

ACT ONE

EXT. DOWNTOWN PLAZA - DAY 1

MAXINE CARLSON, 26, strides through the crowd, toward an OFFICE TOWER. She's attractive, trying to look buttoned-down. A young woman who wants to ensure she's taken seriously. A LEGEND reads: *Montreal, Day One, 10:51 a.m.*

INT. OFFICE TOWER - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Airy, modern. Maxine reaches a bank of elevators. As HER FINGER impatiently jabs the the CALL BUTTON, MATCH CUT --

INT. CHURCH - MEETING ROOM - DAY

A MAN'S FINGER enters frame, tracing a Bible verse, a Latin illumination of the Book of Isaiah. It's quiet in here, except for the sound of a HELICOPTER passing overhead.

SIX WOMEN (one pregnant), FOUR MEN and TWO CHILDREN sit on the floor, their fearful eyes focused on --

BERNARD CLARKE, 56, wispy hair, a man over the edge. How do we know? Because as he flips through the Bible, he adjusts the STICKS OF DYNAMITE on an explosive vest, mumbling.

BERNARD

*Pete tibi signum a Domino Deo tuo
in profundum inferni sive in
excelsum supra, propter hoc dabit
Dominus ipse vobis signum ecce
virgo concipiet...*

ANGLE - AT THE DOOR. Something blocks the light as we find -- A SWAT OFFICER, in the hall, kneeling to sneak a SNAKE CAMERA in position.

Bernard's found what he was looking for: a worn PHOTO of his WIFE Trudy, smiling. He stares at the image, tears welling. As the SWAT Officer CLICKS ON THE CAMERA --

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The SNAKE CAM FEED appears on a MONITOR. One of several MONITORS showing surveillance feeds of the church.

A MAN in a tailored suit and open-collar shirt stands, back to camera. Uniformed POLICE OFFICERS hurry past in f.g., but he's still, calmly studying the images. Deep in thought.

INT. CRISIS RESOLUTION - RECEPTION - MOMENTS LATER

Open plan, a dozen EMPLOYEES work with quiet urgency. On the wall above the reception desk, the company name: *Crisis Resolution*. Maxine approaches the RECEPTIONIST.

MAXINE

Maxine Carlson for Eric Beaumont.

RECEPTIONIST

I don't see your name here, Ms. Carlson. What time was your appointment?

MAXINE

That's odd. Are you sure?

INT. CHURCH - MEETING ROOM - CONTINUED

A FEMALE HOSTAGE, with her son, reaches for a water bottle.

BERNARD

I said don't move!

The Woman shrinks back. Bernard picks up his SMART PHONE (in FaceTime mode) and waves the camera at the hostages.

BERNARD (CONT'D)

Are you seeing this?! You save her -- you save Trudy -- or I'll start killing them! I swear I will!
(peering into the lens)
Is anybody listening?!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Man, face still unseen, presses a button to talk.

MAN

I'm listening.

INT. CRISIS RESOLUTION - RECEPTION - CONTINUED

OLIVER (O.S.)

Ms. Carlson has no appointment.

Maxine stiffens hearing OLIVER YATES, 30s, rumpled and bookish, Eric's psychological profiler. She turns, sees he has an armful of files. Feigning cheerfulness --

MAXINE

Mr. Yates.

(CONTINUED)

Oliver continues on his way, Maxine falling in step behind.

OLIVER

You must have got my message.

MAXINE

Thing is, it didn't make sense.
First you tell me I'm perfect for
the job. Then I don't even get an
interview.

OLIVER

That's the way it goes sometimes.

MAXINE

Who else can I see about this?

OLIVER

I do the vetting. You were vetted.
Now you're post-vetted.

MAXINE

And if Mr. Beaumont disagrees?

Oliver reaches an office door, turns to face her.

OLIVER

Appealing to fear of a higher
authority. Textbook tactic. But we
left the textbooks behind a long
time ago. Goodbye, Ms. Carlson.

He goes, leaving Maxine frustrated. But now she sees a TV --
VARIOUS ANGLES, including aerial shots, of the church siege.
A NEWS TICKER reads *HOSTAGE CRISIS LIVE*.

REPORTER

Here's what we know so far: A man
armed and wired with explosives
entered Sainte Marie Church at
7:40 this morning and took 14
hostages, including two children,
attending a gospel reading. Police
say he is demanding divine
intervention to save his
critically ill wife. An expert
negotiator has been called in and
police are asking the public to
stay clear of the area...

Maxine studies the TV. Getting an idea. As she reaches
behind an empty desk, scoops up a Cri/Res BUSINESS CARD --

EXT. DOWNTOWN MONTREAL - CHURCH - DAY

POLICE CARS everywhere. SWAT reinforcements lurch to a stop, moving into positions outside and above the church. FIND --

Maxine, hurrying out of a taxi, toward a POLICE CORDON, where she flashes the stolen business card at an OFFICER.

MAXINE

Crisis Resolution. I work for Eric
Beaumont.

The bluff works! As the Officer lifts the tape --

Maxine moves past, then stops to look from the church to a HOTEL immediately adjacent. A FIFTH-FLOOR ROOM that offers a perfect vantage point. She can see POLICE OFFICERS inside --

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Maxine nervously steps in the elevator, doors closing when --

ZARA (O.S.)

Hold that!

Maxine blocks the doors, watching as ZARA HALLAM, mid 30s, Cri/Res BADGE around her neck, hurries inside. Maxine guiltily stands behind her as the car heads up --

INT. CORRIDOR/HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zara exits, snags two cups from a UNIFORMED COP carrying a tray of takeout coffee. Maxine trails her into --

The hotel room, a hive of activity, police moving in and out. The Man in the suit a calm eye at the center of the storm. Maxine keeps to the back and watches Zara hand him one of the coffees, whisper --

ZARA

Archbishop's plane is still in the
air. We're trying to reach him.

The Man sips, then turns to camera for the first time, making a face. This is --

ERIC BEAUMONT

Cinnamon. Think I got yours.

As Zara smiles, swaps cups with Eric --

(CONTINUED)

BERNARD
(on the monitor)
He's killing her! If God kills
her, I'll show Him I can kill too.
You understand? He can't let her
die!

INT. CHURCH - MEETING ROOM - DAY

Bernard FIRES into the ceiling. The hostages SCREAM.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Police react outside the church and in the command center,
including CAPTAIN JULES CHARLOIX, 40s. Into his radio --

CHARLOIX
Red Team, hold your positions.
(to Eric)
This has gone on long enough,
Eric.

ERIC
You want those hostages out of
there alive, let me do my job,
Captain.
(to Zara)
What about the wife?

ZARA
(on the phone)
Still in surgery.

CHARLOIX
(over comm)
Get me CQS. And another
access point.

Charloix turns from the radio to Eric.

