording from the dash mount.

SUPER: 12:30 P.M.

Forklifts cross. Drivers sign sheets. A reefer coughs to life.

SUPER: 12:40 P.M.

No white van. No produce-company polo. No message.

Betzaida looks at the cooler. Condensation beads along the zipper.

SUPER: 12:45 P.M.

She remains where she is.

The burner stays dark.

At 12:47 she gets out, retrieves the cooler, and carries it back to the rig.

INT. KOLWEZI HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A ceiling fan turns beneath a light that dims with the generator.

Javier answers his ordinary phone.

INTERCUT - KOLWEZI / PRODUCE MARKET

BETZAIDA
They missed the window.

JAVIER
New location?

BETZAIDA
Nothing.

She presses a hand to the cooler lid. Still cold.

BETZAIDA
I have three days in a cooler and
nowhere to send them.

Javier looks at the depot notes spread across his hotel desk.

JAVIER
Keep the burner on.

BETZAIDA
It is on.

Neither has anything after that.

INT. KOLWEZI HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Javier calls Rivera. The generator drops out. Darkness, then emergency light.

RIVERA (V.O.)
The medical issue has been
re-elevated. An intermediary is
attempting contact.

JAVIER
You called the first drop a
channel. The second one
disappeared.

RIVERA (V.O.)
We did not lose it. We never
controlled it.

Javier looks at the black window. His own reflection over
the room.

JAVIER
You keep saying that like it helps.

RIVERA (V.O.)
Finish the diligence work. Get on
the charter Monday. That cover is
the only piece of this you still
have.

JAVIER
I'm just done with you.

He ends the call.

The generator catches. The room comes back exactly as it
was.

EXT. AURIX COMPOUND - TERRACE - DAY

SUPER: DAY 5 - SUNDAY

White cloth. Water already poured. Ceiling fans pushing warm
air over a compliance lunch.

At the table: Mercer, Javier, Mukendi, and BERNARD KASONGO,
50s, Aurix partner, immaculate in the dust.

An AURIX LOGISTICS COORDINATOR sets a slim folder beside
Bernard.

BERNARD
Formalized extraction is community
investment. The paperwork is the
proof.

Mercer raises his glass.

MERCER
To proof.

They drink.

Javier wears the sunglasses from the depot. Ordinary frames
except for a pinprick in the bridge.

His thumb finds a small clicker in his pocket.

Bernard opens the folder toward Mercer.

Javier catches the header before Mercer angles it away:

LOT TRANSFER SUMMARY MIXED AGGREGATION SECONDARY SORTING
PROTOCOL

Mercer asks Bernard about Brussels. Bernard begins a story
about a minister and a stalled elevator.

The table turns toward him.

Javier shifts the sunglasses half an inch.

CLICK.

Through the lens: lot numbers. Pre-sort grades.

Post-sort grades.

The same impossible rise Javier saw at Depot 1818.

A classification line changes:

ARTISANAL / UNVERIFIED to CONCESSION / VERIFIED No ore moves
on the page. Only words.

CLICK.

BERNARD

And then the elevator opens. The
minister has never moved.

The table laughs.

Javier does too.

EXT. AURIX COMPOUND - TERRACE - LATER

Coffee now. The folder remains open beside Mercer.

The Logistics Coordinator slides a second document beneath
the lot summary.

Javier catches the header:

MATERIAL ORIGIN ATTESTATION RETROACTIVE LOT ALLOCATION
CERTIFIED SOURCE LOTS: 1818 / 1821 / 1824 ALLOCATED FINISHED
SHIPMENT: MA-27 FINISHED AI ACCELERATOR MODULES

Javier's thumb presses once.

CLICK.

The page continues:

VESSEL: MSC ALBORAN PORT OF ENTRY: SAN PEDRO / LONG BEACH
INLAND TRANSFER: BNSF - ONTARIO CONSIGNEE: HALCYON MATERIALS
GROUP

Mercer places two fingers on the document.

MERCER
Downstream chain is outside the
local review.

JAVIER
It is still the chain.

Mercer closes the folder halfway.

Javier catches one final line before the paper disappears:

INSURED VALUE: \$50,000,000

Bernard studies Javier across the white cloth.

BERNARD
Mr. Jimenez.

Javier looks up.

BERNARD
You wanted chain integrity.

JAVIER
I wanted the break points named.

Mercer closes the folder.

Below the table edge, Javier wakes his phone.

On it, the photograph he took in Imelda's kitchen:

TWO WEEKS. TWO MILLION.

Above the white cloth, caught in the sunglass lens:

INSURED VALUE: \$50,000,000

The Logistics Coordinator gathers the papers.

The bottom of the attestation slides past Javier's glass.

PORT ETA: SUN 18 AUG BNSF RELEASE: MON 19 AUG

His thumb presses the clicker once more.

CLICK.

Mercer watches him.

Javier lifts his coffee and drinks.

INT. KOLWEZI HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Dark room. Generator hum. Javier sits on the edge of the bed in his undershirt.

The sunglasses connect to his laptop by a short black cable.

A hotel pad lies beside the laptop. Javier's notes from Depot 1818:

BOY / HANDLER ID / COMMON HOPPER / LOT 1818-A

Images advance across the screen:

PRE-SORT / POST-SORT. SECONDARY SORTING PROTOCOL.
RETROACTIVE LOT ALLOCATION. MA-27. SAN PEDRO / LONG BEACH.
BNSF - ONTARIO.

\$50,000,000.

He opens the photograph of the ransom demand.

TWO MILLION.

He places the two windows side by side.

A knock at the door.

Javier closes neither window.

MERCER (O.S.)
Six-thirty lobby. Monday charter
does not wait.

Javier writes on the hotel pad:

MA-27 / PORT ETA SUN 18 AUG / DAY 12

Under it: SAN PEDRO.

Across the page: ONTARIO / MON 19 AUG / DAY 13.

Below that: DEADLINE / WED 21 AUG / DAY 15.

He draws a line between them.

The pen stops at the end of the line.

INT. HECTOR'S APARTMENT - VAN NUYS - DAY

SUPER: DAY 5 - SUNDAY / 10:18 A.M. LOS ANGELES

A television carries Jess's photograph with the sound off.

HECTOR ALMANZA, 30s, Jess's younger brother, sits on the floor beside an Xbox opened to its storage menu.

Betzaida stands behind him. She has not taken off her work jacket.

HECTOR
She left it three weeks ago. I
thought it was a game file.

ON SCREEN: saved maps, potions, character builds. One folder named POTIONS_OLD.

Hector opens it.

A password field.

He types:

3MTA3

The folder unlocks.

Inside: video, spreadsheets, manifests, still images from above.

One file:

SECONDARY SORTING PROTOCOL

Hector plays the video.

ON THE SCREEN: Jess in his living room, still in uniform pants, speaking low so no one in the next room can hear.

JESS (ON SCREEN)
Hector. If this opened, I missed
the handoff. They will have what I
carried. They won't know about
this.

Hector's face tightens. Betzaida does not move.

JESS (ON SCREEN)
Copy it twice. Give one to
Betzaida. Tell Javier to watch the
transfer. It doesn't exist on paper
until it hits California.

The video ends.

A file list remains. HALCYON MATERIALS. TRANSFER
ATTESTATIONS. CONGO RAW.

HECTOR
What did she do.

BETZAIDA
She made a copy.

INT. HECTOR'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Two blank drives lie beside the Xbox.

A progress bar begins to move.

COPYING: POTIONS_OLD

Betzaida photographs the file list, not the files.

Her burner sounds from the table.

A new message:

ON SCREEN TEXT: MEDICAL RELEASE APPROVED. SATICOY CLINIC.
12:30. BRING INSULIN. COME ALONE. IF FOLLOWED, SHE MOVES.

Hector reads over her shoulder.

HECTOR
Release?

Betzaida takes the burner.

BETZAIDA
Copy it twice.

HECTOR
It isn't done.

BETZAIDA
Then don't let it stop.

She leaves.

EXT. SATICOY URGENT CARE - REAR LOT - DAY

SUPER: 12:27 P.M. LOS ANGELES / 9:27 P.M. KOLWEZI

Sunday shutters. Empty pharmacy windows. A rear clinic door
beneath a dead security light.

Manny's rig waits at the edge of the lot.

Betzaida sits alone behind the wheel. A fresh cooler belted
into the passenger seat.

The burner displays one word:

WAIT.

At the rear door, an unmarked white van idles.

Through its tinted side glass: IMELDA. Pale. Awake. One hand against the window.

Betzaida's hand closes around the door handle.

She stays inside.

A dark sedan rolls in from the street and stops across the mouth of the lot.

Two men inside. Plain clothes. Government haircuts. One lifts a phone toward the van.

The white van's brake lights flare.

The burner sounds.

ON SCREEN TEXT: YOU BROUGHT THEM.

BETZAIDA

No.

The van pulls away from the clinic door.

Imelda's hand disappears from the glass.

Betzaida starts the rig.

The dark sedan moves at the same moment, briefly crossing her path without seeming to.

By the time the lane clears, the van is gone.

