

BLOODLANDS

Written by

Peter Marshall Smith

and

John Fiske

INT. PRISON CELL - DAY

MARIA TREVINO, 40, Latina, stands behind bars. She's street-wise and beautiful, but hard; steel beneath olive skin. Her expression hides an edge that incarceration has not dulled.

A warning bell rings, echoing down the cellblock. Trevino's cell door slides open. A gruff female correctional officer, C.O. DRAKE, is present to accompany the prisoner for release.

C.O. DRAKE

Roll it up, Trevino. Time to go.

Trevino steps out of her cell and looks at the C.O. sideways.

C.O. DRAKE (CONT'D)

Don't cut your eyes at me, convict.

INT. CELLBLOCK - DAY

WE TRACK along a tier of cells as Trevino walks down the row, eyes front amid HOLLERING, CATCALLS and CLANGING on the bars.

C.O. DRAKE (CONT'D)

Lucky ya ain't goin' out in a body-bag. They ain't much for sheepdogs who turn wolf 'round here.

INT. U.S. DISTRICT COURT, COURTROOM - DAY

SHERIFF (Ret.) LONNY DUGAN, 69, takes the stand. From his leather boots to his Stetson hat he's every inch a Texas lawman. A man burdened by the weight of his own sins.

JUDGE (O.S.)

I will remind you, Lieutenant Dugan, you're still under oath.

DUGAN

Yes, Your Honor.

Dugan sits in the witness chair.

JUDGE (O.S.)

Counselor, you may proceed.

COUNSELOR (O.S.)

Lieutenant Dugan, you were sheriff of Brewster County, correct?

DUGAN

Uh huh.

COUNSELOR (O.S.)  
Please speak into the microphone.

Dugan clears his throat and adjusts the mic.

DUGAN  
Uh-- Yes, I was.

COUNSELOR (O.S.)  
How long were you sheriff?

DUGAN  
17 years.

COUNSELOR (O.S.)  
During those 17 years as sheriff,  
while on duty, did you commit  
crimes in violation of your sworn  
oath to protect and serve?

DUGAN  
Yessir, I did.

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

C.O. Drake escorts Trevino through a series of locked gates.

INT. U.S. DISTRICT COURT, COURTROOM - DAY

Dugan sits up straight in the witness chair.

COUNSELOR (O.S.)  
Did you use your authority to  
commit extortion?

DUGAN  
Yes.

COUNSELOR (O.S.)  
Did you commit theft?

DUGAN  
Yes.

COUNSELOR (O.S.)  
Did you traffick narcotics?

DUGAN  
Yes.

COUNSELOR (O.S.)  
Did you take bribes?

DUGAN

Yes.

COUNSELOR (O.S.)

Approximately how many criminal acts do you estimate you committed as a peace officer?

DUGAN

I reckon I don't know. Lost count.

INT. PRISON PROPERTY ROOM - DAY

C.O. Drake waits nearby as Trevino, facing away, strips nude, taking off her white jumpsuit to change into her civvies.

She reveals her tattoos, including a rosary on her upper back that drapes over her shoulders, a cross on her right forearm and a U.S. Army MP insignia featuring two crossed Harpers Ferry Model 1805 flintlock pistols on her mid-back with the words "Death Before Dishonor" written below it.

INT. U.S. DISTRICT COURT, COURTROOM - DAY

We now see the Counselor, KENNETH CROWLEY, 50, an elite Southern defense attorney who can strut sitting down.

In the defendant's chair is SANTINO ALEJANDRO BALDERAS, 50's, an immaculately dressed Argentinian who rose from nothing to command Los Zetas. He's now as restless as a caged predator.

CROWLEY

Ever kill anyone?

Dugan hesitates.

DUGAN

You mean in the line of duty?...  
I've been compelled to use deadly force, yes.

CROWLEY

How--

DUGAN

But they were all good k--  
(beat)  
Each incident was justified.

CROWLEY

And how many "incidents" were there over the course of your career?

Dugan shifts in his seat.

DUGAN

I-- uh, I don't recall.

CROWLEY

Is that right?... Maybe this will refresh your memory. Your Honor, I'm handing what I have marked for identification purposes as Defense Exhibit A to Mr. Hughes, the States' advocate.

Crowley holds up a thick file on his desk. He slides one copy across the prosecution's table to CLAY HUGHES, late 40's, a regimented and uncompromising Assistant District Attorney.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)

May I approach the witness?

JUDGE JACKSON ROBERTS, late 50's, a fair but firm State District Court judge, beckons Crowley to come closer.

JUDGE

You may.

Crowley walks up to the witness box and hands Dugan the file.

CROWLEY

Lieutenant Dugan, I am handing you Exhibit A. Will you look at that for me? Take your time.

Dugan reluctantly takes a pair of reading glasses from his inside jacket pocket and fumbles to put them on. As he begins to read the report, Crowley is quick with his questions.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)

What is Exhibit A?

DUGAN

DPS reports for each of my OIS's.

CROWLEY

DPS? That's Department of Public Safety. What's OIS stand for?

DUGAN

Officer involved shooting.

CROWLEY

Are those true and accurate reports of each officer involved shooting that were you involved in?

DUGAN  
Looks like it... yeah.

CROWLEY  
And how many is that?

Dugan mumbles to himself.

DUGAN  
(sotto)  
Eleven.

Crowley pivots to the jury box and its TWELVE JURORS.

CROWLEY  
Y'all hear that? I'll remind you to  
speak into the microphone,  
Lieutenant. How many?

Dugan clears his throat and leans into the mic.

DUGAN  
Eleven.

CROWLEY  
I see your memory is refreshed.

Slight LAUGHTER in the courtroom. Gavel TAPS. Dugan scowls.

HUGHES  
Objection! Badgering.

CROWLEY  
Hardly.

JUDGE  
Overruled, but watch your tone,  
Counselor.

CROWLEY  
Lieutenant Dugan, it's your  
testimony that you committed crimes  
in violation of your oath of office  
as Sheriff, but prior to taking  
that oath, you were also required  
to execute and file Form 2201 -  
commonly referred to as the Anti-  
Bribery Statement, were you not?

DUGAN  
Yes, I believe so.

CROWLEY

You believe so? Do you need to refresh your memory again? Because I have a copy here, signed by you.

DUGAN

That's unnecessary. I remember it.

CROWLEY

And do you recall that you signed that statement under penalties of perjury?

DUGAN

Yeah, so?

CROWLEY

So, you committed perjury. In fact, in your prior statement you admit to taking bribes. I asked you, "did you take bribes?" You said, "Yes". My point is, how do you expect the jury to believe that each of the eleven men you shot and killed were justified?

HUGHES

Objection!

JUDGE

Overruled. Answer the question.

DUGAN

Believe whatcha want. The truth's right there in black and white.

Crowley pivots to the jury.

CROWLEY

The truth? "He that speaketh truth shows forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit." Proverbs.

HUGHES

OBJECTION! Counsel is testifying!

The Judge raps the gavel.

JUDGE

Sustained. Mr. Crowley, you are in a court of law, not a house of God. Conduct yourself accordingly.

HUGHES

Let me rephrase, Your Honor.  
Lieutenant, how can you expect us  
to believe this report wasn't made  
up by a police force that protects  
its own? Or rather, how do expect  
us to believe anything you say?

DUGAN

Like I said, believe whatcha want,  
but I'll tell ya somethin'. Same  
thing I tell all my deputies...  
(beat)  
We live in a hostile world. A world  
that's gunnin' for ya, n' all it  
takes is one wrong move n' yer  
dead.

Dugan snaps his fingers.

DUGAN (CONT'D)

Just like that. Another statistic.  
So, I train my men. To be warriors.  
They come to me soft, fearin' for  
their life, but they are born again  
hard, and ready to enforce the law.  
To kill, if necessary, so they can  
go home at night to their families.

Dugan holds up the report.

DUGAN (CONT'D)

An' I'll tell somethin' else. I  
never lost an officer under my  
command in seventeen years. That's  
a fact, but it ain't in no report.

He tosses it and the papers scatter across the courtroom.

The Judge pounds the gavel twice.

JUDGE

Order! Order! Pull another stunt  
like that, Lieutenant, and I'll  
hold you in contempt of court. Do  
you understand?

Dugan nods. The Bailiff and Deputy pick up the papers.

CROWLEY

Lieutenant, did you make a deal  
with the District Attorney to  
cooperate in hopes of getting a  
reduced sentence?



HUGHES  
Objection! Calls for privileged  
communication!

CROWLEY  
Your Honor, the prosecution's  
witness has been promised certain  
benefits for his testimony,  
including favorable treatment on  
various pending criminal charges.

Hughes slams his open palm on the table and stands.

HUGHES  
Objection! Counsel's testifying!

CROWLEY  
Am I now?

HUGHES  
Assumes facts not in evidence.

CROWLEY  
Well, now that ya mention it.

The Judge raps the gavel.

JUDGE  
Sustained.

Crowley moves to his desk and trades a look with Santino.

JUDGE (CONT'D)  
Counselor--

Crowley takes documents from his desk and raises them high.

CROWLEY  
Mark for identification as Defense  
Exhibit B.

Crowley gives a copy to Hughes, who sits down in his chair.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)  
Permission to approach.

JUDGE  
Granted. Tread carefully.

Crowley walks up and offers the document to Dugan.

CROWLEY  
What is this?

Dugan shrugs.

DUGAN  
How should I know?

CROWLEY  
You can read can'tchya?

Fury flashes in Dugan's eyes but he doesn't bite.

DUGAN  
I don't rattle, boy. I'm no snake.

Crowley puts the document on the witness stand and as he does, he leans in, cups the mic with his palm and hisses.

CROWLEY  
(whispered)  
Nah, you're just a ratfuck snitch.

Crowley winks at him and grins like a weasel in a hen house.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)  
Now *that's* badgerin'.

Madness flares. Dugan snatches Crowley's neck tie.

DUGAN  
Come 'ere!

Dugan drags Crowley closer and grabs him by the throat.

HUGHES (O.S.)  
OBJECTION!

Face to face, Dugan looks Crowley in the eye, his voice low.

DUGAN  
(whispered)  
This's what we do ta snakes where I  
come from. Grab 'em by the throat  
n' snatch the life right outta 'em.

GASPS throughout the courtroom. The Judge CRACKS his gavel.

JUDGE  
Order! ORDER! BAILIFF!

Dugan stands in the witness box, choking Crowley by the neck.

DUGAN  
Where's that sanctimonious smile  
now, ya up'dee sonumabitch?

Dugan's knuckles go white. Crowley's face goes red.  
The BAILIFF rushes over and pulls Dugan off Crowley.  
The Deputy jumps in and drags Dugan back.

DUGAN (CONT'D)  
GETCHA HANDS OFF-A ME!

The gavel hits over and over like gunshots: BANG! BANG! BANG!

JUDGE  
YOU'RE OUT OF ORDER!

They bring Dugan down hard, but he bucks like a mad bull.

BAILIFF  
CALM YER SHIT!

DUGAN  
FUCK ALL Y'ALL!  
(to Crowley)  
AN' FUCK YOU, TOO!

Crowley is on the floor wheezing, his eyes wide with fear.

JUDGE  
You, sir, are in contempt!

The Judge punctuates his decree with a strike of the gavel.

DUGAN  
YER GODDAMN RIGHT!

Dugan stops fighting and just stares up at Santino.  
The Bailiff holds Dugan while the Deputy slaps on cuffs.  
Dugan breathes heavy, locking eyes with Santino.

DUGAN (CONT'D)  
I ain't got nuttin' but contempt.

Santino remains seated and still with a slight smile.

EXT. PRISON, MAIN GATE - DAY

Mountain View Unit, a maximum-security women's prison in Gatesville, Texas.

A sally-port in the main gate opens and Trevino walks out, now wearing street clothes. She raises her face to the sun and breathes in the morning air.

DOMINIQUE "DOC" TREVINO, 39, leans on her car, a highland green 2008 Ford Mustang Bullitt. She's dressed with style; a passionate Latina woman, devoted to the family she has left.

Doc throws out her arms.

DOC  
Welcome back, manita!

Doc embraces her big sister. Trevino goes rigid.

Doc holds on tight until Trevino hugs her back.

TREVINO  
Good to be back.

Trevino breaks the embrace.

TREVINO (CONT'D)  
Ándale.

Trevino walks off. Doc shakes her head.

INT. MUSTANG - DAY

Doc is in the driver's seat but the car is stationary. Doc puts a hand on Trevino's shoulder and looks her in the eye.

DOC  
How ya doin'?

Trevino looks away, out the passenger window at the prison.

TREVINO  
Just get me outta here.

DOC  
Remember, nothin' that happened in there is who you are. This is a new start.

Trevino turns and glares at Doc.

TREVINO  
Start the fuckin' car, Doc.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

A Texas highway cuts through a landscape of desert flatland.

The distant roar of an approaching engine overtakes the ambient sounds. The Mustang appears on the horizon.

It roars at full gate through the middle of nowhere. The engine is thunderous.

DOC (O.S.)  
Djeetyet?

TREVINO (O.S.)  
Not hungry.

INT. MUSTANG, MOVING - DAY

Doc drinks from a stainless steel thermos as she steers.

DOC  
Want some coffee?

TREVINO  
Quit caffeine.  
(beat)  
Is Ava with mamá?

DOC  
Yep. They baked you a cake.  
(beat)  
Still eat cake?

Trevino doesn't smile. She looks out at the barren flatlands.

TREVINO  
Did ya get it?

Silence.

DOC  
It's in the glove box.

Trevino opens the glove box and takes out a 9mm handgun.

TREVINO  
Unregistered?

Doc looks over at her sister with concern and nods.

Trevino feels the weight, ejects the clip, checks the ammo, re-inserts it, pushes down on the safety and racks the slide to load a bullet in the chamber. It takes her four seconds.

DOC  
Ain't that a violation of parole?

TREVINO  
Ain't on parole. I was exonerated.

DOC  
So yer not guilty?

TREVINO  
Never was guilty. I was framed.

Doc nods, looks back at the road and then over at the gun.

DOC  
So whatchya gonna do with that?

Trevino stares out the passenger window and says nothing.

DOC (CONT'D)  
You're gonna do somethin' bad,  
ain'tchya?

Facing away, Trevino's reflection in the window is dark.

EXT. AUSTIN STREETS - DAY

Now in Austin, the Mustang passes the Texas State Cemetery.

INT. MUSTANG, MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Trevino watches rows of white headstones fly by at a clip.

TREVINO  
Pull over.

DOC  
What? Here?

TREVINO  
Yeah, just pull over.

Doc pulls over to side of the road but keeps it running.

DOC  
They're waitin' on us.

TREVINO  
(sighs)  
Just gimme a minute.

DOC  
At least take my coat.

Doc offers her coat. Trevino takes it and opens the door.

EXT. TEXAS STATE CEMETERY - DAY

Bare branches hang over the gateway and sway in the breeze.

CUE MUSIC: "VICIOUS TRADITIONS" BY THE VEILS (PLAY SONG)

Trevino walks through the gate wearing a black wool overcoat.

She passes two steel columns from Ground Zero erected in monument to September 11th. She gazes at the twisted metal.

She walks into a cemetery section dedicated to the military.

She approaches a grave and stops. The wind blows her hair.

