

ENDGAME
"Pilot: Place Your Bets"

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. VEGAS - ESTABLISHING

A jittery, paranoid MONTAGE from high-end, wish-fulfillment Vegas. A TICK sounds for each image: 10,000\$ chips are stacked. A briefcase of \$100 bills is deposited, more briefcases stacked behind. A half-naked rock star is rushed out of his suite as a maid changes blood-stained sheets. The TICKS going faster, images just impressions of the menace under the glitter, now so fast it's a RAT-A-TAT-TAT ...

INT. MAJESTIQUE HOTEL - CASINO FLOOR - PRESENT DAY - DAY

-- rat-a-tat-tat that spins DOWN, slows: it's a ROULETTE WHEEL. The Croupier calls the number, scoops the chips. Gamblers react. Pass OVER the gamblers toward --

EXT. MAJESTIQUE HOTEL - ENTRANCE - DAY

The MAJESTIQUE CASINO HOTEL is ornate, all balconies and curves. Top suites are \$20k a night. Minibar not included.

BLACK SUVs arrive. Suited SECURITY MEN emerge from one, led by FARID (30's, professionally intimidating). His clients step from the next. DAOUD (40's, overbearing, good-humored) is followed by his wife MEDINA (40's, wry, patient). Next is their Westernized daughter SHADA (16, sweet but serious). Like most teens, Shada's eyes-down on a TABLET.

At the door DETECTIVE CAL BROWN (40's, precise) badges them.

BROWN

Mr. Raqib. Detective Brown. In light of the recent threats, your government's asked Las Vegas Police to ensure your safety during your stay.

FARID

We have the situation under control.

Doud's about to agree, but at a look from his wife:

DAOUD

No harm in walking the detective through your preparations, Farid.

Grudgingly, Farid leads the group into the casino.

PAST them, HAMID (20's, intense) approaches, his eyes on Daoud. He has a bellman's jacket over one arm.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Daoud's men push other guests out of the way. A CONCIERGE does the bow-and-scrape as they head for the PRIVATE ELEVATOR.

FARID

The royal suite is completely locked down in preparation for Mr. Raqib's arrival.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - RECEPTION AREA

High-end suites have a RECEPTION AREA just off the Private Elevator to protect the privacy of the suite itself.

SOMEONE emerges from the elevator. A CAMERA above is tagged with a MAGNET. Gears GRIND as the camera is pulled off-focus.

At the suite door, the intruder places LEADS onto the keypad connected to a SMARTPHONE, reading the RFID frequency of the pad. A DECRYPT sequence runs as the intruder flips through a selection of RFID KEYS. When the decrypt DINGS, the intruder taps the keypad with the KEY. The lock CLUNKS open.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - PRIVATE ELEVATOR BANK

Daoud's group enters the PRIVATE ELEVATOR from the lobby.

FARID

Private access elevator, one man downstairs at all times.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - VARIOUS

QUICK CUTS of

-- someone SEARCHING the suite, making sure it's unguarded.

-- a CHAIR being dragged into place, in the center of a room.

-- now a GUN, a nasty SIG SAUER PS290, placed with a CLANK onto an end table.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - RECEPTION AREA

Daoud's party emerges from the elevator. Daoud, unseen, smiles at the back of Shada's head. Happy family.

FARID

Cameras and 128-bit encryption on the door. We are completely secure.

They enter ...

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

... and find ALEX KING sitting in the middle of the room. Alex, 40, is "tough" rather than "fit", cleans up well when he has to. He's drinking a beer from the suite fridge, his gun within easy reach.

The security men dash forward, screaming, drawing their weapons. Brown draws his own gun. But a beat later:

BROWN
Goddamit, King.

Everyone lowers their guns, confused.

SHADA
It's Alex! Hi Alex!

ALEX
(sub-titled Arabic)
>Good morning, Shada.<

DAOUD
Mr. King? What are you doing here?

BROWN
I assume because of the threats, your government also hired Vegas's biggest pain-in-the-ass security consultant to test your preparations.

ALEX
Congratulations. You failed.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - RECEPTION AREA - LATER

Alex leads Brown and Farid through the suite.

FARID
We locked down the suite!

ALEX
And then left it empty. Should have two men here even when it's vacant.

FARID
The cameras --

Alex pulls a SMALL MAGNET off the camera housing.

ALEX
Neodymium magnet screws the camera without penetrating the casing. Nothing beats a pair of eyes. Low tech is the best tech.

BROWN
 Don't feel bad. Did the same thing
 to me last month, cracked the Bellagio
 Vault.