The burner sounds again.

ON SCREEN TEXT: WINDOW CLOSED. SHE MOVES.

Betzaida looks at the two men in the sedan.

They look back as if they have never seen her.

She calls Javier.

INT. KOLWEZI HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Javier sits beside the line he drew from San Pedro to Ontario.

His phone rings. BETZAIDA.

He answers.

INTERCUT - KOLWEZI / SATICOY

JAVIER
I found a shipment.

BETZAIDA
Hector found the copy.

They both stop.

JAVIER
Of the drive?

BETZAIDA
What she left before the hotel.

Javier looks at SECONDARY SORTING PROTOCOL on his laptop.

BETZAIDA
She said watch the transfer.

JAVIER
It comes into San Pedro. Fifty
million. Seven days. Then rail to
Ontario.

Betzaida looks at the cooler beside her. Still sealed.

BETZAIDA
They opened the medical window
again.

JAVIER
Did they release her?

BETZAIDA
I saw her.

A beat.

BETZAIDA
Then a car came in. Two men
watching. The van moved her.

Javier looks at the photograph of the first medication
instructions on his phone.

BETZAIDA
Who did you tell.

JAVIER
Rivera.

Nine time zones between them. Neither fills it.

Betzaida watches the dark sedan leave the lot.

BETZAIDA
You work the money. I'll work the
medical.

Javier looks at the line from San Pedro to Ontario.

Betzaida looks at the cooler still belted into the passenger seat.

Neither says goodbye.

The call ends.

Javier keeps the phone to his ear a moment longer.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. IMELDA'S KITCHEN - MORNING

SUPER: DAY 6 - MONDAY

The burner lies dark beside the Saturday cooler.

Betzaida opens the refrigerator.

In the butter compartment: three rubber-banded bundles of insulin. One space empty. The bundle meant for Saturday still wrapped in its dish towel.

She checks the burner again.

Nothing.

She puts the Saturday bundle back and closes the door.

EXT. FEDERAL CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION, LOMPOC - DAY

Low buildings beyond wire. Wind folding dry grass against the fence.

Visitors cross the lot carrying nothing.

INT. LOMPOC - VISITING ROOM - DAY

Scratched plexiglass. Bolted stools. Phones the color of old teeth.

JANSON TORRES, 40s, prison blues, Betzaida's older brother, takes the receiver.

His first look is at her hands.

JANSON
How's Jasmine.

BETZAIDA
Working.

JANSON
That's not what I asked.

Betzaida picks up her receiver.

BETZAIDA
They took Ma.

Janson's face does not change.

JANSON
Tell me how.

Betzaida gives him the pieces.

BETZAIDA
Four men in ICE jackets. Genesis
loading dock. White van. The demand
came to Javier's burner. Different
van took the insulin. Different van
brought Ma to Saticoy.

JANSON
And the voices.

BETZAIDA
No voices. Text.

JANSON
Good.

BETZAIDA
Good.

JANSON
Means they don't trust anybody
enough to talk.

He counts the pieces against the scratched glass.

JANSON
Takers. Callers. Keepers.

BETZAIDA
Three crews.

JANSON
Takers know the body. Callers know
the price. Keepers know the door.

BETZAIDA
Which one do I need.

JANSON
The door.

He leans closer.

JANSON
There is a man named Rojas. Sonora side. He can reach people who keep things for other people.

BETZAIDA
You have a number.

JANSON
I have somebody who can put your number in front of him.

BETZAIDA
Do it.

JANSON
Not so you can ask where Ma is. You call when you can change his day.

Betzaida holds his eyes.

BETZAIDA
I'm working on that.

Janson studies her.

JANSON
Jasmine working on it too.

Betzaida says nothing.

JANSON
Dawes still around her.

BETZAIDA
She used him for a gate.

JANSON
You used her for a gate.

BETZAIDA
She kept her hands clean.

JANSON
I told you hands, Betz. Not eyes.

Betzaida's grip tightens on the receiver.

A GUARD taps his watch.

JANSON
Katrina home?

BETZAIDA
Not when I went by.

JANSON
Then Jasmine goes where you go
until this is done.

BETZAIDA
She is sixteen.

JANSON
That's why I said it.

He presses two fingers to the glass. Betzaida does not mirror him.

JANSON
Rojas calls, you sound like family
with something on the table.

The line clicks dead.

INT. LOMPOC - VISITOR LOCKERS - MOMENTS LATER

Betzaida opens a metal locker.

The burner waits inside.

Dark.

INT. IMELDA'S KITCHEN - DAY

SUPER: DAY 7 - TUESDAY

The key comes down from the frame over the door.

Javier enters with one carry-on and the Aurix folder under his arm.

Betzaida sits at the table. Saturday's cooler under her chair. The burner between two untouched cups.

Javier sets down what he brought home:

SECONDARY SORTING PROTOCOL. RETROACTIVE LOT ALLOCATION.
MA-27. SAN PEDRO / LONG BEACH. BNSF RELEASE - MON 19 AUG.
INSURED VALUE: \$50,000,000.

Betzaida lays a phone number beside it.

ROJAS.

JAVIER
Who is he.

BETZAIDA
A door to the people holding Ma.

JAVIER
Call him.

BETZAIDA
Janson says not until we have
something worth saying.

She taps MA-27.

BETZAIDA
Can we sell it.

JAVIER
Not in two days. Not without
becoming the easiest people in
California to find.

BETZAIDA
Then what did we find.

JAVIER
Collateral.

A beat.

JAVIER
We don't sell it. We make it
disappear.

Betzaida opens the refrigerator.

Three bundles remain in the butter compartment. The Saturday
bundle sits beside them, untouched.

She takes out one fresh bundle and writes TUESDAY on the
masking tape.

JAVIER
There is no window.

BETZAIDA
She still needs it.

She packs the bundle into a clean cooler.

BETZAIDA
Long enough to borrow against the
box.

Javier looks at her.

BETZAIDA
Levon.

INT. LEVON'S COLLISION SHOP - GLENDALE - NIGHT

Cars sit under plastic. Tools arranged with the seriousness
of surgical steel.

A roll-up door closes behind Betzaida, Javier, Manny and
Jasmine.

LEVON SARKISIAN, 50s, clean work shirt, reads the Aurix
documents at a metal desk.

ARMAN, 30s, Levon's broad-necked nephew, works at a frame
rack without pretending not to listen.

Levon looks at Betzaida.

LEVON
Janson bought you ten minutes.

He looks at Javier.

LEVON
The box buys the rest.

He points to the attestation.

LEVON
Container number.

JAVIER
MA-27 is the shipment identifier.
Box number posts when Alboran
clears discharge.

LEVON
Seal.

JAVIER
High-security bolt. Halcyon
release.

LEVON
Chassis.

JAVIER
Assigned at Pier 11.

LEVON
Rail.

JAVIER
BNSF release Monday. Ontario Day

Levon looks at the calendar on the wall. Then at the ransom photograph.

LEVON
And you need two million by next Wednesday.

BETZAIDA
We need Ma before Wednesday.

LEVON
Not the same sentence.

INT. LEVON'S COLLISION SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Levon takes a yellow pad.

At the top he writes:

48 HOURS

LEVON
I don't loan against plans. I loan against possession.

JAVIER
The box comes under your lock. You release two million.

LEVON
Two million out. Forty-eight hours to put it back.

BETZAIDA
And if we don't.

LEVON
First recovery on MA-27.

BETZAIDA
We are not selling it.

LEVON
Then pay me back.

He slides the pad toward them.

LEVON
Whatever you tell the kidnappers is
your religion. My religion is
collateral.

Manny looks at the fifty-million-dollar line.

MANNY
Two million for two days.

Arman says something low in Armenian.

Levon answers without looking at him.

BETZAIDA
We are still here.

LEVON
My nephew says the government man
is either very useful or the reason
everyone in this room goes away.

JAVIER
Both can be true.

One corner of Levon's mouth moves. Not quite a smile.

He turns to a clean page.

LEVON
Show me the gate.

INT. LEVON'S COLLISION SHOP - LATER

Jasmine opens her laptop.

The Pier 11 gate board fills the screen. Crane assignments.
Checker lanes. Reefer-service access.

LEVON
You have credentials.

JASMINE
Somebody set me up for dispatch
work and never turned them off.

LEVON
Somebody named Dawes.

Jasmine looks at Betzaida before answering.

JASMINE
He knows the terminals.

LEVON
That was not my question.

JASMINE
He got me the login.

Levon studies her. Then the screen.

LEVON
Who controls the chassis.

JASMINE
Forwarder posts it after discharge.
Gate board shows the row before the
driver gets the text.

LEVON
Names of the crane crew and
checker.

JASMINE
I can get them.

LEVON
How.

JASMINE
People talk when they think you're
stupid.

Levon looks at Betzaida.

BETZAIDA
She gave you what she heard. Now
let him talk.

Jasmine closes her mouth.

The burner lies beside the laptop.

Dark.

Levon draws:

PIER 11.

A line to 710.

A second line toward a holding yard.