ANGLE ON HEADSTONE ENGRAVED WITH A CROSS AND SEAL TRIDENT:

HERE LIES  
JOSEPH B. SYKES  
SOC (SEAL) USN  
NOV 24 1975  
OCT 22 2019  
BELOVED FATHER  
EASY DAY

Trevino sweeps the hair from her face and looks around.

TREVINO

Governor gave ya a sweet spot. You  
deserve it. What'd you SEALs say?  
"The only easy day was yesterday".  
What the fuck does that even mean?  
That life is hard? Yeah, no shit.

Trevino's dark eyes narrow as they fill the frame.

EXT. BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TX - DAY (PAST)

This is the end of the road, where cacti bloom under the southwestern sun and a river carves its way through a limestone canyon. It is a wooded refuge surrounded by desert.

TREVINO (V.O.)

Yesterday was no picnic, either.

TITLE: BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TX

A Latino BOY, 9, closes the lid of a JAR over two lizards.

TREVINO (V.O.)

The brass gave me a commendation  
the same day I caught the case.  
(beat)  
I didn't know it'd be my last.

Nearby is DEPUTY LEWIS, 20's, a rookie too green to be jaded.

An engine approaches. Deputy Lewis flags down the vehicle.

An SUV pulls up. Trevino exits.

DEPUTY LEWIS  
Hey, Congrats.

Trevino waves him off.

TREVINO  
Later. Where is it?

DEPUTY LEWIS  
About 40 feet past the treeline. I  
retraced my steps like you said.  
Took pictures, too.

TREVINO  
Good. How'd the kid get all the way  
out here?

DEPUTY LEWIS  
Family has a trailer up the road.

Trevino kneels by the Boy and looks at his lizards in a jar.

TREVINO  
Gonna put holes in the lid?

BOY  
Why?

TREVINO  
'Cause you're killin' 'em.

Trevino stands, back to the sun.

She walks towards a tree-shaded canyon.

The high-pitched hum of cicadas echo among the juniper trees.

Trevino approaches the VICTIM, lying prone on the ground.

She removes a PEN and hooks the beaded chain of a ROSARY,  
clutched in the Victim's fingers, stiff with rigor mortis.

Trevino raises the chain. An ornate cross dangles from it.

RACK FOCUS from the cross to the face of the Victim, an  
attractive Latina in her 20's, her eyes open but clouded.

TREVINO (V.O.)  
You feel it sometimes...  
(beat)  
like someone's watchin' you.



CLOSE UP on her unblinking, unseeing eyes. Frozen in death.

TREVINO (V.O.)  
That blank stare of the Reaper.

The sun is high behind Trevino as she looks around.

TREVINO (V.O.)  
Shake it off. Do the job. Access  
the scene. How'd she get here?

Trevino scans the ground until she spots FOOTPRINTS.

TREVINO (V.O.)  
Follow the trail.

Trevino follows the footprints until - THUD. She steps on a SHELTER DOOR in the middle of a field. She steps on it again to confirm - same hollow THUD. She kneels down in the grass.

TREVINO (V.O.)  
Wherever it leads.

Trevino opens the shelter door. A foul stench rises up to her. FLIES buzz at the entry. She peers into the black hole.

TREVINO (V.O.)  
Without fear.

She removes her flashlight and flips it on.

TREVINO (V.O.)  
But that's a lie.

The beam shines on a torn BACKPACK then moves off it...

TREVINO (V.O.)  
You can't conquer the fear.

...to a rotting CORPSE with putrid flesh hanging off of bone.

TREVINO (V.O.)  
You can only move through it.

A muffled sound is heard, a WHIMPER in the dark.

TREVINO (V.O.)  
It's not just your life you risk...

Trevino swings her light, searching...

TREVINO (V.O.)  
 It's your soul.  
 (beat)  
 The truth is...

The light stops on CECILIA PEREZ, 15, Mexican, chained and gagged, tears streaking the dirt on her cheeks, eyes begging. The light causes desert ants crawling on her face to scatter.

TREVINO (V.O.)  
 If you go into the darkness...

Trevino reacts with shock. Her flashlight shines in the lens.

TREVINO (V.O.)  
 The darkness goes into you.

EXT. HAMPTON INN & SUITES EL PASO WEST - NIGHT (PAST)

CLOSE UP of black boots running up a stairway.

WIDER on a STRIKE TEAM of the El Paso Child Exploitation Task Force in full gear, guns drawn, moving quickly up the stairs.

In the lead is DET. JOSEPH B. SYKES, 44, a veteran Crimes Against Persons detective, and former Chief Special Warfare Operator of SEAL Team 7, driven and haunted by the past.

TITLE: BORDERLAND - A NEIGHBORHOOD IN EL PASO, TX

EXT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

The Strike Team takes up positions at the door and Sykes, holding a no-knock search warrant, gives a signal to DET. MAC MACBRIDE, 33, a matter-of-fact cop with a battering ram.

INT. HOTEL SUITE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

With the blinds shut, it's a dimly lit room. Four CHOLOS sit around a coffee table packing product. They run ZipVacs to evacuate the air from plastic bags of cocaine and stack the bags next to piles of cash.

The door crashes open and the Strike Force storms in.

MAC  
 POLICE! LET ME SEE YOUR HANDS!

CHOLO ONE and TWO reach for the ceiling while CHOLO THREE rabbits out the back. Two COPS pursue him.

INT. HOTEL SUITE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

The two COPS seize Cholo Three as he climbs out a window.

CHOLO THREE  
                                (in Spanish)  
                                GET THE FUCK OFF ME, PIG! OK, ok-

INT. HOTEL SUITE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mac and Sykes cover the two Cholos with their hands up.

                                SYKES  
                                On your knees! Hands on your head!

The two Cholos comply and kneel down with the hands raised.

Seated on the couch is the gang leader, EL ARCÁNGEL, 60s. He pulls the pin on a hand grenade and holds it up in his fist.

                                SYKES (CONT'D)  
                                Grenade! Don't move.

                                EL ARCÁNGEL  
                                (to Sykes)  
                                Yo, pinche gringo, pass me that  
                                blunt.

Sykes looks astonished. He looks down at a blunt smoking in an ashtray on the coffee table. He racks his shotgun and holds it closer, at point blank range in El Arcángel's face.

                                SYKES  
                                What'dya think this is, a joke?

El Arcángel twitches with rage and then is suddenly calm.

                                EL ARCÁNGEL  
                                Nah, this is a fragmentation  
                                grenade with a two second fuse and  
                                a kill radius of 'bout... twenty  
                                two feet. I ain't goin' back inside  
                                so I guess today's a good day to  
                                die... for all of us.

A tense moment of silence.

                                SYKES  
                                Alright, alright... just be cool.

Sykes picks up the joint and slowly passes it to El Arcángel.

El Arcángel takes a drag, exhales a plume of smoke and grins. He laughs a guttural laugh that rolls into a hacking cough.

The other Cholos laugh with him as Arcángel puts the pin back in and sets down the grenade. Sykes' face goes red.

EL ARCÁNGEL  
 Never let 'em bluff you out,  
 pendejo.

More laughter. Sykes disarms Arcángel and slams him, against the wall. Mac joins in and they beat Arcángel with a fury.

INT. HOTEL SUITE, BATHROOM - NIGHT

A Cop opens the bathroom door to reveal a Latina GIRL, 14, huddled inside the bathtub, dressed in a flimsy chemise.

COP  
 (into radio)  
 Get the ambulance ready.

CLOSER on the Girl, shaking with fright.

EXT. HAMPTON INN & SUITES EL PASO WEST - NIGHT

Sykes leans on his cruiser and lights a smoke.

In the background, an EMT covers the Girl in a blanket.

Sykes shuts his eyes and rubs the space between his eyebrows.

When he looks up Mac is staring at him with a worried look.

MAC  
 You okay?

Sykes doesn't answer.

INT. MOVING, POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Sykes smokes as he steers with the window down. His cell rings. Caller ID on the dashboard screen reads:

MARIA TREVINO

He picks up.

SYKES  
 This is Sykes.

EXT. BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TX - NIGHT (INTERCUT SCENES)

Trevino's on her cell by her SUV. In b.g., are two TROOPERS.

MARIA  
 Joe, it's Maria.

SYKES  
 Hey you. Long time.

MARIA  
Yeah, we need to catch up.

SYKES  
But that's not why you called.

MARIA  
No... it's about Valérie.

Sykes tenses and says nothing.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
I found somethin', Joe.

SYKES  
Found what?

MARIA  
A hole in the ground, make-shift  
dungeon, two DB's, and Valérie's  
backpack. Or it might be her's. But  
ya don't need come down here to ID  
it. I can send you pic--

SYKES  
I'm on my way now.

He turns the wheel. Tires squeal.

MARIA  
The scene's restricted to preserve  
evidence. The M.E.'ll out here at  
first light.

SYKES  
What's your twenty? I'll be there.

MARIA  
It's a 5 hour drive, Joe. I'll text  
you where I'll be next. There's an  
eyewitness. A 15-year-old girl. She  
might be able to I.D. who took her.

He hangs up, tightens his grip on the wheel and steps on it.

EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The cruiser accelerates to 85 mph and speeds out of frame.

INT. BIG BEND REGIONAL HOSPITAL - ALPINE, TX - NIGHT

Trevino speaks with DR. CATHERINE REY, 45, in reception.

DR. REY  
I can only give you a few minutes.

TREVINO  
A few's all I need.

DR. REY  
Some patients never get over this  
kind of trauma. You have to be  
delicate.

They both turn at the sound of commotion.

GRUS (O.S.)  
WHERE THE HELL IS SHE?

SGT. GRUS DUGAN, 30, Sheriff Dugan's lead deputy and son,  
enters. A hardscrabble Texan and natural born gunfighter who  
feels superior to most and has a sadistic impulse to punish.

TREVINO  
(to Dr. Rey)  
He's madder than an ol' wet hen.

Grus marches up to Trevino, fuming, but she never backs down.

GRUS  
So this is how ya work?

TREVINO  
Ya mean this case? It was state  
property. Not your jurisdiction.

GRUS  
We handle illegals and ya know it.

TREVINO  
No ID. She could be the Governor's  
daughter, for all ya know.

GRUS  
Please. Where's the survivor?

DR. REY  
Excuse me, is there a problem here?

TREVINO  
(to Dr. Rey)  
No problem, doc.  
(to Grus)  
CID's takin' it.

Trevino folds her arms, defiant. Grus bites his lip.

GRUS  
So that's how ya wanna play it?

TREVINO  
I'm not playin' anythin'.

Grus turns and storms out of the hospital just as Sykes is entering. He approaches Trevino, senses tension, looks back.

SYKES  
Whosat?

TREVINO  
Don't pay 'im no mind. That one's  
got horns holdin' up his halo...  
Glad ya made it.

SYKES  
Thanks for the call.

DR. REY  
And you are?

Sykes reaches into his leather jacket and flashes his badge.

SYKES  
Detective Joe Sykes, El Paso PD.

TREVINO  
Doc, will ya excuse us a minute?

Dr. Rey gives an irked look between them and then walks away.

TREVINO (CONT'D)  
Listen, Joe, there's a chance this  
witness won't even be awake, let  
alone know anythin' about Valérie.

SYKES  
I just want to see her, that's all.

TREVINO  
We may have to wait until tomorrow--

SYKES  
I'm sorry, but what--?

TREVINO  
You've had a long drive--

SYKES  
This can't wait. It can't wait--

TREVINO

Ya look like shit. Ya need some re--

SYKES

Look. I'm here. I don't plan on sleepin'. These things-- the window closes. It closes like that.

He snaps his fingers.

SYKES (CONT'D)

And you're back to zero. You don't know. I've been thinkin' about my daughter every 15 minutes for the last eight years. I'm not sleepin' tonight. We're seein' that witness.

Trevino looks at him for a beat with compassion and nods.

TREVINO

Follow my lead.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cecilia Perez sleeps. Trevino lightly knocks. She wakes.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

(in Spanish)

Hi, Cecilia. My name is Maria, I'm a Detective with the Texas State Police. I'm the one who found you.

Cecilia can barely muster the energy to turn her head.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

(in Spanish)

I know this is difficult.  
But we have some questions.

Cecilia turns away. Dr. Rey and Sykes hover behind Trevino.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

(in Spanish)

You don't have to answer.

Trevino lays MUGSHOTS in front of Cecilia.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

(in Spanish)

Did any of these men abduct you?

Cecilia scans the mugshots. Nothing until OSCAR BALDERAS, 31, a Mexican American heavyweight, bald, goatee, Los Zetas tats.



Cecilia recoils and withdraws. Trevino locks in.

TREVINO (CONT'D)  
 (in Spanish)  
 This man? Did this man hurt you?  
 It's important. Please look--

DR. REY  
 I think that's enough for tonight.

Sykes steps up and takes a worn picture from his wallet.

SYKES  
 Did that man abduct you? It's  
 important. My daughter's missin'.  
 Was there a white girl with you?  
 This girl. Have ya seen her?

Cecilia groans. Dr. Rey gets between Sykes and her patient.

DR. REY  
 Please, she's just not ready for  
 this. Imagine if it were you?

SYKES  
 (to Trevino)  
 Ask her if there was a white girl.

TREVINO  
 (in Spanish to Cecilia)  
 Was there a white girl with you?

Cecilia panics and cries. Dr. Rey puts up her hands.

DR. REY  
 Ok, Please! That's enough!

EXT. PENNY'S DINER - ALPINE, TX - NIGHT

A semi-tractor-trailer roars past Penny's Diner on HWY 90.

A red neon sign reading "DINER" points at the restaurant, but the lights to the "N" and "R" are out.

INT. PENNY'S DINER - NIGHT

Sykes and Trevino sit in the back booth of the diner. They've finished their meal. Sykes reads a file as he sips a coffee.

SYKES  
 Oscar Balderas. Suspicion of  
 murder, drug traffickin', rape,  
 assault, robbery - never charged.  
 A fine upstandin' citizen.

He drops the file on the table.

TREVINO

And nephew of Santino Balderas, el número uno de Los Zetas. El patrón of the most violent Mexican drug cartel. They traffick drugs, sex, guns, whatever turns a profit.

SYKES

I know who they are. I've seen their shock n' awe videos. I can't un-see it. Beheadings, torture, mass murder. Pure evil.

TREVINO

I'm good, ya know.

SYKES

At what?

TREVINO

Bein' a cop.

SYKES

Yeah, I know.

TREVINO

No, you still look at me like my T.O. and see a rookie, but this ain't my first rodeo.

SYKES

Yeah? So let's go round 'em up.

TREVINO

Tonight? Fuck no. I'm goin' to bed. Been up since dawn. I got one wheel down and the axle draggin'. 'Sides, tomorrow we need to wrap the scene and get a warrant. We're doin' this by the book, alright? This ain't some vendetta for Valérie.

Sykes looks away, scanning his surroundings out of habit.

SYKES

I just need to know whether she's alive or-- Eight years of not knowin' is some kinda hell.

TREVINO

It's my fault. I let you in on this case and you're too close to it...

(MORE)

TREVINO (CONT'D)

Christ, you're the one who taught me that ya can't focus on an investigation if you're emotionally involved in the crime.

SYKES

You're right.

TREVINO

What'd ya tell your captain?

SYKES

Told 'im I'm takin' some time. He gave me a three day RIP for not givin' proper notice.

TREVINO

Gotta place to stay?

SYKES

I'll figure it out.