ALEX
 He bet me I couldn't.
 (to Brown)
 You still owe me a beer.

BROWN
 You still owe me fifty bucks for the
 Pats/Jets game.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - MAIN ROOM

As they enter the suite Daoud, pouring himself a glass of
 wine, passes them with Medina.

ALEX
 There's a separate catering entrance
 in the kitchen, too, lock that down --

DAOUD
 How much longer? I just want a nap.

MEDINA
 Don't nap, your body clock will never
 reset.

ALEX
 She's right.

DAOUD
 You always agree with her.

ALEX
 Because Mrs. Raqib is always right.
 (to Farid)
 Sniper sightlines through those
 windows, I suggest blocking them.

FARID
 With all due respect I will not be
lectured.

Farid storms off.

ALEX
 You feel all that respect?

BROWN
 In waves. Good call on the windows.

Brown crosses to Farid.

SHADA

How do you do that? How do you figure out what bad guys are going to do?

ALEX

Think like a bad guy.

SHADA

How do you think like a bad guy without being a bad guy?

Alex loses a step. That question landed, hard.

DAOUD

You're so smart, tell me what my daughter's looking at all the time on her screen. I bet it's that Korean boy band. Swooshy hair.

Shada eye-rolls at the teasing. Daoud grabs the tablet.

DAOUD (CONT'D)

(reading)

"Inertial confinement fusion does not require plasma con--" Come on, you're sixteen, you're supposed to be sneaking Western culture behind my back. It's healthy.

MEDINA

She wants to go to Oxford.

SHADA

I'm studying for a scholarship.

DAOUD

You don't need a scholarship! I can pay -- we're not having this conversation again.

(to Medina)

I'm going to lie down. You can't stop me.

Daoud stomps off.

ALEX

Why the scholarship?

SHADA

My father can buy my way into any university, just like his father did for him. But if I get a scholarship, I earned it. It's mine.

ALEX

... Good for you.

Shada exits, pleased.

MEDINA

It is good to see you again. I'm glad you're here.

ALEX

Mr. Raqib will be all right. Your man Farid's a little high-strung, but he's good.

MEDINA

That's why I'm glad you're here. Men like Farid, all they see is my husband. They look right through Shada and myself. We're ... complications.

ALEX

Known you long enough to say, anybody who underestimates you or your daughter has more to worry about than those guys with guns.

Alex sketches a salute, heads out.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - RECEPTION - MOMENTS LATER

Daoud chases down Alex and Brown as they enter the Elevator.

DAOUD

They're sealing off the balcony!

ALEX

It's an easy point of entry.

DAOUD

Twenty-two stories up! Ridiculous. I have better protection than the President of the United States.

ALEX

That would be a comfort, Mr. Raqib. Except they shot six Presidents.

INT. LOBBY - MAJESTIQUE CASINO - MOMENTS LATER

Alex and Brown push through the crowded hotel/casino floor. They bump past a BELLMAN in uniform -- it's HAMID.

BROWN

You know you're not as charming as you think you are.

ALEX
 Nobody could be. How serious are
 the threats?

BROWN
 The trade deal he's negotiating ticked
 off the old guard back in his country,
 but it's worth a billion ... what?

Alex's turned, watching Hamid disappear by the elevators.
 He begins to walk in that direction. Then run.

ALEX
 That kid doesn't work for this hotel.
 Right jacket, wrong pants.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - PRIVATE ELEVATOR BANK - CONTINUOUS

They find the Security Man on the floor.

ALEX
 Got his elevator keycard. And his
 comm set, the bogey's in their
 communications loop.

BROWN
 Hotel phone, I'll call Farid!

ALEX
 He's not in that elevator!

Alex's through an ACCESS DOOR before Brown can question him.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - SERVICE CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

Alex sprints past surprised maids and maintenance men.

ALEX
 Nearest maintenance elevator! Where?

There's a janitor hitting a button in the nearest elevator.
 Alex SLIDES into the elevator as it closes.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - FRONT DESK - CONTINUOUS

BROWN
 (into phone)
 This is Detective Brown, you have an
 intruder, private elevator!

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - MAIN ROOM

Farid leads his men for the front door as the family retreats
 to the Balcony Room.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - RECEPTION AREA

Farid and his men line up on the elevator, guns out.

INT. / EXT. MAJESTIQUE ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

The maintenance elevator opens within the INDUSTRIAL AIR UNITS every big building has. Alex BURSTS through the rooftop door and SPRINTS across the casino roof under the Vegas sun.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

The elevator DINGS. The Security Team tenses, the doors open -- empty. What the hell?

