

RESCUE ME TWICE

Written by

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Rescue Me Twice

FADE IN:

Act One

EXT. MAJOR U.S. CITIES - NIGHT

We SEE aerial shots of several major U.S. Cities (very dark) while TV Newscasters (Narrators) speak.

SUPER: July 29, 2013 8:57 PM EDT

WOMAN NARRATOR #1 (V.O.)

The largest sex-trafficking crackdown in U.S. history resulted in the rescue of 105 children and the arrest of 150 alleged pimps and others across the nation, the FBI announced today. Nationally, the children ranged from 13 to 17 years old.

SUPER: October 14, 2015 1:13 PM EDT

MALE NARRATOR #1 (V.O.)

A nationwide FBI sting focusing on underage victims of prostitution resulted in the rescue of 149 sexually exploited children and the arrests of more than 150 pimps and others, according to the bureau. The ninth annual initiative known as "Operation Cross Country" - the largest to date - was carried out last week in 135 cities including Atlanta, Cleveland, Denver, Knoxville, Alexandria, Jackson, Los Angeles, Portland, Sacramento and Seattle.

SUPER: Present Day, Present Time

SUPER: Real-time website map of human trafficking:
[www.http://human.globalincidentmap.com](http://human.globalincidentmap.com)

MALE NARRATOR #1 (V.O.)

The human trafficking stories you just heard are real.

(MORE)

MALE NARRATOR #1 (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The stories you are about to see are based on actual reported events, although the rescues are dramatized, and the long-term effects are far more horrifying for the victims of human trafficking than we can show you here.

(beat)

However, from darkness there will come light!

SUPER (Title): "RESCUE ME TWICE"

EXT. GRASSLAND/SAVANNA - NIGHT

A helicopter SWOOPS in and lands, near a dirt road and stand of tall bushes.

SUPER: Somewhere in West Africa

Three BLACK OPS, heavily armed soldiers jump out. They RACE to a nearby stand of BUSHES and uncover three *Mitsubishi i* cars (tiny electric cars). The leader, RHONDA BUTLER (35, curvy urban black woman) is PISSED. TREY STENSON (28, white, handsome cowboy) LAUGHS. LIN SU (25, beautiful Asian) continues to remove the branches covering the cars.

RHONDA

What the hell are these?

TREY

They're charged!

RHONDA

I'm not driving no golf cart.

LIN

Mitsubishi i cars. They won't hear us coming.

RHONDA

What's the range on these toys?

TREY

Sixty miles.

(beat)

Maybe.

RHONDA

Maybe?

LIN

It's all we could get here on short notice. Blame your nun friends!

RHONDA

Okay, okay. Let's go.

They LOAD IN backpacks and automatic rifles, and RACE down the dirt road, silently.

INT. SMART CARS - NIGHT

Headlights are on, dust is flying. They talk on HANDS-FREE radios.

RHONDA

Shit. This is fine!

TREY

Radio silence. Your orders, remember.

RHONDA

Better not be telling anyone at home I drove a smart car!

LIN

Nobody'd believe it, Girl!

RHONDA

Radio silence, Girlfriend! And lights out after five miles.

TREY

Eight point zero-five kilometers.

RHONDA

Radio silence, Cowboy.

They SWERVE down the dirt road at surprisingly fast speeds.

TREY

Careful of the...

A WATER BUFFALO stands in the middle of the road. They each SKID to a stop.

RHONDA

What the...

TREY

Dwarf water buffalo.

RHONDA
Dwarf my ass.

LIN
Big ones come in herds in the
millions.

TREY
Could have trampled us to death.
Like bison or longhorns back home.

RHONDA
What now?

TREY
Rocks.

RHONDA
I ain't getting out.

Trey JUMPS out of the car, throws a rock, and the water buffalo moves on. Rhonda and Lin RACE ahead. Trey SHAKES his head in disgust, and gets back in his car and races on.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
Let's go. We gotta be there in ten
minutes.

TREY
Just a goddamn dwarf buffalo.

RHONDA
I heard that.

LIN
How we supposed to see 'em after we
turn of our headlights?

RHONDA
Hell if I know.

They turn off their headlights. Staying on the dirt road is more difficult. Their windshields get dirty, but they remain at high speeds.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
Complete silence in thirty seconds.
Let's go get 'em!

They shut off their radios.

Rhonda CHECKS a GPS map on her *GLOBALSTAR GSP-1700 SATELLITE PHONE* as she drives. She SWERVES to avoid hitting a TREE. She slows her car, and turns around on the dirt road.

Lin and Trey follow suit. They HOP out of the cars, put on backpacks, and grab their rifles. They shut the doors, quietly.

They each put on NIGHT VISION goggles. Rhonda signals with HAND GESTURES. Rhonda heads down the road. Trey and Lin take off into the grassland at slight angles.

They walk a hundred yards. Rhonda STOPS when she SEES a campfire, with TEN SOLDIERS (18-22; black, camouflage pants, and sports T-shirts from the U.S.), sitting around the fire and joking in their indigenous language, FON. There are three JEEPS and three small HUTS behind the soldiers. The soldiers' automatic rifles are at their sides. Rhonda removes a TEARGAS CANISTER and GRENADES from her backpack, as Trey and Lin move into position. Rhonda PEEKS through NIGHT VISION BINOCULARS and SEES that two of the Soldiers look as young as twelve years old.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
(whispers)
Shit!

Rhonda SQUATS, puts her palm to her forehead, and THINKS. She sends a TEXT on her phone.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
Shit, shit, shit!

Rhonda AGONIZES, as she forms a fist and PUNCHES the ground. She puts the GRENADE back in her backpack. Then, she pushes a few buttons on her satellite phone.

Deadly silence.

Rhonda's phone LIGHTS UP. She shoves it in her pocket, and TOSSES the TEARGAS CANISTER toward the soldiers. She shoves a *Triton Oxygen Respirator* in her mouth and charges at the soldiers firing her automatic rifle. EXPLOSIONS rip through two of the huts, and all three JEEPS. We HEAR automatic rifle fire from all directions. We HEAR Five Young Girls SCREAMING in the remaining hut. The Soldiers SCATTER covering their eyes. Some GRAB their rifles and FIRE in random directions.

Rhonda RACES past the campfire and STORMS into the remaining hut. She SEES one GUARD (30; aiming an automatic rifle at the Five Young Girls (8-10; dressed in rags), who are crying and screaming. Rhonda sees the GUARD's hands are shaking. She shoots him as he fires into the air. Rhonda rips the RESPIRATOR out her mouth and YELLS at the girls.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
(in French)
Viens avec moi, come with me, now!

Rhonda gives them a short rope to hold on to, and like elephants, she leads them past the campfire.

Rhonda sees one of the two young soldiers, facedown, on the far side of the campfire, as the teargas lifts.

We HEAR rifle shots coming their direction.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
Shit, shit, shit!

Rhonda RACES over to young soldier with the girls in tow. She CHECKS his pulse. He's alive. She drops her backpack, lifts and tosses the young boy over her shoulder, and leads the girls into the dark.

Trey and Lin close in behind Rhonda as the soldiers give CHASE. They provide cover, and FEND them off. TREY gets SHOT in the leg, but limps along okay.

TREY
Ahhhh!

LIN
You okay?

TREY
Leg.

LIN
Get to the car. I got this!

Trey DROPS his rifle, and takes out a GRENADE, pulls the pin with his teeth and tosses it. It EXPLODES and BODIES go flying.

LIN (CONT'D)
Get to the car, damn it. I'm right behind you.

Lin DROPS to the ground and sprays fire, as Trey reluctantly LIMPS away.

Rhonda PACKS the young boy and one young girl in her car, and two young girls in the other cars. Trey joins them, bleeding profusely from the leg.

RHONDA
Where's Lin?

TREY
Right behind me.

RHONDA
You okay to drive?

TREY
Never better, but they're after us.
We gotta get outta here.

Rhonda pulls out a PISTOL aiming down the road as Trey hops in the car, turns around, and SMILES at the two girls crouched in the back seat.

TREY (CONT'D)
Howdy ladies, buckle up.

They STARE at him like he's crazy.

TREY (CONT'D)
Don't matter. We'll get y'all outta here.

Lin RACES down the dirt road like a track star, turning and firing after a dozen steps.

LIN
Let's get outta here.

RHONDA
You're loaded up. And I got a surprise for those traffickers!

Lin and Rhonda hop in, and the three electric cars RACE away. Soldiers are running down the road firing their RIFLES as a huge EXPLOSION lights up the ROAD. The young girls turn to SEE it. The young soldier next to Rhonda remains UNCONSCIOUS.

They RACE away just as the sun begins to RISE.

ROLL CREDITS

INT. ORPHANAGE - DAY

A large ten-seat, Chevy Astro van (which says "St. Vincent's Orphanage" on the side), rolls up to an orphanage with two NUNS in habits (Nun #1 60, white; Nun #2 30, black) wait anxiously for the van to stop. The girls hop out, and hug the nuns.

NUN #1
(in French)
Praise God. Praise God.

Rhonda hops out of the driver seat. She's wearing a fashionable black pantsuit, with a white blouse, and black boots. Nun #2 RACES to hug her.

The girls hug the nuns, then hug Rhonda. Trey slowly gets out. He's in blue jeans, a western shirt showing a silver necklace and cross, cowboy boots, and Texas A&M baseball cap. His leg is heavily BANDAGED. Lin is sleepy, but drags herself out with mismatched sweat clothes and red plastic-looking jacket. The girls hug Lin and Trey.

TREY

Ow.

(smiles)

All y'all hurting me.

Nun #1 begins to lead the girls back into the orphanage, when the oldest, tallest girl (ORPHAN #1) RACES back to hug Rhonda again. She lifts her head and speaks softly, tears in her eyes.

ORPHAN #1

From darkness to light. I owe you my life.

RHONDA

One smile every day.

ORPHAN #1

What?

RHONDA

That's what you owe us. One smile every day.

Orphan #1's smile says it all. She turns and runs into the orphanage. Nun #2 hugs Lin, Trey (gently), and then Rhonda for a long time.

NUN #2

I knew you could do it! I knew you could do it! Were any of the girls, you know, hurt?

RHONDA

I don't think so. Doctor didn't say anything.

NUN #2

They never do. Are you okay?

RHONDA

Cowboy here got a scratch.

Trey WINCES in pain, obviously embellishing it.

TREY
 (sarcastic)
 I'll be okay. Don't worry about me.

RHONDA
 We lost a lot of gear, and we still
 owe the helicopter pilot hazard pay
 and night-flying bonuses.

NUN #2
 The Lord will provide.

RHONDA
 (laughs)
 Tell him the rent is due, too.

NUN #2
 I see you owe someone one smile a
 day, too! I'll pray for you, Ms.
 Butler, and your friends.

RHONDA
 What will happen to the girls?

NUN #2
 We're moving them to the city.
 Can't protect them out here. Mbeetu
 grows stronger every day.

TREY
 How?

NUN #2
 Average citizen makes one dollar
 U.S. per day. Mbeetu pays two.

LIN
 How much does he pay for...
 (beat)
 Girls?

NUN #2
 Twenty to seventy dollars each. He
 takes them north and sells them for
 three-hundred-fifty dollars each.

RHONDA
 And they become sex slaves forever.

NUN #2
 Or until they die of AIDS.

RHONDA
How many children are taken each
year?

NUN #2
More than a million, we think.

TREY
The government don't stop them?

NUN #2
There is corruption, and they don't
have your resources.

LIN
We don't have our resources.

Rhonda HUGS Nun #2.

RHONDA
I'm glad you called.
(beat)
But our funders will be very
pissed.

Rhonda laughs and smiles.

NUN #2
Two smiles today. Praise the Lord.

RHONDA
Yeah. Whatever.

Two Police Cars, each with two POLICEMEN (35-60), RACE up to the orphanage with lights and SIRENS blaring. The cops jump out with pistols drawn. Rhonda hands the van KEYS to Nun #2 with her phone. Policeman #1 (60) struts over to Rhonda.

POLICEMAN #1
Hand up.

RHONDA
(whispers to Nun #2)
You know who to call.

POLICEMAN #1
(broken English)
I shoot you here, nobody care.

RHONDA
We'll come peacefully.

POLICEMAN #1
Get indie car.

RHONDA
We were only trying to help.

NUN #2
Mbeetu stole our girls from God!
These fine people returned them to
God.

POLICEMAN #1
God no care about orphans. You shut
up. I shoot you here, nobody care.

TREY
I think that's his one good line.

Policeman #1 sees the heavy bandage on Trey's leg.

POLICEMAN #1
What happen you?

TREY
Fell off my bicycle.

Policeman #1 kicks Trey on his bandaged leg.

TREY (CONT'D)
Ow! That's gonna leave a mark.

Policeman #1 SLAPS Lin.

LIN
What was that for?

Rhonda steps between Policeman #1 and Lin. Policeman #1 looks
over Rhonda's shoulder and yells.

POLICEMAN #1
No like your Chinese oil company
take our riches away!

Policeman #1 PUSHES Rhonda hard to the ground.

POLICEMAN #1 (CONT'D)
Get indie car or I shoot you
here...

Trey and Lin help Rhonda up.

TREY
Nobody care. We know.

Nun #2 waves, while the cops and Rhonda's team get in the
cars and RACE away with lights flashing and SIRENS blaring.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

In a dilapidated police station, Policeman #1 stands behind his desk on the telephone as Rhonda, Trey, and Lin SIT in fold-up chairs, hand-cuffed to each other and the end chairs.

POLICEMAN #1

This very unfortunate news. Very unfortunate, indeed.

Policeman #1 HANGS up.

POLICEMAN #1 (CONT'D)

The young boy you drove back to town survived, Miss Butler.

RHONDA

That should be good news.

POLICEMAN #1

Mbeetu also survived.

TREY

That sucks.

LIN

Really sucks.

The Policeman #1 slumps into his chair and begins to weep.

POLICEMAN #1

You not understand my country. You Westerners fly in for day or two with your money, your guns, and your God.

RHONDA

We apologize for...

Now angry, the policeman draws his pistol and AIMS it at Rhonda.