TREVINO

I'd offer ya room, but my daughter and I are stayin' at my sister's in Marfa, and it's only a three bedroom so... it's a full house.

SYKES

I noticed no ring.

She down looks at her left hand and makes a fist.

TREVINO

Yeah, that's whole 'nuther story. That sonumabitch was tak'n'ta drinkin' again and fuckin' our realtor while we lookin' to buy our first home, so yeah, it's over.

SYKES

This life of ours... it's hard on marriages. It was on mine. And after Val vanished, that was it.

TREVINO

They can't understand what we do.

SYKES

It's beyond their comprehension.

They look at each other in a moment of mutual sympathy.

TREVINO

See ya at six, which is in what?

Sykes looks at his watch, a Luminox Evo Navy Seal Blackout.

SYKES

Four hours.

Trevino shakes her head as she pays the check and exits.

Sykes sips his coffee.

INT. COURTHOUSE, HOLDING CELL - DAY (PRESENT)

A pair of cowboy boots sit in the corner. Chains rattle.

The Bailiff lifts Dugan's pantlegs above his new moccasin-style canvas shoes. Shackles clamp down on his ankles.

JUDGE (PRE-LAP V.O.)

It's my duty to inform you that the witness will continue his testimony while physically restrained. You must completely disregard this circumstance in deciding the issues in this case. Do not consider it for any purpose or discuss it during your deliberations.

The chains loop around his waist and lock to the handcuffs.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The Judge addresses the Jury from the bench.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Evaluate the witness's testimony according to the instructions I have given you. Any questions?

(beat)

Bailiff, bring in the witness.

The Bailiff escorts Dugan, without a hat, into the courtroom in handcuffs and leg irons with a chain connecting them.

Dugan shuffles to the witness box and sits.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Are you comfortable, Lieutenant?

Dugan doesn't acknowledge the Judge, but he spits at Santino.

Santino sits at the defense table, grinning from ear to ear.

JUDGE (CONT'D)  
 (raps the gavel)  
 Sir, you will conduct yourself with civility in this courtroom or I will charge you with another count of contempt, is that understood?

Dugan looks over at the Judge and winks with one eye.

DUGAN  
 Loud and clear.

JUDGE  
 Counselor, you may proceed.

Crowley stands behind at the defense table, back in control.

CROWLEY  
 Thank you, Your Honor. Welcome back, Lieutenant. I'd like to ask you *when* you first heard about the case involving my client's nephew, Oscar Balderas?

DUGAN  
 (sighs)  
 I reckon it was... two years ago. The mornin' of... March the second.

CROWLEY  
 And where were you?

EXT. MOUNTAINS, BREWSTER COUNTY - DAWN (PAST)

The sun rises over West Texas mountains. Wind gusts, howls.

DUGAN (V.O.)  
 I was havin' breakfast.

INT. BROYHILL BAR - ALPINE, TX - DAY

Hands turn a RING. Then slip it back on the left ring finger.

Another hand pours whiskey in a glass and leaves the bottle.

Sheriff Dugan stares at his 100 proof breakfast.

He throws it back. Then helps himself to another pour.

The owner/operator of a local saloon, ELLIOT BROYHILL, 70, a retired cop, cleans glasses behind the bar.

BROYHILL  
 How many days left? We pass 60?

DUGAN

58. What'd you do when you retired?

Dugan knocks back another.

BROYHILL

I got a job.

DUGAN

Maybe I oughta start a business.

Broyhill glares at Dugan as he pours number three.

BROYHILL

As long as ya don't open a bar.

Dugan stops his pour. Both men stare at each other.

Then they both laugh out loud.

Grus enters, nods to Broyhill, and whispers in Dugan's ear.

GRUS

(whispered)

We got a real problem.

Dugan's smile drops and he looks up at Grus.

EXT. BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, PINE CANYON - DAY

The command post is on the ridge of a canyon overlooking the death scene. Trevino briefs two male CRIME SCENE ANALYSTS.

TREVINO

Let the unis walk the area first,  
then let the dogs check. Let's  
move.

The Analysts exit. A car approaches. Trevino shakes her head.

A black and white CROWN VIC pulls up. Dugan and Grus exit.

GRUS

Well, well...

TREVINO

So what happened? You go cryin' to  
daddy?

DUGAN

Now, now. We're not here to step  
on your toes.

TREVINO  
What do you want?

DUGAN  
Just to be kept in the loop.

TREVINO  
I don't think that's--

DUGAN  
Stop. You've been interrogatin'  
people in my jurisdiction. You'll  
be using our facilities... And yes,  
I would like to be kept apprised of  
the investigation...

Down the hill, Sykes and the County Medical Examiner, DR.  
DAWN GREGGS, 55, kneel in the tall grass over a body bag of  
remains, surrounded by crime scene tape and evidence markers.

DUGAN (O.S) (CONT'D)  
Especially with him runnin' around.

Dugan takes a step closer towards Trevino.

DUGAN (CONT'D)  
Maria, it's a reasonable request.

Trevino sighs and moves past Dugan, leading him and Grus down  
the steep slope. CSA's swarm the hill collecting evidence.

Sykes and Greggs stand as Trevino, Dugan and Grus approach.

TREVINO  
Hey guys, this is Sheriff Lonny  
Dugan and Deputy Sergeant Grus  
Dugan. You all know the county  
M.E., Dr. Dawn Greggs, and this is  
Detective Joe Sykes, El Paso PD.

DUGAN  
(to Sykes)  
First off, I want to say I'm sorry  
for your troubles.

Sykes nods.

DUGAN (CONT'D)  
I just want to let you know you'll  
be followin' Detective Trevino  
here. Do we have any leads?

TREVINO

The survivor gave us an initial I.D. on the coyote who brought her here, and we're waitin' on an arrest warrant. They're still treatin' this like it's a traffickin' fatality.

DAWN

Why?

TREVINO

We get a lot of dead bodies in the desert.

GRUS

Mexicans. They cross and they die. Bein' without ID's, leaves us a lot of unidentifieds... It's quite a thing really. They used to pay a local undertaker \$1000 a head bury 'em proper. Turns out he was just puttin' 'em in a hole in the back of the cemetery.

DAWN

You mean... like a mass grave?

GRUS

Yeah, some folks called it that.

DAWN

Oh yeah, what'd you call it?

GRUS

An unfortunate necessity.

TREVINO

Enough! At least for our bodies, we have a suspect.

DUGAN

That'll be good then, we'll leave it to ya.

(to Sykes)

Nice to meet you.

Sykes returns Dugan's wave.

Dugan and Grus walk back up to their car.

DAWN

What was that all about?



TREVINO  
Jurisdictional nonsense.

INT. CAR, STATIONARY - BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK - DAY

Dugan sits in the passenger seat of the stationary car and takes out a cigar. He bites the end of it and spits it out. Grus leans on the driver's side door as he smokes.

GRUS  
Looks like they don't have much,  
maybe they won't find him.

DUGAN  
We want them to find Oscar. We  
don't want them to look anymore. We  
want them to stop lookin'. We want  
them to find their man. Because if  
this investigation drags on any  
longer, God knows what else their  
gonna find! Or who else they're  
gonna find! The APB's been out on  
Oscar for what? Eight, ten hours,  
they should have him by mornin'.

GRUS  
If he talks?

DUGAN  
Look, he knows the consequences,  
ok? Just stay on Trevino, make sure  
the lawyer gets Oscar out. Come on.

Grus gets in and slams the door.

EXT. BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, PINE CANYON - DAY

Trevino leads Sykes and Dawn along the ridge of Pine Canyon.

TREVINO  
Seemed closer the other day.

SYKES  
Adrenaline. Causes tunnel vision.

They make it to the SHELTER DOOR in the middle of a field. The door is open but cordoned off with crime scene tape.

INT. STORM SHELTER - DAY

The team climbs down a police rope ladder into the shelter. It's basically a 7' x 12' cell 15' deep. Chains with shackles hang from anchors in the dugout walls. Buckets of excrement.

Trevino turns on her flashlight and points it at a corner.

TREVINO

That's where we found the backpack.  
And that's where the decomposed  
body and survivor were chained.

Dawn pulls out a CRIME SCENE KIT and gets a closer look.

DAWN

At least you made a save. Sometimes  
that's all the good news you get.

They share a look as Sykes inspects where the pack was found.

SYKES

What'd we know about the victims?

TREVINO

Females, both early 20's, Latina.  
Missing Persons is running an RID.

SYKES

And the COD of the one who escaped?

DAWN

Technically hypothermia by  
exposure. The nights get down to  
the low 40's this time of year.

SYKES

Any evidence of torture or sexual  
assault?

DAWN

Not torture per se, but definitely  
mistreatment - there was bruising  
around the neck. Probably a  
struggle four or five days back.  
No DNA under the nails.

TREVINO

Her hands were tied.

Trevino's phone vibrates. She answers it.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Trevino.

(beat)

Alright, thanks.

She hangs up.

TREVINO (CONT'D)  
The arrest warrant came through.

SYKES  
Now all we gotta do is find him.

EXT. DESERT - DUSK

The sun sets on the horizon. The CROWN VIC is parked nearby.  
Dugan faces the sun talking on a BURNER PHONE to Santino.

DUGAN  
You're not hearin' me. The tunnel  
is down.

SANTINO  
(over phone)  
I'll be at the meet tonight.

DUGAN  
It's not wise.

SANTINO  
(over phone)  
Just make this problem disappear.

DUGAN  
That's not what I do. You pay me to  
look the other way.

SANTINO  
(over phone)  
You do what I tell you to do, or  
I'll find someone who does.

DUGAN  
We've been together a long time,  
Santino. More risk requires more  
money.

A beat. The line goes dead.

Dugan pulls the burner apart and stomps it into the dirt.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY (PRESENT)

Crowley pivots to face the Jury.

CROWLEY  
And yet there's no record of that  
call between you and my client...  
why is that?

DUGAN

We used burners. Pre-paid cellular phones. One time use. Disposable. Untraceable.

CROWLEY

I see. So you say... And where was your son at this time? Sergeant Grus Dugan?

Dugan subtly twitches at his son's name.

DUGAN

He was pursuin' another lead.

CROWLEY

"Pursuing another lead". That's an interesting way to put it.

Crowley moves to his desk and picks up a paper.

CROWLEY (CONT'D)

I have an affidavit here from an associate of my client that says your son assaulted him. Are you familiar with a... Rafael Verdugo?

Dugan nods.

DUGAN

Yeah, I know that punk ass bitch.

INT. AUTO REPAIR SHOP - MARFA, TX - EVENING (PAST)

Grus enters like he owns the place, ignoring the MECHANICS, passing the repair bay, and heading to the BACK DOOR.

Grus pushes past a Mechanic that tries to stop him at the door, and goes through it to reveal:

INT. CHOP SHOP - CONTINUOUS

It's three times the size of the legit shop out front - disassembled, stolen vehicles everywhere.

RAFAEL VERDUGO, 20's, Mexican, Santino's point man, jumps to.

GRUS

Rafael, mi amigo, why haven't ya called me back?

RAFAEL

I don't call you, puto.

GRUS  
Where's Oscar at?

RAFAEL  
Fuck if I know.

Grus decks Rafael. Rafael grins bloody teeth; he isn't someone you just push around. He reaches for his GUN.

Grus expertly subdues him, takes the gun - a Browning 9mm with a taped grip. Grus puts it behind his back, in his waistband, shoves Rafael to the floor and stands over him.

GRUS  
Don'tcha ever fuckin' draw on me,  
or it's adios motherfucker, cuz I  
swear to God, I'll beat yer illegal  
ass to death n' deport your corpse  
back home to your mama! Comprende?  
And fuck you for makin' me ask a  
second time, cuz I don't like to  
repeat myself. Where's Oscar at?

RAFAEL  
Chinga tu madre.

Grus seizes him by the collar and drags him up, face to face.

GRUS  
Listen to my words, you cock  
socket, CID's got an APB out on  
Oscar as we speak and his dumbass  
is drivin' a truck registered to  
one of your stash houses. He's  
gonna fuck up the whole operation.

Grus drops him in disgust. Rafael stays down, shuts his eyes.

RAFAEL  
He's fuckin' dead.

Grus waves his hand as he steps away.

GRUS  
Nah, nah, not yet. We can fix this  
shit, but we only gotta few hours  
to do it. Where the fuck is he?

Rafael stands up.

RAFAEL  
You got his number.

Grus quickdraws the Browning and holds it to Rafael's head.

GRUS  
He ain't answerin'. Last chance.

Grus draws back the hammer -- CLICK. Rafael flinches.

RAFAEL  
The house on Murphy and Russell.

GRUS  
Whatever you got there - get it  
out. I'll take care of Oscar.

Grus exits. Rafael shouts after them.

RAFAEL  
YO, CAN I GET MY GUN BACK?  
(to himself)  
Hijo de puta.

INT. MOVING, GRUS' F-350 TRUCK - EVENING

Grus is cruising at 70 mph while on a call with Dugan.

GRUS  
Fuckin' Rico Suave here's drivin' a  
truck registered to the stash house  
he's holed up in. Wanna get rid of  
it? Rafael could chop that shit in  
an hour.

DUGAN (O.S.)  
(phone filter)  
No, that's not the move. Let  
Trevino find Oscar with the truck.

GRUS  
And if he rabbits?

DUGAN (O.S.)  
(phone filter)  
If he disappears before Trevino  
finds him, she'll keep lookin' and  
this investigation will grind on.  
If she finds her man and *then* he  
disappears...

GRUS  
Case closed.

DUGAN (O.S.)  
(phone filter)  
Exactly. Let her arrest him, then  
call the lawyer. He'll get him out.

Dugan clicks off.

EXT. STASH HOUSE - 253 E MURPHY ST. MARFA, TX - NIGHT

The stash house is a dilapidated home with a dead lawn out front and a Dodge Ram truck parked in the driveway.

INT. TREVINO'S SUV - OUTSIDE STASH HOUSE - NIGHT

Close on the ROSARY hanging in Trevino's rearview mirror.

Trevino is in the driver's seat and Sykes is in shotgun. They both keep an eye the house for any signs of movement.

ANGLE ON REARVIEW

Two PRESIDIO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE (PCSO) DEPUTIES pull up behind the SUV in a squad car with no headlights.

TREVINO

Local's here. Stay in the car.

Sykes nods as Trevino exits.

EXT. STASH HOUSE - NIGHT

Trevino and the PCSO Deputies approach the house. She knocks.

INT. TREVINO'S SUV - NIGHT

Through the windshield, Sykes sees Oscar exit on the side of the house, hop a fence and run through the neighbor's yard.

Sykes hops over to the driver's seat, hits the HORN, and starts the car.

EXT. STASH HOUSE - NIGHT

Trevino and the Deputies hear the HORN, turn and spot Oscar.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

Sonumabitch.

Trevino and the Deputies take off, chasing Oscar on foot.

EXT./INT. MOVING, TREVINO'S SUV - NIGHT

Sykes peels out. The SUV speeds up the street, past the next house, hops the curb and cuts through an empty dirt lot.

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S YARD - NIGHT

Oscar leaps over a 4 ft. chainlink fence and runs through the neighbor's backyard, frantic.

He jumps the opposite fence, and charges toward a house.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Oscar throws open the back door of the house.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Oscar runs past an OLD MAN on a sofa, watching TV. The Old Man turns his head tracking Oscar as he runs out of the room.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Oscar bursts out onto a porch and scrambles into the street.