LEVON
There is a dead interval after the
gate. Port thinks the road owns the
box. Consignee thinks the port
still owns it.

JAVIER
Paper trails the physical transfer.

Levon writes TRUCK and RAIL.

LEVON
Railroad has cameras.

He circles TRUCK.

LEVON
Ugly passes.

He draws a tractor leaving Pier 11.

LEVON
Legal driver. Legal release. Box
leaves like every other box.

A mark beside the 710.

LEVON
Air line fails here. Big, visible,
inconvenient.

He draws a tow truck with lights.

LEVON
Private call. No city rotation.
Mission arrives. Every eye moves to
the broken tractor.

Another tractor waits on the second line.

LEVON
Quiet truck takes the chassis while
everybody argues about the loud
one.

JAVIER
To your yard.

LEVON
Under my lock. Then the cash moves.

The plan sits between them. Simple enough to be believed.

Betzaida points to the tow truck.

BETZAIDA
Manny takes the wrecker.

LEVON
No.

He draws a line through Manny's name.

LEVON

You take the wrecker. Your name is
already in every system. One more
sighting adds nothing.

He writes MANNY outside the diagram.

LEVON

Loose support. No fixed position.
No radio unless something breaks.

JAVIER

Something will break.

Arman lowers the roll-up door until only a foot of night
remains beneath it.

Betzaida's phone vibrates.

Not the burner. A photograph from Dolly: the Mission Tow
office emptied under warrant. The butter compartment in
Imelda's refrigerator reflected faintly in the phone glass.

Betzaida turns the phone facedown.

INT. LEVON'S COLLISION SHOP - LATER

The yellow pad has become a map of names and times.

BETZAIDA - VISIBLE WRECKER ARMAN - LEGAL TRACTOR MANNY -
LOOSE JAVIER - RELEASE / COMMS LEVON - CASH / HOLDING YARD

Jasmine leans over the pad.

JASMINE

Where is the holding yard.

Levon draws a line through her name before writing it.

JASMINE

What is that.

LEVON

You leaving the room.

JASMINE

I got you Pier 11.

LEVON

You got us near Pier 11.

JASMINE

I can get the checker names.

LEVON
You will give them to your aunt.
Then you are done.

JASMINE
No percentage. No vote. No lane.

LEVON
Correct.

JASMINE
I'm not asking for money.

LEVON
That worries me more.

She turns to Betzaida.

JASMINE
You brought me here.

Betzaida looks at the yellow pad.

BETZAIDA
To answer questions.

JASMINE
I answered them.

JASMINE
So I'm good enough to get you past
the fence, but not good enough to
know what happens after.

Levon looks to Betzaida.

Betzaida looks at the pad. Her own name inside the diagram.
Jasmine's crossed out beside it.

Jasmine takes her laptop.

BETZAIDA
Outside.

JASMINE
Tia--

BETZAIDA
Now.

Jasmine goes through the side door. It SLAMS.

Inside, nobody moves for a beat.

Levon tears the top sheet from the pad.

LEVON
Again. Without the child.

Betzaida looks toward the closed door.

MANNY
She is not a child when you need
the password.

BETZAIDA
Not helping.

MANNY
Was not meant to.

Levon sets down a fresh sheet.

EXT. LEVON'S COLLISION SHOP - SIDE ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Jasmine stands beneath a security light. Laptop against her chest.

Her phone lights.

DAWES.

A new message begins to appear.

Jasmine looks through the shop window at the adults starting over without her.

Her thumb hovers over the screen.

ON SCREEN TEXT - DAWES: THEY CUT YOU OUT?

Through the shop window: Levon at the pad. Betzaida turned away. Javier reading the diagram.

Jasmine types.

ON SCREEN TEXT: THEY'RE USING WHAT I FOUND.

ON SCREEN TEXT - DAWES: THEN WHAT'D THEY PICK.

She hesitates.

Types:

ON SCREEN TEXT: TRUCK. MONDAY. 710. PRIVATE TOW.

Her thumb finds PRIVATE TOW. Deletes it.

She looks through the window again.

Types it back. Sends.

INT. DAWES'S CAR - NEAR THE PORT - CONTINUOUS

A work vest on the passenger seat. Fast-food wrappers in the door well. The ordinary sediment of a man who waits in cars for a living.

DAWES, 20s, reads Jasmine's message. He copies the words into a different thread and thins them out.

ON SCREEN TEXT: ROAD MOVE. MONDAY. MISSION TOW.

The recipient is a number with no name.

No reply comes. No payment chimes. The information simply leaves his phone.

EXT. LEVON'S COLLISION SHOP - SIDE ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Jasmine pockets the phone. She walks to the mouth of the alley and stops there, in the dark past the light, before anyone inside has noticed the door.

INT. IMELDA'S KITCHEN - MORNING

SUPER: DAY 8 - WEDNESDAY

The Tuesday cooler sits on the table, packed, unopened.

Betzaida opens the refrigerator. The Saturday bundle waits in the butter compartment beside the others. She reaches for it. Stops at the date on the tape.

She checks the temperature indicator on the Tuesday cooler instead.

Still safe.

The burner on the table is dark.

She takes a new prepaid phone from her jacket and dials the Sonora number Janson gave her.

The line opens. No greeting.

BETZAIDA
Janson gave me this number.

ROJAS
Your mother's name is off the
paper.

BETZAIDA
What does that mean.

ROJAS

The men who call don't feed her.
The men who feed her don't know
what she's worth.

Betzaida stands still with the cold air of the open
refrigerator against her.

BETZAIDA

Where is she.

ROJAS

You call when you can change his
day.

BETZAIDA

Whose day.

The line disconnects.

Betzaida looks at the dead phone. Then at the Tuesday bundle
in her hand.

She peels the masking tape and writes over the date. Not a
day. A name.

ON SCREEN TEXT: ROJAS

She sets the bundle in the cooler with the others. The route
the insulin will take is now a man, not a window.

The burner stays dark.

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE - CIVIC CENTER - DAY

Concrete and low ceiling. No institutional comfort. Morales
waits by an unmarked sedan with two coffees he brought
himself.

Javier and Betzaida come down the ramp on foot.

Morales hands Javier a photocopy. Jess's property inventory.

He reads it aloud from memory before Javier finds the line.

MORALES

Phone. Wallet. Keys. No drive.

JAVIER

It was taped above her ankle.

Morales lets that sit.

MORALES

Then somebody reached her before
the sheet did.

JAVIER

They have the originals.

BETZAIDA

Hector has the copy.

JAVIER

And the first time we use something
only Jess knew, they know where to
look for it.

Betzaida absorbs it.

BETZAIDA

Then we don't use it.

JAVIER

MA-27 came out of my authorized
Aurix work. It doesn't point at
Hector.

BETZAIDA

Nothing from the Xbox. Hector
doesn't open it again. The Xbox
stays put.

MORALES

And Simmons?

Javier has nothing.

EXT. 710 FREEWAY - SHOULDER - DAY

SUPER: DAY 9 - THURSDAY

A private service call. No city rotation. A tractor sits
dead on the shoulder, hazards going, an air-line failure
Arman arranged an hour ago. Traffic shoves past in the near
lane.

The visible Mission rig comes up the shoulder. Betzaida
driving.

Farther back, an unmarked support truck. Manny at the wheel,
patient, out of the picture.

Javier stands off the shoulder with a stopwatch. Levon
watches the sight lines, not the work.

The rehearsal runs nearly silent.

Betzaida noses the rig in and blocks the dead tractor. Amber lights wash the lane. Passing cars ease off, the way they do for anything with a beacon.

Arman goes under the trailer.

Manny slides one lane over behind a box truck and is gone from every mirror.

Javier's thumb comes down on the watch.

Six minutes, arrival to controlled movement.

The truck plan works.

Then Jasmine's phone buzzes. A screenshot from Marisol's brother, sent up through the legitimate terminal network.

ON SCREEN TEXT: MA-27 - TRANSPORT MODE AMENDED / ON-DOCK
RAIL / NO DRAYAGE RELEASE / BNSF DIRECT - ONTARIO

She reads it twice before she says it.

JASMINE
No truck leaves Pier 11.

The shoulder goes quiet under the traffic noise. The operation they just rehearsed to six clean minutes is a rehearsal for nothing.

Levon takes the stopwatch out of Javier's hand and stops it, though it is already stopped.

At the vehicles he draws a line through TRUCK.

LEVON
Road's gone.

Javier studies the amended release.

JAVIER
It changed after Tuesday.

Betzaida. Levon. Arman. Manny. Javier looks at each of them in turn. Then at Jasmine, apart from the others, already looking at her phone.

INT. JASMINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dark room. One lamp. Jasmine on the floor against the bed, laptop closed for once.

Her phone lights.

ON SCREEN TEXT - DAWES: DON'T PUT YOUR AUNT ON THE 710.

She sits up.

ON SCREEN TEXT - DAWES: THEY KNOW THE TRUCK.

Her thumb is already moving.

ON SCREEN TEXT: WHO DID YOU TELL.

The reply takes a long time. Long enough that she watches the three dots start and stop twice.