CHARLOIX (CONT'D)
Window at the back. We can get a
shot.

Maxine, gripped, looks from Charloix to Eric and Zara.

EXT. CHURCH - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

THROUGH RIFLE SCOPE: distorted by distance and glass,
CROSSHAIRS settle on the head of a pacing Bernard.

A REVERSE reveals a POLICE SNIPER: he's found a POSSIBLE
SHOT through a window.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE - ERIC. Sound, movement seem to fade out behind him as his mind processes, looking from the sniper feed to Bernard's face via the FaceTime connection.

INT./EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

SWAT Officers move into position at the doors, prepping FLASH-BANG CANISTERS. Ready for an assault.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Charloix in non-stop communication with SWAT. Eric stays cool. Presses the button to speak to Bernard.

ERIC	CHARLOIX
Bernard, it's Eric. When I get the Archbishop on the phone, what do you want me to ask him?	On deck for takedown. Expand the AO another 500 metres.

But Bernard, consumed by anxiety, is mumbling again.

BERNARD
*Pete tibi signum a Domino Deo tuo
in profundum inferni sive in
excelsum supra...*

ERIC
What's he saying? Something... of
the lord your god...

Zara doesn't recognize it. Maxine sees her chance --

MAXINE
(calls out)
...ask a sign.

Zara turns, noticing her for the first time.

MAXINE (CONT'D)
(less confidently this time)
"Ask a sign of the Lord your god."
Book of Isaiah, I think.

Eric still hasn't turned.

ERIC
Somebody's been to Sunday school.

CHARLOIX
We can take the shot now.

(CONTINUED)

Eric reaches for an EARBUD, fits it in place.

ERIC
And if you miss, what happens to
those hostages?

CHARLOIX
What are you doing?

ERIC
He wants a sign. I'll give him
one.

Eric starts off, passing Maxine. Who turns back to see Zara,
staring. Wondering who she is and what she's doing there.

EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Eric flashes his ID at SWAT as he enters the church, his
PHONE BUZZING. He checks CALLER ID, answers.

ERIC
Hi sweetie. What's up?

INT. CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Eric's daughter, EVIE, 15, willowy, sweet but with claws,
sips a moccacino while she talks.

Her BFF, STEPHANIE, also 15, watches as though the fate of
the universe hinges on this call. The call is INTERCUT.

EVIE
Stephanie invited me for friend's
weekend at her cottage, but Mom's
saying no.

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Eric enters, the door ECHOING shut behind him.

ERIC
Maybe your mom's right.

EVIE
Dad it's just a weekend. We're not
little kids!

Eric picks up a ROSARY from an altar, leaves behind a COIN --

(CONTINUED)

ERIC
(to Evie)
You want something, you've got to
give something.

She's heard this many times before. Sighs.

EVIE
"Concessionism." I know...

ERIC
How about you offer to take that
math course this summer?

Eric nods to a SWAT OFFICER as he heads upstairs --

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Charloix, listening via speaker, looks to Zara.

CHARLOIX
Is he doing what I think he's
doing?

Maxine takes this in, as --

INT. CHURCH - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Eric emerges into a dimly lit corridor.

EVIE
Might as well gouge my eyes out.

ERIC
Make the concession. Tell her
you'll do the course even if she
still says no. Take a risk. But
mean it. Then you get the weekend.

EVIE
You're the best, Dad.

ERIC
Where are you?

EVIE
A café and no, I don't have my
back to the door.

ERIC
That's my girl. Love you.

He hangs up -- KNOCKS.

(CONTINUED)

ERIC (CONT'D)
Bernard? It's Eric.

INT. CHURCH - MEETING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bernard freezes, agitated, fingers the belt's detonator.

BERNARD
Stay away!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Maxine swallows, watches the monitor from behind Charloix and Zara --

CHARLOIX
(into comm)
Red team, stand by.

INT. CHURCH - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

ERIC
(through door)
I know you're looking for
guidance, Bernard. I am, too.
Maybe we can help each other.
(sotto, on comms)
Take your shot ten seconds on my
mark...

CHARLOIX
Finally.
(over comm)
Ten seconds, on his mark.

EXT. CHURCH - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

The POLICE SNIPER has Bernard steady in the cross hairs, his finger wrapping around the trigger.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Maxine's thrown by Eric's instruction --

MAXINE
I thought he never used violence.

Zara glances at her.

ZARA
Who are you, by the way?

INT. CHURCH - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The handle slowly turns... the door opens... Bernard lets him in but aims right at Eric's chest. Then sees the cross dangling from the rosary in his hand --

ERIC

I've come unarmed. Like Jesus into the temple.

Eric calmly walks towards the gun levelled at him.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Trudy prayed with these people, Bernard. I don't think you want to hurt them. I don't think you want to hurt anybody. You just want to save your wife.

Bernard swallows. Heartbroken.

BERNARD

I've spent my life believing in Him. And now he does this...
(anger rising)
... to my wife.

ERIC

God thinks you doubt him. He's testing you.
(sotto, on comms)
Mark.

Charloix's countdown -- 10, 9, 8... -- drones in Eric's ear. But Bernard has heard, raises his weapon --

BERNARD

Who's Mark?

ERIC

(barely missing a beat)
Book of Mark, Chapter 11. He who does not doubt in his heart, it will be done for him.

Bernard looks uncertain. ... 7, 6...

ERIC (CONT'D)

You want God to help? Get on your knees. Show Him you believe.

... 5, 4... Eric calm, steady --

(CONTINUED)

ERIC (CONT'D)
On your knees now, Bernard.

... 3, 2... Eric suddenly forceful --

ERIC (CONT'D)
On your knees!

...1! Suddenly, Bernard drops to his knees -- the WINDOW BLOWS OUT -- a BULLET PIERCES THE ROOM, splinters a wooden kneeling stand, inches from where Bernard's head just was.

He stares at the BULLET HOLE, then looks to Eric, amazed.

ERIC (CONT'D)
It's a sign. You submitted and God saved you. Take off the vest, Bernard. I'll hold your gun.

A LONG MOMENT. Then Bernard does as he's told, handing the weapon to Eric, who looks over at the hostages, all relieved and amazed. As is --

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Charloix, who shakes his head with reluctant admiration.

CHARLOIX
Well, I'll be damned.

Maxine, staring in awe, looks from the monitor to Zara. Who meets her eyes, then gets a text on her phone and goes.

EXT. CHURCH - A SHORT TIME LATER

LOVED ONES hug HOSTAGES, while a handcuffed BERNARD is led into a police car. Zara catches up to Eric, moving through the crowd.

ZARA
Wife didn't make it.

ERIC
(not unkind)
So much for miracles. What's next?

ZARA
(checks her phone)
Insurance executive blackmailed in Philly. Criminal past.

ERIC
Give that to Saunders.