EXT. STREET, ALLEY - NIGHT

As Oscar runs across the street and cuts into an alley...

The SUV SCREECHES to a stop in front of Oscar, blocking him.

Oscar locks on Sykes behind the wheel. Sykes winks at him.

Trevino runs up, draws her gun and adopts the Weaver stance: with her left foot a step ahead of her right, knees slightly bent, her shooting arm extended and support hand on the grip.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

STATE POLICE! DON'T MOVE! DON'T  
TAKE ANOTHER STEP! NOW LAY DOWN ON  
YOUR FACE WITH YOUR HANDS BEHIND  
YOUR BACK AND CROSS YOUR ANKLES.

(to Deputies)

Hook 'em up.

Oscar complies. The Deputies catch up and handcuff him.

Trevino holsters her weapon and walks up to the SUV.

She glares at Sykes as he rolls down the window.

He grins at her and shrugs.

SYKES

What? I stayed in the car.

She can't help but smile.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

Grus enters the observation room where Sykes is watching through the one way mirror as Trevino interviews Oscar.



GRUS  
She interviewing him without a  
lawyer?

SYKES  
He hasn't asked for one.

TREVINO (O.S.)  
We know you were drivin' in Pine  
Canyon off Glenn Springs Road.

Grus watches Trevino, while Sykes clocks Grus, suspicious.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Trevino sits across from Oscar, who is restrained to a table.

TREVINO (CONT'D)  
Forensics confirms the tire marks  
match your truck at the scene of a  
double homicide. Did you kill those  
girls, Oscar?

OSCAR  
Which ones?

Trevino stares at Oscar like she wants to rip out his throat.

TREVINO  
"Which ones."

She stands up and walks over to the mounted security camera.

SECURITY CAMERA POV

Trevino reaches up and pulls out the power cord -- STATIC.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grus turns to Sykes, incredulous.

GRUS  
What the fuck is she doin'?

SYKES  
Goin' off the record.

GRUS  
She can't do that.

Sykes glances at Grus and grins.

SYKES  
She just did.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, INTERVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Trevino walks around the room, circling Oscar like a shark.

TREVINO

A smart ass just don't fit in a  
saddle round 'ere, ese. I'll show  
ya *which ones*.

She lays out several crime scene photos of the victims.

Oscar looks at them but doesn't react.

OSCAR

I want my lawyer.

TREVINO

I don't give a fuck what you want.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grus glances over at Sykes who suppresses a laugh.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, INTERVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Trevino is behind Oscar now.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

Take a closer look.

She grabs the back of his bald head and slams his face into the table. His head snaps back and blood runs from his nose.

Oscar bucks and writhes against his wrist and leg chains.

OSCAR

¡Qué chingados!

TREVINO

Te dije que no doy un carajo.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grus turns to Sykes.

GRUS

What'd they say?

Sykes shrugs.

GRUS (CONT'D)

Fuck this!

Grus moves for the door. Sykes steps in front him.

SYKES  
What'd ya think you're doin'?

GRUS  
Endin' this interview.

SYKES  
Tell me somethin', sergeant...

Sykes nods toward Oscar.

SYKES (CONT'D)  
Ya know him?

Grus feigns shock.

GRUS  
What?!? No! Get outta my way--

SYKES  
No? So why do ya care?

GRUS  
I don't. But I go by the book. The suspect has a right to counsel and not to be assaulted in custody.

Sykes gives Grus a hard look, nods and steps aside.

SYKES  
Ya ain't wrong. Run along now.

GRUS  
Fuck off.

Grus shoulders past Sykes and storms out.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, INTERVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Trevino is now seated. Oscar tilts his head back and bleeds.

TREVINO  
Don't tilt your head back. You'll choke on your own blood.

OSCAR  
(coughs)  
My lawyer's gonna sue yer ass.

TREVINO  
Well, bless his heart. But he might have his hands full defendin' ya on two counts of murder. Oh, I forgot to mention, there's a witness.

Oscar blinks and then shakes his head.

OSCAR  
¡Mierda!

Grus walks in the room, goes to the camera and turns it on.

GRUS  
This interview's over. Now.

Trevino stands and leans across the table, her voice low.

TREVINO  
It's the truth. You can take that to the bank. I saved her life and she ID'd you. But I wanted ya to know... when they lock ya up in Huntsville, strap ya down, stick a needle in your arm and send your soul screamin' to Hell, that'll be 'cause of *me*, not the witness. My arrest. My testimony. Me. Killin' ya back. For which ones? All of em.

Oscar's mouth goes slack and his eyes show fear.

GRUS  
Let's go.

Grus puts a hand on Trevino. She turns and almost decks him.

TREVINO  
Don't fuckin' touch me. Ever.

Grus puts his hands up. Trevino walks out.

OSCAR  
See what that bitch did?

Grus gives Oscar a handkerchief and an admonishing look.

GRUS  
Don't be a pussy. It ain't broke.

Oscar soaks up his blood with the fabric.

OSCAR  
I want my lawyer.

Grus puts his cell on the table.

GRUS

Fine, call him, but you haven't  
been charged with anythin' yet.  
Right now you're just a witness.

Oscar holds up the chains between his wrists.

OSCAR

A witness? Yeah, right. I ain't  
sayin' shit.

Oscar dials the cell.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Trevino and Sykes watch as Oscar calls his lawyer.

TREVINO

So that's it.

She turns away.

SYKES

You let him get to you.

She glares at Sykes and then back at Oscar.

SYKES (CONT'D)

Next time, control your temper--

TREVINO

"Use the anger", I know.

SYKES

So now what?

TREVINO

We gotta charge 'im or release 'im.

DAWN (O.S.)

Maybe not.

They turn to see Dawn at the door.

DAWN (CONT'D)

I got a print on the victim's  
rosary, and it's not hers. If you  
get me his prints, I can confirm it  
right now.

TREVINO

The house was wiped clean and we can't print him if we don't charge him. Technically we can't even talk to him without counsel.

DAWN

A match would place him at the scene. Add that to the tire track and witness testimony--

TREVINO

And it won't matter what the lawyer says. No bail.

Sykes takes out his cell and dials. A phone rings O.S.

SYKES

Let me handle it.

(into phone)

Can I speak to Sergeant Grus Dugan?

(beat)

Yeah, I'll wait.

Sykes puts his phone down and exits the observation room.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, INTERVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

KNOCK on the door. Grus stands to see a DEPUTY and Sykes.

DEPUTY

Sergeant, you got a call.

Grus warily exits as Sykes enters with a cold can of COCA-COLA held with a napkin. He puts it on the table, sits and looks at Oscar. Sykes takes out the picture of his daughter.

SYKES

I've only got one question. You ever seen this girl?

Oscar glances at the picture, shakes his head, no. Sykes tries to read him. Then he pushes the can of Coke forward.

SYKES (CONT'D)

Thirsty?

Oscar reaches, but his cuffs stop him. Sykes takes out a KEY.

SYKES (CONT'D)

I got you, man. Not really sure how to, uh...

He unfastens the cuffs.

OSCAR

Thanks.

Oscar takes the Coke and cracks it open.

SYKES

(to Oscar)

Ya know they used to put cocaine in Coke? Makes the name kinda ironic, dontcha think? And yet... an appropriate beverage for a drug traffickin', piece-a-shit, rapist, murderer like you.

Oscar looks up at Sykes as he turns and exits, dumbfounded.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Trevino grins, admiring Sykes. She looks over at Dawn.

TREVINO

Told ya he's good.

Sykes enters, places the handcuffs and in an EVIDENCE BAG.

SYKES

There ya go. Fingerprints on the can in there.

DAWN

Is that even legal?

SYKES

(shrugs)

Close enough.

Trevino's phone RINGS. She checks the caller ID.

TREVINO

It's my Lieutenant. Gimme a minute.

Sykes nods and picks up his cell. He and Dawn steps out. Trevino answers her cell.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

Hey, L.T.

INT. LIEUTENANT BLAKE'S OFFICE - NIGHT (INTERCUT SCENES)

LT. HENRY BLAKE, 50's, a career do-gooder but a workaholic, always last to leave the CID office in Austin.

BLAKE

What the fuck's goin' on down there? You assaulted a suspect?

TREVINO

Who told ya that? We're talkin' to him as a witness, that's all.

BLAKE

Don't bullshit me, Trevino! You've been interrogatin' a suspect without his lawyer after he requested counsel. And you cracked his skull on a table? What kinda rookie move is that? It can get a murder case thrown outta court, am I right?

TREVINO

Yessir.

BLAKE

Well, the lawyer found out and is threatenin' to press charges for harassment and police brutality.

TREVINO

The lawyer? Sir, he was tipped off.

BLAKE

Irrelevant. Cut him loose and get your shit together, detective.

Blake hangs up the phone. Trevino fumes. She walks to...

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, BULLPEN - NIGHT

The DESK SERGEANT stops her in the hall.

DESK SERGEANT

Ma'am, his lawyer's here.

TREVINO

Of course he is, that motherfucker. Send him in.

The Desk Sergeant nods and walks away.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, SERGEANT'S DESK - NIGHT

DAVID ALAN MARKS, ESQ., 40's, a well-paid criminal defense attorney for Santino. A bucket of smoke in a business suit.

The Desk Sergeant hands Marks his GUEST PASS.



DESK SERGEANT

No weapons, no passing items to your client, you know the drill.

MARKS

I won't be long. Where are they?

DESK SERGEANT

Interview room one.

The Desk Sergeant points.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, BULLPEN - NIGHT

Trevino, Sykes and Dawn watch Marks walk through the Bullpen.

Sykes checks his pockets and then taps Trevino's shoulder.

SYKES

You got a pen?

TREVINO

What?

SYKES

A pen. Gimme a pen.

She takes a pen out of her pocket and holds it up.

He grabs it out her hand and exits just as Marks walks up.

MARKS

Are you Detective Trevino?

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Sykes walks in and nods to the Deputy. Oscar glares at him.

OSCAR

It's about time.

Sykes sticks the pen into the mouth of the Coke can, picks it up, turns it upside down and walks out without saying a word.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

What the fuck?

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, BULLPEN - NIGHT

Trevino stands in the Bullpen with her arms folded as Marks lists his demands. SHERIFF'S PERSONNEL watch the exchange.

MARKS

I would like to see my client.  
In private. And you may as well  
start processing his release now.

TREVINO

How do ya figure that? At the very  
least he's a witness to a crime.

MARKS

Do you typically handcuff murder  
witnesses? And then torture them  
while they're restrained?

TREVINO

(laughs)  
Torture? Please. He ran. He's a  
person of interest.

MARKS

Then contact my office.

Trevino stares Marks down as he steps around her and exits.  
Sykes walks up, bags the can and hands the evidence to Dawn.

SYKES

(to Dawn)  
Do it. Run the print.

Dawn exits for the lab.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Marks and Oscar speak confidentially.

MARKS

I'll have you out of here by dawn.  
Why did you run?

OSCAR

Fuck was I supposed to know it  
wasn't a set up? And what the  
fuck's the point of jammin' me up,  
just to get it kicked?

MARKS

Nevermind that. You kept your mouth  
shut, right?

Marks notices the napkin.

MARKS (CONT'D)

They fed you?

OSCAR  
Nah, I just had a Coke.

MARKS  
Where's the can?

OSCAR  
Whiteboy took it.

Marks covers his eyes with his hand.

MARKS  
Oh, Oscar, Oscar. Did you wipe it  
down? What about your truck?

OSCAR  
Fuck do ya mean?

EXT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Sykes leans on the brick wall smoking. Above him is a billboard of Sheriff Dugan with his cowboy hat, riding a horse. It reads: RE-ELECT SHERIFF DUGAN - THE LAWMAN FOR THE JOB.

Wide of Trevino opening the door. She steps out to join him.

TREVINO  
There ya are. Can I bum one?

Sykes gives her a smoke and lights it.

SYKES  
So, they're gonna cut 'im loose?

TREVINO  
Yeah, it's unbelievable.

SYKES  
I believe it. That I don't believe.

He motions to the billboard. Trevino glances up at it.

TREVINO  
When I look at that it reminds me  
of the line, "...you can hold an  
important public office forever in  
our country with no qualifications  
for it but a clean nose, a photo-  
genic face and a close mouth. If on  
top of that you look good on a  
horse, you are unbeatable."

Sykes smirks. He likes her style.

SYKES

Ya remember that word for word?

Trevino taps her temple.

TREVINO

Photographic memory.

SYKES

No shit. Who wrote it?

TREVINO

I forgot.

They both laugh.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

No, it's Raymond Chandler. The Long Goodbye. I read all his books when I was a kid. Dreamed of bein' a detective.

SYKES

And now you are. A damn good one.

TREVINO

I thought I'd be able to make more of a difference.

SYKES

You made a difference for Cecilia Perez. You got a save. It's not all death and human tragedy.

Dawn enters from the parking lot and walks up to them.

TREVINO

Hey, so what'd ya know?

DAWN

It's not him.

TREVINO

What?!

DAWN

It doesn't mean he didn't kill those women. Just means it's not his print on the rosary.

Trevino shakes her head in disbelief.

TREVINO

He's involved. Somehow. A lesser  
player in a greater game.

Trevino and Sykes share a look, a silent acknowledgment of  
that truth and a determination to see it through to the end.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Dugan smokes a cigar. In b.g. are the headlights of a caravan  
of vehicles. The lead sedan pulls up and Santino steps out of  
the passenger door, and raises his hand to signal his backup.

A VAN rolls up. Doors open and slam shut. Dugan is surrounded  
by masked ARYAN GUARDS armed to the teeth.

Santino reaches into his jacket and hands Dugan an ENVELOPE.

SANTINO

You're right. This isn't what  
you're paid for. Now it is.

Dugan counts the CASH as he looks at the Aryan Guards, wary.

DUGAN

New help?

Santino lights a cigar of his own as he glances around.

SANTINO

We've worked together in the past.  
It's an enemy of my enemy  
situation.

DUGAN

The lawyer is bringing Oscar to you  
directly.

SANTINO

Excellent. Some good news, eh?

DUGAN

What're we goin' to do with Oscar?

Santino starts to laugh and then Dugan joins in.

DUGAN (CONT'D)

Ya know, just because they're  
releasin' Oscar, doesn't mean this  
case is closed...

Santino's smile drops and he stares at Dugan.

DUGAN (CONT'D)  
They still have your stash house.

Santino waves his hand.

SANTINO  
We can afford that.

DUGAN  
Trevino's not goin' to let this go.  
With those bodies, if they find  
even one of your shipments, she's  
goin' to connect the dots.

A beat. Santino steps back and faces away as he muses.

SANTINO  
Hijo de puta. We're moving the  
routes through the Border Patrols.  
It's not ideal -- some will die.  
But after they've paid us that's  
actually better for business. No  
loose ends.

DUGAN  
(sotto)  
How do you do this to your own  
people?

Santino turns back to Dugan.

SANTINO  
Qué dijiste?

Santino steps up to Dugan.

SANTINO (CONT'D)  
What did you say to me? My people?  
You think a line in the sand makes  
a difference? None of you are my  
people. I'm from Argentina. The  
people we're moving in tonight's  
load are from 100 miles from here.  
They're more *your* people than *my*  
people.

Santino gives the signal to roll out. The last Aryan Guard  
walks backwards toward the van, his eyes never leaving Dugan.