ON SCREEN TEXT - DAWES: I SOLD A ROAD. I DIDN'T SELL YOUR FAMILY.

Then, after another wait:

ON SCREEN TEXT - DAWES: DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS HALCYON.

Jasmine reads the name twice.

A new attachment loads. A terminal exception screen. An inspection code field.

ON SCREEN TEXT - DAWES: RAIL DIRECT. THIS IS THE ONLY PLACE IT COMES OFF BEFORE ONTARIO.

She does not answer his defense of himself. She saves the attachment.

Then she deletes the thread.

ON SCREEN TEXT: MOVE TO RECENTLY DELETED?

She confirms. The RECENTLY DELETED folder opens on one new conversation.

Her thumb hovers over DELETE PERMANENTLY.

She darkens the phone instead.

INT. LEVON'S COLLISION SHOP - DAY

SUPER: DAY 10 - FRIDAY

Jasmine sets the amended release on Levon's metal desk. She presents it as terminal-network information. She does not say Dawes.

Levon does not tell her to leave this time. Nobody remarks on it.

Javier reads the exception field.

JAVIER

We don't stop the train. We change where the box comes off it.

JASMINE

A seal discrepancy forces the box out of the consist. Weight, documents, a broken bolt -- any of them. The train sets it onto a chassis in the Ontario inspection lane.

LEVON

And after it's pulled.

JASMINE

A chassis gets assigned. They move it to inspection.

Manny sees it before anyone draws it.

MANNY

Then it's a truck again.

Levon looks at the diagram a long moment. Then crosses out the whole road route -- every shoulder, every lane, the dead tractor, all of it.

He draws one line.

ON SCREEN TEXT (ON THE PAD): PIER 11 -> ONTARIO

And circles one point on it:

ON SCREEN TEXT (ON THE PAD): EXCEPTION LANE

LEVON

More cameras. Fewer shoulders. Railroad police. A schedule nobody slows.

But the exception lane gives back a little of what it takes.

A predictable stop. A box on wheels. Four authorities -- railroad, customs, maintenance, consignee -- each certain one of the others owns the container. And paper that can be copied.

The clone returns.

They do not steal MA-27's identity. They lend it. They hang MA-27's numbers on a harmless box long enough for the cameras and the software to follow the wrong one off the train.

Javier gives the container and seal numbers.

Jasmine can make the discrepancy, or insert it.

Arman can cut the physical seal to match.

Manny waits outside the lane with a private-service reason to be there.

Betzaida takes the visible place again -- not on a freeway shoulder now, but at Ontario, the expected woman beside a disabled chassis.

Levon writes three words down the pad:

ON SCREEN TEXT (ON THE PAD): BOX / WORDS / WHEELS

He pushes it to Javier. Javier draws the arrows -- where the box changes hands, where the words change owners, where the wheels take over.

Nobody says the word Congo. The diagram says it for them.

LEVON

Who sent the amended release.

Jasmine looks at the pad.

JASMINE

It came through the terminal chain.

True. Not an answer. Levon knows the difference and lets it stand a beat too long.

Levon looks to Betzaida.

Betzaida looks at Jasmine.

Jasmine keeps her eyes on the pad.

The burner lights on the workbench before anyone spends it.

Everyone turns.

A video.

Imelda on a narrow bed. No insulin in frame. Her face damp. A hand off-frame holds a glucose meter up to the lens.

ON SCREEN TEXT (METER): 361

The video ends.

ON SCREEN TEXT: HAVE THE MONEY READY. NEXT INSTRUCTIONS DAY

Javier looks at the rail line he just helped draw.

JAVIER
Day thirteen is Ontario.

Betzaida looks at the frozen glucose number.

BETZAIDA
They know the box moved.

JAVIER
Or somebody told them.

Nobody says Halcyon. The evidence points there and the room lets it point, one step short of a single hand behind both clocks.

Levon circles DAY 13 on the pad. The medical clock and the container clock are one clock now.

BETZAIDA
Monday.

In Jasmine's pocket, her phone vibrates once. She does not take it out. We see the screen she is not looking at:

ON SCREEN TEXT - DAWES: YOU NEED TO TELL HER.

Jasmine keeps her hand still on her knee.

On the pad, the line runs from Pier 11 to Ontario. Beside it, the number 361.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. IMELDA'S KITCHEN - MORNING

SUPER: DAY 11 - SATURDAY

The cooler marked ROJAS sits sealed on the table.

Betzaida takes the prepaid from her jacket and dials the Sonora number.

The line opens. No greeting.

BETZAIDA
I have something worth your day.

ROJAS (V.O.)
Say it once.

BETZAIDA

A box comes off a train Monday.
Fifty million on the paper. I say
where it stops.

ROJAS (V.O.)

Monday you have that. Today you
have a phone.

BETZAIDA

My mother needs insulin before
Monday.

ROJAS (V.O.)

The ones who call don't feed her. I
feed her.

BETZAIDA

Where.

ROJAS (V.O.)

Tomorrow. Eleven-forty. Laundromat
on Tyler. Third machine from the
door. Clean hands. Not yours.

BETZAIDA

And I get what.

ROJAS (V.O.)

Her face. Not a promise. A face.

The line goes dead.

Betzaida sets the prepaid on the table beside the cooler. In
the drawer, the burner stays dark.

INT. LEVON'S COLLISION SHOP - NIGHT

The pad from Friday, redrawn clean. One line: PIER 11 to
ONTARIO. One circle: EXCEPTION LANE.

Betzaida, Javier, Manny and Arman at the desk. Jasmine at
the end with her laptop closed.

LEVON

Box discharges San Pedro tomorrow.
Rails Sunday night. Ontario Monday,
first light.

He taps the circle.

LEVON

It comes off here or it rides to a
customer who counts it.

JAVIER

Seal discrepancy pulls it from the consist. Weight won't match the manifest. Railroad sets it on a chassis in the inspection lane and waits for four people to sign.

LEVON

And while they wait.

ARMAN

I cut the bolt. New bolt on the decoy. Same number.

LEVON

Betzaida.

BETZAIDA

Disabled chassis in the lane. Mission call, private. I pull the real one out under lights. A breakdown.

MANNY

And I'm the truck nobody wrote down.

LEVON

The discrepancy goes in the system before the train leaves San Pedro. After that the paper's moving and your hands don't reach it.

They look at Jasmine's laptop.

JASMINE

I can file it from the terminal login.

LEVON

From where.

JASMINE

Cleaner on the terminal network. Yard office guest wifi. Ten minutes inside the fence.

Betzaida turns to her.

BETZAIDA

No.

JASMINE

It's a login and a form. Nobody clocks a girl on a laptop.

BETZAIDA
That's not the reason and you know
it isn't.

Jasmine doesn't answer.

MANNY
She's right about the girl part.

BETZAIDA
Not helping.

MANNY
Wasn't trying to. Telling you what
a camera sees.

Levon watches Jasmine a beat.

LEVON
Whose login.

A fraction too long.

JASMINE
Mine to use.

Levon lets it stand. He does not say Dawes. Neither does
she.

BETZAIDA
She files from the apartment. Not
the fence.

EXT. EL MONTE - LAUNDROMAT - DAY

SUPER: DAY 12 - SUNDAY / 11:40 A.M.

Jasmine crosses the lot with a laundry bag. Inside it, the
ROJAS cooler.

INT. LAUNDROMAT - CONTINUOUS

Fluorescent hum. A woman folds towels. A child watches a
dryer turn.

Jasmine opens the third machine from the door. She sets the
cooler inside, not the clothes. Closes the glass. Feeds a
quarter she doesn't need to.

She walks out carrying the empty laundry bag.

EXT. LAUNDROMAT - ACROSS THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

Betzaida watches from Manny's rig. Her hands stay on the
wheel.

The prepaid lights. A photograph.

Imelda, seated, holds an insulin pen to the lens. Fresh tape. A date in a hand that is not hers.

Betzaida studies it. It came through Rojas. The burner in her jacket stays dark.

EXT. VAN NUYS - HECTOR'S BLOCK - DAY

SUPER: DAY 12 - SUNDAY / 1:15 P.M.

A sedan parked across from Hector's building. Two men.

Coffee. In no hurry.

INT. HECTOR'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The blinds cracked a finger wide. Hector at the gap, phone to his ear. The Xbox sits dark beneath the television.

INTERCUT - HECTOR'S APARTMENT / MANNY'S RIG

HECTOR

There's a car. Two guys. Since church let out.

BETZAIDA

Doing what.

HECTOR

Nothing. Sitting. One of them ate.

BETZAIDA

If it was a warrant, they'd be at the door.

HECTOR

I want it out of here. The box. I'll drive it to the desert.

BETZAIDA

You move the console, you tell them it's the console.

HECTOR

It's sitting on a shelf, Betzaida.

BETZAIDA

Then let it sit. Take out the trash. Buy a soda. Bore them.

HECTOR

Somebody's watching me.

BETZAIDA
Then do it slow.

Across the street, the passenger door opens. A man gets out.
He looks up at the building. He does not cross yet.
Hector lets the blind fall shut.