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - BALCONY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Daoud, Medina and Shada are in the room with balcony access. TRACK PAST THEM to the KITCHEN, where a HIDDEN DOOR in the wall opens. The catering door. Hamid creeps out.

EXT. MAJESTIQUE - ROOF - CONTINUOUS

Alex's sprinting, the edge is closer, closer, twenty three floors up, he's running out of room to stop.

He doesn't stop. Launches himself out over the edge --

EXT. MAJESTIQUE - 22ND FLOOR BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

-- but only falls ten feet, lands hard on a BALCONY just below. Winded, struggling to stand, he looks into the room. Strippers and some very surprised tech geeks stare back.

ALEX

Wrong room? You're shitting me --
What room are you? WHAT ROOM?

GUEST

2204?

Alex takes off at a sprint again, for the Balcony railing.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - BALCONY ROOM

Daoud and his family REACT as Hamid reveals himself. Daoud steps in front of his family as Hamid reaches into his jacket.

EXT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

Alex, expression screaming "bad idea bad idea", LEAPS off the first balcony, windmilling wildly, SLAMS down on the next, stumbles --

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - BALCONY ROOM

-- out-of-control SMASH-FALLS through the balcony glass.
Lets his momentum carry him straight into Hamid.

Hamid struggles. Alex hits him. Grabs the open BOTTLE OF WINE. Hits him again, the wine spilling everywhere. Finally Hamid goes down. PAMPHLETS in Arabic scatter from his hand.

Brown and the Security Men rush in. Brown looks at Alex. At the stalker. At the broken balcony door.

ALEX

Told you it was a point of entry.

Daoud takes the bottle from Alex's hand.

DAOUD

That is a Mosigny Grand Cru! Did you have to hit him with this?!

Daoud goes off on Farid, on Alex, just furious. During the tirade, Alex slumps back on the floor. Looks to Medina. They nod to each other. "Can you believe this?"

CUT TO:

INT. UNKNOWN LOCATION (THE HOUSE) - CONTINUOUS

ON A HIGH-TECH HOLOGRAPHIC SCREEN, that argument plays out. Pass THROUGH the image to see the room. Gilded Age meets future-tech, 3-D holograms in brass and wood. (*Important. This is not the "room full of screens" from a technothriller. We're grabbing "Holy shit, twenty years in the future" tech from a sci-fi show and dropping it into our crime show*)

CASSANDRA (30's, confident, sly humor) watches ON-SCREEN ALGORITHMS analyze footage of Alex vs. Hamid. Countless camera feeds, phone audio logs, a dizzying amount of DATA visualized in cutting edge images cycle past.

Cassandra checks a VIRTUAL GLASS-BOARD. Alex's FBI ID hovers. She taps it; "DATABASE CONFIDENTIAL/ENCRYPTED" appears.

Annoyed, she gestures. A SCANNER BEAM emerges from thin air, scans her eye. A beat, "ALL FILES/ALL ACCESS" appears and Alex's FBI file EXPANDS. Cassandra flips through old photos of Alex. "Terrorism" and "car bombs" figure prominently. She's watching him, appraising him ...

On another screen, a BLACK VAN stops outside the Majestique.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. MAJESTIQUE HOTEL - PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER - DAY

That BLACK VAN is parked where it can watch the action. WIDEN to find Hamid being loaded into an AMBULANCE. He's in a neck brace. Alex tuned him up. Nearby, Brown takes notes, Alex ices his fist. Punching people hurts.

BROWN

Looks political. Accused Raqib of crimes against his people, etcetera. Family say anything to you?

ALEX

Daoud's bitching I spilled his wine.

BROWN

Rich people.

ALEX

Rich people.

Alex's phone buzzes. He checks the text, double-takes.

BROWN

After that stunt, I owe you a beer.

ALEX

Rain check. It's Ginny. I have to go meet her.

BROWN

Of course. Say hi to the wife.

ALEX

Ex-wife.

BROWN

The ex-wife you have dinner with, and fix stuff around the house --
(over Alex)
You even sign the divorce papers yet? Last time you even mentioned the divorce papers was ...?

ALEX

It's complicated.

Alex is walking away, Brown still genially giving him shit.

BROWN

All I know, you've been getting divorced longer than my first marriage lasted. Hell, you get along better with you "ex-wife" than I do with my current wife.