Santino drives off. The dust rises, surrounding Dugan and  
glows red from the departing tail lights. He becomes a  
silhouette trapped in a hellish image.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, BULLPEN - DAWN

The sun is up. The graveyard shift is clocking out and going home. Trevino and Sykes watch Marks sign paperwork as the Desk Sergeant processes Oscar for release.

TREVINO  
What time is it?

Sykes checks his watch.

SYKES  
Zero seven twenty.

TREVINO  
Fuck me, I'm late. I promised to  
take my daughter to school.

SYKES  
That's sweet. What grade is she in?

TREVINO  
Kindergarten.

SYKES  
Go. Do whatcha gotta do. And then  
get some rest. I got your back.

TREVINO  
You always do. Thanks, Joe.

She rushes out.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, OFFICE - DAWN

Grus stands in a dark office, holding venetian blinds apart, spying on Trevino as she exits. He lets the blinds snap shut.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

A BMW i8 pushing 90 mph down an empty desert highway.

INT. MARK'S BMW, MOVING - DAY

Marks drives. Oscar rides shotgun and looks around the car.

OSCAR  
Damn, This is a fine ass ride. No  
gas?

MARKS  
No gas.

OSCAR  
Shit, I want me one of these!

MARKS  
You keep goin' the way you're goin'-

SIRENS in the background. Marks looks up at the rearview.

MARKS (CONT'D)  
Aw, what?

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

AERIAL - following the BMW is a POLICE CAR, flashers on.

MARKS (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
This is bullshit. Don't say  
anything.

INT. MARK'S BMW, MOVING - DAY

Marks slows and pulls over to the shoulder. SIRENS in b.g.

OSCAR  
I just got out!

MARKS  
I know, just keep quiet.

EXT. HIGHWAY, SHOULDER - DAY

Both vehicles are stationary on the shoulder.

Grus opens the door and steps out, dressed in civilian clothes: baseball cap, jeans, flannel shirt and vest.

He glances back down the highway. No cars in sight. Then he walks to the BMW's driver's side window. It rolls down.

MARKS (CONT'D)  
Is there some kind of--

Grus quickdraws and BANG! - fires a point-blank headshot. Mark's blood splatters the inside of the BMW's windshield.

GRUS  
He was gonna take you to Santino,  
Oscar! You were gonna talk!

Grus walks around to the passenger side, his gun still drawn.

GRUS (CONT'D)  
Who knows about our operation?



OSCAR  
Nobody! Nobody knows!

GRUS  
Does Dugan know?

OSCAR  
No, Dugan don't know. He'd have me  
kill--

BANG! Grus fires another headshot, killing Oscar instantly.

He holsters the Browning 9mm and checks for traffic in the distance - nothing. He walks back to his patrol car.

The distant song of a CACTUS WREN echoes across the flatland.

EXT. MARFA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, ENTRANCE - DAY

Trevino walks her daughter, AVA, 6, towards the entrance to school. Ava wears a pink coat and carries a pink lunch box.

TREVINO  
Come on! March those legs 'lil  
lady! We're late! We're late!  
For a very important date!

Trevino holds Ava's hand until they're almost to the door of her kindergarten class. KINDERGARTNERS run wild in the b.g.

Trevino kneels down to Ava's height.

TREVINO (CONT'D)  
Ok, pre-separation checklist.

Ava giggles and stands at attention as tall as she can.

TREVINO (CONT'D)  
You got your lunch.

Ava hugs her lunch box.

AVA  
Check!

TREVINO  
You got your coat. Wait a second,  
what'd ya got on under this? Ava,  
are you wearin' your Wonder Woman  
pajamas? What the hell? You are.

Trevino adjusts Ava's coat and sees that her daughter is wearing her Wonder Woman pajamas underneath it.

Ava looks down like she's been caught doing something bad.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

Look at me, nugget. I'm not mad.  
It's ok, but pajamas are for bed-  
time. Can you tell me *why* you  
changed your clothes?

Ava looks up at her mom.

AVA

In case anyone needs any help.

TREVINO

And you were gonna help 'em?

Ava nods. Trevino smiles through tearful eyes.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

Well, I think that's pretty heroic.  
(beat)  
Gimme a hug.

Ava hugs Trevino tight and whispers in her ear.

AVA

(whispered)  
I'll tell you a secret...  
(beat)  
I'm Wonder Woman.

TREVINO

Yes, you are, baby. Yes, you are.  
Your tia's gonna pick you up, ok?

Ava nods. Trevino lets her go and Ava runs to her classroom.

EXT./INT. MOVING, TREVINO'S SUV - DAY

As Trevino drives she holds back a flood of emotion.

She holds the wheel so tight that her knuckles go white.

EXT. TREVINO'S HOUSE - 433 N MESA ST. MARFA, TX - DAY

Her SUV turns off a residential street into the driveway.

It's a modest two-story house, with a few succulents planted  
in the arid ground and a tree on the corner of the property.

Trevino exits the SUV, walks to the door and unlocks it.

A camera CLICKS and captures a FREEZE FRAME of Trevino.

INT. VAN, PARKED ACROSS THE STREET - DAY

Through the windshield of a VAN parked across the street an unseen DRIVER photographs Trevino as she enters her house.

INT. TREVINO'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - DAY

Trevino's clothes and boots are scattered on the floor. Gun belt over a chair. The sound of a SHOWER in the background.

INT. TREVINO'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - DAY

Trevino stands under the spray of a shower and yawns. Hot water fills her mouth. She leans against the wall and spits.

HIGH ANGLE of the water raining down and circling the drain.

INT. TREVINO'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - DAY

She walks into the bedroom wearing a oversized shirt, drying her wet hair with a towel, and flops on her bed, face first.

CLOSE UP on her eyes as they shut.

TIME SPEEDS UP. She sleeps. Her eyes shift under closed lids.

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. TEXAS STATE CEMETERY - NIGHT

TIME LAPSE of storm clouds rushing in, darkening the sky.

Rain begins to fall on dirt. DRIP. DRIP. DRIP. The drops come faster. Soon it's pouring. The dirt grows dark and moist.

Trevino is a dark silhouette in the rain. A bolt of lightning splits sideways across the sky followed by a clap of THUNDER.

Her shadow is cast on a tombstone in flashes. The inscription is VALÉRIE SYKES. The dirt below the stone begins to MOVE, rising upward as if pushed from underneath the earth.

Rain runs down into Trevino's eyes as they go wide.

The soil heaves and throbs. A child's HAND bursts out of the mud, and claws at the grave. Then a decomposed HEAD emerges.

INT. TREVINO'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - DAY (~5 HOURS LATER)

Trevino's eyes snap open. A phone is RINGING.

Slowly, unwillingly, she draws herself up and out of bed. She finds her cell in the pocket of her jeans and answers.

TREVINO (CONT'D)  
 (into phone)  
 Trevino.

SYKES (O.S.)  
 (phone filter)  
 Turn on the local news.

TREVINO  
 What is it?

Trevino retrieves the remote and points it at a flatscreen.

ON TELEVISION

COURTNEY CARROLL, 29, a local anchor, is behind a news desk with a red and blue banner below that states: CRIME-TRACKER.

CARROLL  
 (tv filter)  
 --an initial report of an abandoned vehicle on Highway 90 near Alpine just before 10:30 a.m. When they arrived, they found two people shot to death inside the car. The motive for the deaths remain a mystery, but the Brewster County Sheriff identified the victims as 31-year-old Oscar Balderas and 48-year-old David Alan Marks, and announced the investigation had been officially ruled as a double homicide.

INT. TREVINO'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

TREVINO  
 When did this happen?

SYKES (O.S.)  
 (phone filter)  
 They don't have time of death yet.

Trevino yanks on her jeans, socks and boots. Next she buttons her shirt, slips on her shoulder holster and secures her gun.

ON TV CUT TO:

EXT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - DAY (~3 HOURS EARLIER)

Dugan stands outside the station, his billboard in b.g.

DUGAN

(tv filter)

Both men are deceased by what appears to be gunshot wounds to the head. The initial investigation found no gun in the vehicle, so we are officially rulin' this as a double homicide and are actively lookin' for the shooter.

The DOORBELL rings.

CARROLL

(tv filter)

Anyone with any information regarding the investigation is asked to contact--

INT. TREVINO'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - DAY

Trevino shuts off the TV.

TREVINO

(into phone)

Are you at the station?

She exits the bedroom.

INT. TREVINO'S HOUSE, FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Trevino rushes down the stairs towards the front door.

SYKES (O.S.)

(phone filter)

Yeah, but no one's here.

Trevino opens the door to Sheriff Dugan, wearing a starched white shirt, tan jacket, arrowhead bolo tie and gun belt. Behind Dugan is Grus in his cap, jeans, flannel and vest.

TREVINO

(into phone)

I gotta go.

She hangs up. Five PCSO DEPUTIES and three black and white PATROL CARS are parked in the driveway behind her SUV.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

Sheriff. What's goin' on?

Dugan gives her a sympathetic look.

DUGAN

Maria, forgive the intrusion, these boys are just doin' their job, on my order. Is your family home?

TREVINO

No, my sister's at work and my kid's at school.

DUGAN

That's good.

TREVINO

What the fuck is this, Dugan?

He takes a deep breath.

DUGAN

We found your suspect and his lawyer shot dead on the highway.

TREVINO

Yeah, I just heard.

Dugan scrutinizes her reaction.

DUGAN

But ya don't know nothin' about it?

TREVINO

Why would I?

DUGAN

Well, from what I hear, there was some kind of fracas between you and your suspect. Shit, we gotcha on tape threatenin' his life--

TREVINO

No, that's not how it went down--

DUGAN

And you took it hard when that fancy lawyer of his got him released without charges--

TREVINO

Not hard enough to kill 'em, if that's what your insinuatins'.

Dugan looks down at his boots.

DUGAN

I assure ya, I take no pleasure in it. Now, these boys gotta search your house and vehicle. Here's a copy of the warrant.

He takes out a folded piece of paper and hands it to her.

Trevino takes the warrant and stares down at it blankly.

Dugan holds up his hand and signals the Deputies to come in.

TIME SLOWS as three PCSO Deputies walk in the door past her.

CLOSE UP on Trevino's eyes as she looks up in disbelief.

Dugan and Grus stand on the driveway talking, but we can't hear. PAN OFF them to two PCSO Deputies searching her SUV.

One PCSO Deputy finds something under the front seat. He takes out the BROWNING 9MM and holds it up like a dead rat.

CUE MUSIC: "WAY DOWN WE GO" BY KALEO (PLAY SONG)

Trevino is in shock. Her mouth agape.

Dugan, Grus and the PCSO Deputies look at her in judgement.

Trevino stands in the doorway of her house, thunderstuck.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. TEXAS STATE CEMETERY - DAY (PRESENT)

Trevino stands above Sykes' grave as a cold wind blows.

TREVINO

That was the moment they took my life away.

MONTAGE

EXT. GRUS' TRAILER IN THE DESERT - DUSK

A blood red sunset on the flat horizon. MUSIC (~0:22)

Grus' F-350 truck drives fast towards a mobile home parked by itself in the desert. The 4x4 tires kick up a cloud of dust.

Grus pulls up, cuts the engine and gets out. He walks past a fire smoldering in a metal barrel, and as he does he strips off his vest and flannel shirt. He enters the trailer.

He exits with his clothes bundled up in one hand and a bottle of Jack Daniels in the other. He takes a slug and spits it on the fire. The flames jump. He drops the bundle in the barrel.

CLOSE UP on Grus as he watches the evidence burn. He takes out a smoke and lights it, then watches the flames dance.

INT. EVIDENCE ROOM - DUSK

Sykes has the contents of Valérie's BACKPACK spread out on the table. He pulls out the last item, a PHOTOGRAPH.

ANGLE ON PHOTO of a younger Sykes, late 30's but already haunted, with his WIFE, 30's and Valérie, 9, both happy.

INT. DUGAN'S HOME - DUSK

The interior of a well-furnished living room with a wall of windows. Through the windows we see Dugan return home, enter the door, drop his keys and walk to the kitchen. PAN OVER TO:

HELEN DUGAN, 60's, head tilted, confined to a wheelchair, suffering from advanced stages of Lou Gehrig's Disease.

Dugan approaches her. Helen's eyes move, tracking him as he bends down to tenderly kiss her forehead.

Dugan pays the CARETAKER from Santino's envelope. She leaves.

INT. LT. BLAKE'S OFFICE - AUSTIN, TX - NIGHT (FEW DAYS LATER)

Trevino sits across from her boss, Lt. Henry Blake. He stares at her with a look of disappointment. Trevino puts her badge and gun on his desk, suspended while under investigation.

TREVINO (V.O.)

It felt like it was happenin' to someone else.

INT. CID HEADQUARTERS, BULLPEN - NIGHT

Trevino makes the walk of shame through the bullpen holding a box of her personal belongings. All her fellow COPS stare at her, and as she makes eye contact, they look away. She exits.

TREVINO (V.O.)

Twenty years as a cop and they *all* turned their back on me...

EXT. CID HEADQUARTERS, ENTRANCE - AUSTIN, TX - NIGHT

Trevino carries her box out the door of CID Headquarters, stops at the top of the steps and looks down at the street.



At the curb, leaning on his car, is Sykes, waiting for her. He's off-duty and dressed casual, jeans and a leather jacket. He takes one last drag of his smoke and flicks it away.

TREVINO (V.O.)

Except for you.

Trevino walks down the steps. Sykes opens the passenger door for her, takes her box and puts it in the car.

When he turns back to her she's trying not to cry. He offers her his hand. She takes it, steps forward and kisses him.

His eyes close and he wraps her in an embrace. MUSIC (~1:55)

EXT./INT. CAR, MOVING - NIGHT

Sykes cruises down the city street. He looks over at Trevino.

Her window is down and her long dark hair blows in the wind. She turns, sweeps her hair from her eyes and stares at him.

They pass by a neon sign for a motel that reads: VACANCY.

INT. CAR, MOVING - NIGHT

Trevino sees the sign and looks at Sykes. He turns the wheel.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - AUSTIN, TX - NIGHT

A motel room in blue. The curtains open. Blurred city lights. Sykes and Trevino stand, dark silhouettes locked together.

They shed their clothes and fall into bed. The sound of their breathing increases in pace.

In bed, their eyes connect, her on top of him, his hands touch her face and caresses her cheek, wiping away a tear.

Light from the street sweeps past the window, striking her from behind, head back, as her hair whips through the air.

She cries out. In that moment he wants to both protect and possess her. All breathing stops.

She collapses on top of him. MUSIC (~3:07)

Afterwards they hold each other, bodies intertwined, dark figures amid scattered sheets in a wash of midnight blue.

They breathe in unison.

TREVINO

We could just go.

SYKES

Go where?

TREVINO

Somewhere...

SYKES

Without extradition.

TREVINO

Anywhere.

(beat)

Just take Ava and go.

SYKES

On the run?

Silence.

TREVINO

They set me up.

SYKES

Who?

TREVINO

I don't know.

(beat)

All I know is...

(beat)

if I stay...

(beat)

I take the fall.

SYKES

I'm not gonna let that happen.

TREVINO

What're you gonna do?

SYKES

Fight.

TREVINO

Fuckin' crazy.

SYKES

Why?

TREVINO

Fuckin' scared.

Sykes holds her close.