EXT. SAN PEDRO - TERMINAL OVERLOOK - DUSK

SUPER: DAY 12 - SUNDAY / 6:50 P.M.

Javier in a parked car above the container yard. Below,
cranes work a berthed vessel. MSC ALBORAN on the hull.

On his phone, Jasmine's gate board. A row lights.

ON SCREEN TEXT: MA-27 / DISCHARGED / RAIL BUILD - BNSF

JASMINE (V.O.)
It's off the ship. Building onto
the Ontario train tonight.

Javier lifts a small pair of binoculars.

Down in the yard a box comes off the stack. Two men walk
beside it. Soft-shell jackets, no reflective stripes. Not
railroad. Not customs.

One clamps a small black unit to the container door and
photographs the number.

JAVIER
They put an escort on it.

JASMINE (V.O.)
Do they know about us?

JAVIER
If they did, the box wouldn't be
moving. It'd be sitting under a
light.

The men do not hurry. They finish and walk to a clean SUV
with no markings. The box rides toward the rail build in the
dark.

INT. JASMINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

SUPER: DAY 12 - SUNDAY / 11:52 P.M.

One lamp. The terminal login on screen. The discrepancy form
filled: weight, seal, a broken-bolt flag against MA-27.

Jasmine clicks SUBMIT.

The screen holds. Then:

ON SCREEN TEXT: REMOTE SUBMISSION BLOCKED - ON-SITE NETWORK
REQUIRED

Her phone lights. DAWES.

ON SCREEN TEXT - DAWES: THEY LOCKED MY REMOTE ACCESS
TONIGHT. DON'T FILE FROM IT.

The login is Dawes's. She has known and hasn't said.

She picks up the phone and calls her aunt.

INTERCUT - JASMINE'S APARTMENT / IMELDA'S KITCHEN

JASMINE
It won't take it remote. It wants
the yard network.

BETZAIDA
No.

JASMINE
Then the box stays on the train.

Betzaida says nothing.

JASMINE
Tía.

BETZAIDA
You stay in the office. You don't
come past the glass.

EXT. BNSF ONTARIO - INTERMODAL YARD - DAWN

SUPER: DAY 13 - MONDAY / 5:20 A.M.

A cold flat yard. Stacked wells. A train easing in off the
main.

In the inspection lane, a chassis sits with its air line
bled.

On it: a harmless gray container wearing MA-27's stenciled
number.

The Mission rig stands over it, amber lights turning.

Betzaida in the cab.

Down the fence, Manny's unmarked truck idles among bobtails.

INT. BNSF ONTARIO - YARD OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A cramped counter, a guest terminal in the corner. Jasmine at it, visitor lanyard, laptop open beside the yard's own screen.

INTERCUT - YARD OFFICE / INSPECTION LANE / MANNY'S TRUCK

JAVIER (V.O.)
Train's in. MA-27 is third well
from the head.

On the yard's own terminal, Jasmine files the discrepancy.

This time it posts.

ON SCREEN TEXT: MA-27 - SEAL/WEIGHT DISCREPANCY - SET OUT
FOR INSPECTION

JASMINE (V.O.)
It's out of the consist. They'll
pull it to the lane.

A hostler lifts the flagged box off the well, sets it on a chassis, and rolls it into the inspection lane beside the decoy.

Two boxes now, ten feet apart. The same number stenciled on both.

Arman steps down from the passenger side of the Mission rig.

Hi-vis vest. The cutter flat against his leg.

Up the lane, a clean SUV. Two men in soft-shell jackets step out. The San Pedro escort. They walk the row, reading door numbers.

BETZAIDA
(into comms)
Company's here.

JAVIER (V.O.)
Do they move on the box?

The men stop at the decoy. One photographs the number. They do not look at the real one. Not yet.

MANNY (V.O.)
They're reading the paper. The
paper says the decoy.

In the office, the clerk turns toward Jasmine.

CLERK
Whose kid.

JASMINE
Contractor. Seal audit.

She holds up the lanyard. The clerk turns back to his coffee.

In the lane, Arman reaches the real MA-27, ten feet from the decoy. He sets the cutter to the high-security bolt.

In the cup holder, the burner wakes. The callers, on schedule.

ON SCREEN TEXT: DAY 13. FINAL INSTRUCTIONS TO FOLLOW. STAND BY.

Betzaida looks at it. She does not pick it up.

Down the row, a soft-shell man checks his phone. The decoy stands right in front of him, its number correct. His phone pulls him off it, toward the real box. Toward Betzaida.

Arman's cutter closes on the bolt.

The seal parts.

EXT. BNSF ONTARIO - INSPECTION LANE - CONTINUOUS

The cut bolt hangs from the real container's hasp. Arman lifts it free and pockets it.

From his vest, a second bolt, its number matched to the decoy's paper. He crosses to the decoy and seats it home.

The decoy is MA-27 now. Number, manifest, seal. All three agree.

At the real box, Arman snaps a plain orange maintenance seal through the naked hasp. It doesn't authenticate anything. It makes a container pulled for chassis repair look closed and controlled.

Down the lane the signatures arrive. A railroad inspector with a tablet. A customs officer. A maintenance lead. A consignee rep in a windbreaker.

Each stops at the decoy. Each waits for one of the others to take the box first.

At the far chassis, Betzaida backs the underlift beneath the chassis axle. The forks close. Amber lights turning. A breakdown on a private call.

The two soft-shell men stand with the paper crowd.

One reads the stenciled number and is satisfied.

The other checks his phone. Steps back from the decoy.

He looks down the lane, at the tow rig lifting the second box.

INT. JAVIER'S CAR - YARD APPROACH - CONTINUOUS

Javier parked on the access road, engine running, eyes on the lane through the fence.

Through the fence he finds the black unit still clamped to the real container's door. The soft-shell man checks his phone and keeps coming.

INTERCUT - JAVIER'S CAR / INSPECTION LANE / MANNY'S TRUCK

JAVIER
(into comms)
That unit from San Pedro. He's
following the signal, not the
number.

In the lane, Arman finds the same unit on the real box, inches from his hand.

BETZAIDA
(into comms)
Then it watched all of it.

JAVIER
Stop now and you've got two boxes
and a cut seal in one lane.

BETZAIDA
I know what I've got.

She does not stop. The real MA-27 rises onto the underlift.

INT. MANNY'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Manny watches the soft-shell man watch Betzaida. His hand rests on the shifter. He leaves it there.

The underlift locks. Betzaida's rig eases the real MA-27 out of the inspection lane, past the frozen signatures, toward the gate.

Only now does Manny put the truck in gear.

INT. MISSION RIG - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

In the cup holder, the burner buzzes. Then again.

ON SCREEN TEXT: PROOF OF FUNDS. NOW. OR THE NEXT WINDOW IS THE LAST.

Betzaida keeps both hands on the wheel. She does not look at it.

EXT. BNSF ONTARIO - GATE - CONTINUOUS

At the gate, the guard scans the off-site repair ticket clipped to Betzaida's window.

Green.

He waves her through. The box rides out behind the rig.

INTERCUT - JAVIER'S CAR / MISSION RIG

JAVIER
They want proof.

BETZAIDA
Then get me somewhere I can prove
it.

EXT. ONTARIO - INDUSTRIAL APPROACH - CONTINUOUS

Behind the rig, the clean SUV pulls out of the yard. The soft-shell man at the wheel. On the cradled phone, a point moves where the box moves.

Manny's truck slides between them.

He changes lanes when they change lanes. He sits where they need to see.

At the split for the interstate he drifts wide and closes the gap to the on-ramp until the SUV takes it or hits him.

The SUV takes it.

Now the SUV is on the ramp and the rig is on the frontage road, and Manny is the vehicle the tracker team has to get past.

He doesn't touch them. He's just in the way.

Ahead, Betzaida's rig makes the frontage turn and drops behind a row of warehouses.

On the SUV's cradled phone, the point turns with it. Still on the real box. Still moving.

Manny holds a speed that keeps them behind him.

EXT. FONTANA - FRONTAGE ROAD - DAY

SUPER: DAY 13 - MONDAY / 6:02 A.M.

The interstate curves back toward the frontage road. On the SUV's cradled phone, the point pulls east, off the freeway line.

The SUV muscles down the shoulder onto the surface streets.

Manny goes with it, still a truck-length ahead.

The SUV finds a gap Manny can't close and takes it. The distance to the signal starts to shrink.

Ahead: a Fontana diesel yard. Fuel islands, a tire shop, a closed truck-wash bay at the back.

Betzaida's rig swings wide and noses the container chassis toward the bay.

INT. TRUCK-WASH BAY - CONTINUOUS

The chassis clears the threshold. The roll-up door comes down behind it.

Dim light, coiled hoses, standing water. A second roll-up at the far end, shut.

Betzaida drops from the cab. Arman is already at the rear of the container.

He runs a hand down the door frame and finds it. A flat magnetic unit, matte black, seated against the steel.

He works a bar under its edge and peels it free. A dull click.

Outside, an engine. Two knocks on the far door.

The far roll-up lifts. Manny noses the truck's bumper under it, into the bay.