POLICEMAN #1

(interrupting)

You kill our small businesses. You kill our sons. Then go home to comfortable, safe lives.

RHONDA

(sadly)

Those men were stealing young girls! They become slaves in the darkness, forever!

Policeman #1 stands and PACES in the station, waving his pistol like a lunatic.

POLICEMAN #1

Mbeetu, went go to hospital personally to tell boy Mbeetu killed boy's whole family. Then he shoot boy in the stomach, because he supposed to be on watch that night. Twelve years old!

Lin and Trey turn their heads in shame. Tears form in everyone's eyes.

RHONDA

Oh my God...

Rhonda catches herself saying God. Policeman #1 COLLAPSES in his chair.

POLICEMAN #1

Mbeetu hired twenty more soldiers, and ten more of our babies stolen from the next village.

RHONDA

Oh my.

POLICEMAN #1

We drive you to airport now. We sell your little cars, rifles, phones, and toys to pay more policemen to guard our babies.

RHONDA

I'm so sorry. We're so sorry.

A second Policeman enters to remove the handcuffs.

POLICEMAN #1

You not come back! We want our babies.

The second policeman guides Rhonda, Trey, and Lin toward the exit. They HEAR Policeman #1 yell.

POLICEMAN #1 (CONT'D)

We want our babies!

EXT./INT. WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

We see a commercial airplane land.

LATER

Outside the airport at a Taxi stand, Rhonda, Trey, and Lin silently wait for a taxi. Lin CHECKS her phone.

LIN
Boss wants to see us at three
o'clock sharp.

RHONDA
How did you get a phone out of
Africa?

LIN
Buddhist jacket from Tibet. Secret
pocket's everywhere.

RHONDA
I'm gonna take a nice hot bath,
glass of wine...

TREY
(interrupting)
Why's the boss wanna see us on a
Saturday?

RHONDA
How the hell do I know? Cowboy,
how's the leg?

Rhonda looks worried.

TREY
Doc's gonna take a quick look at
it, but I'll get to the meeting.
But you're not worried about my
leg.

RHONDA
I can't get Mbeetu out of my mind.

LIN
Think the boss knows?

RHONDA
I'm guessing the CIA, State
Department, and the whole freakin'
city knows by now!

TREY
Don't worry. I said a prayer for
y'all.

Rhonda is about to take off in the first cab.

RHONDA

Pray for those ten girls and that newly orphaned boy. Don't pray for me.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

A massive glass conference table is surrounded by a dozen fine-leather chairs on rollers. It's a windowless room with large wooden double doors, which say "The Worthington Foundation." Four digital clocks have signs above them: Washington D.C., Los Angeles, Beijing, and Zurich. Lin and Trey, in casual business clothes, sit across from DR. LEXI WORTHINGTON (70), a stern-looking grey-haired woman dressed like Jackie Kennedy, in a sky-blue skirt and jacket, white blouse, and pearls. Lexi PATS a large, closed file before her.

She looks back at Washington D.C. clock that reads: 2:59. As the clock changes to exactly 3:00 PM, Rhonda strolls in and sits next to Lin and Trey.

LEXI

I'm so happy we ALL made it in today.

Lexi opens a thick file before her.

RHONDA

My report will be on your desk first thing Monday morning.

LEXI

I have everything I need for my friends in the State Department, CIA, and security at Andrews Air Force Base.

LIN

Andrews?

Lexi gets angrier as she reads the list.

LEXI

A little matter of an unauthorized air drop of three Mitsubishi i cars, juiced, night vision supplies, teargas canisters, automatic rifles...

RHONDA

I can explain...

LEXI
Grenades!

Rhonda, Trey, and Lin look down.

LEXI (CONT'D)
Disaster! A complete disaster!

Lexi gets up and PACES.

TREY
We did save five kidnapped girls.

LEXI
And?

LIN
And we got those donations directly
to the nuns, so the government
officials didn't skim off the top.

LEXI
And?

RHONDA
And it was a disaster.

LEXI
(yells)
You failed to get the head of the
snake.

RHONDA
Mbeetu. Son-of-a-bitch. Took ten
more girls while we were there.

TREY
Took out a little boy's family too.

LEXI
It's all here in the report. Even
your recording of that policeman
who schooled you.

RHONDA
Yes, he did. Policeman spoke the
truth!

TREY AND LIN
Yes, he did.

Lexi leans on the table and STARES at each of them.

LEXI

You can't continue to fight human trafficking one case at a time. You can't bully your way into a country like crazed superheroes, despite your military backgrounds.

Rhonda, Lin, and Trey look puzzled.

LEXI (CONT'D)

For the past year, I've sent you on a series of minor cases.

TREY

I wouldn't call that high-rise brothel in Cambodia minor!

LIN

Or that garment factory in India!

Rhonda stands, angry.

RHONDA

I get it! We've been in boot camp. You've been testing us! We could've been killed!

LEXI

(scoffs)

Small potatoes. Had to know if you could take it!

TREY AND LIN

What?

LEXI

Yes, there's only one thing to do!

RHONDA

We're being fired?

Lexi opens a SECRET DOOR in the conference room. We SEE bright lights, HEAR four VOICES, and SEE four big-screen computers.

LEXI

We're going to "up your game" as the kids say these days! Follow me.

Rhonda, Lin, and Trey

RHONDA

What the hell?

Lexi leads the team into "The Rescue Room," a second conference room with SIX large computer screens, stylish office furniture, fancy coffee bar, and kitchenette. Five adults immediately stop talking and laughing.

LEXI

I'd like you to meet your team. Everyone, this is Lin Su, Trey Stenson, and their leader, Rhonda Butler. They know all about you already from reading your files.

Lexi stops at the desk of a sexy Latina, ROSA MENDEX (22), wearing an M.I.T. T-shirt, shorts, and sandals.

LEXI (CONT'D)

This is Rosa Mendez. Just graduated from M.I.T., top of her class in data management.

LIN

Data management?

LEXI

She's been compiling a database of repeat traffickers. The kingpins of the organizations.

ROSA

Second in my class, actually, to that cabrone behind me, Jan.

The team shakes hands with Rosa, as Lexi moves on to JAN REJMANEK (24), a poorly dressed gypsy.

LEXI

This is Jan Rejmanek, spelled J-A-N, but pronounced Yawn. Expert statistician.

Rhonda shakes his hand first.

RHONDA

Probabilities?

JAN

Spatial and temporal modeling. I like to predict where the bad guys are going to strike next time.

TREY

You can do that?

JAN

Predictions are imperfect, but they're a start, and they can be pretty good. People have patterns.

Lexi moves on to BRET MUNSON (20; Goth-type, depressed).

LEXI

This is Bret Munson from Oklahoma City. Didn't finish high school, but he's the best hacker on the black market.

Bret doesn't stand to shake hands.

LEXI (CONT'D)

Bret's working on his social skills.

RHONDA

Why do we need a hacker?

LEXI

Hit 'em where it hurts. In their bank accounts.

TREY

But so much of this is on a cash economy.

LEXI

That brings us to Willis Leyman. Call him Willy.

WILLIS LEYMAN (28) is half-black, half-Asian, dressed mostly in tattoos, and confined to a wheelchair.

WILLY

Sup!

LEXI

Willy is a former trafficker. Sweat shops in Asia, graduated to the red-light district in Miami, frequent trips to Africa. He was one of the best-known recruiters until he found religion.

TREY

Welcome, Willy. I know how you feel.

WILLY

No you don't.

LEXI

Willy's not the warmest guy, but he can help you.

Rhonda is not so sure.

RHONDA

Hmmm! Willy, tell us about yourself.

Willy points to Rosa, Jan, and Bret.

WILLY

They didn't have to tell you nothing.

RHONDA

I'm curious, Willy. And I need to know if I can trust you.

WILLY

What do you want to know?

RHONDA

What kind of trafficking did you do most recently?

WILLY

Mostly drug related.

TREY

Drug related?

WILLY

Sold heroin to undocumented Mexicans.

LEXI

Adults, over eighteen.

LIN

That don't make it right!

WILLY

They'd get hooked, we keep 'em in debt, they do us favors, get us money, and we'd give them just enough.

RHONDA

To do you more favors?

WILLY

Exactly. Done in every major city
in America.

LEXI

And now the suburbs. The whole
family's getting hooked.

LIN

So what happened to your legs?

WILLY

I saw that I was killing kids too,
and I quit.

RHONDA

Kingpins don't let you quit.

WILLY

Tell me about it! They tortured me.
I escaped, crawling three miles
after they shredded my legs. I told
the cops everything.

LEXI

So he can't leave the building. We
set him up in the building. He's in
hiding. I trust him. You can trust
him.

Lexi moves on to the oldest member of team, TED REYNOLDS
(50s), blue long-sleeved shirt and tie, khaki pants, dress
shoes. Ted stands and smiles.

LEXI (CONT'D)

This is Ted Reynolds.

RHONDA

What's your superpower, Ted?

TED

Just a social worker.

Rhonda, Lin, and Trey look puzzled.

RHONDA

Ted Reynolds? THE Ted Reynolds.
Inventor of Social Media?

TED

I was able to retire young, and I
wanted to make a difference.

LIN

You must be worth billions.

TED

No family, no kids, so Lexi offered me all of her kids.

RHONDA

Young victims of human trafficking?

LEXI

That's right. We've got a lot of kids to care for.

TED

I was impressed with Lexi's Foundation, because of the kids I could help.

LEXI

So, Ted is funding a good share of your field operations.

LIN

And this whole Rescue Room?

LEXI

And much more. Can I tell them, Ted?

TED

Sure, they'll learn soon enough.

Ted sits back down to his computer, while Lexi addresses them all.

LEXI

Thanks to Ted, we're changing our approach. Evolving.

LIN

Evolving?

LEXI

We're taking away your rifles, teargas, and grenades. That's old school. Violence is not a viable solution in all cases. You're going to outsmart them!

RHONDA

Let me guess.
(points to Rosa)
Prevention.

(MORE)

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Rosa keeps track of the bad guys.

(points to Jan)

Early detection. Jan predicts their next moves.

(points to Willy and Bret)

Containment. Willy tells us how they move money, and Bret hacks their phones and accounts.

LEXI

Nailing it!

Rhonda moves behind Ted and softly massages his shoulders.

RHONDA

But Ted, here, wants more. He's going to set up and coordinate a system to rebuild the lives of former victims.

TED

Bingo!

LEXI

What did I tell you, Ted?

TED

She's gonna be worth every penny.

LEXI

You see, we'll still need a team on the ground to disrupt the trafficking, but we'll go after big players, repeat felons, and the thirty-two billion dollars per year organized crime component.

TREY

Thirty-two billion dollars a year?

LEXI

Ten billion in the sex trade alone.

LIN

That's a Fortune 500 company.

TED

That's one to four million lives that need to be returned to their parents, homes, extended families and villages.

RHONDA

My guess is we don't start Monday morning.

LEXI

Right. We start now. Rosa?

Rosa projects the FACES of ten human traffickers on her big screen. Everyone crowds around to see. Seven are mug shots, two of the top three criminals have blurred photos, and the top figure contains a name (Godfather) but no photo.

ROSA

I've cross-referenced Interpol data with local reports for everyone ever accused of stealing passports, booking private passenger boats and planes, and evidence of domestic abuse from doctors, hospitals, and social service organizations.

TREY

They don't give out that data. Confidentiality.

LEXI

Once we explained what we were doing, you'd be surprised how many people wanted to help.

ROSA

The names and identities of victims remains confidential, but the suspects in the abuse are in the database, as well as could be determined.

LEXI

Jan?

Everyone moves to see Jan's giant screen.

JAN

I combined all the occurrences of known trafficking events, and merged it with Rosa's suspects database to produce maps.

(beat)

Hotspots of trafficking everywhere in the world.

Maps of trafficking are DISPLAYED. Everyone GAWKS.

ROSA

Show off.

JAN

Because traffickers have set patterns, like territories, they can be mapped and predicted to some degree.

LEXI

But even these maps need help.
Bret?

Bret is unenthusiastic.

LEXI (CONT'D)

Bret?

Bret talks slowly. He's depressed. But he shows his computer display, zooming in on one of Jan's maps (red shows hotspots), then three 3-D bars of different heights show up.

BRET

Can't tap all the mobile phones in the world, especially encrypted phones and messages, but if Jan's maps can zero in on a few high-probability areas, I can find out where the highest two or three concentrations of encrypted messages are from, and where they are going to.

RHONDA

Right, but we need Willy to tell us how they think, which one of the two or three hotspots might contain our bad guy!

LEXI

Exactly. Get the trafficker, and find a safe haven for all the victims.

TED

Safety, education, job training.

LIN

They get their lives back.

TREY

But you still need us to lead the ground campaign.

Lexi points back to Rosa's top ten list.

LEXI

We want these scumbags arrested,
not shot!

RHONDA

Who's first? Let's get going!

LEXI

Rosa, pull up the Paris and Romania
files.

Everyone gathers around Rosa's computer display. We see two
FACES: Jacques Ager (Age 55, Paris, France) and Rico Sala
(Age 49, Bucharest, Romania).

ROSA

Ager and Sala are running an Oliver
Twist type of campaign, smuggling
children into France to pickpocket
and rob wealthy tourists in Paris.

LEXI

Sala is number ten on our list.

RHONDA

For pickpocketing?

LEXI

Those children net their
traffickers over a million Euros
per year.

TED

When the kids get caught, they
kidnap more of them.

LEXI

Jan, show them the predictive
models.

JAN

With pleasure.

The group turns to Jan's screen to a map with BRIGHT-RED
hotspots over Paris and Bucharest.

JAN (CONT'D)

If we zoom in on Paris...

The map zooms in to show bright-red hotspots around the
Louvre, Notre Dame Cathedral, and Eiffel Tower.

RHONDA

I could have predicted the Louvre,
Notre Dame Cathedral, and Eiffel
Tower.

JAN

Yes but I can run a time sequence
of pickpocketing reports by day and
time.

Jan shows a model where the morning is "hot" at the
Cathedral, afternoon is "hot" at the Louvre, and the Eiffel
Tower is "hot" at night.

TREY

Have y'all shown this to the Paris
police?

LEXI

No, because we want to make the
link to Bucharest.