SYKES

When Val first went missing, before we all knew she'd been abducted, she just wasn't there one day after school. I remember all the voices, asking questions, suggesting possibilities to calm me down... some said she took the bus, or walked home, or got a ride from a friend, or ran away... but they didn't know her like I knew her. Right away, I knew something was very wrong but I was helpless to stop it. That was first time I felt true fear... That cold panic like you're standing on ice that cracks and then you're falling... drowning in the dark.

They grow smaller in the frame receding into black.

FADE TO BLACK

SYKES (V.O.)

You can't escape that darkness. That fear. You either become a survivor or a casualty of it. You live or die with it.

INT. TREVINO'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (2 WEEKS LATER)

Ava runs down the dark hallway into the light.

She's wearing her Wonder Woman pajamas dragging a stuffed teddy bear that's tied with a golden lasso. She dives behind the couch where Trevino, Sykes and Doc are seated.

TREVINO

Ava! Ava, come here, nugget.

Trevino lifts Ava up onto her lap, and kisses her head.

TREVINO (CONT'D)

If you're *quiet* you can stay up longer, but if not, it's bedtime.

Ava doesn't say a word and hugs her bear.

DOC

I'll put her to bed.

TREVINO

No, it's ok. Sorry, Mr. Maddox. Where were we?

Trevino's criminal defense attorney, LUKE MADDOX, 40's, sits across from the couch with his briefcase on the coffee table.

MADDOX

Right, so the DA's office presented their case to the grand jury. Our side is not present for that part. It's a closed-door proceeding. And I haven't reviewed the full transcript, because that exhibit was just made available to me tonight in discovery.

TREVINO

What's the bottom line?

MADDOX

The grand jury voted to indict you on capital murder for the murders of more than one person.

Trevino, Sykes and Doc are stunned. Ava looks confused.

TREVINO

My God. That means--

MADDOX

It's a capital felony punishable by either life in prison or the death penalty, if they seek it.

SYKES

They indicted her on *what*? Based on *whose* testimony?

MADDOX

Primarily a Deputy Sheriff, uh...  
(checks his notes)  
Sergeant Grus Dugan.

Sykes and Trevino look at each other. Doc stands.

DOC

I'm gonna take her to bed.

AVA

Nooooo!

Doc scoops up Ava in her arms.

DOC

Come on, let's go, lil' missy. I'll read ya a comic if you brush your teeth and go to bed, how 'bout that? Say goodnight, sweet dreams!

AVA

Goodnight, sweet dreams!

As Doc and Ava exit, Trevino turns back to Maddox.

TREVINO

Why wasn't I subpoenaed to testify?

MADDOX

They don't have to do that if they can make their case another way. The ballistics matched the murder weapon which was found--

TREVINO

Planted! It was fuckin' *planted* in my car. And I need to testify to prove I'm innocent! I'm not gonna just roll over when they're tryin' to bury me in lies! This is my *name!* Do ya understand? My *life!* I'm fightin' for my fuckin' life here! And for that little girl--

Trevino chokes up. Sykes puts a hand on her shoulder.

SYKES

Just calm down, take a breath.

Trevino gives Sykes a fierce look. He takes his hand away.

MADDOX

I understand. I'm on your side. And it's your choice to testify at the trial, but I don't recommend it.

TREVINO

What do you recommend?

MADDOX

Get ahead of this. Surrender yourself. I'll file a motion to keep the transcript under seal because it would prejudice your right to a fair trial. The arraignment will be scheduled. We'll plead not guilty.

TREVINO  
Damn right not guilty.

Trevino takes Sykes' hand and squeezes it, trembling.

SYKES  
It's gonna be ok.

Trevino doesn't look so sure.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, SERGEANT'S DESK - DAY

Trevino surrenders herself to Sheriff Dugan. She is stone cold. No emotion. In the b.g. is Sykes, Doc and Maddox.

CLOSE UP on Trevino's wrists as the cuffs snap shut on them.

INT. BREWSTER COUNTY JAIL, CELL - DAY

Trevino steps into a jail cell. The bars slide shut and lock.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, BULLPEN - DAY

As Sykes enters the Bullpen, Dugan steps out of his office.

DUGAN  
Detective Sykes, ya got a minute?

Sykes walks over and enters the Sheriff's office.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, OFFICE - DAY

Dugan sits behind his desk in high back leather chair. His office has accolades of his career on the wood-paneled walls.

DUGAN (CONT'D)  
Get the door.

Sykes closes the door, and glances at a framed PICTURE of YOUNG BROYHILL and YOUNG DUGAN and NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS.

DUGAN (CONT'D)  
Have a seat.... Wanna drink?

Dugan opens a drawer, takes out a bottle. Sykes turns around.

SYKES  
No thanks.

Sykes sits down across from Dugan as he pours a shot in his coffee cup and puts the bottle back in the desk drawer.

DUGAN

It's already been one of those days  
an' it ain't even noon... Look, I  
know you and Maria are, uh, well  
it's none of my business, but what  
I'm sayin' is... I'm sorry it had  
to come to this.

Sykes nods and looks around.

SYKES

Where's that boy of yours?

DUGAN

Grus? He may have the graveyard  
shift. Check the duty roster. Why?

SYKES

Need to follow up with 'im on that  
double homicide with the Jane Does.

DUGAN

Yeah, that's what I wanted to talk  
to ya about. See... that's not our  
case. And I spoke Maria's ol'  
lieutenant and he's reluctant to  
assign another CID detective. He  
agrees with my assessment that the  
witness I.D., the tire tracks and  
so forth-- pointed to the fact that  
Oscar was our man. And now that ol'  
boy's gone, so... case closed.

Sykes leans forward, grim.

SYKES

What about my daughter?

DUGAN

Well now that, uh, evidence found  
in connection with your daughter...  
that's purely circumstantial. No  
body, no crime. We just don't know  
what happened. May never know. Ya  
gotta learn to accept that, son.

Sykes shuts his eyes.

SYKES

I do *not*...

Sykes opens them again and his unblinking eyes lock on Dugan.

SYKES (CONT'D)

Accept that.

(beat)

Excuse me.

Sykes stands.

DUGAN

Come on now. Sit down. Show me the same professional courtesy I've shown you. Let's be honest, ya got no *official* reason to be here, and you're way outta your jurisdiction, detective.

Sykes puts his hands on Dugan's desk and leans in closer.

SYKES

Since we're bein' honest, I think we both know... I don't give a fuck about jurisdiction. Just the truth.

Dugan studies Sykes for a moment and sighs.

DUGAN

What's it gonna take?... For ya to drop it. Look the other way and go back to El Paso.

Sykes grins. He reaches his coat and takes out his badge.

SYKES

See that badge? It ain't for sale.

Sykes flips the badge closed and puts it back in his coat.

DUGAN

Ya know better than that. Every man has a price. Just name it. You and I, we're just... spokes on a wheel. The one who turns it, that's the ring you've gotta kiss... The hand of the Devil himself... And that badge don't mean nothin' to the Devil. He's above the laws of man. The rules are for the little people like us. When we break 'em, we go to jail... like Maria. When the Devil breaks 'em, he goes to lunch.



SYKES

Ya know what your problem is?  
You're more afraid of the Devil  
than you are of me. And it should  
be the other way 'round.

Dugan watches as Sykes turns, opens the door and walks out.

INT. ASTROVAN, STATIONARY - EVENING

A HAND tunes an FM CAR RADIO dial, and stops on an old song.

View through the windshield of the van. We RACK FOCUS from a HULA GIRL stuck on the dashboard to DOC pushing a grocery cart in a supermarket parking lot. Ava rides in the cart.

EXT. GROCERY STORE, PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Doc and Ava arrive at their parked car. Doc opens the trunk.

The van's headlights turn on. Doc and Ava look over and see the van accelerate through the parking lot toward them.

INT. ASTROVAN, MOVING - CONTINUOUS

The Hula Girl bobs left and right with the motion of the van.

EXT. GROCERY STORE, PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

The van pulls up alongside Doc and Ava. The side door slides open. A Latino MASKED MAN gets out and aims a gun at Doc.

The Masked Man picks up Ava out of grocery cart and drags her into the van. Ava screams.

Doc lunges toward them but the Masked Man turns and pistol-whips her into submission. She staggers backwards, bloody.

The Masked Man gets into the van. The MASKED DRIVER guns it. Ava cries as the door of the van slides shut.

Doc cries in shock and anguish as the van pulls away.

INT. ASTROVAN - DUSK

Hands hold Ava down. Duct tape is wrapped around her wrists and a black bag is pulled over her head. BLACKOUT.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

(tv filter)

24-hour, around the clock coverage  
of the day's local news, plus  
sports, finance and weather...

INT. TREVINO'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Doc stands frozen near the house phone, still in shock, with a bandage across the bridge of her nose, staring at the TV.

In the background, C.I.D. MAJOR CRIMES UNIT NEGOTIATORS take over her living room, setting up a wire, tapping the phone line using an IMSI tracker and running wires to a recorder.

Doc watches TOM WHEELER, a local news anchor, ON TELEVISION:

WHEELER (O.S.)

(tv filter)

News at 11, authorities say this kidnapping may be tied to a recent double homicide. Our own Courtney Carroll has more. Courtney...

CUT TO: Courtney Carroll behind the news desk.

CARROLL

(tv filter)

Thanks, Tom. Authorities speculate that a Mexican organized crime ring is suspected to have kidnapped six-year-old Ava Trevino in retaliation for the deadly shooting of Oscar Balderas and his attorney David Alan Marks. A Brewster County Grand Jury recently indicted the girl's mother, former State Police detective Maria Trevino, on capital murder and she is now in custody.

Sykes puts a hand on Doc's shoulder and tries to comfort her.

SYKES

If they call, ask for proof of life. Say you wanna talk to Ava. These boys'll trace their location.

Doc looks at him with tearful eyes.

DOC

If they call.

They both look at the phone, waiting for it to ring.

INT. BREWSTER COUNTY JAIL, CELL - NIGHT

There are two holding cells in the county jail, one empty, and a short hallway that leads to a steel reinforced door.

Trevino sits in a cell, behind bars, lit by dim light. A lock on the door in the hall CLICKS. It opens. Light spills in.

A dark silhouette appears in the doorway.

GRUS  
No cameras back here, Maria.  
(beat)  
Just how ya like it.

He looks at his watch as he steps up to her cell.

GRUS (CONT'D)  
Alone at last.

He gazes at her. His eyes roam all the way down and back up.

TREVINO  
You set me up. I'm gonna prove it.

GRUS  
No, all you're gonna do...

He drops a stack of papers between the bars. Tosses in a pen.

GRUS (CONT'D)  
Is sign *that*.

Trevino picks up the papers and scans them.

TREVINO  
What the fuck is this?

GRUS  
Your confession. It corroborates  
everythin' I told the grand jury,  
with a few... gruesome details  
added... for authenticity.

Trevino is astonished by what she's reading. She looks up.

TREVINO  
You're outta your mind.

He laughs to himself.

TREVINO (CONT'D)  
Go fuck yourself.

She throws the papers back at him. They scatter to the floor.

GRUS

I don't think so. Think it through.  
 If ya *don't* sign, somethin' *bad*  
 might happen to that lil' girl of  
 yours.

Trevino lunges at Grus, swinging and clawing like a trapped animal, but the bars prevent her from reaching him.

TREVINO

YA MOTHERFUCKER!!!

GRUS

Ah, so close.

Trevino grabs the bars and glares at him with an unholy fury.

TREVINO

If ya touch her I'll kill you. Ya  
 hear me? If ya even go near her,  
 I'll castrate those shriveled balls  
 an' shove 'em in yer mouth. Daddy's  
 lil' house ferret. You're not a  
 man. You're swine, ya neo-nazi pig  
 fuck! Hidin' behind these bars like  
 a lil' bitch!

Grus looks at his cell and just laughs with a raspy chuckle.

GRUS

You got a sweet mouth on ya. I'm  
 tempted to choke ya out, then strip  
 ya naked while yer unconscious just  
 to see that look in your eyes when  
 ya wake up and I'm hard inside you.  
 But we can't have any visible  
 bruises for the arraignment  
 tomorrow when you plead guilty.

Grus holds up a video of Ava bound to a chair, blindfolded.

VOICE (O.S.)

(phone filter)

Say hello to mommy.

AVA

(phone filter)

Mommy? Mommy, I want to go home--

Trevino is stricken by his daughter's voice. It breaks her heart and she cups a hand over her mouth.

AVA (CONT'D)  
 (phone filter)  
 Please, mister, let me go. I  
 promise I won't tell--

VOICE (O.S.)  
 (phone filter)  
 Shut your mouth, or I'll tear out  
 that pretty little tongue of yours.

Ava goes silent. The video ends. Grus lowers the phone.

GRUS  
 You love your daughter, right?

TREVINO  
 Yes. Yes, I do. Very much.

GRUS  
 Do you believe in fate?

TREVINO  
 What? Just, please, don't hurt her.

GRUS  
 That depends on you, Maria. You  
 hold your daughter's fate in your  
 hands. And if you want her back...  
*alive*, you'll sign that confession.

Tears stream from her eyes. She takes small gulps of air.

TREVINO  
 (sobbing)  
 I'll do that. I'll do anythin', ok?  
 I'll sign it. I'll sign it right  
 now. Just don't-- don't hurt her.

She sinks to her knees. Grus kneels down, collects the papers  
 and pushes them to her.

Trevino picks up the pen. It trembles as it draws closer to  
 the paper. She hesitates for a beat and then signs her name.

GRUS  
 Good girl. See how easy that was?  
 (beat)  
 Tomorrow at the arraignment, plead  
 guilty, and your daughter will be  
 returned safe and sound. Tell any-  
 one and she'll never be seen again.  
 Remember... I'll be watchin'.

He takes the papers and stands. She looks up at him.

TREVINO

There's somethin' wrong with you.  
In the head. Ya know that don't ya?

He looks down at her.

GRUS

You're such a self-righteous cunt.  
How many qualified cops did ya jump  
when you got your shield 'cause of  
some affirmative action bullshit?  
You and I both know the difference  
between right and wrong but ya know  
what the difference between you and  
me is? I don't give a damn.

He walks away. As he opens the door, light falls across her.

TREVINO

(sotto)

And that's why you are damned.

He exits. The door SLAMS. She sobs on the floor in the dark.

INT. TREVINO'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

The beehive of activity has died down. The sun is up.

Three Major Crimes Unit Negotiators have been up all night  
waiting for a ransom call. Sykes and Doc sleep on the sofa.

LT. BENEDICT CARPENTER dozes in the chair by the phone when  
it RINGS. He jolts upright. Others jump to attention in b.g.

Sykes and Doc wake up with a start. All eyes on the PHONE.

Lt. Carpenter points at a CID TECH on the Stringray which  
tracks cell phones. The CID Tech activates a recorder, puts  
on headphones and signals Doc to answer the call.

Doc's hand shakes as she picks up the phone.

DOC

Hello...?

(beat)

It's our lawyer.

Everyone's anticipation deflates at the false alarm.

Carpenter yawns. Sykes approaches holding a black duffel bag.  
Doc is on the call in b.g.

CARPENTER

The wire's up. If they call, we're on it, but most ransom demands would've come in by now.

SYKES

I know. Do me one last favor--

Doc rushes up to Sykes and yanks his arm. He turns to her.

DOC

Joe, we gotta go! Now!