(CONTINUED)

ZARA

Computer virus uploaded at a hedge fund in New York. Hacker's looking for a payout to disable it.

ERIC

What else?

ZARA

Here's something. Couple in Denver, just received a \$5 million ransom demand for their son.

ERIC

And?

ZARA

The boy disappeared eight years ago.

Eric's interest piqued, when --

MAXINE

Mr. Beaumont!

They turn, Eric fixing his gaze on Maxine, catching up to them. She forces herself to remain focused --

MAXINE (CONT'D)

My name is Maxine Carlson. I was short-listed for a job with your company until Oliver Yates rejected me.

ZARA

(disbelief)

That's what you're doing here?

ERIC

If Oliver rejected you, that's the end of it. I'm sorry, Ms. Carlson.

Eric and Zara continue on. Maxine refusing to give up --

MAXINE

Listen. I just graduated *summa cum laude* from Northwestern. I've got job offers from law firms, investment bankers, tech startups...

ERIC

Congratulations.

(CONTINUED)

They've reached an SUV. Eric opens the door --

MAXINE

What you just did back there, Mr.
Beaumont. It's all I've ever
wanted to do.

Eric turns, unimpressed.

ERIC

That's it? That's your pitch?
(Maxine deflates, then)
Get in.

Maxine eyes widen -- she nods, bursting with excitement, as
she climbs in the car. Zara looks at Eric --

ZARA

Really?

Eric shrugs --

ERIC

She knows Latin.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

As the SUV pulls into traffic, Maxine on her way --

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. MILLER RESIDENCE - DAY

DROP DOWN from the Denver skyline to an upscale house, a LUXURY CAR in the drive and SUV at the curb. A RENTAL SEDAN pulls up. Oliver steps out, reaches for EQUIPMENT CASES.

A LEGEND reads: *Denver, Colorado, Day One, 6:17 p.m.*

INT. MILLER RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A pen on a notepad. Frantic scribbling. Reveal: Maxine taking notes while Zara interviews BETH MILLER, late 30s, natural warmth saddened by years of strain. Beside her is VINCE MILLER, early 40s, preoccupied, angry at life.

BETH
(painful memory)
I was at class. Vince was home.

VINCE
I stepped out to take a call --
reception was crappy in that
house. It was five minutes. When I
came back he was gone.

Maxine glances at Eric, watching them with that gaze of his.

ZARA
This was eight years ago.
(off Vince's nod)
And you never received any ransom
demand?

BETH
Not until last night. Vince came
home and found that taped to the
garage.

Eric picks up a TORN PHOTO in a plastic bag. It shows a BOY, 11, with a sad smile, a woman's hand on his shoulder. Printed on back: \$5 MILLION CASH. NO COPS OR YOUR SON DIES.

VINCE
They say that's him.

BETH
It *is* him... he'd be 11 now.

Eric clocks the tension between them, as -- Oliver enters, carrying equipment cases. Breathless.

(CONTINUED)

OLIVER
Hey. Sorry I'm late.

ZARA
Mr. and Mrs. Miller, this is
Oliver Yates, our psychological
profiler.

Oliver scans the house, but stops, noticing Maxine, who
makes an awkward smile. He looks to Eric, who meets his eyes
-- they'll talk about this later. Addressing the Millers --

OLIVER
I'll set up over here, if that's
OK...

VINCE
(to Eric)
So how does this work?

ZARA
Eric does the negotiating. I deal
with law enforcement and handle
security assessments.

VINCE
What are you, a cop?

ZARA
Used to be.

VINCE
And who's she?

All eyes look to Maxine.

MAXINE
(beat)
I'm... new.

INT. MILLER RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - DAY

Oliver unpacks the cases he carried in, setting up a laptop
and the VEB (Virtual Evidence Board). Maxine approaches --

MAXINE
I should explain...

OLIVER
What's there to explain? You said
you'd go over my head and you did.

(CONTINUED)

MAXINE

You'll like me once you get to
know me.

OLIVER

Oh I do know you. I know exactly
who you are.

Off Maxine, worried by this --

INT. MILLER RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Eric casually flips through a stack of the Millers' unopened
mail, listening as Zara asks more questions.

ZARA

It's been eight years, Mr. Miller.
Any idea why the kidnapppers would
only get in touch now?

VINCE

It was all over the press. We had
a software company. We sold it for
\$23 million.

ZARA

Right, search optimization. That
was five years ago.

VINCE

Look, Beth got your name from a
private investigator, but I still
don't get it. What do we need a
negotiator for? We could just call
the police.

BETH

They said no police...

ZARA

It's a good question, Mr. Miller.
And it's your decision, of course.
But police priorities are split.
As well as recovering the missing
person, they have to catch the
kidnapppers.

VINCE

While you just let criminals walk
away...?

(CONTINUED)

ERIC
We focus on saving lives, Mr.
Miller.

Just then -- *BRRING!* The PHONE RING pierces the air.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Oliver, donning headphones, activates the VEB. An AUDIO WAVEFORM GRAPH appears, projected in mid-air. Beside it a MAP of the Denver area is highlighted, a scanner trying to locate the call's source.

OLIVER
Call's from a burner. Encrypted.

The team and the Millers congregate around the VEB. All eyes on Eric as he waits two more rings, then answers.

ERIC
Hello.

A pause, then a voice (Yannis Kalvos, accented) on speaker.

YANNIS (O.S.)
Who is this?

ERIC
A friend of the Millers.

INTERCUT:

INT. MINIVAN - CONTINUOUS

Rack from a CROSS on the rear-view mirror to YANNIS KALVOS, early 50s, at the steering wheel, cell phone to his ear and working a set of *komboloi* (Greek worry beads) in his hand.

YANNIS
I said no police.

ERIC
I'm not the police, but I am kind
of curious -- why now? Eight years
is a long time.

YANNIS
The parents, they don't want him
anymore?

ERIC
Let me speak to him.

(CONTINUED)

YANNIS
Not a chance.

ERIC
We're going to need proof. That
you really have him. That he's OK.

YANNIS
You have the picture.

ERIC
That's not proof. We need DNA.

YANNIS
(rising anger)
You're not going to get it!

ERIC
Then there's no deal.

Eric hangs up the call. They look at him in disbelief --

VINCE
What the hell kind of negotiating
tactic is that?

MAXINE
(getting it)
Force position.

Oliver, reviewing the call with his headphones, shakes his
head at Maxine.

OLIVER
Still with the textbooks...

VINCE
What?

MAXINE
(to Eric)
An aggressive move to impose a
view on the adverse party.
(to the Millers)
Normally used in situations where
the negotiator has the upper hand.

Eric clocks Maxine's cleverness, but Vince is confused.

VINCE
We have the upper hand?

ERIC
You will when he calls back.

MAXINE
Accent sounded Mediterranean,
maybe Greek.