ALEX

You could start by not calling her your "current" wife. Sounds temporary. Tends to spook 'em.

BROWN

You were smart, you'd make it work with Ginny.

ALEX

I were smart I wouldn't be jumping off balconies.

Neither Alex nor Brown sees the Black Van roll out.

EXT. VEGAS BAR - ESTABLISHING - LATER - DAY

An upscale bar in a professional area just off the Strip.

INT. VEGAS BAR - CONTINUOUS

Alex spots GINNY LEE at the bar. Ginny's his age, hard-working but with a quirky sense of humor. Everyone else is dressed for after-work drinks; she's in SURGICAL SCRUBS, her coat on the stool next to her. The BARTENDER's flirting with her as she nurses a cocktail.

BARTENDER

Let me get you another one.

GINNY

I'm good.

BARTENDER

On the house.

(winks)

You class up the joint.

The Bartender moves off. Alex slides in next to Ginny. She scrupulously avoids eye contact. He points to the cocktail. She flashes two fingers. Alex winces.

Ginny then shows him a CHIP: a 1 YEAR SOBRIETY CHIP. With a flourish, she tosses it over the bar, into the trash.

ALEX

Why are you in your scrubs?

GINNY

Remember the last Christmas you played Santa Claus on the children's ward?

ALEX

Three years ago.

GINNY
Mm-hm. Remember Tommy? Skinny,
nine years old.

The Bartender comes back with another cocktail.

GINNY (CONT'D)
No more.

BARTENDER
Hey, it's happy hour, gotta stay --

ALEX
I believe she said no more.

BARTENDER
(ignoring Alex)
It's on the house.

Alex drinks the cocktail in one swig. The Bartender glares at Alex. Alex, maddeningly, just keeps looking at Ginny.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
That'll be fourteen dollars.

ALEX
You said it was on the house.

The Bartender begins to speak. Alex's eyes slide to him. A flash of something very dark. The Bartender backs off.

GINNY
Alex King, friends all over Vegas --

ALEX
He had a lymph thing. Tommy Gold.
Skinny kid, asked Santa for a
lightsaber. Lymph thing.

GINNY
Acute lymphocytic leukemia. Got
into his brain.
(drinks)
Twelve hours ago, I look him in the
eye, tell him we're going to win.
(checks watch)
Forty-seven minutes ago, his mom ...

She's forcing the casual tone, all the tension in her hands.

GINNY (CONT'D)
... his mom just won't stop crying.
(drinks)
Just. Won't stop.

ALEX

You want to go to a meeting?

Ginny finally looks directly at him.

GINNY

There are days you need a roomful of strangers. And there are days you really just need your friend.

ALEX

So we grab pizza, go back to your place, you make me watch that goddam Downton Abbey.

She cracks into a grin. Alex grins back. The Bartender returns with the MANAGER.

BARTENDER

Him, he threatened me.

MANAGER

He threatened you. How?

BARTENDER

He looked -- I want to call the cops.

MANAGER

Hey Alex.

ALEX

Hey Tyrone.

MANAGER

Want me to fire this guy?

ALEX

Hell no. He bought me a drink.

Alex takes Ginny's coat as they leave.

GINNY

You really do have friends all over Vegas.

ALEX

It is my superpower.

EXT. GINNY'S HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - THAT NIGHT

A nice mid-price bungalow on a street behind the older hotels.

INT. GINNY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alex and Ginny are on the couch. Friendly, not intimate. Still working on the pizza. Mid-laugh.

GINNY

She was nice, she liked the date.

ALEX

She was into chakras and -- just don't set me up again, please.

GINNY

You can't be all about your job, Alex. You can't be alone.

ALEX

Big talk from the ex-wife who still wears her wedding ring.

Ginny pulls off her RING, puts it on the table.

GINNY

I just wear it so the surgeons won't hit on me. Surgical ward's ass-deep in God complexes and hair plugs.

ALEX

And nobody can see your shame.

Ginny glances down at her ring finger. She has a RING TATTOO, a Celtic pattern usually hidden by her wedding band.

GINNY

Ugh, I was nineteen! You used to tell me it was cute.

ALEX

That would be a lie. I was lying.

They laugh again. Alex clears plates out to a kitchen area.

GINNY

Thanks again. For coming when I called.

Crossing back, he looks at PHOTOS on her mantle. Most are Ginny with parents and happy child patients. A surprising number are set in rough-looking FIELD HOSPITALS.

ALEX

This job today, I've worked with the family before. Their daughter, real smart, asked me if knowing how bad guys think made me a bad guy.