INT. U.S. DISTRICT COURT, COURTROOM - DAY

The door in the back of the courtroom swings open and Sykes and Doc rush in just as the CLERK announces the Judge.

CLERK

All rise.

Everyone in the courtroom stands, including those appearing for the State, BELINDA BALDWIN, 30's, a sharp and motivated Assistant District Attorney and her 2nd chair, Clay Hughes.

Trevino, in a white jumper, stands next to her attorney, Maddox, as Judge Jackson Roberts enters the courtroom.

Doc and Sykes stand in the first public row of the gallery behind the defendant's table where Trevino and Maddox stand.

CLERK (CONT'D)

Court is now in session. The Honorable Judge Jackson Roberts presiding.

Sykes leans in to get Maria's attention. She doesn't respond.

JUDGE

Good morning. What'd we have on the docket today?

CLERK

Criminal cause for arraignment for the State of Texas versus Maria Martina Trevino, PD-1040-39, capital murder. Counsel, please state your appearances.

Baldwin stands.

BALDWIN

Belinda Baldwin and Clay Hughes for the State, Your Honor.

Maddox stands.

MADDOX

Luke Maddox for Ms. Trevino.

JUDGE

Very well. Will the defendant please rise?

Maria stands, her hands clasped in front of her, head bowed.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Since this is an arraignment for you, Ms. Trevino, I am going to read the indictment. "The grand jury charges, Count One, Capital Murder, alleged to have been committed in Brewster County, Texas on or about the 4th day of March, 2019." How do you plead?

TREVINO

Guilty, Your Honor.

DOC

Oh my God!

Audible GASPS. Sykes leans over the low gallery wall.

SYKES

Maria, what're ya doin'?

The Judge raps the gavel. Baldwin confers with Hughes.

JUDGE

Counsel, have you reached a settlement?

BALDWIN

No, Your Honor. But this morning we did receive a full confession, signed by the Defendant.

Maddox stands.

MADDOX

Your Honor, I was not present when that confession was signed and my client insists on entering this plea against advice of counsel.

SYKES

Don't do it, Maria!



The Judge cracks the gavel.

JUDGE

Order! Order in the court.

(beat)

Ms. Trevino, do you know that by pleading guilty you lose the right to a jury trial?

TREVINO

Yes, Your Honor.

JUDGE

Do you give up that right?

TREVINO

Yes, Your Honor.

JUDGE

Do you understand what giving up that right means?

TREVINO

Yes.

JUDGE

Do you know that you are waiving the right to cross-examine your accusers?

TREVINO

Yes.

JUDGE

Do you know that you are waiving your privilege against self-incrimination?

TREVINO

Yes.

JUDGE

And you know the consequences of this plea, with the sentence as it stands and the possible sentences that could be given?

TREVINO

Yes.

JUDGE

Did anyone force you into making this plea?

Silence. Trevino looks down at her clasped hands.

TREVINO  
(sotto)  
No.

JUDGE  
Are you pleading guilty because you  
in fact shot both victims, Oscar  
Balderas and David Alan Marks  
without legal provocation?

Silence. Sykes shakes his head.

TREVINO  
Yes.

JUDGE  
Very well then, the court accepts  
your plea of guilty to the charge  
of capital murder.

Doc puts her hands over her mouth and muffles a cry.

BALDWIN  
Your Honor, the people move to  
expedite sentencing.

JUDGE  
I've reviewed the facts of this  
case carefully, and if there are no  
objections or other matters to be  
presented, I'm prepared to sentence  
the Defendant now.

MADDOX  
A moment, Your Honor, to confer  
with my client.

JUDGE  
Make it brief, Counselor.

Maddox huddles with Trevino. Doc and Sykes lean in to hear.

MADDOX  
This is your last chance, Maria.

Trevino is resolute in her silence.

DOC  
What are ya doin', manita? You're  
throwin' your life away. For what?

SYKES

For Ava... right?

Trevino turns to Sykes and stares at him with tearful eyes.

SYKES (CONT'D)

I'm gonna get her back.

TREVINO

Promise me.

Sykes puts his hand on hers, but in his hand is a cell phone.

SYKES

I swear it.

She kisses his hand, palms the phone and stands, facing away, toward the Judge.

TREVINO

I'm ready, Your Honor.

As the Judge hands down the sentence we PUSH IN on Trevino.

JUDGE (O.S.)

You are guilty of capital murder,  
and it falls upon this court to  
decide your sentence... So after  
taking into consideration all of  
the evidence, it's apparent beyond  
a reasonable doubt that aggravating  
circumstances were, indeed, present  
on that day, March 4th. Therefore,  
it is the judgment of this court  
that you be remanded to the  
Mountain View Unit in the state  
penitentiary at Gatesville, where  
you will await execution by lethal  
injection on a date to be set by  
the Attorney General of this state.  
May God have mercy on your soul.

TIME SLOWS as all hope drains from Trevino's face. The CRACK of the gavel falling makes her whole body flinch.

Maddox, Doc and Sykes register shock. Doc begins to cry.

In the back of the gallery, Grus Dugan stands and exits.

The Bailiff handcuffs Trevino and pulls her towards the door. Trevino twists her body, turning to Sykes. They lock eyes.

TREVINO  
(mouths the words)  
Grus Dugan.

He nods. They drag Trevino out of the courtroom and through the "The Door of No Return". As it closes, she makes eye contact with him through the crack before the door shuts.

EXT. U.S. DISTRICT COURT, PARKING LOT - DAY

Local PRESS and others gather outside the courthouse. KVLFF Reporter, Courtney Carroll, and her CAMERAMAN follow Sykes as he exits and pushes through the CROWD to make a path for Doc.

SYKES  
Excuse us. Excuse us. Move aside.

NEWS CAMERA HANDHELD POV

Carroll holds out her mic with a KVLFF box logo toward Sykes.

CARROLL  
Detective Sykes, what's your  
reaction to the court's sentence?

Sykes pushes the mic away.

SYKES  
Respect the family's privacy.

CARROLL  
You've maintained that Maria  
Trevino was innocent--

SYKES  
Because she is.

Sykes ushers Doc past the camera towards her car.

CARROLL (O.S.)  
Then why did she confess?

Sykes stops, his back to camera. He whispers to Doc. She walks on to her car. He turns around and stands still.

The HANDHELD SHOT shakes as the Cameraman rushes up to him. Sykes looks down, away from camera and his answers come fast.

SYKES  
That confession was coerced.

CARROLL  
What about the fact that the murder  
weapon that was found in her car--

SYKES

With no fingerprints. There's no eyewitness; no physical or forensic evidence to tie her to that gun.

CARROLL

Then how did it get in--

SYKES

It was planted.

CARROLL

And the video of the interrogation? Doesn't that prove her motive?

SYKES

No, it proves she was a good cop, tryin' to--

Sykes spots Grus in his F-350 pulling out of the parking lot.

CARROLL

Trying to what?

SYKES

Catch a killer... excuse me.

Sykes walks away. The NEWS CAMERA and Carroll follow him.

CARROLL

What happened during those missing minutes when the camera was off?

Sykes gets into the passenger side of Doc's Mustang and shuts the door. Carroll and the CAMERA MAN move up to the window but they drive off.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, DUGAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dugan sits in his chair behind his desk watching the news.

The television shuts off.

Dugan sits with the remote in hand, on edge.

INT. MUSTANG, MOVING - DAY

ANGLE ON GRUS' F-350 THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD OF A FORD MUSTANG

Maria's ROSARY swings from the rearview mirror as Doc drives on the highway, following Grus at a distance.

SYKES

Stay on his right in his blindspot.

Doc looks over her shoulder and changes lanes.

SYKES (CONT'D)  
Close the gap, never let 'em get  
more than three cars ahead.

Doc maneuvers into position and cruises.

SYKES (CONT'D)  
That's good. Stay on him.

The reflection of the F-350 on the highway in her sunglasses.

DOC  
I got 'im.

Sykes leans into the backseat and lifts a black Pelican case onto his lap. He opens the lid, which is labeled in stencil: PROPERTY OF TEXAS DPS CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION.

DOC (CONT'D)  
What's that?

Sykes flips on the surveillance device and begins to tune it.

SYKES  
A StingRay, on loan from the fellas  
sleepin' on your couch. If he's on  
his cell, we can listen in. I just  
gotta tune to the right frequency.

Sykes scans the 800 MHz and 1900 MHz range. It sounds like a radio dial, with fragments of the voices all around them.

MALE VOICE  
(phone filter)  
Hablame de la relación con tu jefa--

Static. Tuning.

FEMALE VOICE  
(phone filter)  
--he says, "What'd ya got to lose,  
darlin'?" because we kid around--

Tuning. More static.

GRUS  
(phone filter)  
When we take some underage gash on  
a cruise in international waters--

SYKES  
That's him.

GRUS

(phone filter)

--trust me, she ain't comin' back to shore. Ever. After the party they give her the needle, weigh her down, drop her overboard, an' it's like she was never there. No body, no crime. It's clean, not like that fuckin' storm shelter in the woods.

Doc looks at Sykes in horror and disbelief. Sykes is cool.

RAFAEL

(phone filter)

Greed, bro. It fucks witchu. Oscar thought he was some kinda pimp but he was sloppy, ya know what I'm sayin'? He shoulda cut his losses.

GRUS

(phone filter)

He had to go.

RAFAEL

(phone filter)

No doubt, an' that's one way to get outta payin' the attorney's fee.

Grus cackles.

GRUS

(phone filter)

But seriously, with this much heat, the chica's gotta go, too.

Sykes and Doc look at each other.

RAFAEL

(phone filter)

Ya gonna take care of it?

GRUS

(phone filter)

I'm already on my way.

Grus clicks off. The line goes dead.

EXT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY

A security door opens and JAILERS escort a chain-gang with Trevino and two other females, all of Latin American descent.

The Jailers load the gang into the back of a transport van with the sign TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE and logo decal.

INT. TRANSPORT VAN, STATIONARY - DAY

Trevino sits next to the two other CONVICTS on a narrow seat inside a cage, cuffed and shackled at the waist and ankles.

A male guard, C.O. MILLER locks the interior cage, while the female guard, C.O. RODRIGUEZ, stands outside the open double doors at the back of the van with a shotgun.

Trevino looks at both of them before the doors slams shut.

EXT. HIGHWAY 190 - DUSK

The sun sets on the horizon in red and gold. The transport van shimmers in the heat as it drives down Highway 190E.

TREVINO (O.S.)  
Guard!... GUARD!

INT. TRANSPORT VAN, MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Chains rattle. The air conditioning sputters. Trevino sweats.

TREVINO (CONT'D)  
GUARD!!!

A voice comes through the steel grate in the driver's cabin.

C.O. MILLER (O.S.)  
WHAT? What're ya hollerin' bout?

TREVINO  
It's been four hours with no bath-  
room breaks, no water, no nothin'.  
It's over ninety degrees in here,  
an' at least another four hours to  
Gatesville. Can we get a rest stop?

C.O. MILLER (O.S.)  
Piss in yer fuckin' shoe, convict.

C.O. RODRIGUEZ (O.S.)  
I ain't cleanin' that up.

C.O. MILLER (O.S.)  
Unless it's life or death, we don't  
open the cage en route.

Trevino leans in to the grate and speaks fast, in one breath.



TREVINO

Unless ya stop this fuckin' van at the next gas station and let me out to piss, I'm gonna instruct my lawyer to file a complaint against C.O. Miller, badge number 12757, and C.O. Rodriguez, badge number 62068, for violation of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure 46, oh four, section 2, paragraph 4, "the officer transporting the prisoner shall give the prisoner reasonable opportunities to get food and water and use the bathroom".

She takes a breath. Miller and Rodriguez look at each other. Trevino turns. The Convicts look at her with awe and respect.

EXT. GAS STATION - DUSK

It is twilight. The van is parked at an isolated gas station.

INT. TRANSPORT VAN, STATIONARY - DUSK

The double doors open. C.O. Miller has a shotgun ready.

C.O. MILLER

(to Trevino)

One at a time. You first.

INT. GAS STATION - DUSK

A redneck CLERK, 20's, puts down a Heavy Metal magazine as the bell above the door rings. He gawks as the armed C.O. Miller escorts Trevino inside the gas station in chains.

TREVINO

Restroom?

The Clerk points to the back. Trevino eyes the newspaper on sale below the counter. It's her picture under the headline:

EX-COP ON TRIAL FOR MURDER, DAUGHTER KIDNAPPED

Trevino looks away, hangs her head and shuffles out of frame.

INT. GAS STATION, BATHROOM DOOR - LATER

C.O. Miller stands outside the bathroom door.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Trevino sits on the toilet with her pants on, texting Sykes.

TEXT MESSAGES APPEAR ON SCREEN:

TREVINO (CONT'D)  
 (text)  
 can't talk but I can listen  
 (text)  
 call u in 5 sec

She dials and holds the phone to her ear. Internal ringing.

INT. MUSTANG, STATIONARY - DUSK

Sykes answers. He's in the passenger seat of Doc's Mustang.

SYKES  
 Hey you, I'm with Doc. We followed  
 Grus from the courthouse to the  
 location where he has Ava.

Sykes looks through a night vision monocular at his target.

EXT. CROSSROADS - NIGHT

The Mustang is parked at dusty crossroads. In the distance is a dilapidated motel with a neon sign that reads "No Vacancy".

SYKES (V.O.)  
 It's a cheap motel way out in the  
 desert. Most likely a front for a  
 brothel.

INT. MOTEL - DUSK

The Latino CLERK at the front desk is asleep in his chair.

SYKES (V.O.)  
 Looks almost empty. Maybe they keep  
 the No Vacancy sign on all the time  
 to turn away tourists.

EXT. MOTEL - DUSK

A LOS ZETA SENTRY, Latino, shaved head, Zeta tats, stands outside a doorway next to a window with security bars. He holds an H & K MP5 A3 machine-gun on a shoulder strap.

SYKES (V.O.)  
 Armed guards, rooms with bars on  
 the windows; locks on the *outside*  
 of the doors.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DUSK

PAN AROUND a motel room past barred windows and closet with lingerie on hangers. There's no phone or TV, just a bed. Ava lays on the mattress, curled up in a ball, sobbing.

INT. GAS STATION, BATHROOM DOOR - CONTINUOUS

C.O. Miller KNOCKS on the bathroom door with his fist.

C.O. MILLER

Let's go!

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Trevino reacts to the KNOCKING.

TREVINO

IN A MINUTE!

C.O. MILLER (O.S.)

HURRY UP!

Trevino cups her hand to her mouth and talks fast.

TREVINO

(whispered into phone)

Let me know when she's safe.

I gotta go. Te amo, Joe.

She hangs up.

INT. MUSTANG - DUSK

Sykes takes the phone from his ear with a hint of a smile.

INT. GAS STATION, BATHROOM DOOR - CONTINUOUS

A toilet flushes, a sink runs and Trevino emerges. C.O. Miller scowls at her as she shuffles past him pulling chain.

EXT. CROSSROADS - DUSK

CUE MUSIC: "BLACK FLIES" BY BEN HOWARD (PLAY SONG)

Doc gazes through the monocular as Sykes smokes. They sit in the car with the windows down, looking out across the desert.

DOC

What'd we do?

SYKES

Wait for dark.

The sun is now just below the horizon.

DOC  
 Ya know what they call it?  
 (beat)  
 This time of day...  
 (beat)  
 just after sunset...  
 (beat)  
 before night falls?