Eric absorbs this, turns to Oliver --

ERIC
Well?

OLIVER
No latency -- he's not looking for
approval. He sounded calm but it
was an effort. Maybe impulse
control issues.

BETH
You can tell that from a phone
call?

VINCE
Please, Beth, this is a scam! I'm
calling the police --

BETH
No.

VINCE
He just said it -- there's no
proof they even have a boy!

ERIC
They don't. Not yet.
(off their surprise)
Eight years is a long time. Their
first step was making sure you'd
pay. Step two is the kidnapping.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A BUS wipes frame, revealing SAMUEL BRETT, 11 (the boy in
the photo), carrying a backpack and playing a computer game
as he walks. A LEGEND reads: *Two hours earlier.*

Samuel glances up and sees -- his mom's MINIVAN, parked at
the curb. He approaches, pulls open the back door --

INT. MINIVAN - CONTINUOUS

Samuel hops in and is about to continue his game, when he
looks up, sees -- YANNIS at the wheel.

(CONTINUED)

SAMUEL
...who are you? Where's my mom?

YANNIS
Don't you worry about her.

Yannis locks the doors. Samuel realizes something is very wrong, pulls at the handle to open the door, but it's child-locked. As Yannis puts the car in gear, DRIVING OFF --

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. MILLER RESIDENCE - BACK YARD - LATE AFTERNOON

A pool, edged with algae and fallen leaves. It hasn't been cleaned in a long time. A LEGEND: *Day One, 7:12 p.m.*

Eric is on the back deck leaning on the railing. He glances back into the house and sees -- Maxine, trying to reassure an emotional Beth. He turns back, stares at --

CLOSE - A WORN WALLET PHOTO: a younger Eric in an FBI windbreaker, his arm around a pretty, red-haired woman (JESSICA FORD) with an enigmatic smile.

VINCE (O.S.)
Professional negotiator. Never heard that one before.

Vince has walked outside. Eric tucks the photo in his wallet.

ERIC
Most people haven't. Until they need one.

VINCE
You're an expensive option.

ERIC
I won't ask more than you can afford. And if I don't get your son back, you won't pay.

Vince didn't expect that. Eric nods to the pool.

ERIC (CONT'D)
You don't swim much.

VINCE (O.S.)
Pump went. Didn't see much point fixing it. Listen, Mr. Beaumont...

ERIC
Eric.

VINCE
I don't mean to be rude, but you've got to understand...

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

You lost your son once. You don't
want to go through that again.

Vince's thought exactly. Maxine appears at the door --

MAXINE

He's calling back!

INT. MILLER RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

CLOSE - THE RINGING PHONE. Beth transfixed, as Maxine grabs
her pad and Oliver dons headphones, activating recording
software on the VEB. Eric enters with Vince, then picks up.

ERIC

This is Eric.

INTERCUT:

EXT. RV - CONTINUOUS

YANNIS

Abandoned gas station on Route 6,
outside Golden. One hour.

He hangs up, stows the phone in his jacket pocket. Now we
reveal he's standing in a VAST DESERT LANDSCAPE. The minivan
and a truck parked outside an RV. As he heads toward it --

INT. MILLER RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ERIC

Oliver, Zara, you're on deck.
Maxine, come with me.

Eric heads out. Maxine, excited reaches for her coat --

MAXINE

Thanks for not ratting me out.

OLIVER

(corrects)

Yet. We're in the middle of a
case, Ms. Carlson.

Maxine frowns, nods. Then hurries to follow Eric. Off
Oliver, looking from her to Zara --

INT. RV - DUSK

Samuel sits in a bedroom, watching NIKO KALVOS, 40s, in the next room, frowning as he tries to play the game on the boy's handheld device. When Yannis enters, angrily notices --

YANNIS

What are you doing?! That thing
has Internet, GPS. Get rid of it!
(throws him keys)
Dump the minivan while you're at
it.

Yannis starts to hang up his jacket on a peg, but Niko lingers, grunts dissatisfaction. Yannis wheeling on him --

YANNIS (CONT'D)

(Greek)

*What? You think I can't handle
this guy? I've dealt with smarter
than him. When we had it good,
that was all my doing. Don't
forget that. Now go!*

Niko, reluctant, heads outside, while Yannis goes to a drawer, noisily searches for something. Samuel speaks carefully --

SAMUEL

How come he doesn't talk?

Yannis finds what he's looking for -- a Swiss-Army style KNIFE with an extended blade.

YANNIS

Because my brother has no tongue.
Our loving father said he talked
too much. So one morning...

He makes a slicing sound, motions CUTTING IT OFF. Samuel stares at the blade with worried eyes.

SAMUEL

I want to call my mom and dad.

YANNIS

What for? Everyone was a sinner in
that house, am I right? Not fun
for you. And they were lying the
whole time. But you figured that
out, didn't you little man? That
your real parents aren't dead.

(CONTINUED)

SAMUEL
They're really alive?

YANNIS
That's why we brought you here. To
help them get you back.

SAMUEL
And to make money.

Yannis smiles.

YANNIS
You're a smart boy.

He folds the knife blade away, pulling out tweezer blades.

YANNIS (CONT'D)
Now sit still. This won't hurt a
bit.

As he brings the tweezers to Samuel's head, PULLING AWAY
STRANDS OF HAIR --

EXT. MOUNTAIN HIGHWAY - NIGHT

RISING HIGH ABOVE as Eric's rental car cuts through the
mountains. A LEGEND: *Outside Denver, Day One, 8:21 p.m.* A
CLAP OF THUNDER brings us --

INT. CAR / EXT. ABANDONED GAS STATION - NIGHT

Eric pulls to a stop in POURING RAIN, outlines of the
mountain landscape visible in the darkness. He kills the
engine. The sound of drumming on the roof.

ERIC
So what else should I know about
you, Ms. Carlson? Other than your
impressive GPA, that is.

MAXINE
Just that I've always wanted to do
this.

ERIC
So you said. You didn't say why.

Maxine shrugs. Tries not to seem like she's changing the
subject --

(CONTINUED)

MAXINE

What you did back there in the church. How did you know it would work?

ERIC

What someone wants and what someone needs are often two different things. That man wanted to save his wife. What he needed was to have his faith restored.

MAXINE

And if you were wrong...

Eric looks to her, his face suggesting he's never wrong. When -- the HEADLIGHTS of a PICKUP TRUCK SWITCH ON. Niko gets out of it, a silhouette --

MAXINE (CONT'D)

He's probably armed.

ERIC

Uh huh.

MAXINE

But you're not?

ERIC

Hard to earn trust if you're carrying a gun.

MAXINE

He could kill you.

ERIC

He could. Stay here.

He gets out. Maxine watches him go for a few beats, but then can't stand it. As she opens her door to follow --

EXT. ABANDONED GAS STATION - NIGHT

Eric sizes up Niko, a see-through plastic mask on his face to distort his features.