Arman goes flat on the wet concrete and reaches up under the frame. He sets the unit behind the front axle. The magnet takes it.

The signal is on Manny now.

Manny backs out into the service alley. His truck carries no container. Just a truck and the signal.

EXT. FONTANA DIESEL YARD - CONTINUOUS

The SUV slows at the fuel islands.

On the cradled phone, the point moves out the back and down the alley.

The SUV turns after it.

INT. TRUCK-WASH BAY - CONTINUOUS

The first roll-up lifts. Betzaida pulls the rig and the real MA-27 out the opposite side, into a lane that doesn't front the yard.

No point rides with her now. The chassis is only freight.

EXT. LEVON'S HOLDING YARD - DAY

SUPER: DAY 13 - MONDAY / 6:41 A.M.

A blind industrial gate, no signage. Betzaida rolls the container up to it. It opens, takes her in, and closes.

Javier waits inside the fence.

INT. LEVON'S HOLDING YARD - CONTINUOUS

Levon walks the length of the container. The number. The orange seal. The corner castings. The number again.

LEVON
It's the box.

On the office whiteboard he writes the window and draws a box around it.

ON SCREEN TEXT (WHITEBOARD): MON 6:41 A.M. -> WED 6:41 A.M.

Arman drops two duffels at Betzaida's feet and unzips one.

Bank-wrapped bundles, banded and stacked.

INTERCUT - LEVON'S YARD / MANNY'S TRUCK

JAVIER
(into comms)
Box locked. Money live.

Manny hears it. He does not slow down.

INT. LEVON'S HOLDING YARD - CONTINUOUS

Javier photographs the burner's current screen. Betzaida starts recording on the burner.

Against the blank wall: two open duffels. Javier's phone beside them, displaying the demand.

ON SCREEN TEXT (JAVIER'S PHONE): PROOF OF FUNDS. NOW. OR THE NEXT WINDOW IS THE LAST.

Betzaida steps into frame. Her, the cash, the demand. No box. Nothing behind her.

She sends the recording from the burner.

INTERCUT - LEVON'S YARD / MANNY'S TRUCK

Betzaida watches the burner.

ON SCREEN TEXT (BURNER): PROOF ACCEPTED. AWAIT FINAL LOCATION.

In Manny's mirror, the clean SUV swings back into his lane. Gaining.

Manny does not slow.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. LEVON'S HOLDING YARD - OFFICE - MORNING

SUPER: DAY 13 - MONDAY / 6:47 A.M.

The burner lies beside the two open duffels.

PROOF ACCEPTED still on its screen.

Javier's Bureau phone rings across the room.

It has not rung since the Hilton.

ON SCREEN TEXT: SIMMONS

Javier looks at Betzaida. Answers. Puts it on speaker.

JAVIER
Where were you.

SIMMONS (V.O.)
Inside.

Nothing moves in the room.

SIMMONS (V.O.)
You moved MA-27.

JAVIER
The tracker says that.

SIMMONS (V.O.)
The tracker is moving east on a
truck with no container. The men
behind it know the difference.

Javier looks through the office window at the real MA-27
inside Levon's locked yard.

SIMMONS (V.O.)
The next message gives you a
recovery point. You bring the box.

JAVIER
Then tell them the window stays
open.

SIMMONS (V.O.)
What window.

JAVIER
The people holding my mother had my
operational number.

A beat.

SIMMONS (V.O.)
Then somebody else was inside.

Javier says nothing.

SIMMONS (V.O.)
Bring back MA-27 and the breach
stays contained.

JAVIER
Contained.

SIMMONS (V.O.)
Refuse, and by morning what Jess
carried enters evidence with your
number on it. So does everyone she
contacted.

JAVIER
You took it off her.

SIMMONS (V.O.)
She brought classified material
into a protected operation.

JAVIER
She brought it to us.

SIMMONS (V.O.)
That was the problem.

The line goes dead.

Javier keeps the phone to his ear another second.

Then lowers it.

BETZAIDA
He doesn't know about Ma.

JAVIER
No.

BETZAIDA
He knows the box.

Javier looks through the window again. MA-27 under lock.

Then at the comms unit.

INTERCUT - LEVON'S YARD / MANNY'S TRUCK

Manny drives a four-lane industrial road. The clean SUV
three car-lengths back.

JAVIER
(into comms)
Don't lose them.

MANNY
That wasn't the problem.

Javier ends the call.

EXT. FONTANA - INDUSTRIAL STREETS - CONTINUOUS

Manny passes an open freeway ramp.

Does not take it.

The SUV closes to two lengths.

Ahead, a light turns yellow. Manny could clear it.

He brakes.

The light goes red.

The SUV stops behind him.

Manny watches the two soft-shell men in his mirror. They
watch him back.

Green.

He moves.

At the next intersection he turns away from the freeway and deeper into the warehouses.

The SUV follows.

INT. LEVON'S HOLDING YARD - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Javier's Bureau phone lights with a new message.

ON SCREEN TEXT: NO HANDOFFS. KEEP THE SIGNAL MOVING.
RECOVERY LOCATION TO FOLLOW.

Betzaida reads it over his shoulder.

BETZAIDA
No handoffs.

JAVIER
He heard buyer.

BETZAIDA
They think they're leading us.

JAVIER
Right now they can only follow.

EXT. FONTANA - INDUSTRIAL STREETS - CONTINUOUS

The SUV holds two lengths back.

A gray sedan turns in from a cross street and settles in behind it.

Manny checks the mirror. Counts.

MANNY
(into comms)
Company brought company.

Manny eases off the throttle.

The SUV gains.

He holds it there - close enough to see, too far to touch.

A side street opens beside him. Empty. An easy exit.

Manny drives past it.

INT. LEVON'S HOLDING YARD - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Betzaida takes the prepaid from her jacket.

Through the window, the real MA-27 sits under Levon's lock.

Betzaida steps close to MA-27. Photographs only the number and orange seal. Steel fills the frame.

She dials the Sonora number.

The line opens. No greeting.

BETZAIDA
It's Monday.

ROJAS (V.O.)
Say what you have.

BETZAIDA
Check the phone.

She sends the photograph. A pause on the line.

ROJAS (V.O.)
A box.

BETZAIDA
Fifty million on the paper. It
moves again inside two days. One
location. One ten-minute window. I
say where.

Silence. Long enough that she checks the screen.

ROJAS (V.O.)
And you want.

BETZAIDA
My mother crosses to me, breathing.
Then you get where the box goes
next.

ROJAS (V.O.)
The ones who call still get their
money.

BETZAIDA
They get their money. You get the
route. She gets delivered by your
people. Not theirs.

ROJAS (V.O.)
You're asking me to move her.

BETZAIDA
I'm asking you to feed her one more
day and carry her to a door. You
already do the first part.

Another silence. Through the office window, Javier watches her, hearing half of it.

ROJAS (V.O.)
The route first.

BETZAIDA
Her first. Breathing. Then the route. That's the whole shape of it.

A beat.

ROJAS (V.O.)
When they send you the place, I will already know it.

The line goes dead.

Betzaida lowers the phone.

JAVIER
He took it.

BETZAIDA
He took her.

She looks at the burner beside the duffels. Dark.

EXT. VAN NUYS - HECTOR'S BLOCK - DAY

SUPER: DAY 13 - MONDAY / 11:24 A.M.

The sedan across from Hector's building. The two men inside.

Cold coffee on the dash.

The passenger's phone lights. He answers. Listens. Says nothing.

He hangs up and looks at the driver.

The passenger gets out.

The driver stays.

INT. HECTOR'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The television murmurs. The Xbox dark beneath it.

Hector at the counter, eating standing up.

The lobby buzzer sounds.

He stops chewing.

It sounds again. Held longer.

Hector sets the plate down without a sound. Crosses to the window. The gap in the blinds.

The sedan across the street. One man inside now.

The empty passenger seat.

Footsteps in the stairwell. Unhurried. Rising.

Hector looks at the Xbox.

He does not move toward it.

The footsteps reach his floor and stop.

A knock. Two knuckles, evenly spaced.

VOICE (O.S.)
Mr. Almanza. Federal agents.

Hector stands still in the middle of the room.

The knock again. The same two knuckles.

VOICE (O.S.)
Open the door, please.

Hector looks at the Xbox beneath the television. Dark.

He does not move toward it.

He opens the door.

Two men in the hall. Soft-shell jackets. One holds a credential wallet up and closes it before the photograph resolves.

FIRST MAN
We need you to come with us.

HECTOR
Am I under arrest.

FIRST MAN
We need you to come with us.

The same words. The same weight.

Hector takes his keys from the counter. He does not look at the Xbox again.

The first man steps aside to let him into the hall.

Courteous. Unhurried.

The apartment door closes.

The Xbox remains dark beneath the television.

CUT TO:

INT. IMELDA'S KITCHEN - DAY

SUPER: DAY 14 - TUESDAY / 9:41 A.M.

The burner lies on the table between Betzaida and Javier.

It lights.