JAN

If we zoom in on Bucharest missing
persons reports for the past ten
years, we see a huge cluster every
year in a place known as the bridge
of the poor.

LIN

What time of year?

JAN

Starts in two days.

BRET

You may want me to monitor cell
phone encryption patterns between
now and then.

WILLY

It takes twenty-two hours and fifty-
three minutes to drive a truck from
Bucharest to Paris.

All eyes turn to Willy.

WILLY (CONT'D)

Easy crossings into Hungary,
Austria, Germany, and France.

Willy sees them STARING at him.

WILLY (CONT'D)

What? Look for a frozen-food truck.
It will have fake freezers in the
sides and back.

TED

I'll hunt for a safe home for the
kids in Romania.

RHONDA

Sounds like we're hitting the road.

TREY

(nervous)
Bucharest?

Rhonda and Lin turn to Trey.

RHONDA

What's the matter with Bucharest,
Cowboy?

TREY

Romania? Central Europe. I don't
know.

LIN

Safer than all the other places
we've been. You'll be fine.

LEXI

If you'd rather not go, Mr.
Stenson...

RHONDA

(interrupts)
He'll go. We're a team.

Rhonda puts her arm around Trey. Trey smiles weakly.

LIN

Weapons?

Lexi produces three state of the art Stun Guns. They laugh!

RHONDA

You're kidding, right?

Lexi hands them to Rhonda, Lin, and Trey.

LEXI

We want them arrested.

TREY
When do we leave?

LEXI
Red-eye flight tonight. We'll fill
you in when you land in Bucharest!

RHONDA
Lin, Trey, let's go pack!

EXT. BUCHAREST AIRPORT - DAY

Rhonda, Lin, and Trey exit the airport, greeted by a beautiful morning. A Taxi is waiting. Trey opens the door for Rhonda and Lin.

RHONDA
We'll get a few hours sleep at the
hotel. The action's tonight.

TREY
You two go on ahead. I need to stop
somewhere.

LIN
Where?

Trey shut the door of the cab, before answering. The cab RACES off. Trey hops in the next cab.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BUCHAREST - DAY

Trey sets three large bags of groceries, and three large bags of children's clothes by a sewer entrance aside a major boulevard. He sits nearby, and waits.

The bags of food and clothes DISAPPEAR.

Rhonda and Lin walk up from behind Trey.

RHONDA
Loosin' your edge, Cowboy. Should
of seen us coming.

Trey turns to acknowledge them, a tear in his eye. Lin HUGS him.

LIN
What brought you here, my friend?

RHONDA
The sewer people.

TREY

You know?

Rhonda looks at her satellite phone.

RHONDA

I know you still have your tracking device buried in your hip. You were pretty easy to find.

LIN

We knew it was pretty odd for you to wander off.

RHONDA

Looked like you had some reservations about coming here back in the office.

Rhonda and Lin sit next to Trey in a tight semi-circle. Trey pulls out a folded report from a genetics-testing lab.

TREY

Had a genetics test after my folks died. Stenson! Ha!

RHONDA

You told us you were adopted. Big deal.

Trey waves his report.

TREY

Could've been from here. Sixty-two percent Central European.

RHONDA

Could've been from anywhere.

LIN

Bet you have Neanderthal genes too, up to five percent for most Europeans.

TREY

(slight chuckle)
Two-point-four percent.

RHONDA

What makes you think it's Bucharest?

TREY

I was born in 1988.

LIN

So.

TREY

In 1989, the Communist regime collapsed in Romania, and all of the orphanages were closed down. Thousands of kids thrown into the streets.

RHONDA

And you think they threw a one-year-old into the streets?

TREY

Aid agencies came from all over to get some of the kids adopted. Like every orphanage, the kids with the fairest skin and bluest eyes get adopted first.

LIN

That sucks!

TREY

That's the way it is. Lots didn't get adopted. And a culture was born in Bucharest.

(beat)

Sewer people. Living in miles of tunnels.

Rhonda and Lin get up and look down the entrance of the sewer.

TREY (CONT'D)

Eleven hundred children live down there. The government says the people don't want to leave the tunnels.

RHONDA

Adults, too?

LIN

Can you even imagine what that must be like?

TREY

They sniff paint to forget they're hungry.

RHONDA

You're right. We can't really
imagine living that way.

Rhonda and Lin return to Trey and help him up.

TREY

And they say they're like a family.
Drug addicts, sickness, no life for
a human being. A poor, sick family.

RHONDA

World needs to know.

TREY

Rich hotels right across the
street. They know.

LIN

Everyone just looks away. Like they
don't see 'em. Like they're
invisible.

RHONDA

Can we help them later? We gotta
go!

TREY

There might not be a later for them
like there is for y'all. The world
keeps putting the kids off 'til
later!

LIN

Other kids need you now. The boss
wants us back to D.C. in a hurry.

Trey seems paralyzed, unable to move. Rhonda grabs him by the
shoulder.

RHONDA

We gotta job to do.

Trey is reluctant to leave the sewer opening, but he does.
Rhonda and Lin comfort Trey on either side of him as they
lead him away, but Trey glances back at the sewer opening one
last time.

TREY

What I didn't understand was that some people's lives are so terrible, and living conditions so bad, that they might get persuaded by a trafficker that they're being taken to a better place.

Rhonda hangs her head. Trey and Lin see this.

RHONDA

But it's an even worse darkness they're kidnapped to. It's slavery pure and simple. Slavery!

Trey moves to put Rhonda in the middle as they walk away so he and Lin can comfort Rhonda as they walk.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Poverty is bad. But ain't nothin' worse than slavery!

End Act One

Act Two

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Rhonda, Lin, and Trey are all on fancy (brand name) tablet computers. The clock reads: "3:18 AM."

RHONDA

Why don't they tell us where we're going?

LIN

Jan is just putting the cell phone data from Bret into the models.

TREY

Should be any minute now.

RHONDA

Stun guns charged?

Trey and Lin SMIRK.

TREY

Yes, Rhonda.

LIN

Yes, Girl.

RHONDA

No need to get snooty!

LIN

Here come the model results.

A map of Bucharest shows up with two red hotspots on different sides of the city.

RHONDA

What?

LIN

There's a fifty-five percent chance it's on the northwest side, and a thirty-nine percent chance they're on the southeast side.

TREY

That don't add to a hundred percent.

LIN
Uncertainty. There is always some
uncertainty in the models.

RHONDA
We can't split up. Too dangerous.
Northwest it is. Let's go.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

The rental car is a sub-compact, and they barely fit in it.
Rhonda drives. Lin is stuffed in the back.

LIN
Always shove the Asian in the back!

RHONDA
You're our GPS coordinator. Where
we going?

Lin stares at her tablet computer.

LIN
Left at the next light. Then keep
going for four-point-eight
kilometers.

RHONDA
In miles please!

LIN
Three miles.

TREY
(laughing)
Why didn't you say so?!

Rhonda RACES the tiny car in and out of traffic.

LIN
Take the dirt road coming up on the
right.

Trey checks his tablet computer.

TREY
New data from Bret. Cell phone
encryption spike in the southeast
part of town, we gotta go back.

LIN

Model reverse. Ninety-seven percent probability it's on the southeast side.

Rhonda SKIDS into a one-hundred-eighty degree turn, and steps on the gas.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

We see Rhonda RACING through town at tremendous speeds, dodging in and out of traffic, going through red lights, and screeching around turns.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Trey and Lin hang on for dear life as Rhonda reaches the edge of town on another dirt road. Lin checks the map on her tablet. They are at the spot.

LIN

It's bright, bright-red.

TREY

I don't understand.

RHONDA

We missed 'em.

(beat)

They're gone. Get me Willy on the phone, now!

Trey dials.

TREY

It's eight PM in D.C., he'll be awake.

WILLY (O.S.)

Yo.

Rhonda GRABS the phone from Trey's hand. Rhonda YELLS.

RHONDA

They're gone. What do you recommend?

WILLY (O.S.)

I'm working with amateurs! Get on the highway toward Vienna.

RHONDA

And?

WILLY (O.S.)

Pass every truck you can. Note every refrigerated truck you see. They'll have to stop for gas between the Austrian border and Vienna. Gas is more expensive in the city, and they won't risk being seen.

RHONDA

We can't stop at every gas station in Austria.

WILLY (O.S.)

I'll find 'em. I mean, we'll find 'em. We got Bret and Jan here. I'll scout Google Earth for on-and-off gas stations, Bret is monitoring encrypted calls on the route, and Jan is ready to run his stupid models. Losers!

RHONDA

In the morning, have Lexi send someone to our hotel for our bags.

LEXI (O.S.)

You didn't take them with you?

Rhonda hangs up! Furious. She PEELS out and RACES to the highway.

CUT TO:

INT. RESCUE ROOM - NIGHT

Rosa, Jan, and Bret, are busy on computers as Lexi paces.

LEXI

Rosa, get me the names of refrigeration trucking companies that work that region.

ROSA

Already on it, Dr. Worthington.

LEXI

Call me, Lexi. My doctorate in sociology was so long ago my diploma was written on parchment!

JAN
Sorry about the models, guys.
They're only so good!

WILLY
You mean, so bad!

Willy pushes Jan.

BRET
That was my fault. Cell phone
reports were jumbled. Romania
doesn't have the big mainframes we
do.

LEXI
No excuses. Get to work! There are
kidnapped kids in one of those
trucks!

Lexi PACES, worried.

LATER

INT. CAR - DAY

We see Rhonda RACING past trucks on the highway, as Lin snaps photos of the back of trucks, and Trey photographs the sides of the trucks with their cameras.

RHONDA
You sending those photos to Rosa as
soon as you take them?

LIN
Of course.

TREY
Yes.

LIN
Girl, you must be tired. Why don't
you let Trey or me drive a while?

They pass another refrigeration truck, and Lin and Trey take photos.

RHONDA
Black coffee. What I wouldn't give
for black coffee.

TREY

Willy's last call said that odds are there would be two drivers, one Romanian from this end, and one Frenchman for that end. We should look for refrigerated trucks with two drivers.

LIN

They're team-driving, almost twenty-three hours. They gotta switch off.

RHONDA

Get the team on the phone again and tell 'em every Frenchman likes good coffee, so we're looking for a gas station with cheap gas and damn good coffee.

TREY

It's the middle of the night in D.C.

RHONDA

Wake 'em up. We got kids inside one of these trucks!

EXT./INT. TRUCK STOP/ CAR - DAY

SUPPER: Austria, 1:30 PM

Rhonda, Trey, and Lin sit in their car and observe every truck that enters the truck stop in Austria. They are sipping fresh hot coffee and eating fresh croissants.

LIN

Geeks did great this time! Gotta be like bait to a French truck driver!

RHONDA

Don't enjoy 'em too much. Those kids get nothing to eat for a whole day.

Trey stops eating.

TREY

Look at this one. We passed them in Romania.

Two drivers (50s; grubby) exit the cab of the truck. One fills the tank. The other heads to buy something.

RHONDA
One Romanian, one Frenchman?

TREY
Why don't I go in and buy some
coffee?

RHONDA
Good idea.

Two minutes later, Trey comes out with coffee. He hops in the
car.

TREY
It's them.

RHONDA
Get the license plate and alert
Europol.

LIN
Got it.

RHONDA
Without being seen, get photos of
the two drivers.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Trey drives a safe distance behind the truck as Rhonda and
Lin sleep. We see a road sign: "Paris 80 km"

TREY
Wake up, you two, we're an hour
outside of Paris.

Rhonda and Lin STIR.

RHONDA
I'll alert Europol.

Rhonda sends a text message.

LIN
I gotta pee.

RHONDA
Hold it. Think about those kids in
the truck.

They follow the truck to a poor neighborhood.

TREY

Gotta be it.

RHONDA

We want the people who meet the truck too. Careful, they might have real guns.

Rhonda checks her TASER.

The truck stops. Rhonda hops out and crosses the street. Trey and Lin hop out and hug, and walk like drunks toward the truck. The truck drivers hop out and look around.

TRUCK DRIVER #1

I count three.

TRUCK DRIVER #2

(in French)

Prostitute and a couple drunks.
We're good.

Truck Driver #1 sends a text, and Three Armed Men exit a shabby house. One carries a bag (cash).

Truck Driver #2 opens a side door, pulls out cartons of eggs and milk, sets them aside, and unlocks an inner door after Rhonda passes them on the sidewalk. A YOUNG GIRL (9) pokes her head out of the truck. Rhonda SPINS and RACES to the armed men and STUNS them. Trey and Lin RACE across the street to her aid. They each STUN a person, as Rhonda goes into Martial Arts Mode. Lin is fighting too. Trey has a bad leg, but he PUNCHES a guy to a pulp.

Two police cars arrive with SIRENS and LIGHTS.

In the b.g., we HEAR the actual news report
<https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/18-arrests-international-human-trafficking-operation>)

MALE NARRATOR #1

French and Romanian authorities, supported by Europol, have dismantled an organized crime network involved in trafficking minors. The underage victims forced into committing pickpocketing and begging produced criminal profits of up to EUR 7000 daily. The total criminal proceeds are estimated at nearly EUR 1 million.

INT. RESCUE ROOM - DAY

Rhonda, Trey, and Lin sit, exhausted, in chairs that are too comfortable. They try to stay awake, as the team works feverishly around them. Lexi strolls in with bags of take-out Thai food. Rosa, Jan, Bret, and Willy tear into the food.

LEXI

Welcome home. Job well done.

(beat)

Sure, Europol took all the credit, but the children are safe.

TED

We're arranging for a new orphanage in Romania to help out. I've asked some friends in the State Department to work with the Romanian government to build an even bigger facility for the sewer people.

Rhonda looks up.

RHONDA

Thai food smells great, but I don't like the looks of this.

Lin and Trey look up.

TREY

It's a sign, isn't it?

LIN

Bet we're going to Thailand.

Rhonda, Lin, and Trey grab lunch.

LEXI

Bangladesh, actually. Rosa?

Rosa stops eating, but uses her chopsticks to point at her big screen. Two of the top ten most wanted traffickers (#10 and #8) have x's across their photos. Before she can speak, Lin stands, paces and goes into a tirade.