ERIC

You have the proof?

Niko doesn't move. Eric senses something's wrong, when he hears Maxine GASP, turns to see -- Yannis, face also obscured, has a gun to her head.

(CONTINUED)

ERIC (CONT'D)
It's OK. No one's getting hurt.

Yannis nods for Niko to frisk Eric. Niko hesitates...

YANNIS
(Greek)
Káne to!

Niko begins patting down Eric, takes his wallet, pulls out the contents, looking for I.D., throwing credit and business cards to the ground. He looks at Yannis, shakes his head.

ERIC
I'm not a cop.

Yannis approaches Eric and PUNCHES him hard in the stomach. Eric doubles over, collapses to the ground.

On all fours, he grits his teeth from the pain, notices the photo of Jessica on the ground, covers it with his hand.

Yannis drops a PLASTIC BAG with strands of Samuel's hair.

YANNIS
There's your proof. You've got 24 hours.

He and Niko jump in the SUV. It starts up, bathing them in its HEADLIGHTS then swerves close as it pulls onto the highway and races away. Maxine hurries to Eric.

MAXINE
You OK?

He scoops up his wallet and the photo.

ERIC
I told you to stay in the car.

As he heads back to the rental car, Maxine following.

INT. MILLER RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Oliver and Zara work on their laptops.

OLIVER
Aren't you even curious *why* I rejected her application?

ZARA
Not really.

(CONTINUED)

OLIVER
Why not?

ZARA
Because Eric wants her here.
That's good enough for me.

OLIVER
Eric's never gone against my
recommendation before. Not once. I
think it's strange.

ZARA
Were you a solid hire when Eric
found you? Was I? He knows what
he's doing.

OLIVER
Your loyalty is almost
pathological.

ZARA
Don't shrink me, Oliver. You're
the one obsessing.

Just then, the DOOR OPENS. Eric and Maxine enter.

ERIC
Two men, faces obscured. Late 40s,
early 50s. One was armed and
violent. It's his show. The other
does what he's told.

MAXINE
They're Greek. Recognise the
swearing.

Eric gives the hair sample to Zara.

ERIC
How long to confirm?

ZARA
36 hours, if I pull a favor at the
lab.

MAXINE
He said we have 24 hours.

ZARA
(taking out her phone)
I'll see what I can do.

(CONTINUED)

OLIVER
(to Eric)
I'm thinking borderline
personality. Possibly suffering
from dysphoria, although
dysphorics are less likely to be
outwardly violent.

MAXINE
What about the other one?

OLIVER
Most likely a dependent
personality. Fear of separation
leads to submissive behavior.

Maxine sees Eric's frowning.

ZARA
Eric...?

ERIC
There was no deadline when he left
that photo last night. Suddenly
he's in a hurry. Why?

EXT. RV - DAY 2

Sun rising over the spectacular desert landscape. The pickup
truck pulls up outside. As Yannis alights --

INT. RV - DAY

Samuel looks out the window, then to the next room, where
Niko struggles to figure out the video game. (Which he
hasn't thrown out, despite Yannis' command.)

Seeing the boy, Niko grunts, indicating he should approach.
Samuel stands, walks toward him cautiously. Niko nods toward
the screen. Samuel looks, points.

SAMUEL
You've got to push the red button.
It curls the ball right in the
corner, see.

Niko does as Samuel says, and it works. He smiles. The boy
sits down beside him,

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
Hold it down, and he'll run
faster.

(CONTINUED)

Just then, the door BANGS OPEN. Samuel and Niko look up, surprised. Yannis stands there, jacket in hand.

YANNIS
(enraged)
Vlákas!

Yannis throws down his jacket and yanks the game console from Niko, shouting.

YANNIS (CONT'D)
What the hell's wrong with you?!

He drops the console and stomps on it, cracking it. Then he grabs Niko, squeezing his face with an odd mixture of intimacy and violence.

YANNIS (CONT'D)
As to thialo! You know what they
will do to us!

Yannis kicks open the door and throws Niko outside.

EXT. RV - CONTINUOUS

Yannis comes out and kicks his brother hard in the gut. He kicks him again.

YANNIS
This is for your own good! You
understand?! *Your own good!*

Niko curls into a fetal ball, covering himself and grunting in pain from the blows --

INT. RV - CONTINUOUS

As the beating continues, Samuel sees his chance, reaches for Yannis' jacket. He fishes out the CELL PHONE. Glances outside once more, then starts dialing a number --

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. MILLER RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON A PHONE. A LEGEND: *Day Two, 7:12 a.m.* Suddenly, it rings VERY LOUD. Beth and Vince fly in.

Oliver pulls on headphones, activates the VEB. A graph appears, starts recording. After a few rings, Maxine and Zara watch Eric pick up --

ERIC
This is Eric.

Eric can hear the faintest breathing, but no one speaks. Then --

INTERCUT:

INT. RV - CONTINUOUS

SAMUEL
(quiet)
He's hurting him...

BETH
It's Jason...!

Eric holds up a hand --

ERIC
Who?

SAMUEL
His brother. We were just playing
Netbuster...

EXT. RV - CONTINUOUS

Yannis, winded from the beating, looks down at Niko, lying on the ground, dazed and cowering.

INT. MILLER RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ERIC
Are you alright, son?

SAMUEL
I'm OK.

ERIC
What's your name?

(CONTINUED)

SAMUEL
(whispers)
Samuel.

Maxine looks to Beth and Vince, who share a look. Not their son's name...

EXT. RV - DAY

Yannis mutters under his breath in Greek, heads to the RV --

INT. MILLER RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Eric speaks quietly, reassuringly.

ERIC
We're going to get you back.
You're going to be safe. Can you
tell me where you are?

JUST THEN: A CREAK on the step at the door of the RV. Samuel whips his head around, sees -- the DOOR HANDLE turning.

Then -- THE LINE GOES DEAD. Beth looks from Vince to Eric, terrified.

INT. RV - BEDROOM - DAY

Yannis throws aside the plastic curtain, finds -- Samuel sitting back on the bed, innocently, no phone in sight. He reaches for his jacket, right where he left it. Off Samuel --

At the Millers: Eric sees fear in Beth and Vince's eyes.

ERIC
Brave boy.

VINCE
You mean "Samuel."

BETH
They would've given him a new
name, Vince.

OLIVER
He said they were brothers.

ERIC
(to Zara)
And he was playing a game with one
of them. Netbuster.

(CONTINUED)

ZARA
Soccer game for a handheld
console. Cody plays it all the
time.

ERIC
Can you bring up that photo they
left?

Zara types. The TORN PHOTO appears on the VEB.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Underneath the windbreaker.
Burgundy and white. Team colors.

Oliver grabs his jacket, starts out.