ON SCREEN TEXT: DAY 15. WEDNESDAY. 5:30 A.M. ONE VEHICLE.
THE SISTER DRIVES. THE BROTHER CARRIES. BURNER STAYS ON. NO
POLICE. MONEY CROSSES FIRST. SHE WALKS WHEN IT CLEARS.

A map pin follows. An address east of the basin.

Javier reads it twice.

JAVIER
They know it's both of us.

BETZAIDA
They've known since the hotel.

She looks at the pin.

BETZAIDA
Money first. She walks after.

JAVIER
That's the part they control.

BETZAIDA
That's the part we're changing.

The prepaid buzzes in her jacket. She takes it out.

A video.

ON THE PHONE: Imelda belted into a moving van. Refrigeration
hum under road noise. She is awake. She holds an insulin pen
to the lens. Today's date on the tape, in a hand not her
own.

No faces. The van moves.

The video ends.

ON SCREEN TEXT - PREPAID: MOVING.

Betzaida sets the prepaid beside the burner.

BETZAIDA
Rojas has her.

JAVIER
You believe the date.

BETZAIDA
I believe he wants the route.

INT. JASMINE'S APARTMENT - DAY

SUPER: DAY 14 - TUESDAY / 11:15 A.M.

Jasmine at the table, both screens open. A satellite image of the Ontario complex fills the laptop.

Betzaida behind her. Javier at the window.

Jasmine traces it with a finger.

JASMINE
Two loading courts. Parallel. Cold storage on the north side, reefer yard on the east.

She pulls a second layer. Camera icons bloom across the map.

JASMINE
Cameras on the main gates and the dock faces. The service road between the courts and the reefer yard is dark. No coverage.

BETZAIDA
Gates.

JASMINE
Three. Two powered, one manual. The manual maintenance gate connects the exchange court to the reefer yard.

She zooms it. A chain-link gate on a rolling track, between the two spaces.

JASMINE
That's the only thing standing between the bay they picked and the yard next to it.

Betzaida looks at the gate a long moment.

BETZAIDA
Who controls it.

JASMINE
Whoever's standing next to it. It's
a hand-pull. No motor, no log.

Javier turns from the window.

JAVIER
I want to see it in the dark.

EXT. ONTARIO - COLD-STORAGE COMPLEX - DAY

SUPER: DAY 14 - TUESDAY / 2:38 P.M.

Javier's car moves down a public road along the complex
fence. He does not slow.

Through the fence: two loading courts under the flat
afternoon light. A fenced reefer yard beside them, units
running in rows.

And between them, low and easy to miss, the manual
maintenance gate on its track.

Javier drives the length of it once. The exchange court on
his left. The reefer yard past it. The dark service road
joining their rear boundaries.

He reaches the end of the fence and turns onto the main
road.

He does not go back for a second look.

INT. LEVON'S HOLDING YARD - OFFICE - DAY

SUPER: DAY 14 - TUESDAY / 4:20 P.M.

MA-27 visible through the window, under lock.

The satellite map on the desk now, printed. Jasmine's gate
marked in red. Betzaida, Javier, Levon around it. Jasmine at
the end. Manny on the comms unit, a voice in the room.

Javier sets a finger on the exchange court.

JAVIER
They pick the bay. We drive in,
money crosses, Rojas's people walk
her out through cold storage.

He moves the finger east, across the red gate, into the
reefer yard.

JAVIER
This is the yard next door. One
maintenance gate between them. No
motor. No camera covers the service
road.

He stops.

JAVIER
We can bring Simmons.

The room goes quiet.

BETZAIDA
Close.

JAVIER
How close.

BETZAIDA
Close enough to hear them.

Levon looks at the two spaces. The exchange court. The
reefer yard. The single gate.

LEVON
The box stays inside this gate.
Nothing leaves but the money.

Betzaida nods once.

Javier looks at the reefer yard on the map. Then at the
comms unit.

JAVIER
Manny brings the signal into the
reefer yard. He's the first thing
they see.

Betzaida looks toward the comms unit.

MANNY (V.O.)
Give me the gate.

Betzaida sets two fingers on the red gate between the
courts.

BETZAIDA
You have the gate.

A beat. Nobody fills it.

Then Betzaida turns to Jasmine.

BETZAIDA

You get us in. Then you stay here.

Jasmine looks at the map. Her gate. Her cameras. Her service road.

She does not argue.

She closes the laptop.

EXT. ONTARIO - COLD-STORAGE COMPLEX - PRE-DAWN

SUPER: DAY 15 - WEDNESDAY / 4:52 A.M.

The cold-storage complex before dawn. Refrigeration units labor behind two parallel rows of loading bays.

A public road runs the fence line. Nothing moves on it yet.

EXT. EXCHANGE COURT - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: 5:22 A.M.

Betzaida's rig noses into the first loading court. She kills the amber lights before the turn.

One vehicle. The two duffels on the bench between her and Javier.

She stops it square in the open court and cuts the engine.

Ahead: a row of roll-up doors, all down but one. That one raised waist-high. Beneath it, a low produce cart on hard rubber wheels.

The bay behind the half-door is black.

Nobody stands in the court.

JAVIER

Staged and empty.

BETZAIDA

That's the point. Nobody to see.

The burner lights in the cupholder.

ON SCREEN TEXT: VEHICLE OFF. BOTH OUT. BAGS TO THE CART.
DOOR DROPS. WAIT.

Betzaida looks at the black gap under the raised door.

BETZAIDA

They're already inside.

EXT. COLD-STORAGE SIDE - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: 5:24 A.M.

Around the north face of the complex, out of the siblings' sightline, a white van rolls to a personnel door and stops.

Refrigeration noise covers its engine.

Nobody gets out yet. The van sits with its lights off, a shape among shapes.

EXT. REEFER YARD - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: 5:26 A.M.

The adjacent yard. Rows of refrigerated units running in the dark, a hundred small engines.

Manny's truck rolls in through the yard's own gate, unhurried. No container behind it. Just the truck and, magnetized behind the front axle, the signal.

He parks it in a lane between two rows of reefers and leaves the engine running.

He looks at the maintenance gate at the far end of the yard - chain-link on a track, the exchange court beyond it.

Closed.

MANNY
(into comms, low)
I'm in. Gate's on my right.

BETZAIDA (V.O.)
(comms)
Hold there.

Headlights sweep the yard mouth behind him.

The clean SUV rolls in. Then, three lengths back, the gray sedan.

They stop at the head of the lane. They do not approach. Two vehicles reading a signal that says the box is here.

Manny watches them in his mirror and does not move.

EXT. EXCHANGE COURT - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: 5:28 A.M.

Betzaida and Javier stand at the rig. The court is silent except for the refrigeration hum bleeding over the walls.

Javier lifts the two duffels. Carries them to the cart under the half-raised door.

He sets them on the cart. Zips neither. Steps back.

He pushes the cart under the door with his foot.

It rolls into the black and stops against something inside.

The roll-up door drops. It seats against the concrete with a flat metal sound.

Silence.

Then, from behind the door: a zipper. Another. The soft displacement of banded bundles moved by hands the family cannot see.

A pause.

The mechanical chatter of a bill counter starts up. Runs.

Stops. Starts again.

Javier does not look at the door. He looks at the burner in his hand.

The counter runs a third time. Stops.

Silence again.

The burner lights.

ON SCREEN TEXT: STAND BY.

BETZAIDA
Stand by.

JAVIER
They're counting it again.

The refrigeration units labor. Somewhere past the wall, in a yard the siblings cannot see, two sets of headlights sit in a lane and wait.

SUPER: 5:30 A.M.

The burner lights again.

ON SCREEN TEXT: CLEAR.

A different door - a steel personnel door in the cold-storage wall, twenty feet from the counting bay - opens from inside.

Cold fog rolls out at the floor.

Imelda stands in the doorway.

She is on her feet. Still in the blood-marked Genesis apron.

Thinner. Awake.

Two of Rojas's crew stand at her shoulders, one at each side. They do not hold her. They frame her.

Imelda finds Betzaida across the court.

For a breath, neither moves.

Then Rojas's two crewmen step her forward - out of the doorway, three paces into the open court. Controlled.

Unhurried. Delivering.

Behind them, the personnel door swings shut. It seats against its frame.

Imelda stands in the court now. Clear of the wall. Clear of cold storage.

Betzaida watches her mother's feet leave the threshold and reach the open concrete.

Betzaida keys the comms without looking away from Imelda.

BETZAIDA

Gate.

EXT. REEFER YARD - CONTINUOUS

Manny steps down from the cab on the blind side, the truck between him and the two sets of headlights.

He crosses to the maintenance gate. Sets both hands on the chain-link.

He pulls it along its track.

The gate rolls open on the exchange court.

In the SUV, a soft-shell man leans toward the windshield.

His eyes are on Manny's truck - the shape the signal promised.

Just a bobtail idling in a lane, and a heavy man walking away from a gate he has just opened.

The gray sedan door opens.

SIMMONS steps out.

Full. Ordinary. A man in a soft-shell jacket in a cold yard before dawn, moving like he belongs to every part of this.

He does not look at the truck the way the others do. He reads it faster.