LIN

Bangladesh! The garment industry is second only to prostitution in human trafficking, sweatshop labor and slavery. Estimated 170 million children worldwide are forced laborers, but the garment industry is the biggest offender.

(MORE)

LIN (CONT'D)

Sure, our president just signed a bill banning goods produced by slave labor, but most factories are just getting trickier!

LEXI

Lin, that's enough.

LIN

Those governments look the other way. Millions of over-crowded, under-paid, workers in totally unsafe buildings with inadequate fire alarms, escape routes, and fire extinguishers.

LEXI

Are you done?!

LIN

Time for true Americans to stand up for those workers even if it costs a few more dollars for their designer dresses, bathing suits, and underwear.

Everyone but Lexi CLAPS for Lin.

LEXI

Thank you, Lin, for your inspiring speech, but we have to catch a human trafficking kingpin before the monsoon season! Rosa?

Rosa is still stunned by Lin's speech. She regains her composure and points to her computer display with her chopsticks.

ROSA

Dil Mohammed, number one on our most-wanted list, is known as the Godfather of human traffickers between Bangladesh and Malaysia.

Jan pops out of his chair to show a map and model.

JAN

The Godfather runs a massive human smuggling operation promising poor Bangladeshis a better life. Trouble is, he uses old rickety boats to sail past Myanmar (old Burma), Thailand, and on to Malaysia.

BRET

Bastard!

LEXI

Many boats simply don't make it.
But the Godfather learned how to
get paid twice for the same bodies.
He sails a little ways from
Bangladesh, then demands ransom.

TED

Do they pay him?

LEXI

Yes, but he keeps on sailing, and
he sells the slaves in Malaysia as
plantation workers, factory
workers, and the black market sex
trade.

RHONDA

What can we do?

JAN

We tracked vessels known to be
owned or operated by the Godfather,
including the most seaworthy of the
lot.

BRET

And the idiot doesn't encrypt his
phone messages.

WILLY

Not the sharpest trafficker on the
block.

JAN

So I was able, with Rosa's and
Bret's help, to track his routes
over the past several years.

LEXI

He's sailing back to Bangladesh
from Malaysia as we speak. But he's
in International waters.

WILLY

But a contact of mine, who shall
remain anonymous, told me that his
captain has a weakness for a
brothel in Teknaf, bordering
Myanmar.

LEXI

That might be the least safe town,
bordering the least safe country in
the world right now. They find mass
graves all the time.

RHONDA

We gotta stop this guy!

LEXI

Not if your lives are in imminent
danger.

LIN

I read about this guy. Thousands of
slaves each year. He's a mad man.

TREY

I'm in. But we need more than silly
TASERS. They about got us killed in
Paris.

LEXI

No can do. It's TASERS. We want him
alive.

RHONDA

Bet you just don't fly into a place
like Teknaf?

LEXI

Ted has graciously offered his
private jet to take you to Shah
Amanat International Airport in
Chittagong, Bangladesh. You'll be
driven to a fishing village near
Teknaf, then you'll go by fishing
boat the rest of the way.

LIN

Why the fishing boat?

LEXI

If you show up in Teknaf with a
car, you'll be watched immediately.

RHONDA

First class. When do we go?

LEXI

Tonight, of course. Pack modest
clothes. Don't stand out. Don't
look rich.

RHONDA

Great.

LEXI

Rhonda, you're traveling as Mr. Stenson's woman. Bait for the Godfather.

LIN

That's rich.

LEXI

Lin, you'll be his private maid -- his domestic -- safer that way.

TREY

And me?

LEXI

Garment buyer for a small chain of gift shops in the Virgin Islands. Your fake passports and additional information will be in Ted's jet.

RHONDA

Thanks, Ted.

TED

Just nail this guy!

INT. PRIVATE JET - NIGHT

Trey is fast asleep. Rhonda and Lin are on their tablet computers. Rhonda puts her tablet down and turns softly to Lin. They all dress in modest clothes as suggested.

RHONDA

You were pretty fired up in the Rescue Room. What was that about?

LIN

Rather not talk about it.

RHONDA

Common, Girlfriend.

Lin turns to see Trey is fast asleep.

LIN

I'm a fifth-generation Chinese-American. No, wait! I'm a fifth-generation American!

RHONDA
Shhhh! Let Trey sleep.

LIN
(whispers)
I mean, I only fly off the handle
when I hear about children
enslaved, and I'm angry and
embarrassed by my own Asian people
who seem to be the very worst.

RHONDA
You can't take it personal. That's
how you lost your TV news job.

Lin's eyes widen in anger.

LIN
I covered the Rana Plaza garment
factory fire in Bangladesh where
more than a thousand people died
making cheap clothes for
Westerners.

RHONDA
Tragic.

LIN
Many children.

RHONDA
I get it. You flew off the handle
and lost your job.

LIN
I didn't lose my job. I finally
gained my dignity!

RHONDA
And we're glad to have you on our
team of rescuers.

Lin CRIES.

LIN
But I need to be rescued again.

RHONDA
What?

LIN
I do!
(beat)
(MORE)

LIN (CONT'D)

I don't investigate how all my electronic devices are made. I sure as hell don't check into where all my clothes come from. I even use cocktail umbrellas in my margaritas that probably come from sweatshops!

RHONDA

Okay. Calm down. We all don't pay much attention about what we buy.

LIN

Then we are contributing to the problem. Like illegal drugs, we create the demand -- that's why they are produced.

RHONDA

I get ya. We gotta be better consumers.

LIN

Investigative consumers, or we create and prolong the problem! Our country, America, got rich off of slavery!

Now Rhonda gets angry.

RHONDA

Don't have to tell me about that! I'll slap you cross the face.

Lin sees that she struck a nerve. She STARES at Rhonda with puppy-dog eyes. Rhonda remains ANGRY.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

We all gotta be rescued twice from somethin'! Trey thinks he had to be rescued twice by Jesus. Fine! You think you gotta be rescued twice from buying cheap shit. Fine! And I don't know what the hell I need to be rescued twice from, but it's somethin'!

LIN

I'm sorry, Girl. I guess I wasn't done venting from earlier.

Rhonda STARES back.

RHONDA

It's okay, Girlfriend. Maybe I was thinking about the bastard Mbeetu in Africa. Like to pop a cap in his ass!

Rhonda and Lin LAUGH.

TREY

(mumbles, eyes closed)
Will all y'all shut up? I can't take twelve hours of this. I'll jump. I'll really jump.

They ALL laugh.

EXT. SHAH AMANAT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

SUPER: Shah Amanat International Airport, Chittagong, Bangladesh -- 2 P.M.

Outside the airport, an old sedan and driver (AHMED, 35, rustic) waits to take Rhonda, Lin, and Trey to a fishing village almost six hours away. Trey carries a leather briefcase (of sales goods) and all travelers carry a small backpack of clothes.

AHMED

You pay driver speak English?

RHONDA

Yes. I'm Rhonda...

AHMED

You get in car. Not safe.

Rhonda, Lin, and Trey hop in the old car.

AHMED (CONT'D)

You keep head down a bit.

They slouch down as told.

EXT. ROAD SOUTH - DAY

Ten minutes later, Ahmed looks in the rearview mirror and sees nothing.

AHMED

Head up now. Safe. Welcome to Bangladesh.

Rhonda, Trey, and Lin sit up and look around.

RHONDA
What is your name?

AHMED
Ahmed.

RHONDA
Why were you concerned back there?

AHMED
Many pirates here, land and sea.

LIN
I thought this area was relatively safe.

AHMED
Only few bad people. You private jet, some people think you rich.

TREY
Thanks for saving us.

Ahmed sees a motorcycle gaining on them fast.

AHMED
Not good. Pirate.

The motorcycle gains on them. The driver is in a black leather suit and helmet. Ahmed speeds up, and cuts him off several times as he tries to pass. Rhonda carefully removes her TASER. After two more times cutting off the motorcycle driver, he pulls along side Ahmed, and pulls out a pistol, aiming it at Ahmed.

Rhonda casually rolls down the window, and shoots the motorcyclist with the TASER.

The motorcyclist CRASHES.

Ahmed is speechless, but very sweaty.

TREY
Nice shot.

LIN
Moving car, too.

RHONDA
Pistols are over-rated.

They LAUGH. Ahmed is still speechless. The rest of the ride is peaceful and beautiful.

LATER

RHONDA (CONT'D)

We've been driving for several hours. How about a pit stop?

AHMED

Mermaid Cafe, Cox's Razor. You like.

EXT./INT. MERMAID CAFE - DAY

A quaint cafe in the fishing village of Cox's Razor is a welcomed site. The atmosphere is one of palm trees and bamboo. Two tables of a few moderately wealthy Vacationers (6; 40s, nicely dressed beachwear) eat and drink merrily. Trey, Rhonda, and Lin do not stand out in their modest clothes.

RHONDA

Ahmed, good work!

LIN

Beautiful, peaceful.

TREY

Food smells great.

AHMED

Last peaceful, good food 'til you get back here, okay?

RHONDA

Okay. Eat up! It's on me. You too, Ahmed.

They eat a fine meal as Ahmed gives them survival tips.

AHMED

You no go bars. Lock hotel door. Keep electric gun handy.

RHONDA

Will do.

AHMED

Phone you got?

RHONDA

Yes.

AHMED
Nobody come when you call.

LIN
So Teknaf is not as safe as here,
we get that!

AHMED
(whispers)
When Godfather there, no one safe.

RHONDA
(whispers)
You know him?

AHMED
(whispers)
Just hear legend. Bad man. Very bad
man.

TREY
(whispers)
Is it true he stole one million
young people from Bangladesh?

RHONDA
Why are we whispering?

AHMED
(whispers)
Everyone on coast work for
Godfather. Everyone.
(beat)
You pay now. We go.

INT./EXT. CAR - NIGHT

They approach a small fishing village.

AHMED
Not good arrive night.

RHONDA
We'd rather sneak into Teknaf.
Heard this was the smart way.

Ahmed parks the car near a group of fishing boats.

AHMED
Yes, but you need boat.

RHONDA

Can you help us get one? We have to change into costumes.

AHMED

Costumes?

RHONDA

(snickering)

I'm traveling as a mistress to Trey. Lin is his domestic, and Trey is a businessman, a garment buyer.

Ahmed SHAKES his head in disbelief, as they change into costumes. Rhonda is FURIOUS as she squeezes into a tight, silky-red, short dress, and red heels. Lin is in a white maid's uniform. Trey is in a nice white-cotton suit, open white shirt showing his silver crucifix, and fancy straw hat. He grabs the briefcase with SHIRT SAMPLES in it. Ahmed watches in amazement.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Uh uh. I ain't going anywhere dressed like this!

TREY

We've been over this on the jet. One night.

Rhonda looks down at herself in DISGUST. She has a tear in her eye. Lin goes to comfort her.

LIN

Hey, I'm a maid. One night.

TREY

What's really the problem?

Rhonda wipes a tear away, and becomes defiant.

RHONDA

Nothing's wrong. There's nothing I can't handle!

Ahmed tries to switch the topic to something lighter. He fails miserably as he chuckles while talking.

AHMED

Godfather many guns. Very bad. He shoot you all.

Rhonda SHAKES her finger at Ahmed.

RHONDA

Just get us a boat. Then you stay here and wait for our return. You will be paid well.

Ahmed takes one step toward the dock and stops.

AHMED

No like plan. But I get boat. You pay for trip back now. I stay two days.

RHONDA

We'll be back in one!

AHMED

Pay now.

Rhonda pays Ahmed.

RHONDA

I trust you.

Ahmed's hands SHAKE as he gets paid.

Ahmed guides them toward a fishing boat. He whispers to Rhonda.

AHMED

Everyone work for Godfather.
Everyone.

RHONDA

Thanks, Ahmed. We know what to do.
See you here tomorrow morning.

Ahmed goes to speak with a fisherman. He waves Trey forward. Lin and Rhonda keep their heads down.

EXT. FISHING BOAT - NIGHT

Trey hands the Boatman (50; tattered clothes) some money, and they board. Ahmed waves good-bye like it's the last time he'll see them. They depart, and remain close to shore. No one speaks.

Ten minutes later, the boat arrives on the beach. Secretly, Rhonda checks her satellite phone under her rags. She nods yes to Trey. They wade ashore, and hike to the Hotel Dip Plaza, the most expensive hotel, and still a dump.

EXT./INT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Trey walks in proudly with the two women behind him. A hotel CLERK (16) doesn't say a word. Trey hands him Tk 500 (100 more than the rate) and the CLERK hands him a key. They HEAR yelling, singing, and bottles breaking in the Bar across the street.

TREY

Sounds like a fun place across the street.

The Clerk STARES, not understanding a word.

Trey POINTS across the street.

The Clerk shakes his head "No" and POINTS to down the hall to the paid room. Trey leads Rhonda and Lin to the room. There is one full-sized bed in the room, and visible toilet with no door.

TREY (CONT'D)

Cozy.

RHONDA

Let's check in.

Rhonda taps away at her satellite phone.

CUT TO:

INT. RESCUE ROOM - DAY

Lexi is PACING. All the computer screens are up with models and maps of Teknaf (red hot). Rosa, Jan, and Bret are typing madly on their keyboards. Willy is on the phone. Ted is PACING as well.

Lexi's phone RINGS. She puts it on SPEAKER.

RHONDA (O.S.)

Just wanted to say we made it.

LEXI

Rhonda, listen to me. Abort the mission. Get out of there now.

RHONDA (O.S.)

What?

LEXI

He's right across the street. Willy's informer was shot just before you got into town. Get out!

ROSA

Bangladeshi police are on their way from Cox's Razor, but they may not be there for a while.

JAN

The Godfather's men went door-to-door in the whole village shooting every stranger.

RHONDA (O.S.)

We don't exactly have a way out of town. An exit strategy, the border with Myanmar is mined and guarded. Our hired car is ten minutes away by boat.

BRET

Police phones say they are twenty minutes out.

LEXI

I'm ordering you to leave. There's gonna be a firestorm of bullets.

RHONDA (O.S.)

You're coming in broken...

Rhonda makes the sound of STATIC.

LEXI

Don't you pull that...

BACK TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Rhonda hangs up.