OLIVER
If we can find the school with
those colors, we might find where
this boy came from.

MAXINE
I'll come with you.

Oliver is about to protest, but is cut short by --

ERIC
Good idea.

Maxine, pleased, goes out with Oliver. Zara turns to Vince
and Beth --

ZARA
It's time to start gathering the
ransom money, Mr. Miller.

VINCE
I'm sorry, but we're not paying
anything until we know for sure
this is Jason.

BETH
They have a child, don't they?
Even if it isn't Jason, we're
still saving a little boy's life!

VINCE
I've had it. I'm calling the cops.

Vince heads to the phone.

BETH
Vince! They'll kill him!

VINCE
Beth --

BETH
You make that call, I'll never
forgive you.

She heads out to the backyard. Vince watches her go. Eric
turns to face him.

ERIC
You need to tell your wife, Mr.
Miller.

VINCE
Tell her what?

ERIC
The broken pool, the pile of
credit card statements, a wine
refrigerator with no wine...
She'll find out soon enough.

Off Vince, seeing there's no point in denying it --

EXT. MILLER HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

Beth looks at the pool. Vince steps up quietly beside her.

BETH
Don't you dare tell me I'm crazy,
or grieving, or hanging onto a
ghost.

VINCE
It's not that.

Beth looks to Vince. Then --

VINCE (CONT'D)
There is no money.

BETH
(confused)
What do you mean, there's no
money?

VINCE
(clear, deliberate)
I lost it. All of it.

(CONTINUED)

BETH
(stunned)
What?

VINCE
Bart Smith and his leaseback
schemes.

BETH
Vince... 23 million dollars?

VINCE
Not all at once. But I took a big
hit the first time. Then I kept
trying to make it back. The more I
put in, the worse it got. Before I
knew it...

Beth's world is falling apart all over again.

BETH
How could you not tell me!?

A long beat. The hardest words Vince has ever spoken.

VINCE
I lost our son... then I lost the
money. Now if I lose you, too...

It's all he can manage. Off Beth --

EXT. RV - CONTINUOUS

Yannis steps out of the RV, stressed, reaches for the phone
in his jacket, but it's not there. Confused, he pats and
finds it in another pocket. A cloud falls over his face.

INT. RV - CONTINUOUS

Samuel stares out the window, turns as Yannis enters.

YANNIS
Want to tell me something?

Off the boy's determined silence, INTERCUT --

EXT. BRADFIELD ACADEMY - DAY

Oliver and Maxine exit a car, heading toward the main
entrance. Passing a sign identifying this as Bradfield
Academy. And a banner, colored BURGUNDY and WHITE.

INT. BRADFIELD ACADEMY - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Middle-school STUDENTS move down the hall, between classes. Oliver a step ahead of Maxine as they walk past a wall of lockers.

MAXINE

The office is back there.

OLIVER

We waltz in there and ask about a missing boy. What happens next?

MAXINE

They call the police. Right.

OLIVER

This is what we're looking for.

He's spotted a TROPHY CASE with PHOTOS of sports teams. He consults a scan of the TORN PHOTO on his smart phone.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

A kid who plays soccer, first name Samuel.

MAXINE

There! Back row, third from the left. His last name is Brett. Samuel Brett.

Oliver starts typing in his phone. Then --

OLIVER

No home address listed.

ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)

Can I help you?

They both turn to see a school ADMINISTRATOR, 40s, approaching them with suspicion.

ADMINISTRATOR (CONT'D)

Visitors need to sign at the office.

Oliver looks momentarily at a loss, but Maxine dives in.

MAXINE

(re: Oliver)

You mean you don't know who this guy is?

(CONTINUED)

The Administrator looks confused. As does Oliver.

MAXINE (CONT'D)
Rivaldo Messi.
(off his silence)
Top scorer in the history of the
Sao Paulo soccer club.

ADMINISTRATOR
Is that so?

MAXINE
Mr. Messi's playing an exhibition
game here in Denver. He received a
very sweet fan letter from a boy
here who wants to meet him. Tell
her how moved you were when you
read it, Rivaldo.

OLIVER
(tentative)
Olá...

MAXINE
(enjoying this)
Oh come. You were in tears.

OLIVER
(enough now)
...sim...sim...tears...olá...

ADMINISTRATOR
Who is the student?

MAXINE
Samuel Brett.

ADMINISTRATOR
Oh yes. He's on the varsity team.
Samuel's marked as absent today.

MAXINE
And we came all this way. What a
shame.

They turn to go, Oliver wondering what that was about, when
Maxine turns, seemingly struck by a new idea.

MAXINE (CONT'D)
You don't happen to have his home
address, do you?

Off the Administrator's uncertainty --

MOVED TO 43A

MOVED TO 43B

OMITTED

INT. MILLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

The PHONE RINGS. Zara looks to Eric, who picks up, Vince and Beth hanging on every word.

YANNIS

I know you talked to the boy.

INTERCUT:

EXT. RV - DAY

Yannick paces, working his worry beads.

YANNIS

You pay or we kill him.

Beth and Vince can hardly bear it --

ERIC

We haven't confirmed the DNA.

YANNIS

No more waiting. Pay!

ERIC

You've gone to a lot of trouble,
Yannis. We need time to get the
money.

YANNIS

Five million dollars or I send you
his heart!

Yannis hangs up. Eric turns to Vince and Beth, aghast.

ERIC

How much money can you put
together, Mr. Miller?

VINCE

Not anything like \$5 million.

ERIC

How much?

(CONTINUED)

VINCE

We still have some IRAs, a line of
credit. Maybe 700 thousand...

ERIC

Go to the bank.

INT. CAR - DAY

Oliver behind the wheel. Maxine checks her smart phone.

OLIVER

You're a pretty nifty liar.

MAXINE

I say what I have to say.

OLIVER

Yeah. Me, too.

Oliver pulls to a stop outside a gloomy ranch-style house.
Kills the engine.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Look, once this is over, you know
I have to tell him who you are.

Disappointed, Maxine's about to protest --

OLIVER (CONT'D)

(in)

I get why you want to be here -- I
do. But my job's to protect Eric.

MAXINE

I don't pose any threat to Mr.
Beaumont --

OLIVER

Emotions are a threat. And let's
face it, Maxine. You bring a boat
load.

MAXINE

I've dealt with my mother's death.

OLIVER

Glad to hear it. But I'm sorry,
you can't be anywhere near him.

Oliver gets out of the car. Maxine sits, a maelstrom of
emotion, then gets out to follow.

EXT. BRETT RESIDENCE - DAY

Oliver rings the bell. Then knocks. Maxine peering through the window. She doesn't see anyone. Off their shared look --

ANGLE - BACK YARD

Oliver and Maxine round the house, approaching sliding doors. Maxine reaches for it, but Oliver stops her hand.

OLIVER
Best not to leave prints.