GINNY

What'd you say?

Alex taps one photo: a field hospital, Ginny and local doctors posing. But Alex is there too, one arm in a bloody sling.

ALEX
Reminded me of when we met.

GINNY
Before or after I sewed you up?

ALEX
Just, there's a time I would've said
"Yeah. It makes me a bad guy."
Because I was.

GINNY
You were, you're not that man anymore.

ALEX
I'm always that man. This nutjob
today, I had him, I stopped him and
some part of me --

Alex pumps his fist softly, as if he could go back, hit Hamid again and again and again.

GINNY
But you didn't.

She rises as he objects, crosses to him (ring in her hand).

GINNY (CONT'D)
We are what we do. Everyone's screwed
up --
(taps heart)
-- in here or --
(taps head)
-- in here, so what we do, that's
who we are. Do good, you are good.
We've talked about this --

ALEX
That's my point, Ginny, you -- you
pulled me out of that life.
(beat)
You call me any time, for anything,
because we're still not even.

Eye to eye. Too close.

GINNY
God I wish we didn't suck so much at
being married.

ALEX
We were spectacularly bad at it.

GINNY

... we were.

(soft)

Maybe we're not those people anymore.

Both fighting it, unable to break the moment. Closer.

GINNY (CONT'D)

We both changed since then. For the better, I think.

ALEX

I should go --

GINNY

You'll come if I call?

ALEX

Any time. Always.

GINNY

(soft)

Hey, Alex. Meet me at my place.

She kisses him. Then a breath, foreheads together.

ALEX

You know, Cal was giving me crap about not signing the divorce papers.

GINNY

... I think maybe the only thing we suck at worse than being married is being divorced.

Alex breaks. Starts laughing. Taps her WEDDING RING.

ALEX

So you putting that back on or --

GINNY

Slow down, big guy.

Still laughing, they disappear into the bedroom. ON the RING sitting on the MANTLE ...

INT. GINNY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Dead quiet. But AT THE WINDOW, a shape appears. An ALARM WIRE is snipped. A noise, though, and the shape disappears. Alex emerges from the bedroom, heads for the kitchen area.

AN INTRUDER'S POV, handheld, slides in the backdoor. Moves into the house. Spots Alex in the kitchen as he pours himself a glass of water.

The KILLER takes out a small HANDGUN, moves forward, intent on Alex, until from Ginny's open bedroom door we hear:

GINNY (O.S.)
Hey Alex, are you up --

Alex turns and sees the Killer, DIVES CLEAR as the man FIRES.

GINNY (CONT'D)
LOOK OUT!!

The Killer pivots at her voice and CHARGES into the bedroom. TWO SHOTS ring out from beyond the door.

ALEX
Ginny? GINNY?!

INT. GINNY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alex crashes through the door. CHAOS of hand-to-hand as the Killer tries to bring the gun around, Alex tangles up. GUNSHOTS STROBE the room. Alex lands hard on the floor, next to the gun. He scrambles for it but then --

-- he sees Ginny. Dead. Blood everywhere.

ALEX
No, no no no.

Movement catches his eye. Whoever just attacked him, the man who just killed Ginny, escaped through one of the windows.

EXT. GINNY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Alex BURST through the back door, the Killer's gun in his hand. He cracked a shoulder; he doesn't care. Barefoot, bleeding, he vaults Ginny's back fence. Scans the darkness -- there. The Killer's dashing up the street.

Alex gives chase. His ankle folds, he still doesn't care. He's hurting himself in this chase, but this is a different Alex. That earlier flash of darkness is consuming him.

EXT. THE STRIP - CONTINUOUS

The Killer runs out into traffic. Horns blare, cars swerve. Alex follows him. He brings up the Killer's own gun, but he can't get a clean shot. Cursing, he keeps running.

It's surreal, a chase down the middle of the Strip lit by the bright lights of billion-dollar hotels.

EXT. THE STRIP - INTERSECTION - CONTINUOUS

The Killer breaks for the opposite sidewalk. The BLACK VAN pulls up in the parking lot next to him, a door opens, but Alex has him now. Raises the Killer's gun --

-- CLICK. Empty. Someone inside the van tosses the Killer a CLEAN HANDGUN, the Killer turns and levels it at Alex --

Alex is in his boxers, lit by the Strip, impossible to miss. The Killer squeezes the trigger, Alex braces for the shot --

-- when the car hits him.

A little SMART CAR, brakes screeching, SLAMS into Alex. Alex FLIES through the air and THUD-ROLLS onto the pavement.