RHONDA

Police are on the way. We gotta stall the Godfather for twenty minutes.

TREY

What's the plan?

RHONDA

Lin, stay here. Monitor the phones for trouble. I'll put ours in radio-transmit mode. Keep your TASER ready.

LIN
Okay, but I don't like it.

RHONDA
Nobody takes their maid into a bar.
Trey, what say you go get a drink,
and treat me like your woman. I'll
carry the TASER in my purse.

Rhonda sees herself in the mirror and FREEZES.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
I can't do this.

LIN
Great! Let's get out of town!

RHONDA
I won't dishonor myself.

TREY
It's bad. I know. But the Godfather
steals thousands of slaves every
year.

Rhonda looks at herself one more time, and gives in.

RHONDA
Okay. Let's do this!

LIN
I don't like this.

RHONDA
We're just going to keep him in the
bar for twenty minutes. If he gets
to his boat, he's gone.

TREY
How do we keep him there?

RHONDA
Maybe you can drink him under the
table!

LIN
I really don't like this plan.

RHONDA
When the police show up, point them
to the bar.

Trey leads Rhonda out of the room, out of the hotel, and
across the street.

EXT./INT. BAR - NIGHT

The bar contains Ten Armed Bodyguards (30s-40s; brutish Malaysians), Dil Mohammed (AKA the GODFATHER; 45; nicely dressed criminal in a barstool), and six Prostitutes (scantily dressed and dancing around the Godfather). The Bartender (50) is heavily tattooed. The Godfather is already tipsy. The Bodyguards are pretty drunk too.

Trey STRUTS into the bar with Rhonda walking seductively behind him, capturing the eye of the Godfather.

The bodyguards pull their pistols, but the Godfather waves them back. The Godfather speaks in Malay. The Bartender understands a little English.

The Godfather SEES Trey's open shirt and silver crucifix and waves him forward.

GODFATHER

Yesus.

TREY

That's right. Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior.

GODFATHER

Who is this?

Trey holds up his briefcase.

TREY

I'm a Garment buyer. I represent a chain of gift shops in the Caribbean...

GODFATHER

Not you. This?

The Godfather POINTS at Rhonda, and WAVES her forward.

TREY

This is my
(winks)
Assistant, if you know what I mean.

The Godfather sits up to look taller. He pushes a Prostitute away.

TREY (CONT'D)

(smiles)
They got beer here?
(louder)
Beer, cerveza, el beer-o?

The Bartender looks at the Godfather to get the okay, before serving Trey a can of beer. The Godfather nods "okay."

Trey puts down money, too much money, placing his hand facedown, on the bar.

The Godfather pulls out a switchblade knife, opens it, and stabs the bar between the fingers of Trey's hand.

Trey pulls out the knife to Godfather's surprise. His guards whip out WEAPONS of every description and aim at Trey and Rhonda.

Trey GRABS the can of beer, turns it upside down, stabs the beer can, opens the tab, chugs the entire beer in a few seconds, and crushes the beer can on the bar.

The Godfather is amazed and amused! He waves to his guards to put their weapons away. He WINKS at Rhonda, who NODS her head like she wants to see the Godfather slam a beer like Trey.

The Godfather understands after a while, and tries to duplicate Trey's beer-slamming.

The Godfather succeeds. His guards CHEER.

The Bartender distributes beers to all the Bodyguards, who try to chug the beers in one gulp (hard to do without opening the other end). They laugh and fill up quickly.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Across the street, Lin listens in via Rhonda's phone (on radio transmit) as a call comes in from Lexi.

LIN

Oh shit.

She reluctantly answers.

LIN (CONT'D)

Hi Boss, I was just about to call...

LEXI (O.S.)

(angry)

Tell me you're all safely out of Teknaf!

LIN

Well...

LEXI (O.S.)
Where is she?

LIN
She didn't want the Godfather to
escape on his boat, so they're
stalling him.

LEXI (O.S.)
Got them on radio?

LIN
Yes, Ma'am.

LEXI (O.S.)
Patch it through.

LIN
Ma'am?

LEXI
Or you're fired!

Lin pushes a few buttons on the phone, and they all HEAR the
action in the bar.

BACK TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The MUSIC is louder.

The Prostitutes vie for attention, but the Godfather pushes
them away.

TREY
Another el beer-o, bartender, if
you please.

Again, the bartender seeks approval from the Godfather, and
again the Godfather nods "okay."

Trey politely gestures for the knife, the Godfather smirks
and hands it to him, and Trey repeats his BEER SLAM. Even the
Godfather's guards CHEER a little.

Rhonda rubs her hand on the Godfather's leg, and nods hinting
that she wants to see him slam another beer.

The Godfather is more interested in Rhonda, so Rhonda pushes
back, and POINTS at Trey's two crushed beer cans compared to
the Godfather's one can.

The Godfather motions for another beer for himself and all of his guards, but they are drunk (and full).

Rhonda SMILES.

The Godfather retrieves the knife, and clumsily repeats the BEER SLAM. His Bodyguards CHEER MADLY!

CUT TO:

INT. RESCUE ROOM - DAY

They all HEAR the loud music and cheering.

Lexi PACES as the radio is on speaker for everyone to hear. The geeks are on their computers, giggling a little.

LEXI

This is serious. He's a mass-murderer. A crazed lunatic.

BRET

The Bangladeshi cops are still five minutes out.

LEXI

God damn it! Get out of there now!

BACK TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The MUSIC is even louder. Trey STAGGERS like he can't take any more. The Godfather motions for the bartender to bring Tray another beer.

Trey shakes his head "no," but the Godfather insists.

Rhonda starts DANCING to the music to distract the Godfather, and it works for a minute.

The Godfather STABS the bar with his knife next to Trey's hand again, insisting that Trey slam another beer.

Trey staggers even more, but motions that everyone should join him, while slurring his speech.

TREY

C'mon. Every...body join me. I'm buying!

Trey slams more money on the bar, winks at Rhonda, and GRABS another beer from the bartender who serves everyone a beer.

Trey pauses, stalls for time by staggering around with the knife and beer. The Bodyguards are already drinking. The Godfather can barely sit up on the barstool. Rhonda keeps dancing.

Suddenly, the Godfather senses something's wrong. He STANDS and yells in Malay.

GODFATHER

Take them! Take them!

The Guards are drunk and confused.

RHONDA

Now!

The bartender pulls out a shotgun.

Trey GRABS the Godfather and holds the knife to his throat.

Rhonda whips out her TASER and zaps the bartender and the first guard who comes her direction.

Lin CRASHES through the doors of the bar and zaps two more guards who pulled weapons.

Seconds later, five cars of Bangladeshi Police (30s-40s; in uniforms) arrive with SIRENS and LIGHTS. Ten Policemen arrest the Godfather and his men, who can barely stand up.

INT. PRIVATE JET - DAY

Rhonda, Lin, and Trey sleep as we HEAR an actual newscast from the arrest.

MALE NARRATOR #2

Bangladesh police say they have arrested a human trafficking "godfather" in a fresh crackdown on smugglers accused of exploiting the regional refugee crisis. The arrest of alleged kingpin Dil Mohammed over the weekend in the southern smuggling town of Teknaf - bordering Myanmar - was part of crackdown that also saw 19 other traffickers captured in the past month.

INT. RESCUE ROOM - DAY

Lexi STARES at Rhonda, Trey, and Lin from across the table, while Rosa, Jan, and Bret, pretend to work on their computers, and Willy and Ted speak quietly in the kitchen so they can listen in.

LEXI

Of all the moronic ideas you three have had, this one takes the cake.

RHONDA

Nobody even knows we were there.

LEXI

That's beside the point.

LIN

We survived, and it went down without a shot.

TREY

Or shot glass. It was just beer.

Lexi GLARES at Trey.

LEXI

You could've died from alcohol poisoning.

RHONDA

Or a mass-murderer. But it didn't happen. Could use a day off, though.

LEXI

I'm afraid there's no time. Rosa?

ROSA

Houston, Texas. A woman this time.

RHONDA

A woman?

Rosa shows the photos of the top ten human-traffickers, and now #1 and #3 have faces.

ROSA

Number Two. Hortensia Meddles-Arguello, simply known as Tencha. The FBI thinks she runs a brothel, but she's never been caught.

LEXI

We need you in Houston tomorrow afternoon, and the sting is tomorrow night. Jan?

JAN

Once Lexi got us a photo from her friends at the FBI, I was able to use face-recognition software to track her purchases for the past ten years.

LIN

From security cameras in stores?

JAN

Stores, banks, gas stations, even drive-up windows at fast food places.

TREY

Amazing.

Jan shows a map of Houston, and red dots all over.

JAN

Because people are creatures of habit, we shop around the places we live and work.

LEXI

Mathematics can be our friend.

JAN

If we run those dots through a simple mathematical algorithm, we should find exactly two "super hotspots" -- where she lives and where she works.

Jan runs the model and two super-hotspots show up.

LEXI

This is really cool.

RHONDA

Got my attention.

JAN

One is a house in an upscale residential neighborhood, and one is a seedy bar and warehouse.

RHONDA
Or whorehouse in this case.

LEXI
It gets better. Bret?

BRET
Once we knew the place of business,
I was able to reverse analyze phone
records to cell phone billing
records, give them back to Jan to
map...

JAN
The johns!

Thousands of red dots appear all over Houston (Note: blurry,
and fast so we don't get sued).

RHONDA
You mentioned a sting operation.
How you gonna catch her?

LEXI
How should I know? You'll think of
something on the way.

Willy RACES in his wheelchair from the kitchen.

WILLY
Check banks for cashiers checks
just under ten-thousand dollars.
Banks have to report them if they
are more than ten grand. She's got
to covert the cash somehow.

RHONDA
Thanks, Willy.

TED
I'll start finding safe homes for
the women.

LEXI
Thanks, Ted.

LIN
What are we waiting for?

TREY
Be like going home, y'all!

Rhonda looks away.

LEXI
Something the matter, Rhonda?

RHONDA
Nothin' I can't handle.

Lin and Trey look at each other as they follow Rhonda out of the room. Their body language suggests that something's not right with Rhonda. They SHRUG their shoulders.

INT./EXT. HOUSTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Trey stands at the *Avis* rental car dealer, while Rhonda and Lin wait for their luggage. He returns without car keys or a rental agreement.

RHONDA
No keys?

TREY
Wasn't going to rent an extra-cheap subcompact when I'm home in Houston.

LIN
What are we gonna do now?

TREY
Hold tight! I'll make a call.

Trey steps away to make a phone call. Rhonda and Lin look at him suspiciously. Trey returns.

TREY (CONT'D)
I warned my staff this might happen.

RHONDA
Your staff?

TREY
Just wait.

LATER

Outside at passenger pickup, they wait impatiently. Suddenly, three fancy cars roll up to them: a Porsche Cayman GT4, a Porsche 911 Turbo S, and a Mercedes Benz Limousine. Three drivers (30s; Hispanics; two male, one female) HOP out and HUG Trey. FRANK (35; handsome) HUGS Rhonda, and he winks at her.

FRANK

Welcome home.

Trey points to the drivers and makes introductions.

TREY

Great to be home, y'all. This is Frank, Micco, and Raina. They run the place for me. These are my work associates, Rhonda and Lin.

RHONDA

What's this?

TREY

Thought we'd stay at my place and save the price of hotel rooms. Who wants to drive?

Rhonda and Lin raise their hands. Trey hands them the Porsches keys. Lin and Rhonda are flabbergasted.

LIN

You're kidding.

TREY

Follow the limo. Try not to lose us.

Trey and the drivers load the bags in the limo as Rhonda and Lin get adjusted in the Porsches.

The limo heads out followed by Lin and Rhonda.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

We see the three cars RACING to the Dos Brisas Inn (or similar) luxury guest ranch outside of Houston.

EXT./INT. LUXURY RANCH - DAY

The cars pull up to the fanciest ranch/inn in Texas. Rhonda and Lin can't believe their eyes. Trey is nonchalant.

RHONDA

You own this place?

TREY

My parents did. Corporation, anyway. Let me show y'all around!

Trey gives a tour to speechless Rhonda and Lin.

TREY (CONT'D)

Caters to a wealthy clientele, as you might have guessed, but all staff are paid well, and offered free university degree programs.

RHONDA

In hotel and restaurant management?

TREY

Any degree they chose. We charge the guests more, but everybody wins. Frank, Micco, and Raina did choose the hotel business, but our employees are not Global 500 CEOs, doctors, lawyers, and fighter pilots. There's a staff reunion and dinner out by the pool every Fourth of July!

LIN

Independence Day.

TREY

Exactly.

Rhonda stops Trey overlooking the pool.

RHONDA

So why did you join us?

TREY

(laughs)

My shrink said I had a Moses-complex. Prince of Egypt, leading his people out of bondage.

LIN

I buy that.

TREY

I was rescued once, when I was adopted. Taken from abject poverty to here. But far more important, and I don't expect you to understand this, is when I was rescued by the Lord.

Rhonda and Lin pause.

LIN

From the upper-class to the middle-class?

RHONDA
To a life of serving others.

They STROLL the grounds.

TREY
Former President Jimmy Carter, who my parents would have never voted for in a million years, has spent decades building homes for Habitat for Humanity.

RHONDA
Put's the rest of us to shame.

LIN
Just serving others.

Rhonda's phone RINGS.

RHONDA
Speaking of serving others, it's the boss!

She answers.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
Hi, Lexi.

LEXI (O.S.)
Jan and Bret say our target is going to her bank this afternoon. They say she has travel patterns. You got to get to that bank before she does.

RHONDA
And arrest her?

LEXI (O.S.)
We need a money trail first. We need video of her buying cashiers checks for under ten grand. Hurry.

RHONDA
We're on it!

Rhonda hangs up.

TREY
The Madam? Tencha?

LIN
Let's nail her!

RHONDA

The Porsches are too conspicuous.
Got something that will blend in?

They RACE away.

EXT./INT. BANK - DAY

An old, rusty Chevy Impala with Rhonda driving, is followed by an old Nissan Sentra with Trey driving and Lin beside him. Rhonda is dressed in a business suit, but Trey and Lin are in worn jeans, T-shirts, and baseball caps. They park behind the bank. Rhonda hops out and speaks to them.