He uses a latex glove to grip the handle -- then PULLS IT OPEN. He hands her another set of gloves, then steps in --

INT. BRETT RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

'70s style, in perfect order. Oliver calls out.

OLIVER
Anyone home...?

No response. Maxine looks at PHOTOS on the fridge: Samuel in a suit for church, one at a bible camp, not happy-looking.

MAXINE
...this is the place alright.

Oliver steps up beside her -- sees one of the photos shows a dour-looking couple standing stiffly with him.

OLIVER
Mom and Dad. So why haven't you reported him missing?

Oliver heads toward a DESKTOP COMPUTER, waking it up. Under his breath --

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Password protected. Nothing a descrambler can't get past...

As he starts typing, we find Maxine moving through the living room, noting details, including a full cup of tea. She dips her finger in it, cold.

MAXINE
Looks like they went someplace in a hurry.

At the computer Oliver's opened a PDF document with the title WESTLAKE ADOPTION AGENCY at the top.

(CONTINUED)

OLIVER
(calling to her)
Well, their files are still here.
And they make for interesting
reading.

Maxine hears a faint MEOWING --

OLIVER (CONT'D)
I'll copy these, then we're out of
here.

He shoves a thumb drive into the USB slot to copy the files.

Maxine heads towards the MEOWING --

INT. BRETT RESIDENCE - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

She moves along a corridor down a few steps to a door
leading to the attached garage. A CAT is meowing on the
other side.

Maxine reaches for the door, opens it. A WHITE CAT bolts
towards her into the house, its PAWS CAKED IN BLOOD. She
looks down at the floor, sees it's tracked more blood there.

Dread rises up in her throat, as she steps past the bloody
tracks toward the darkened garage. Stopped cold by what she
sees there --

MAXINE
Oliver!

Oliver hears the tone in her voice, rises. In a moment, he
is at her shoulder, looking down at -- the CORPSES of WENDY
and RANDALL BRETT, 50s, each SHOT ONCE IN THE HEAD.

OLIVER
Mr. and Mrs. Brett, I presume.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. MILLER RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Beth and Vince stand opposite Eric, Maxine and Oliver.

BETH
(horrified)
They killed them? We've got to
call the police!

Maxine and Oliver look to Eric. Seeing their hesitation --

BETH (CONT'D)
What?

ERIC
It's your decision, Mr. and Mrs.
Miller. But I would strongly
advise against it.

BETH
Whatever for?

Beth doesn't understand, but Vince does.

VINCE
So they don't kill the boy.

ERIC
The only reason he's still alive
is the police haven't found those
bodies yet.

BETH
I don't understand.

ERIC
Pay a kidnapper and he releases
his victim. But a killer can't
afford to leave witnesses.

BETH
By that logic, they'll kill that
boy no matter what we do.

ERIC
(after a beat, gentle)
They may. But I won't let them.

It's more than Beth can bear. She goes off. Eric looks to
Vince.

(CONTINUED)

ERIC (CONT'D)
I think you should go with her,
Mr. Miller.

VINCE
And say what?

ERIC
It's not about what you say.

Vince looks at Eric, understanding. After he's gone --

ERIC (CONT'D)
(to Maxine and Oliver)
Let's take a look at those files
you found.

INT. MILLER RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The adoption files from the Bretts' computer appear on the
VEB. Eric studying them alongside Maxine and Oliver, manning
the laptop.

OLIVER
The Bretts got Samuel through an
agency dealing in East European
children. The agency was also
trafficking infants abducted in
the U.S. The FBI busted them four
years ago, but some of the fencers
vanished, including two brothers,
fraternal twins, suspects in at
least three abductions.

ERIC
I'm going to take a wild guess...

Oliver pulls up an image: FBI WANTED PAGE - SIDE BY SIDE
pictures of Yannis and Niko.

OLIVER
Yannis and Niko Kalvos.

MAXINE
The Bretts didn't know it was
illegal.

ERIC
They knew.

MAXINE
How do you know?

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

Samuel -- or Jason -- was abducted eight years ago. The Millers struck it rich five years ago. But the ransom demand only came in this week. Why?

OLIVER

Someone or something forced their hand...

ERIC

My guess? The boy found those files, just like you did. When he confronted the Bretts, they panicked. Told the kidnappers. Who killed them and then realized they were sitting on a jackpot. So they thought.

Just then, Zara enters, breathless, carrying a file.

ZARA

Where are the Millers?

MAXINE

I'll get them.

OLIVER

What is it?

ZARA

DNA report's in.

Eric moves over to read the file, as Maxine returns with Beth and Vince.

VINCE

What's happened?

ERIC

The DNA results are positive. He's your son.

Beth covers her mouth, while Vince stares in shock. Then --
THE PHONE RINGS. As Eric reaches for the phone --

INTERCUT:

EXT. RV - CONTINUOUS

Yannis paces and works the worry beads.

(CONTINUED)

YANNIS
Have you confirmed the DNA?

ERIC
We have.

YANNIS
Good. Now I want my money.

ERIC
There's a problem. The Millers
don't have it.

YANNIS
You're lying!

ERIC
I wish I was. But they're broke.

YANNIS
You think I won't kill him?!

ERIC
I know you will. And believe me, I
want to give you what you want, so
we can get the boy, safe and
sound.

YANNIS
How much do they have?

ERIC
Seven hundred thousand.

YANNIS
It's not enough!

ERIC
We know you killed the Bretts,
Yannis.

Yannis freezes. Realizing Eric not only knows about the
murders -- *he knows his name.*

ERIC (CONT'D)
What's that sound you hear?

YANNIS
I don't hear anything.

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

Exactly. No sirens. I haven't called the police, who would be all over you by now. Seven hundred thousand, and you and your brother walk away. But you need to bring the boy to us.

YANNIS

You think you can play me?! You think I won't track you down? I would do it just because. I will kill you in your sleep JUST BECAUSE!

ERIC

I believe you. Now it's your turn. The Millers love their son more than anything in the world. They would give you 50 million if they had it. But 700 thousand is all there is. If you insist on more, then this is over and we all lose. But we can all win here.

Yannis paces, cornered, trapped, ready to lash out but abruptly --

YANNIS

Falcon Creek Mall. Parking structure. Top level.

He hangs up.

BETH

You said they might still kill him.

ERIC

I'm sure of it now. Which means we need to take measures to stop them.

VINCE

So what are you going to do?

ERIC

Your son was upset when he called.

MAXINE

(of course he was)
He's been kidnapped.

(CONTINUED)

Eric shakes his head --

ERIC

He was upset that Yannis was
hurting his brother. Because he'd
played that game with him.