Sykes exhales. Smoke drifts. He looks at her.

DOC (CONT'D)  
 The gloaming.

The sky is a blue incandescence with traces of crimson.

EXT. CROSSROADS - NIGHT - MUSIC (~0:21)

Sykes stands at the back of the Mustang and opens the trunk.

He withdraws the black duffel and unzips it. He takes out a Benelli M4 Super 90 12-gauge shotgun and a box of shells.

Sykes, jacket off, straps on a tactical vest with ballistic-resistant body armor. He puts two flash-bang grenades in the side pockets. It reads POLICE across the back shoulders.

Sykes loads the shotgun with heavy waxed shells.

He checks the clip and slide on a Heckler & Koch HK45 Compact with .45 ACP cartridges, and then screws on a .45 suppressor.

He buckles a gun belt with strong side holster, secures the handgun, plus four belt clips with extra magazines.

Doc watches him, the driver's window down and her elbow out. Sykes puts his leather jacket back on.

He nods to her as he hefts the shotgun in an elbow carry, turns and walks away across desert ground towards the motel.

INT. MUSTANG, STATIONARY - NIGHT

Through the windshield, Doc watches Sykes in the distance. She takes the ROSARY down from the rearview mirror and makes the sign of the cross on the crucifix. MUSIC (~1:11)

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

A ZETA walks the perimeter of the motel with a MP5A3 in hand.

The Zeta stops to survey the empty desert that drops off into darkness at the edge of the ambient light from the motel.

A wind blows, stirring up swirling clouds of dust, and a shadow moves low across the foreground of the frame.

The Zeta looks alert, as if he saw someone in his peripheral vision, but they're gone now. Just a cloud of dust billowing.

Suddenly, three muzzle FLASHES and dampened GUNFIRE. The Zeta takes two in the chest and one in the head. MUSIC (~1:42)

The Zeta drops where he stands. Sykes rises from a crouch and advances forward, both hands on his silenced HK45C pistol, the shotgun slung across his back by a shoulder strap.

Sykes swaps out the shotgun for the MP5A3, slings it over his shoulder. He searches the Zeta, finds two extra magazines, pockets them and moves along the wall to a barred window.

INT. MOTEL, ROOM - NIGHT

Sykes' face inches past the edge of the window and looks in.

WIDER ANGLE

The room's only occupant is a GIRL, 15, Latina, wearing only a flimsy dress with bare feet. She sits on a mattress on the floor and eats rice and beans off a plate with her hands.

She stops and looks up, making eye contact with Sykes through the barred window. He puts an index finger to his lips.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Sykes moves past the window along the wall to the corner of the building. He looks up at a mounted surveillance camera.

He goes flat against the wall directly under it. He checks his six and then slowly inches out to look around the corner.

SYKES' POV

Pan past the wall to reveal the parking lot and the front office. Inside the office is the Clerk behind the front desk.

INT. MOTEL, FRONT OFFICE - NIGHT

The Clerk sits back in front of an array of small monitors, showing various surveillance camera angles. His eyes go wide.

Feature one monitor as Sykes is seen crossing the parking lot a few seconds before he enters the front office's glass door.

PAN off the monitor to see Sykes walk up, raise his pistol and pull the trigger. One muzzle FLASH and a muffled CHUD.

The Clerk's head kicks back. The bullet entered under his eye and exited the back of his skull, painting the wall in blood.

Sykes walks around the front desk and scans the monitors.

PAN across the monitors until we stop on Ava in Room 6.

Sykes pulls up the wires of the monitors. They connect to a black DVR. He tears it loose, pries it open and rips out the hard-drive with his bare hands. He pockets it.

EXT. MOTEL, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Sykes exits the office door and automatic GUNFIRE erupts, shattering the glass door and wall of the office around him.

THE GUNFIGHT - STEADY CAM ONER :69 - MUSIC (~3:22)

Sykes dives flat behind a nearby car. He holsters the pistol, rolls over, swings the HK MP5A3 around so it's ready to fire.

Incoming full-auto rounds rake the opposite side of the car that Sykes is using as cover, punching holes in the metal.

With a free hand Sykes grabs a flash-bang, pulls the pin with his teeth and heaves it over the car. One... two... three...

A DEAFENING EXPLOSION AND BLINDING FLASH

A white-hot flash and concussion blast wave shatters the car's windows, glass rains down on Sykes.

Sykes stays low and moves around the front of the car. As he pops up, the STEADY CAM frames up OVER HIS SHOULDER.

Through the smoke he sees a pair of ZETAS, stumbling out of cover in shock, blind and deaf by the flash-bang grenade.

Sykes levels the MP5A3 on the hood of the car and OPENS UP.

The two Zetas are BLOWN APART, dancing like puppets with no strings as they take full auto rounds to the head and body.

Sykes ducks down, pulls the bolt handle, ejects the empty magazine, drops it, reloads a full mag and releases the bolt.

Sykes stands and charges across the parking lot, through the smoke, past the two dead Zetas.

Ahead of him the door to Room 4 swings open and a naked Latina WOMAN runs out, shrieking, her arms up and head down.

Sykes holds his fire. He rushes up to Room 6. He puts a boot into the door and it flies open.

Light falls across Ava, who stands there looking up at Sykes in the doorway, trembling with fear.

He kneels down, holding the pistol grip of the machine gun in one hand, and extending his other hand to her. She looks at him with her big brown eyes for a beat.

Ava rushes toward him. Sykes scoops her up and hugs her.

SYKES  
(whispered)  
You're safe now.

He turns and carries her out across the parking lot, jogging past the STEADY CAM, which PANS to follow behind them.

Sykes gets 20 feet when Ava (looking back at CAMERA) screams.

SIX SHOTS ring out. Sykes is hit in the back. He drops.

END ONER. CUT TO:

Grus walks toward them with a smoking Colt 1911 pistol. He's wearing a white wife-beater, jeans and boots with no socks.

Ava scrambles out from under Sykes. He lays face down and strains to breathe.

SYKES (CONT'D)  
(whispered)  
Run... run!

Ava runs several steps before Grus catches up to her and snatches her by the hair. Ava cries out.

GRUS  
Go on, doll, scream your lungs out.  
It don't matter, cuz nobody's gonna  
save ya.

In the foreground, Sykes stands into frame, facing away.

SYKES  
(raspy)  
Let her go.

The back of Sykes' leather jacket is shredded by gunfire, revealing the word POLICE on the bulletproof vest beneath it.

Grus turns, throws Ava aside and aims at Sykes as he charges.

Grus fires at point blank range as Sykes collides with him.

They both go down, Sykes on top of Grus. Grus loses his grip on his gun, the pistol hits the asphalt and skids away.

Sykes rains down punches until the sounds are wet and sloppy.

Grus rattles, spits and grins a bloody smile. MUSIC (~4:34)

GRUS

The Reaper's comin' for ya.

SYKES

(raspy)

What?

GRUS

That's what I told Valérie.

Sykes freezes.

GRUS (CONT'D)

That was her name wasn't it?

Valérie.

Grus kicks Sykes, sending him sprawling onto his back.

Grus picks up his gun and looms over Sykes for the kill shot.

They hear the engine before they turn to look, but by then it's too late. The headlights hit Grus and then the Mustang itself, going 60 mph. He flips like a ragdoll over the roof.

Grus is dead before his broken body hits the pavement.

Doc yanks the wheel and skids to a stop broadside in a cloud of smoke. She leans over and throws open the passenger door.

DOC

Anybody need any help?

Ava throws up both fists.

AVA

Woohooo!

Sykes lifts Ava into the car and then slides into shotgun.

SYKES

(gravelly)

Good lookin' out, Doc.

Sykes slams the door as Doc hits the gas.

CRANE SHOT as the Mustang tears through the desert.



EXT. MUSTANG, MOVING - NIGHT

Headlights on the highway as the road races under the hood.

                  SYKES (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
                  (raspy)  
                  Gotta call it in. Save the others.

INT. MUSTANG, MOVING - NIGHT

Sykes winces as he retrieves the hard-drive from his jacket. When he puts it on the dash, Doc sees it's covered in blood.

Sykes looks at his own bloody hand and then at Doc.

He slumps against the window and struggles to breathe.

                  DOC  
                  Oh my God. Joe. Joe!

Ava leans over the seat in a panic.

                  AVA  
                  No, no... Joe... Joe...

                  SYKES  
                  (to Ava)  
                  Come 'ere you...

Sykes whispers in Ava's ear. She nods. He smiles weakly, leans back against the window and coughs up blood.

Doc reaches out to him with her right hand as she drives.

Sykes holds her hand. Squeezes it. Then his grip goes slack.

She's talking but he can't hear her now. He's gone.

CLOSE UP on Sykes, his eyes closed, at peace, as the dusty desert landscape rushes by the window. MUSIC ENDS (~6:10)

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. TEXAS STATE CEMETERY, AUSTIN - DAY (PRESENT)

Trevino stands over Sykes' grave, bracing against the wind. Glimpses of faces and events of the past unfold over her V.O.

                  TREVINO (V.O.)  
                  Doc did call it in. The Feds saved  
                  those other girls. Then Doc took  
                  the evidence to our lawyer, and he  
                  went to the DA.  
                  (MORE)

TREVINO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They had the phone call on tape with Grus confessin' to killin' Oscar and Marks, plus the surveillance footage from the motel which led to the arrest of Raphael Verdugo as Grus' accomplice in the kidnappin' of Ava. When they told Raphael he was lookin' at 25 to life, he flipped on Sheriff Dugan an' copped to whole traffikin' operation. So, I was exonerated.

(beat)

And here's the kicker. Dugan...

EXT. ELM GROVE CEMETERY, ALPINE - DAY (PAST)

An elm tree casts its shade across the grave where MOURNERS congregate for the funeral of Grus Dugan.

TREVINO (V.O.)

He got what was comin' to 'im.

Dugan stands with his wife, Helen, who is in a wheelchair. Dugan's face is stoic, his eyes hidden behind Aviators.

The Mourners line up to heap condolences on the Dugan and his wife, shaking hands and embracing each other.

Dugan is alarmed to see the next person in line is Santino, dressed immaculately in an all black suit, shirt and tie.

Santino cups Helen's claw hands in his own and pats them.

SANTINO

Senora, we haven't been introduced, but my name is Santino Balderas, and I've come a long way to pay my respects. So please... accept my deepest condolences for your loss.

He bows to her, rises and looks at Dugan, who is seething.

SANTINO (CONT'D)

May we talk a moment?

DUGAN

Now is not a good time.

SANTINO

A moment... is all I ask.

DUGAN

(to Helen)

Back in a minute, dear.

They walk away among the graves. Two ZETAS in suits follow.

DUGAN (CONT'D)  
What'd ya want?

SANTINO  
I want you to answer when I call.

DUGAN  
My son was just killed.

SANTINO  
It's tragic, I know. I recently  
lost my nephew. My sister is...  
inconsolable.

Dugan stops walking and looks back.

DUGAN  
I can't do this anymore.

SANTINO  
Do what, Sheriff? I haven't told  
you what the problem is.

DUGAN  
I don't give a fuck what it is! I'm  
not your bagman. I ain't gonna  
carry your water anymore. I was  
doin' it all for my boy. To give  
him a future and now that's gone.  
I'm out.

Silence. Dugan's jaw tenses, waiting.

SANTINO  
You're under an emotional strain,  
which is to be expected under the  
circumstances, so I will let this  
insolence pass, but as I've had to  
remind you before, you *will* do...  
what I *tell* you to do... or I have  
no further use for you. And do you  
know where those I have no use for  
usually end up?  
(beat)  
Right where you're standing.

Dugan looks around at the tombstones and glares at Santino.

Suddenly, both men are surrounded by a joint task force of  
FBI and DEA AGENTS, in dark suits, with their weapons drawn.  
Some have their firearms aimed at Santino's Zeta bodyguards.

AGENT-IN-CHARGE  
FEDERAL AGENTS!

Dugan is stunned.

AGENT-IN-CHARGE (CONT'D)  
You're both under arrest for drug  
and human trafficking, including  
conspiracy to sex traffick a minor.

Santino raises his hands, calm.

SANTINO  
I have the right to contact my  
attorney--

The Agent In Charge seizes Santino's arm, twists it behind  
his back and handcuffs him.

AGENT-IN-CHARGE  
You have the right to remain silent  
before I make ya swallow yer teeth.

Another AGENT cuffs Dugan as he protests.

DUGAN  
This is a mistake. I'm on the job.

The Agents lead Dugan and Santino away.

DUGAN (CONT'D)  
Do ya understand what I'm sayin?  
I'm one of you. I'm a cop. I'm the  
goddamn Sheriff.

They prep-walk Dugan past the Mourners at the funeral. Dugan  
makes eye contact with his wife and hangs his head in shame.

EXT. TEXAS STATE CEMETERY, AUSTIN - DAY (PRESENT)

Trevino kneels down and puts her hand on Sykes' headstone.

TREVINO  
(laughing then crying)  
I wish I could've seen his face...  
I heard Dugan flipped and sang like  
a bird. Now he's the prosecution's  
key witness in Santino's trial...  
So, justice prevailed, Joe. I just  
wish-- I never got to thank you...  
for bringin' back my little girl.

She stands and wipes the tears away. Then she turns. Doc is  
standing nearby, with a sympathetic look.

Trevino steps up and hugs her little sister tight. They hold on to each other as the wind blows.

EXT. TREVINO'S MOTHER'S HOME, AUSTIN - DAY

The Mustang pulls into the driveway of a cozy suburban home.

INT. MUSTANG - DAY

Doc cuts the engine and looks over at Trevino.

DOC  
Just promise me one thing.

TREVINO  
What's that?

DOC  
Whatever ya do with that gun--

TREVINO  
It's just for protection, Doc. I'm never gonna let anybody hurt this family ever again.

There's a fierceness in Trevino's eyes. Doc believes her.

DOC  
'Nuff said.

They get out.

INT. TREVINO'S MOTHER'S HOME, FOYER - DAY

The front door opens to balloons and a WELCOME HOME sign. Ava charges down the hall and leaps into Trevino's arms.

AVA  
MOMMY!!! MOMMY'S HOME!  
(beat)  
Did you miss me?

Trevino squeezes Ava. NANA, 70's, walks over and greets them.

TREVINO  
Oh baby, I missed ya so much.  
(beat)  
Hola, mamá.

Trevino kisses her mother and hugs her while holding Ava.

AVA  
I baked you a cake.

TREVINO  
I heard.

AVA  
Nana helped.

TREVINO  
Let's see it!

INT. TREVINO'S MOTHER'S HOME, KITCHEN - DAY

CUE MUSIC: TRUTH BY ALEX EBERT (PLAY SONG)

The lights are dim around the kitchen table as Nana helps Ava bring in a cake with chocolate frosting and burning candles.

TREVINO (CONT'D)  
Candles? It's not my birthday.

AVA  
But you can still make a wish.

Trevino picks Ava up on her lap and looks at her family.

TREVINO  
I already got my wish, nugget.

AVA  
I have a secret for you.

TREVINO  
Oh yeah, what's that?

CLOSE on Trevino as Ava leans in to whisper in her ear.

AVA  
(whispered)  
Joe said to tell you...  
(beat)  
"Te amo también."

Trevino smiles, takes a breath and blows out the candles.

CUT TO BLACK - MUSIC (~0:48) ROLL CREDITS