RHONDA

Fire up the Go-Pro cameras. Follow her back at a safe distance. Boss set me up with the bank manager. Gotta run.

Inside the bank, the Bank Manager (MICHELLE GARCIA; 50s, well dressed, all-business) meets Rhonda at the door.

MICHELLE

Lexi Worthington described you perfectly. She sent us your security clearance and documents, but I need to see a photo ID.

RHONDA

Nice to meet you, too.

Rhonda provides a passport and drivers license to Michelle, who SCRUTINIZES them.

MICHELLE

I had to alert the authorities to test remote camera feeds. You understand.

RHONDA

Long as they don't get in our way.

MICHELLE

You had better not get in our way. We'll give you a name badge, but you are forbidden to talk to any customer. Is that clear?

RHONDA

Yes, Ma'am.

MICHELLE

Don't call me Ma'am. We all know that ma'am means bitch in the south!

Rhonda hides a chuckle.

RHONDA

Suppose it could. My apologies.

MICHELLE

Ms. Hortensia Meddles-Arguello is one of the branch's best customers. Never had a problem with her.

RHONDA

And yet she always gets cashier's checks for slightly under ten grand and pays in cash.

MICHELLE

Many local businesses in this area are cash-only businesses.

RHONDA

Right. Does she go to the same tellers every time?

MICHELLE

After Ms. Worthington alerted us, I checked our records.

RHONDA

And?

MICHELLE

She uses young tellers every time.

Rhonda looks around to find the youngest teller. She spots, MS. EVA SANCHEZ (23, gorgeous).

RHONDA

I see.

MICHELLE

That's Ms. Sanchez. Eva Sanchez.

RHONDA

May I speak with her?

MICHELLE

You'll have to. I told her she'd be training a new teller today, you.

(MORE)

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

I'll introduce you, then I'll be in my office.

RHONDA

Thanks.

MICHELLE

One more thing, Ms. Butler. We'll have you under video surveillance the entire time you're here in the bank.

RHONDA

I understand.

MICHELLE

If you do anything to disrupt normal bank operations, I'll have you arrested immediately.

RHONDA

I understand.

MICHELLE

If you do anything to harm the reputation of this bank, both you and Ms. Sanchez will be fired.

RHONDA

I get it. I'm just an observer. A simple observer.

MICHELLE

Fine. Let's go meet Eva.

Michelle leads Rhonda to Eva.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Eva, this is our new trainee, Rhonda Butler. She's just here to observe.

RHONDA

Hi Eva. Pleasure to meet you.

EVA

Hi, Rhonda.

MICHELLE

I'll let you get back to work. Please notify me if Ms. Butler tries to do anything more than observe.

Michelle heads to the office. Rhonda stands behind and to the side of Eva and watches her deal with an elderly customer, MR. HENDRIX (80; farming overalls).

EVA

Hi, Mr. Hendrix. Good to see you again. A deposit. Good for you.

MR. HENDRIX

Not much, but it helps.

EVA

Yes, Sir. Have a nice day.

Mr. Hendrix leaves. Rhonda whispers to Eva.

RHONDA

One of your customers, Ms. Meddles-Arguello, runs a small charity I'd like to donate a hundred bucks to anonymously.

EVA

Really, Ms. Meddles-Arguello. Doesn't seem the type.

RHONDA

She's very humble. Never brags about her work.

EVA

I'll say. She's come to my window every week for the two years I've been here and had never said a word.

RHONDA

Ya see. Modest to a fault. So if you wouldn't mind, here's a hundred bucks to add to any transaction she makes, but let's keep it our little secret.

Rhonda slips Eva a one-hundred-dollar bill.

EVA

If you say so.

RHONDA

There's so much to learn about the banking business. I hope I can absorb it all.

EVA
Not so bad. Standard procedures.

RHONDA
And precise government regulations
on reporting various transactions?
I don't see how you do it.

EVA
Everything by the book.

RHONDA
You are amazing!

Eva smiles. Rhonda returns the smile.

LATER

HORTENSIA "TENCHA" MEDDLES-ARGUELLO (50s, stout, mean-looking) steps into the bank with a large purse. Rhonda nudges Eva, as Tencha looks around. She waits for Eva. Hortenia looks suspiciously at Rhonda.

EVA
Hi, Ms. Meddles-Arguello, this is
our new trainee.

TENCHA
Old for trainee.

EVA
Took a little longer in college
than most.

Tencha pulls out a canvas bag filled with bills, that Eva puts in the counting machine next to her.

TENCHA
Same. Cashiers check.

Eva writes the amount on a piece of paper, and shows it to Tencha. We SEE \$9,950.

EVA
Does this figure look right to you?

TENCHA
Si.

EVA
Let me draw the check then.

Eva adds Rhonda's \$100 to the stack of bills, as Rhonda LOOKS away towards the door.

Tencha looks back suspiciously, but sees nothing. Eva hands Tencha an envelope. Tencha quickly puts the envelope in her purse and walks out without speaking.

RHONDA

Thanks, Eva. I'll be going now.

(beat)

Oh, aren't you required to track cashiers checks greater than ten thousand dollars.

EVA

Why, you're right Rhonda. I've got a little extra paperwork to do.

Rhonda stops at Michelle's office to say good-bye.

RHONDA

You run a tight ship here, Michelle. Should be proud.

Michelle waves without looking up.

Rhonda EXITS the bank, and immediately gets a text from Lin. The text reads: "On her tail."

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Trey and Lin, in the Nissan Sentra, track Tencha and a Driver and Two Bodyguards (40s, brutes) in a late model Mercedes Benz. The streets look dangerous.

LATER

EXT./INT. SEEDY BAR - DAY

The Mercedes Benz pulls up to a rundown bar and warehouse in the worst part of town. Trey stops across the street and GETS VIDEO as Tencha and the Bodyguards enter the bar. The Driver looks around suspiciously before entering.

LIN

I'll text our location.

Lin texts the address to Rhonda.

LATER

Rhonda drives up and parks behind Trey and Lin. Trey and Lin join Rhonda in the Impala.

RHONDA

Lin, you gotta get in there and establish her ownership on camera.

LIN

How?

TREY

Five o'clock world.

RHONDA

What?

TREY

Workers. Five PM after work. They stop at a bar. It's the law!

LIN

I'll have to get in with a regular.

RHONDA

Be safe. Sunglasses. Roll the camera. We're monitoring.

LIN

With stun guns again?

RHONDA

Starting to like these things.

At 5 PM, old cars start rolling into the parking lot.

LIN

I got an idea. Drive around the block -- give me five minutes.

RHONDA

Be safe.

TREY

Ditto, kiddo.

Lin smiles and exits the Impala. She crosses the street towards the seedy bar, and waits for a car with a single male driver (MARCO MESTEZ; 35, laboring clothes) parks an old pickup truck. Lin wanders over to his truck as he gets out.

LIN

Excuse me, Sir. My Nissan across the street won't start, got any jumper cables?

MARCO

No, but they might inside. People leave their lights on all the time on Friday and Saturday nights here.

LIN

Oh, I don't feel that safe here.

(beat)

Hey, I recognize you. You come into my Walmart. I'm a cashier? Linda?

MARCO

The Walmart on Powerline?

LIN

That's it.

MARCO

Yes, I think I remember you. I'm Marco.

LIN

I'm Linda.

(giggles)

I told you that. I'm nervous. I know, we all look alike, right?

MARCO

No, no. Linda, I insult you. I buy you a drink first, then we get your car started.

LIN

One drink. I never drink and drive.

MARCO

I never drive without drinking, so it evens out.

Marco leads Lin toward the front door.

LIN

Marco, do me a favor. Tell them in there that we're old friends, so I don't feel strange later asking to borrow jumper cables.

MARCO

Linda y Marco, amigos. Si.

Outside, Rhonda pulls into the parking space behind the Nissan. Trey is monitoring the video feed from Lin's Go-Pro.

TREY
What a dump!

RHONDA
Any sign of Tencha?

TREY
Not yet.

RHONDA
Turn up the volume. Can't hear Lin.

Trey turns up the volume. On Trey's tablet computer, we SEE Marco, and a young STRIPPER (21) behind him, pole-dancing.

LIN (O.S.)
I said, she looks a little young.

MARCO (O.S.)
Lotta young ones here.

LIN (O.S.)
Rich guy I met on line last week
would love it here. He said I was
too old for him!

MARCO (O.S.)
No!

LIN (O.S.)
I think he likes 'em too young, if
you ask me.

MARCO (O.S.)
Tencha, the owner, buys our drinks
all night if we bring in a rich
one.

Rhonda's and Trey's eyes light up.

RHONDA
Take the bait.

LIN (O.S.)
What do you mean, Marco?

MARCO (O.S.)
You know, if the rich guy wants to
get friendly with one of the girls.

LIN
What?

Marco leans right into the camera and whispers, between sips of beer.

MARCO (O.S.)
Some of the girls here are hookers.
Don't they teach you anything in
high school?

LIN (O.S.)
I could text my rich friend? I'll
have him bring some jumper cables
too.

MARCO (O.S.)
I'll tell Tencha.

Lin sends a text to Trey.

RHONDA
You're up, Cowboy.

Trey looks behind him as they HEAR the thunder of a Porsche pull behind them. Trey's employee, Frank, hops out of the Porsche, and trades cars with Rhonda and Trey.

TREY
Thanks, Frank. I owe ya.

Frank smiles and waves at Rhonda, hops in his Impala, and RACES off.

RHONDA
Check your camera.

TREY
It's on, don't worry.

RHONDA
(worried)
You're sending me the video, right?

Trey notices Rhonda's worried voice.

TREY
Yeah.
(beat)
Are you okay?

Trey puts an arm around Rhonda, but she shakes it off. Trey is shocked.

RHONDA
Nothin' I can't handle, okay?

TREY

Fine! But you seem jumpy.

RHONDA

Don't know what we'll find in there. Got your stun gun?

TREY

Okay, what's really wrong?

RHONDA

Nothin' I can't handle. You do your job, and I'll do mine.

Trey STARES at Rhonda with a mix of pity and confusion.

TREY

If you say so. Your turn to stay outside to call for help if we need it, right?

RHONDA

Right. Just go!

Trey tosses on a nice sports jacket, hops in his Porsche, and RACES to the front to the front of the bar. Trey walks slowly toward the door of the bar, turning twice to look back at Rhonda.

Trey is being watched by security in Tencha's office.

INT. TENCHA'S OFFICE - DAY

Tencha and two Bodyguards WATCH the MONITORS. They speak in Spanish.

TENCHA

The rich friend.

BODYGUARD #1

Nice car.

TENCHA

Run the plates.

Bodyguard #2 calls a friend, whispering.

BODYGUARD #2

Big guest ranch owner right here in Houston.

TENCHA

Get me a Zillow estimate for his house.

Pause.

BODYGUARD #2

Six-point-seven million dollars.
Not for sale.

TENCHA

Go see what he likes.

In the bar, Trey sees Lin. Lin waves him over to the table.

Outside, Rhonda breaks out in a sweat. She views the tablet computer and sees Trey joining Lin and Marco. Rhonda sees that Lin and Marco are joined by Tencha's Bodyguard #2.

In the bar, Trey sees he's packing heat.

BODYGUARD #2

You cops?

LIN

No.

TREY

No.

BODYGUARD #2

Have to ask.

TREY

Just bringing jumper cables to my friend.

Trey looks at the Stripper, but he appears uninterested.

BODYGUARD #2

You don't like?

TREY

Too old for me.

Lin slaps Marco on the shoulder.

LIN

Told ya.

The Bodyguard turns to the bartender.

BODYGUARD #2
Drinks for the table are on the
house.

Marco gives a thumbs up sign

LIN
Gee. Thanks.

TREY
Very hospitable of y'all.

Outside in the Nissan, Rhonda sweats and shivers.

RHONDA
Nothin' I can't handle. Nothin' I
can't handle.

Rhonda's satellite phone RINGS. Rhonda is slow to answer.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
Hello, Lexi.

LEXI (O.S.)
Abort the mission!

RHONDA
What?

LEXI (O.S.)
You heard me, abort the mission.
You've won. That stunt you pulled
at the bank worked!

RHONDA
The bank had to report the
transaction over ten grand to the
feds?

LEXI (O.S.)
Exactly. Don't know how you did it,
but that's all the FBI needed.

RHONDA
They been watching the bar, too.

LEXI (O.S.)
It's the warehouse and rooms above
the bar. Biggest sex-trafficking
ring in Texas history, and it's
very unsafe. Get your crew back
here, now.

RHONDA
They're inside!

LEXI (O.S.)
I hope not. Tencha, the boss, has insider help. They're very dangerous. Call 'em and get 'em out. Under no circumstances are you to enter that building! Understand?

RHONDA
I wasn't going in.

LEXI (O.S.)
Hurry and call them. The Houston police will be there any minute!

Rhonda hangs up and checks the tablet computer for Trey's video.

She SEES Tencha leading Trey down thin unpainted hallway, with a dozen doors. Tencha UNLOCKS and OPENS one door, and we SEE Prostitute #1 (21; scantily clad) smiling, sitting seductively on a mattress (on the floor) in a filthy room.

TENCHA (O.S.)
Maria, very nice. Room one hundred per hour.

TREY (O.S.)
She's pretty old for me.

Tencha smiles, locks the door, and moves down the hall to another door. She unlocks it and opens the door to Prostitute #2 (18 years old, scantily clad, lying seductively on the mattress, but smiling weakly, as if forced.

TENCHA (O.S.)
Laura, very new. Room two hundred per hour.

Trey shows a sadness in his face.

TREY (O.S.)
She looks very nice, but not tonight. Not what I'm looking for.

TENCHA (O.S.)
You look sad.

TREY (O.S.)
Trying to work things out in my mind is all.

TENCHA (O.S.)
Worry too much, no good. Have good time.

TREY (O.S.)
It's not as easy for me to find the good time I like.

TENCHA (O.S.)
You got money?

TREY (O.S.)
More than enough money.

TENCHA (O.S.)
What is it?

TREY (O.S.)
Special tastes. I should go.