Off Maxine, wondering at the significance of this --

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - ROOFTOP LEVEL - NIGHT

A spectacular view of the Denver skyline. A RENTAL CAR
drives up to the vast, totally empty upper level. A LEGEND:
Day Three, 3:21 a.m.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Zara pulls to a stop, Eric is in the passenger seat. Both of
them looking for some sign of the kidnappers, when --

The truck pulls into view from a higher level. Stopping at
the far end of the rooftop deck.

ZARA

We got company.

Eric reaches for a GYM BAG.

ERIC

Let's go.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Yannis, in the driver's seat, watches Eric and Zara
approach. Niko is in the passenger seat, Samuel in back.
Yannis racks his Glock, turns to Niko.

YANNIS

Go.

Niko glances in the rear view, catches Samuel's nervous
eyes. Gets out of the truck. Off Samuel, watching --

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - ROOFTOP LEVEL - NIGHT

Eric stops 50 feet or so from the truck, Zara several paces
behind him. All sound fades as camera rotates around Eric,
watching. Thinking. Niko slowly approaches.

As he reaches Eric, he stops, hands him a cell phone. Eric
puts the phone to his ears, looks to Yannis in the distance.

(CONTINUED)

YANNIS
Give him the money.

ERIC
Soon as you give us the boy.

YANNIS
He's right here.

ERIC
I need to see him.

There's a pause. The door to the truck opens. Yannis, Glock in hand, pulls Samuel out of the back with a tight grip.

ERIC (CONT'D)
(calls out)
You OK, Samuel? It's going to be alright, pal.

Yannis shoves Samuel back inside while he stays outside beside the truck, 20 yards from Niko and Eric --

YANNIS
Show Niko the money.

Eric whispers to Niko so Yannis cannot hear.

ERIC
You like the boy, don't you? You played that game with him. That's what you and your brother were fighting about.

Niko is nervous, he glances back at Yannis.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Look at me, not him. He killed the Bretts.

He clocks the reaction from Niko --

ERIC (CONT'D)
He didn't tell you, did he? He hasn't told you he's going to kill the boy, too. Just as soon as we give you the money.
(off Niko's look)
Go ahead, take a look inside.

Niko pulls open the gym bag where he sees -- a CAN OF PEPPER SPRAY atop STACKS OF CASH. His eyes widen with alarm...

(CONTINUED)

ERIC (CONT'D)
It's all there -- 700,000 as
promised. You can walk away. Or
you can save the boy, Niko. No one
else has to die.

Yannis shifts uneasily in the car -- why is this taking so
long? Samuel swallows, worried.

YANNIS
(shouts)
Niko!

ERIC
Give your brother a thumbs up. Do
it, Niko.

Niko hesitates, then does so.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Listen to me.

Niko looks back at him, terrified.

ERIC (CONT'D)
It's time to stand up to him. I
know you've always wanted to.

Eric hands him the bag. They share a long look -- will he or
won't he? Niko turns and heads back towards Yannis. Eric
looks back to Zara, as --

Niko reaches the truck --

YANNIS
Put it down.

Niko sets the bag down, moves to unzip it --

Yannis leans in closer, eager to see the contents --

Niko pulls the zipper revealing --

The MONEY (no pepper spray). Yannis begins to rifle through
the cash --

Niko watches him, then GRUNTS --

Yannis looks up to his brother who PEPPER SPRAYS HIS FACE --

Yannis SCREAMS clawing at his eyes --

(CONTINUED)

ERIC
(to Oliver)
Go!

INT. PARKING GARAGE - UPPER LEVEL - NIGHT

Another car, previously unseen with --

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Oliver behind the wheel, Maxine riding shotgun. As he shifts into gear, screeches around the corner -- --

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - ROOFTOP LEVEL - NIGHT

Yannis starts to recover his vision --

YANNIS
Vlákas!

He FIRES at his brother, HITTING HIM IN THE LEG. Niko goes down hard, grunting loudly in pain. Yannis about to fire again -- to KILL HIM -- when --

Eric tackles Yannis, knocking the gun from his hand. Then quickly, but efficiently disabling him and pinning his arm behind his back, while --

Oliver's car screeches to a halt beside the truck, where Zara is taking Samuel from the car, handing him to Maxine, who's got her door open.

MAXINE
It's OK. You're OK now.

She bundles Samuel inside the car, then looks back at Eric, still holding a disabled Yannis on the ground. Smiling. They did it. As Oliver dials a number into his phone --

OLIVER
(on phone)
Reporting an emergency at the
Falcon Creek parking garage...

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - ROOFTOP LEVEL - DAWN (DAY 3)

Tilt down to a CRIME SCENE: police vehicles, ambulances and emergency PERSONNEL. A LEGEND: *Day Three, 6:25 a.m.*

Zara talks to two POLICE OFFICERS, while Eric, Maxine and Oliver watch as a SOCIAL WORKER, late 20s, tends to Samuel who sits in the open back doors of an ambulance.

(CONTINUED)

Eric looks over to another ambulance where Niko is being tended to by EMTs, two POLICE OFFICERS guarding him. He catches Niko's glance, returns a sympathetic nod.

Beth and Vince step out of a police car. This is the moment they've dreamt of every day for the last eight years.

Beth clings onto Vince as they slowly walk towards their son. The Social Worker indicates Samuel should go and meet them. Beth tries to keep it together --

BETH
Jason? I mean... Samuel.

Samuel nods. But is too shy to meet their eyes. Beth looks at Vince, beaming. The Social Worker interjects --

SOCIAL WORKER
We're going to need some time with your son, there's a legal process, lots to get in order before...

BETH
Our son...

The words stick in Beth's throat. Samuel makes to return to the Social Worker. Turns back --

SAMUEL
So are you like... my parents?

Beth and Vince look at each other. Never thought they'd hear those words again --

VINCE
(beat)
Yeah. We are.

FROM ANOTHER POV, we see Maxine watching, moved. Zara steps beside her.

ZARA
(re: Samuel)
He'll have a lot of adjustments to make. It won't easy.
(beat, smiles to Maxine)
You did good.

Maxine smiles back as Zara heads off. Then she walks to Eric and Oliver, just finishing talking. As Oliver passes --

OLIVER
Case is over. Time to tell him.

(CONTINUED)

Maxine swallows, then reaches Eric. Her dread evident --

MAXINE

Mr. Beaumont? There's something I should have said up front. The reason Oliver didn't want to hire me --

ERIC

I know who you are, Ms. Carlson. I knew it the moment I saw you.

MAXINE

So why didn't you say something?

ERIC

That ball was in your court.

MAXINE

Ah. A negotiation. Oliver said I would bring unwanted emotion.

ERIC

Oliver may be right. He usually is.

MAXINE

I'm confused. Why did you hire me if you knew who my mother was?

ERIC

The question isn't why I hired you. It's why you'd want to work for the man who got her killed.

A long beat. Then Eric goes, leaving Maxine, looking after him. With no idea of the answer --

END OF EPISODE