Two gunshots meant for Alex PUNCH through the car's window.

ON ALEX, wincing at BROKEN RIBS. Fighting to get back up. A woman steps from the car, races to his side to check his injuries. No way for him to know, but it's Cassandra, from the surveillance room. She whispers, improbably:

CASSANDRA

Sorry about that, Alex.

What? What the hell -- now she's getting back in the car, just driving away. This makes no sense. Alex's trying to shake off the hit. Vision blurred, foggy sounds of bystanders and now sirens, he's turning, searching.

In the parking lot, the Killer, climbs into the Black Van and then ... gone.

Alex collapses to the pavement.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VEGAS HOSPITAL - ESTABLISHING - THE NEXT MORNING

Establishing the crowded hospital, the parking lot.

INT. VEGAS HOSPITAL - HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alex's wearing LVPD sweatpants and pulling a t-shirt on over taped ribs. He sits a moment, lost in the pain. Someone's TALKING to him, but it's fuzzy. A FLASH of Ginny laughing, the struggle, her body, the car and --

BROWN

Alex.

Brown's there. A UNIFORMED OFFICER stands guard at the door.

BROWN (CONT'D)

Alex, buddy, I need to ask you some questions.

ALEX

... yeah, sure, sorry.

Brown activates a DIGITAL RECORDER.

BROWN

This is Detective Calvin Brown,
interviewing Alex King, who has agreed
to preliminary questioning.

(then)

When Virginia Lee was murdered in
her home last night you claim someone
else was present.

ALEX

We ran down the Strip, a hundred
people got the guy on their phones.

BROWN

Lots of people filmed you running
down the middle of the Strip in your
underwear. No one confirms the other
man when you were fleeing --

ALEX

Not fleeing, chasing. The woman who
hit me with her car, she saw him.

BROWN

We can't locate her. The plates you
gave don't match any existing plates.

(beat)

Mr. King, did you meet Virginia Lee
at the Deuce Bar yesterday afternoon?

ALEX

You were with me when she texted me.

BROWN

(off notes)

At that bar to which you claim
Virginia Lee summoned you, the
bartender told us you were
"threatening."

Alex very deliberately reaches over and turns off the
recorder. Brown lets him.

ALEX

We're friends.

BROWN

We are. And real soon, they're going
to pull me off this case because
you're my friend, and put on some
guy who cares more about his clearance
rate than the truth.

(MORE)

BROWN (CONT'D)

(no answer)

I got an ex-husband confronting his wife in a bar, you're found with the damn murder weapon in your hand, and all you got is the "some other dude" defense? You were FBI, what's rule number one when a woman gets killed?

They say it together:

ALEX / BROWN

The husband always did it.

BROWN

Alex, give me something. Because right now every cop we want to be out looking for Ginny's killer is out making a case against you.

ALEX

... Cal, we were getting back together. Last night, we decided.

BROWN

That's convenient.

Alex's darkness flares, he actually tries to SHOVE past Brown. Brown and the Officer shove him back.

ALEX

I saw the guy who killed Ginny, I'm going to find him and end him --

Brown handcuffs Alex to the BED RAILING. Alex pulls on the handcuff, hard.

BROWN

C'mon, this isn't you!

ALEX

... no. It is. This is me.

Brown and Alex lock eyes. Brown reacts -- for one second, one second, he doesn't recognize the guy staring back. Carefully, he exits, tells the Officer outside the door:

BROWN

Watch him.

The door closes, leaving Alex alone. He sits quietly for a moment. Considering his options. His odds. Not good.

He makes the decision: grabs a THROAT MIRROR off the equipment tray. Bends off the mirror, making a rough LOCKPICK.

INT. VEGAS HOSPITAL - HOSPITAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Brown returns. Finds the room empty, the unlocked handcuffs hanging on the rail. Looks up and sees one tile of the DROPPED CEILING is out of place.

INT. VEGAS HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Brown grabs the Officer, they run down the corridor.

OFFICER

I stood right outside the door!

BROWN

I wanted you to stand I would've said stand not watch.

INT. VEGAS HOSPITAL - HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alex rolls out from under the bed. Runs into the corridor.

INT. VEGAS HOSPITAL - MORGUE - MOMENTS LATER

ALARMS from upstairs are muffled down here. The PATHOLOGIST, DR. SAM POOLE (30's, bookish) works with headphones on.

Alex slides in behind him. Without disturbing the Pathologist, he searches the corpses' EVIDENCE BAGS. Finds one of MEN'S CLOTHING. Slips out again, Poole none the wiser.