A bobtail. No container. A signal that says otherwise.

His eyes go to the open gate.

Through it: the exchange court. A tow rig. Two duffels gone.

A woman being stepped forward by men he doesn't know.

And Javier.

The two of them find each other across the open gate, one in each yard.

Javier does not reach for anything.

JAVIER

Simmons.

Simmons looks from Javier to Imelda.

He reaches inside his jacket.

He comes out with a phone. Thumbs it once. Holds it up, screen out, at the level of his own shoulder.

He puts it on speaker.

HECTOR (V.O.)

Javi?

Simmons takes the phone back down before Hector says anything else. The channel is his again.

Javier holds very still.

JAVIER

Where is he.

SIMMONS

Somewhere clean. He asked for coffee.

He lets that sit.

SIMMONS

Give me the yard.

Javier says nothing.

SIMMONS

The box isn't here. It's under a lock somewhere with a number on the door. Give me the yard.

JAVIER

Give you the yard and what.

SIMMONS

And he never enters the file.

Simmons pockets the phone.

SIMMONS

Right now he's a man we spoke to. By morning he's either still that, or he's a name inside a classified-material case with yours beside his. You pick which.

Javier looks at the jacket where the phone went. Then at his own hands.

JAVIER

I don't control the box.

SIMMONS

Then give me who does.

Javier does not answer.

Simmons moves one step closer to the open gate.

Across the court, the burner lights in Betzaida's hand.

ON SCREEN TEXT: SHE WALKS.

BETZAIDA

(low, into comms)

She's walking.

Rojas's two crewmen start Imelda forward across the court, toward Betzaida.

And Simmons steps through the open maintenance gate.

He crosses from the reefer yard into the exchange court, toward Javier. Two soft-shell men come off the SUV and move with him through the gap.

In the reefer yard, on the blind side of his idling truck, Manny watches Simmons and two men clear the gate.

He does not wait for the rest.

Manny crosses to the maintenance gate and hauls it closed along its track.

The chain-link seats shut behind Simmons and the two men.

The recovery team stops on the other side.

EXT. EXCHANGE COURT - CONTINUOUS

Rojas's crew moves Imelda at a working pace - not fast, not slow, the walk of men carrying something they intend to set down safely.

One of the soft-shell men who crossed with Simmons angles to cut them off.

He reaches for Imelda's arm.

He gets it.

The nearer Rojas crewman takes that hand and drives it down against the tow rig's fender. Traps it flat against the metal. A short twist, all leverage, no wind-up.

Something in the wrist gives.

The man folds around it. Then the sound comes.

The second soft-shell draws. The pistol comes up.

SIMMONS

Down.

The man holds, weapon half-raised, looking to Simmons.

SIMMONS

Lower it. I need him talking.

The pistol lowers.

Rojas's crew does not stop. They step Imelda past the folded man, past the rig, into the open court.

Betzaida is already moving.

She reaches her mother where the crew releases her, one hand closing on Imelda's arm, the other flat on her back, turning her, putting the rig between Imelda and the men.

Imelda's hand finds Betzaida's forearm. The old tattoo. She holds it.

EXT. REEFER YARD - CONTINUOUS

At the shut maintenance gate, the remaining recovery team reaches it.

Two men set hands on the chain-link and drive it back along its track. It gives a foot. Two.

In his truck, Manny drops it into reverse.

He backs the rear corner of the bed against the sliding gate.

Steel meets chain-link. The gate stops. The men on the far side shove it and it does not move - the truck's rear corner pins the gate to its track.

Manny sets the brake and stays in the cab, the engine holding the gate shut behind him.

EXT. EXCHANGE COURT - CONTINUOUS

Simmons stands a few feet from Javier. The broken-wristed man is down against the rig. The court has gone still around the two of them.

Betzaida has Imelda behind the rig. Rojas's crew has drifted back toward the cold-storage wall, watching.

Simmons does not look at any of it. He looks at Javier.

SIMMONS
Give me the yard.

JAVIER
No.

SIMMONS
Then Hector enters the file.

JAVIER
Then file the hotel.

Simmons goes still.

SIMMONS
You don't know what that opens.

JAVIER
I know where you were.

Simmons holds Javier's eyes.

Then he keys his comms.

SIMMONS
Back to the vehicles.

The armed man holsters. He and Simmons get the injured man up between them, an arm across each of their shoulders, and start him toward the gate.

At the cold-storage wall, Rojas's crew turns and goes. The personnel door opens, takes them, closes. They do not stay for a second confrontation.

Beyond the maintenance gate, the recovery team steps back off the chain-link.

Simmons looks at Javier.

SIMMONS
Open it.

Javier does not answer him.

Betzaida keys the comms.

BETZAIDA
Manny.

In the cab, Manny eases the truck forward, off the gate, just enough to free the track. Then he steps down on the blind side and hauls the gate open along its track, the cab between himself and the men.

The injured man crosses first, supported by the other soft-shell. Simmons crosses last.

Manny hauls the gate shut again behind them.

No sirens. The SUV and sedan leave by the service road.

The court goes quiet.

Betzaida opens the passenger door of the rig.

Imelda climbs in with help. Slow. Both hands on the frame.

Javier stays in the court. He watches the empty reefer gate, the lane beyond it, the place where the vehicles were.

BETZAIDA
Javi.

He turns and goes to them.

CUT TO:

INT. LEVON'S HOLDING YARD - OFFICE - DAWN

SUPER: DAY 15 - WEDNESDAY / 6:08 A.M.

MA-27 through the window, under lock. The whiteboard beside it: MON 6:41 A.M. -> WED 6:41 A.M., the window drawn in a box.

The rig sits in the yard. Imelda in the passenger seat, a blanket over her shoulders now, the door open. Betzaida beside her, not leaving.

Javier comes in with his Bureau phone. Levon at the desk.

Arman at the roll-up.

Levon looks at the clock. Then at Javier.

LEVON
Thirty-three minutes.

JAVIER
I know.

LEVON
My money's gone.

JAVIER
You're getting it back.

LEVON
From where.

Javier sets down the Bureau phone.

JAVIER
The people who want the box.

INT. LEVON'S HOLDING YARD - OFFICE - MORNING

SUPER: 6:12 A.M.

Javier calls. Simmons answers on the first ring. Javier puts it on speaker.

JAVIER
Hector goes home. Two million
clears to an account I name. Then
you get the box.

SIMMONS (V.O.)
You don't own it.

JAVIER
Neither do you.

Silence.

SIMMONS (V.O.)
Send the account.

The line goes dead.

Levon slides a routing slip across the desk, beside the Bureau phone.

Javier photographs it. Sends it.

INT. HECTOR'S APARTMENT - MORNING

SUPER: 6:25 A.M.

The door opens. Hector steps in, alone. Behind him, in the hall, the sound of two men leaving without hurry.

He stands in his own front room.

The Xbox sits beneath the television, dark, exactly where it was.

Hector looks at it a long moment.

He does not touch it.

He takes out his phone.

INT. LEVON'S HOLDING YARD - OFFICE - MORNING

SUPER: 6:31 A.M.

Javier's phone rings. HECTOR. He answers on speaker.

HECTOR (V.O.)
I'm home.

JAVIER
The console.

HECTOR (V.O.)
Right where I left it. Nobody
touched it.

Across the yard, Betzaida hears it from the rig. She closes her eyes for a second. Opens them.

JAVIER
Stay inside. I'll call you tonight.

He ends it.

INT. LEVON'S HOLDING YARD - OFFICE - MORNING

SUPER: 6:38 A.M.

Levon watches his monitor. Arman watches Levon.

The screen refreshes.

ON SCREEN: RECOVERY SERVICES - \$2,000,000.00

LEVON
It cleared.

He takes a ring of keys off the wall.

EXT. LEVON'S HOLDING YARD - YARD - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: 6:41 A.M.

A day cab sits coupled to MA-27, engine running.

Levon fits the key to the yard lock.

He opens the gate.

Arman climbs into the day cab.

Javier sends a map pin from the Bureau phone.

ON SCREEN TEXT - BUREAU PHONE: 7:20 A.M. - TEN MINUTES

Betzaida sends the same pin from the prepaid.

ON SCREEN TEXT - PREPAID: 7:20 A.M. - TEN MINUTES

The day cab pulls the container through the gate.

Levon watches it go.

Betzaida looks back at Imelda.

CUT TO:

EXT. INDUSTRIAL ACCESS ROAD - MORNING

SUPER: 7:20 A.M.

MA-27 sits alone on its chassis beneath a dead streetlight.

Arman's day cab turns the corner and disappears.

The gray sedan enters one end of the road.

The white refrigerated van enters the other. The faded hexagon beneath its paint.

Both stop.

MA-27 between them.

No doors open.

CUT TO:

INT. IMELDA'S KITCHEN - MORNING

The burner and prepaid lie dark in the open drawer.

Imelda sits at the table in a clean robe, the blanket still around her shoulders.

Betzaida sets down water. Javier stands at the refrigerator, looking for something she might eat.

Imelda watches the two of them move around her.

IMELDA
Sit down.

They do.

FADE OUT.