Trey begins to walk back toward the bar.

TENCHA (O.S.)
No. No.

TREY (O.S.)
What? They are very nice girls. They're just not for me.

TENCHA (O.S.)
Special tastes.

TREY (O.S.)
Yes, and I'm ashamed. I'm gonna go.

Trey starts to walk toward the bar again.

TENCHA (O.S.)
No. No. Maybe I have something special for you. Very special.

Trey stops. Tencha pulls him by the arm down the hallway.

Trey HEARS his phone BUZZ, but doesn't check it. Tencha hears it too. She smiles when Trey doesn't answer his phone.

Outside, Rhonda is furious.

RHONDA
Check your text messages, Trey!
Damn it!

Rhonda sweats.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
 Check your text messages. God damn
 it, Trey!

Rhonda checks the video feed from Lin and sees her checking her phone with Marco on her right side, and Bodyguard #2 of her left side. We see Lin's Text Message, "Call Home"

LIN (O.S.)
 If you'll excuse me, I need to call
 home. My little boy is worried
 about me.

Lin starts to get up, but they pull her down.

BODYGUARD #2 (O.S.)
 You wait here 'til your rich friend
 returns.

LIN (O.S.)
 I'm sorry, I have to go.

Bodyguard #2 shows Lin he's carrying a pistol.

LIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Or, I could wait.

Rhonda exits the Nissan and PACES up and down the sidewalk. She GLANCES at the Tablet computer to see Tencha lead Trey to the last door in the hallway.

Rhonda comes UNGLUED. She TOSSES the tablet computer in the Nissan, and TESTS the earpiece in her ear and she pushes buttons on her phone. She grabs her TASER gun and puts it in the back of her pants. On her way across the parking lot to the front door of the bar, she HEARS:

TENCHA (O.S.)
 You like Theresa, almost a baby.
 Five hundred, one hour.

In the office, on the security monitor, Bodyguard #1 recognizes Rhonda.

BODYGUARD #1
 That's the lady at the bank!

He PULLS an alarm, GRABS a sawed-off SHOTGUN and RACES out.

Yellow lights flicker in all the hallways of the warehouse, and at the bar. Bodyguard #2 PULLS his pistol on Lin, as Rhonda CHARGES toward him with her TASER drawn.

Twenty JOHNS (men 20s-60s, all types) begin pouring out of the individual rooms, buttoning up their shirts, zipping up pants, and slipping on shoes. They look flustered and scared.

There is pandemonium in the bar. Many of the Johns race through the bar and out to the parking lot.

Bodyguard #2 SEES Rhonda and turns to fire at her, but he shoots early and hits Lin in the arm. She falls out of her seat and out of sight. Rhonda ZAPS Bodyguard #2, PICKS up his pistol, and aims at the Bartender.

RHONDA

Call 9-1-1. Call an ambulance!

He picks up the phone and dials, as Rhonda RACES out the back to the brothel.

Bodyguard #1 reaches Tencha (on the floor) and Trey. We see a poor, frightened Little Girl (12) SHAKING in Trey's arms as Tencha lies on the floor (zapped). Bodyguard #1 aims his shotgun, but gets shot from behind by Rhonda. Bodyguard #1 FIRES above Trey's and the Little Girl's head. The Little Girl SCREAMS.

Rhonda RACES up to the room, PEEKS in the door, SEES the poor Little Girl, and collapses to the floor in tears.

We HEAR SIRENS.

LATER

Rhonda remains on the floor in SHOCK with a blanket wrapped around her as Six Crime Scene INVESTIGATORS (Various ages, genders, races) take photographs of each room.

We see dirty hallways, dozens of rooms filled with dirty clothes and garbage
(<http://www.click2houston.com/news/ringleader-in-texas-biggest-sex-trafficking-ring-sentenced-to-life-in-prison>).

We see Lin being taken out on a stretcher by Two EMTs (30s; uniform), with one Investigator talking to Marco.

We SEE two Investigators finding a safe with millions of dollars in cashiers checks and cash.

We see Bodyguard #1, Tencha, and the Bartender taken out in handcuffs.

We see Trey and a Social Worker attending to the Little Girl, as Prostitute #1 and #2 gather around. Trey leaves them to find Rhonda who is still in the Little Girl's room, squatting under a blanket.

TREY

Another set of EMTs are on the way.
You gonna be okay?

Rhonda's head is down. No answer.

TREY (CONT'D)

What's going on? Y'all can tell me!

No answer. Trey bends to HUG her. Rhonda SCREAMS. Two EMTs enter the room, and treat her for SHOCK.

Trey calls Lexi. She answers immediately.

LEXI (O.S.)

Trey? What is it?

TREY

We have an emergency!

We SEE Rhonda carted out on a stretcher with Trey by her side.

End Act Two

Act Three

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

SUPER: Houston Hospital, 2 P.M.

SUPER: The next day.

Rhonda lays in the hospital bed, asleep. Trey sits in one chair, Lin (with a heavily bandaged right arm) sits in the other.

A Doctor (50s, black) enters the room with a medical chart.

DOCTOR
You two still here?

TREY
Of course.

LIN
Any changes?

DOCTOR
Just about to ask you the same
thing.

The doctor checks her vital signs, then checks her eyes with a light. Rhonda's eyes FAIL to track the light.

TREY
Not a good sign.

DOCTOR
We just got her army medical
records. This is confidential.

Trey nods, "yes."

LIN
Of course.

The Doctor leads Trey and Lin to the hallway and whispers.

DOCTOR
She had a similar incident seven
years ago in Afghanistan.

TREY
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder?

DOCTOR
I wish it was that simple.

Trey and Lin look extra worried.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Wasn't the war, itself, according to the report.

TREY

What was it?

DOCTOR

She led her black ops team into a terrorist compound. The team did their business, killed the bad guys, I guess. She had done that before.

LIN

This was different?

TREY

I can guess.

(beat)

A young girl?

DOCTOR

She opened the door to a small room in the back, and found a dozen little girls who had been raped and mutilated.

Trey and Lin HUG each other.

TREY

Poor Rhonda.

LIN

Oh my God. Nothing prepares you for that!

The doctor leans in closer to them.

DOCTOR

Quite the opposite. I talked to Ms. Butler's grandmother in Louisiana two hours ago.

(beat)

Seems Ms. Butler had a sexually abusive father when she was a very young girl.

Lin breaks into TEARS.

TREY

Oh my God.

LIN
I need time alone.

DOCTOR
Sorry to be the one to tell you.
I've got a counselor on call if she
snaps out of it.

Trey gets angry.

TREY
When she snaps out of it.

DOCTOR
Yes, *when*. We have a few chemical
tricks up our sleeve, but we can't
use them until twenty-four hours
after the incident, a few hours
from now.

TREY
Thanks, Doctor.

LATER

Trey, Lin, and Lexi are bedside with the Doctor as he pushes
a syringe of purple fluid into Rhonda's IV. A NURSE (30,
Latina) is on hand monitoring the sensors.

LEXI
Is that stuff dangerous?

DOCTOR
Very.

NURSE
Nothing, Doctor.

DOCTOR
Give it a minute.

TREY
What'd ya mean, very.

DOCTOR
Neurological pharmaceuticals are
tricky business.

A monitor BEEPS.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Here she comes. Come on, Rhonda.
Speak to us.

Other monitors show good signs.

NURSE
We've got good signs, Doctor.

LEXI
Her eyelids moved.

They all lean in. Rhonda opens her eyes. She slowly looks around. Lexi holds Rhonda's hands. Rhonda pulls her hands away and GRUNTS.

DOCTOR
Hello, Ms. Butler, I'm Doctor Stan Morgan, a neurologist. Can you answer a few questions for me?

Rhonda nods "yes."

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
What's your name?

RHONDA
(weakly)
Rhonda. Rhonda Butler.

Everyone smiles.

DOCTOR
Good! What's your date of birth?

RHONDA
(stronger)
June tenth, nineteen-eight-one.

DOCTOR
Good! Do you know what year it is?

Rhonda looks at the Doctor in SILENCE.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Do you know where you are? What state you're in?

Rhonda looks at the Doctor in SILENCE.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Can you name the people in the room?

Rhonda looks around, but cannot speak.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
We'll try again tomorrow.

The NURSE remains behind as everyone else leaves the room. In the hallway, Lexi confronts the doctor.

LEXI

What happened in there?

DOCTOR

Give her a break. She made more progress in the past ten minutes than in the previous twenty-four hours. Do you think the scars from sexual abuse heal as quickly as a bullet wound? She needs time to heal. I'd like to ask you all to leave until she recognizes your photographs.

TREY

How long will that take?

DOCTOR

Hours?

(beat)

Maybe days. I'm not a psychiatrist, but the pattern seems to be that each time she's reminded of her childhood, it could get worst. I'm sending our best counselor in. I suggest you come back tomorrow. Good day!

The Doctor storms away.

LATER

Frank meekly walks into Rhonda's hospital room. He is smiling and carrying an large old leather-bound book, "Don Quixote." The Nurse comes in to take vital signs, and Frank waits patiently. The Nurse smiles at Frank and pats him on the back. Frank pulls a chair closely to Rhonda, who smiles warmly at the kind man. Frank slowly opens the book, and begins reading in softy and soothing voice.

FRANK

"The first book of the delightful history of the most ingenious knight Don Quixote. Chapter 1 Wherein is rehearsed the calling, and exercises of the renowned gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha.

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

There lived not long since in a certain village of La Mancha, the name whereof I purposely omit, Yeomen of their calling that use to pile up in their halls old lances, halberds, morrions, and such other armors and weapons. He was besides master of an ancient Target a lean stallion, and a swift greyhound. His pot consisted daily of somewhat more beef than mutton."

The scenes FADES into night as Frank continues reading, even after Rhonda falls peacefully to sleep. The Nurse comes in to check Rhonda's vital signs again. The Nurse looks over to Frank and smiles.

NURSE

Who wouldn't want a friend like you?

She smiles again as she exits.

Frank opens the book, and prepares to read again.

LATER

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

SUPER: "The next afternoon."

Frank continues to read with a soft gentle voice. Rhonda smiles.

FRANK

"Recollect, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "that wherever virtue exists in an eminent degree it is persecuted. Few or none of the famous men that have lived escaped being calumniated by malice. Julius Caesar, the boldest, wisest, and bravest of captains, was charged with being ambitious, and not particularly cleanly in his dress, or pure in his morals. Of Alexander, whose deeds won him the name of Great, they say that he was somewhat of a drunkard. Of Hercules, him of the many labors, it is said that he was lewd and luxurious."

The COUNSELOR (60; female; casually dressed) steps quietly into the room and smiles.

COUNSELOR
Frank, are you here again?

FRANK
I never left.

RHONDA
(smiles)
Thank you. I mean it! You made me smile every day.

FRANK
I'm glad you like it.

RHONDA
(to the Counselor)
I love listening to him, and Don Quixote is one of my favorite books of all time. How did he know that? I never told anyone.

COUNSELOR
Frank, can you leave us for a minute? I need to ask Rhonda a few questions.

FRANK
I could use a cup of coffee.

Frank gently squeezes Rhonda's hand, smiles, and exits.

COUNSELOR
That one smile a day is very important to you.

RHONDA
Yes, it is. Very important.

COUNSELOR
Good. Let's see if you can still recognize a few people, shall we?

RHONDA
Sure.

The Counselor shows photos to Rhonda.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
Lexi Worthington, Trey Stenson, Lin SU.

COUNSELOR
Where do you work?

RHONDA
Worthington Foundation. Washington
D.C.

COUNSELOR
And you rescue victims of human
trafficking? The key word is
rescue. You remember that!

RHONDA
Yes, rescue. Thank you, Doctor.

COUNSELOR
My pleasure, Rhonda. We have more
in common than you'll ever know.

Rhonda NODS like she understands. She holds the Counselor's
hands, and smiles warmly.

COUNSELOR (CONT'D)
Are you strong enough to see your
colleagues? They've been bugging
me.

RHONDA
I think so.

The Councilor BUZZES the nurses' station and Lin, Trey, and
Lexi RACE in. Frank enters with FLOWERS. Rhonda SMILES.

COUNSELOR
Be gentle.

The Counselor walks out.

RHONDA
So good to see you Lexi, Trey, and
Lin. And, Frank, thanks for coming
in to read to me. You were the
medicine of all. I love Don
Quixote!

Frank smiles and hands Rhonda the flowers. He squeezes her
hand gently. She smiles and squeezes back.

LEXI
Take as much time as you need to
recover.

TREY

We were so worried about you.

LIN

You'll be back in no time.

TREY

I'd like to move you out to the ranch. Nurses 'round the clock. Frank can help.

RHONDA

I'm fine. I'm fine. Not perfect, but fine. I'm going to be asking you for a few favors over the next three days. It's what I need to do to feel better.

Lexi, Lin, and Trey STARE at each other.

LEXI

What are you talking about?

RHONDA

I've had a lot of time to think in here.

TREY

Sounds dangerous.

RHONDA

(chuckles)

You don't know the half of it yet.

LIN

Go on, then, tell us.

RHONDA

Thanks to Frank, I've learned a lot more about Don Quixote.

Frank SMILES.

LEXI

Yes?

RHONDA

Don Quixote sees the world not as it is, but as it should be.

(beat)

And we should do the same.

TREY
Not just battle the windmill
dragons?

RHONDA
Exactly. We have to work much
harder on preventing human
trafficking, and showing victims a
path to recovery.

LEXI
That won't be easy.

RHONDA
Lexi, you're the one who told us it
wouldn't be easy.

LIN
All for one, and one for all.

TREY
We're with you. What's our first
step?

LEXI
Wait. The doctors haven't released
you yet.

RHONDA
Pull some strings. Get me out of
here!

LEXI
(smiles)
I think that's what the doctors
have been waiting for you to say!

RHONDA
Good. Now, help me get dressed.

There is a flurry of activity in the room. Frank smiles the
most. The Nurse comes in with a wheelchair for Rhonda.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
Thanks for everything, Nurse, but I
won't be needing a wheelchair.

Rhonda kisses Frank on the lips, surprising him, as she RACES
out of the room. Trey and Lin are right behind her!