EXT. VEGAS HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER

In the BG, POLICE CRUISERS squeal to a halt outside the hospital. Alex, now in street clothes, strolls among the parked cars. He's checking underneath all the driver's side wells, tugging for unlocked doors. Suddenly:

POLICEMAN #1 (O.S.)

Hey!

The cops have spotted him. They start to run. He hurries, pretending he didn't hear them. Door, locked. Door, locked --

The police are closing in, now a CRUISER has swung into the parking lot, closing on him -- CLUNK. A car door opens. Alex slides in the passenger side --

Cassandra is sitting there.

CASSANDRA

About damn time.

She guns the engine and SQUEALS off past the cruiser. It brake-turns, tears off after them with the cherries flashing.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. VEGAS STREETS - RESUME SCENE - DAY

Cassandra's car can't outrun the two cruisers closing in on her. A POLICE HELICOPTER swings in above them.

INT. CASSANDRA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

ALEX

Who the hell are you?!

CASSANDRA

I'm Cassandra. You are Alexander King, top in your class at Quantico, specialized in profiling and systems analysis, Feds loaned you out to Interpol counter-terrorism, you spent three years hunting terrorists all over Europe and Asia.

ALEX

Could've pulled that off my resume.

CASSANDRA

Against direct orders from the United States Government, you shot Ibrahim Chechik in the face.

Alex goes cold. That flash again, the darkness.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Hey, he blew up American soldiers, I won't hold it against you. I'm pretty sure you car-bombed those Red Hand sex traffickers too. When you broke bad you didn't screw around, Boy Scout.

ALEX

You CIA?

CASSANDRA

Bigger.

She checks her mirrors. The cruisers are alongside, one cop calling in her license plates. Ahead of them, a cruiser SCREECHES into place, blocking the street. They're boxed.

ALEX

NSA?

CASSANDRA

Bigger.

ALEX

No such thing.

CASSANDRA

They just called in my plates. So here's something cool.

Cassandra looks at Alex steadily as they head straight for the roadblock, the Helicopter circles around again --

-- and then the cops just quit.

The police cars ease back, cut the sirens. The roadblock cruiser abruptly BACKS UP. The Helicopter just flies away.

ALEX

That's ... that's impossible.

CASSANDRA

"Impossible", good, stay with that. I need you to wrap your head around "impossible". People will die, people will die, Alex, if you do not believe the impossible in the next--
 (checks watch)
 -- eight minutes and fifteen seconds.

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

The car halts on the top level, where MR. JOHNSON (50's, Saville Row suit, utterly unflappable) waits. Alex tumbles out of the car after Cassandra.

JOHNSON

This is highly irregular.

CASSANDRA

But within the rules. Seven minutes fifty seconds.

JOHNSON

I shall not be rushed.
 (to Alex)
 Mr. King. This is complicated, so please listen carefully. A long time ago -- you don't have to know how long -- some extraordinarily rich people -- you would not believe whom -- developed a system which allowed them, for lack of a better phrase, to predict crime.

Cassandra takes out a TABLET. When she touches it, EQUATIONS and HISTORIC IMAGES OF CRIME spin by.

ALEX

You can't predict crime. There are too many variables.

JOHNSON

People are a constant. They always want what they cannot have. They will sin and struggle and kill to get it. Understand human nature ... the rest is data analysis.

Alex looks back and forth. They're out of their goddam minds.

ALEX

You realize you're crazy, right? This is --

CASSANDRA

"Impossible." C'mon, Alex --
(off watch)
-- six minutes forty nine seconds, you need to catch up.

JOHNSON

You came to our attention during a crime we were monitoring.

Cassandra pulls up footage of Alex and Ginny at the bar.

ALEX

... are you saying you son of a bitches knew Ginny was going to die --

JOHNSON

No. Not Dr. Lee's murder. The kidnapping.

Cassandra calls up the footage of Alex chasing Hamid. A DATA CLOUD around photos of DAOUD'S FAMILY appears.

CASSANDRA

Weapon purchases, flights to Vegas, they hacked Raqib's personal email. Profile fits kidnapers.
(grins)
I'm the data analysis part.

Cassandra plays a CELL INTERCEPT, European accents.

KIDNAPPER #1 (V.O.)

We have the timetable.

KIDNAPPER #2 (V.O.)

What about the mother?

KIDNAPPER #1 (V.O.)

Show we're serious. Kill her when you take the girl. Kill her and Raqib will do whatever we ask to save the girl.