INT. JET - NIGHT

Ted sits next to Rhonda, chatting as the jet SOARS.

RHONDA
Thanks for doing this Ted.

Ted smiles.

TED
Never considered myself a field
operative. Kind of a rush.
(beat)
I still think you're crazy, but I
want to help you like you helped so
many others.

Rhonda reaches across the aisle to hold his hands.

RHONDA
Talking with a gentle man for
thirteen hours has been the
greatest medicine in the world.

They fall asleep.

INT. AFRICAN HOSPITAL - NIGHT

A small boy (TEWDROS, 12, hospital gown) lays nervously on the bed, watching the door to the room like a hawk, as Rhonda and Ted walk in with flowers, a soccer jersey, and boxes of clothes and shoes. Tewdros smiles weakly, but watches the door. A NURSE (30, cute) translates.

RHONDA
I'm Rhonda Butler. My team saved
the young girls from Mbeetu. I know
what he did to your family.

The boy SHAKES.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
I'm here to make sure Mbeetu can
never hurt you again. This is my
bodyguard, Ted, the best bodyguard
in the world. He will guard you
while I'm gone.

TEWDROS
(in French)
When will you come back?

RHONDA
I hope by tomorrow morning. But if
I don't come back, Ted will take
you to a safe hospital in America.

TEWDROS
America? Barack Obama? Fifty-cent?

TED
That's America. No, Mbeetu.

Ted sits with Tewdros with a STUN GUN. Tewdros is very impressed. Rhonda kisses Tewdros on the top of the forehead, smiles, and exits.

EXT. SAVANNA GRASSLAND - NIGHT.

Rhonda is perfectly disguised as a heavy-set west-African refugee, with makeup to show scars from being beaten and whipped. She walks along a dirt road with a small basket of vegetables and spices. Her guide is Policeman #1 disguised as a blind Vodun (Medicine Man). His eyeballs have thin plastic covers that appear white. They have tiny holes so he can see a little. They approach Two Guards (20s, T-shirts, camo pants, and automatic rifles). One is tall, one is very short. They speak in Fon.

GUARD #1
What you want?

POLICEMAN #1
I am powerful Vodun.

GUARD #2
You look like a blind, pitiful beggar.

POLICEMAN #1
This is my woman. She cannot hear or speak, but she is great cook.

GUARD #1
Go away, beggar.

POLICEMAN #1
Test me. Ask me a question?

GUARD #1
Am I tall, blind man?

POLICEMAN #1
Very tall, but your feet hurt often.

GUARD #1
Lucky guess.

GUARD #2

I'm a bit taller, do my feet hurt?

POLICEMAN #1

You are much shorter, but your feet only hurt others. I can smell them.

The Guards laugh, but turn serious.

GUARD #2

What is this illness that sweeps the land, and killed my sons?

POLICEMAN #1

It is an evil spirit never seen before.

GUARD #1

How do we stop this spirit?

POLICEMAN #1

I sense the spirit, then my wife makes a soup that saves you and your village.

GUARD #2

We will be rewarded by Mbeetu.

GUARD #1

Come with us.

Down the road a bit, we see ten Soldiers (12-30; camo uniforms) on guard, and another ten Soldiers (12-30; camo uniforms) around the campfire. Two of the Soldiers around the campfire twitch and cough with an illness. Guard #2 points his rifle at Rhonda.

GUARD #2

Make soup, cure them or you die.

Policeman #1 gestures for Rhonda to cook.

GUARD #1

They bring medicine, a magic soup.

Rhonda PULLS out a pot, Policeman #1 asks for water, and soon Rhonda is adding vegetables to a nice soup. The Policeman CHANTS and WAVES his arms, showing the men his white eyes. Rhonda adds some spices with a stirring spoon. MBEETU (50; camo uniform) STRUTS up to the campfire. They speak in Fon.

MBEETU

You two, eat soup first.

Rhonda and Policeman #1 eat the soup as commanded, without ill-effects.

POLICEMAN #1

The evil sickness will kill the two sick men tonight.

GUARD #1

See. He is blind yet he sees.

MBEETU

Feed the sick men.

Rhonda switches the serving spoon to one with a lever that adds a powder to the soup. She stirs and serves the two sick men. Soon they stop twitching a coughing. The Soldiers are AMAZED.

POLICEMAN #1

Others may die tonight who have not eaten the magic soup, but we must go soon. Villagers nearby very sick.

MBEETU

They are simple beggars. Give them no money.

Little by little, more Soldiers drink the soup.

MBEETU (CONT'D)

I forbid Soldiers on watch to eat.

Mbeetu marches off to his hut shaking his head in disbelief. The soup is too tempting for most, but five Soldiers do not eat the soup.

Minutes later, the soldiers look awake, but they do not speak. They look perfectly comfortable.

Two shadowy figures (Trey and Lin) appear in BLACK OPS gear, and STUN two Soldiers in front of Mbeetu's tent. Three undrugged soldiers CHARGE Trey and Lin, but Rhonda and Policeman #1 STUN them. Mbeetu CHARGES out of his hut with a pistol drawn and aimed at Rhonda. Rhonda takes careful aim and SHOOTs Mbeetu in the stomach with a real pistol. Mbeetu falls in great pain.

The Soldiers are still helpless.

RHONDA

Round up their weapons, and bring up those weird little electric cars.

(MORE)

RHONDA (CONT'D)

We gotta get this man to the hospital. That stuff wears off in a few hours.

Trey and Lin remove their masks.

TREY

What was in the soup?

RHONDA

Muscle relaxer. Like they use to tranquilize wildlife to put a tracking collar on 'em.

LIN

You collared him, all right.

Policeman #1 removes his fake eye-covers.

POLICEMAN #1

Why didn't you kill him?

RHONDA

He deserves captivity. A very long captivity.

POLICEMAN #1

Your plan was the work of a crazy woman.

RHONDA

I needed a lot of help to pull it off. Thank you all.

POLICEMAN #1

My officers pick these men up in the morning.

(beat)

Can't thank you enough. Mbeetu no problem no more.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Tewdros sits up in bed with his soccer jersey on, and new pants and shoes. Ted is next to him reading, "Goodnight Moon." Tewdros watches the door for another reason. He smiles as Rhonda, Trey, and Lin walk in with more GIFTS.

RHONDA

Mbeetu will never bother you again.

TEWDROS

I go America, Barack Obama, 50-cent?

TED

I told him I had a few friends in the State Department who might grant him special war-refugee status.

Rhonda HUGS him.

RHONDA

He'll need a sponsoring host family to guarantee proper living conditions, an education, and employment, when the time is right.

TREY

(to Rhonda)

Plenty of room in that small apartment of yours in D.C.?

LIN

With you traveling all around the globe every week?

TED

Adoption agencies will never go for that!

EXT. JET - DAY

We HEAR a TV newscaster reporting:

MALE NARRATOR #3

In what appears to be an almost weekly occurrence, police and other officials announced the capture of another human trafficker in West Africa. Children, mostly girls under the age of fourteen, and kidnapped for as little as twenty dollars each, and taken north where they are sold for three-hundred and fifty dollars as sex slaves or field workers. Details of the capture are sketchy, but we know local police captured many traffickers while they slept around a campfire...

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Lexi stands in the Rescue Room as Rhonda, Trey, Lin, and Ted wait like students in the principal's office. In the b.g., Rosa, Jan, and Bret fake like they're working on computers, and Willy shows Tewdros all the computer equipment and gadgets (GPS, TASERS).

LEXI

I hope you're satisfied!

Rhonda smiles, then they all do.

RHONDA

Somethin' I had to do.

LEXI

Your counselor says you were acting out.

RHONDA

Suppose I was.

TREY

Mbeetu deserved it.

LIN

Can't argue that!

LEXI

Ted, what do you have to say for yourself?

TED

(proudly)

Our field team rescued twenty young girls who would have lived their lives in complete darkness, shame, and poverty. I've never been so proud in all my life!

Everyone CHEERS.

LEXI

Okay, okay. But things have to change. The Worthington Foundation won't allow this reckless behavior.

(beat)

And I was worried sick about you.

Rhonda stands and steps over to Tewdros to guide him through the Rescue Room. She stops to HUG Rosa.

RHONDA

Tewdros, this is Rosa. She tracked Mbeetu like a lioness tracks a diseased wildebeest.

Rosa hugs Tewdros. Rhonda moves to Jan.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Tewdros, this is Jan. Jan used math to predict exactly where Mbeetu would be hiding that night.

Jan hugs Tewdros. Rhonda moves to Bret.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Tewdros, this is Bret. He knew the exact time of night we should strike, based on cell phone use.

Bret hugs Tewdros. Rhonda moves to Willy.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Tewdros, this is Willy, he knew that the twenty girls would be moved up north and sold the next day.

Willy hugs Tewdros, Rhonda moves to HUG Lexi.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Tewdros, this my hero, Lexi. She rescued me twice by her example as a strong and powerful woman. Once after my days in the military, and once to approve this mission to rescue you. I needed to see that bad man, Mbeetu, punished. But more than that, I needed to prove something to myself.

(beat)

That I could be a loving parent.

Lexi HUGS Tewdros.

LEXI

You didn't understand a word of that, did you Tewdros?

TED

He understood every hug!

LEXI

You picked a great new Mommy, Tewdros.

TEWDROS
America, Barack Obama, Fifty-cent.

Everyone smiles.

LEXI
It's a shame that I have to fire
her.

Rhonda is stunned.

TREY
What we're trying to tell you,
Rhonda, is that Lexi, Lin, Ted, and
I have another offer we'd like you
to consider.

RHONDA
What are you talking about?

TREY
Ted?

TED
I bought a controlling interest in
Trey's guest ranch. We've decided
to add a rehabilitation facility on
one side of the property.

TREY
Gonna call it the Rescue Me Twice
Ranch.

LEXI
They supply the land and the
buildings, the Worthington
Foundation will support education
and training opportunities for
victims of human trafficking.

LIN
Guess who's gonna run it?

They all gather around Rhonda.

LEXI
You and your son.

Rhonda fights back tears.

RHONDA
I don't know what to say. Who's
gonna take my job here?

Ted slowly raises his hand. Everyone laughs.

TED

Well, Trey and Lin will probably take the lead.

Lexi rolls her eyes in jest.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

SUPER: West Africa, Six Weeks Later.

Mbeetu and six of his Soldiers STAND shackled in a near-empty courtroom. A JUDGE (60, gray hair, robe) is behind a bench, and four armed Policemen (30s) stand guard. In the back of the courtroom, sit Rhonda, Tewdros, Trey, Lin, Ted, and Policeman #1.

JUDGE

You all have been found guilty of nine-hundred and eighty-one counts of kidnapping, sexual assault, and human trafficking; and fifty-one first-degree murders. You are sentenced to death by hanging.

Rhonda STANDS.

RHONDA

Your honor, if it pleases the court, we prefer a life-sentence in solitary confinement, and we are pleased to pay for high-security arrangements.

JUDGE

Life sentence. Not hanging? Mbeetu killed many.

RHONDA

There is an old saying, an eye for an eye makes everyone blind. But he deserves the same long life in the darkness that he gave to so many.

The Judge ponders his decision.

JUDGE

Mbeetu will be given life in darkness as you say. The others will be hanged.

He SLAMS down his gavel. Tewdros GLARES at Mbeetu. Rhonda and the others stare with pity at Mbeetu as the Policemen guide him away.

RHONDA
That went well.

TREY
Hate to break this up, but Lexi
needs us back in D.C.

LIN
What's up?

TED
I got the same message. Seems a Sri
Lankan man, who worked at Vienna
Airport, is suspected of being part
of a gang smuggling mainly Sri
Lankan refugees through security
checks onto flights.

TREY
Lexi thinks gangs are involved.

RHONDA
I don't miss it. I don't miss it.

LIN
The rush?

RHONDA
The danger. I've got my son to
think of.

TREY
We knew you would like your new
job.

LIN
How do the young girls from
Tencha's bar like it?

TREY
They thank God every day. They're
getting counseling and slowly
coming around.

TED
And school?

TREY

Same deal as the others working on the ranch. Free college as long as we can afford it.

Ted puts an arm around Tewdros.

TED

How's this little guy liking it?

RHONDA

He loves the swimming pool.

TEWDROS

No crocodiles!

Everyone laughs.

RHONDA

Learning English quickly.

Everyone laughs.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

We have to get back. Frank is taking Tewdros and me out to dinner.

POLICEMAN #1

Thanks so much. Take care of our baby.

Policeman #1 HUGS Tewdros.

RHONDA

(whispers to Policeman #1)
He wants to come back when he's older to hunt traffickers.

POLICEMAN #1

Where did he get such a foolish idea?

EXT./INT. RANCH - DAY

A sign reads "Rescue Me Twice Ranch." Rhonda and Tewdros return in one of Trey's nice Porsches. They hop out. Frank greets Rhonda with flowers, and Tewdros with chocolates. They all HUG. Frank gets the luggage and brings it into the house.

TEWDROS

Swimming pool?

RHONDA

You bet! After your lessons, and after you feed and brush the horses. You get paid a good wage like everyone else here. You gotta earn it!

Tewdros smiles.

TEWDROS

Yes. I save for children like me.

RHONDA

I know. Every night you must send one smile to all the little boys and girls who live the life of slaves, and for orphans. That's very important.

Tewdros looks down. Then he looks up and SMILES.

TEWDROS

Thank you, new-Mommy.

RHONDA

New-Mommy? I like that. I like that very much!

Rhonda puts an arm around Tewdros and walks him into the ranch.

MALE NARRATOR #1

The human-trafficking cases were real. The industry flourishes with high demand for cheap garments, food, electronics, and the sex-trade around the world. There is no "Rescue Team" or "Rescue Me Twice Ranch," but there should be.

End Act Three

FADE OUT.

THE END

SUPER: It is now permissible to use your cell phones during the CREDITS to photograph the information on the screen pages below:

Screen 1: A test to identify if you and anyone you know may be involved in human trafficking.

Screen 2. Phone numbers and websites to report human trafficking numbers.

Screen 3. Websites to see for more information.

Screens 4 and on; Charitable organizations that help solve human trafficking, or support victims of human trafficking.

Last Screen: THANK YOU