ALEX

Kidnap Shada, kill Mrs. Raqib?

CASSANDRA

That's the plan, though we calculate --

A new DATA CLOUD appears on the tablet. Different scenarios scroll: "Girl saved" "Everyone dies" pop up.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

-- five-to-one during the snatch they accidentally also kill Shada, and three-to-two some innocent bystanders are murdered in the crossfire.

ALEX

No way, no way that guy yesterday could've gotten away with Shada.

JOHNSON

Correct. He was a dupe, sent by the kidnapers to test Raqib's security, spot any obstacles to their plan. And they found one. You. You're just a little too good at your job.
(pause)
So the they sent a man to kill you.

It hits Alex. It shatters him.

ALEX

The only reason Ginny's dead is because ...

JOHNSON

Because you stayed with her. They came to kill you. Dr. Lee was collateral damage.

Alex's physically staggered. Can barely stay upright.

CASSANDRA

Six minutes seven seconds, just tell him.

JOHNSON

With you out of the way, the kidnapers are now proceeding with their plan. For reasons of our own, we would like you to stop this kidnapping. Do what you like to the man who killed your wife.

That hooked Alex, despite himself.

ALEX

You claim you can predict this. When are they going after the girl?

Cassandra simply, silently points at the COUNTDOWN she's been calling this whole time. Five minutes, thirty seconds.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Call the cops. Now.

CASSANDRA

Average response time for a 911 call in Las Vegas is five minutes forty-three seconds. Too late.

(reading screen)

But we calculate you can make it to the Majestique in time.

ALEX

This can't be true. You cannot predict crime.

JOHNSON

There's a very simple way to to find out. Do nothing. If we are lying, or mad, just stand there for another --

CASSANDRA

Five minutes thirteen seconds.

JOHNSON

-- and nothing will happen. But if you're wrong and we can predict crime that woman, that woman who trusts you, will be killed and her daughter abducted -- by the man who last night murdered Virginia Lee.

(beat)

Look at me, Mr. King. Do I really look like I'm insane or lying?

Alex looks from one to the other. Johnson's unreadable. Cassandra's calm, but her eyes drill into him.

Alex breaks and RUNS. Cassandra tosses him her keys. He leaps into her car and peels off.

EXT. THE STRIP / INT. CASSANDRA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Alex punches "DIAL" on the wheel.

ALEX

Dial 911.

PHONE (V.O.)

911, what is your emergency?

ALEX

I need to report a --

PHONE (V.O.)

-- a kidnapping?

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - INTERCUT AS NECESSARY

Cassandra's on her tablet, Johnson with her. IN THE CAR, Alex stares at the phone. No. Way.

JOHNSON

This is your first and last warning, Mr. King. You can never tell the authorities, not the police, no one the truth about our organization.

CASSANDRA

We don't care if you lie, cheat, steal, whatever, but you need to use your own resources to stop the crime. Four minutes eleven seconds. I were you, I'd take a shortcut.

EXT. THE STRIP - INTERCUT

Alex turns the car off the Strip and onto one of the PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS so he can cut across the block. SPARKS FLY as the undercarriage tears.

EXT. MAJESTIQUE - PARKING LOT

Alex throws the car into a sideways skid, CRASHING across the lawn, SMASHING ornaments as it grinds to a halt.

CASSANDRA

Take the phone. You've forgotten to ask me a question.

INTERCUT AS NECESSARY:

INT. MAJESTIQUE - CASINO FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Medina and Shada, with Farid and the Security Men, exit the THEATER at one end of the complex.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - CASINO FLOOR ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Alex's scrambling, searching. No way he sees them.

CASSANDRA (V.O.)

Two minutes. Still waiting for you to ask --

ALEX

You. Do you count as my resource?

EXT. PARKING LOT / INT. MAJESTIQUE - INTERCUT

CASSANDRA

There you go! I've got a backdoor into every database in the world and some very sexy algorithms to crunch 'em. Ask me anything, no matter how obscure, I shall provide. As long as you ride with us, Alex, I've got your back.

Alex runs to a PANEL in the wall, levers it open.

ALEX

Prove it: I need the override codes for a Westech Fire Systems Control Panel Model Foxtrot Juliet Niner Niner Four Dash Romeo Two.

Cassandra types and:

CASSANDRA

That's one zero zero three seven zero two.

Alex enters the code. ALARMS BLARE and SPRINKLERS go off.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - CASINO FLOOR - END INTERCUT

When CASINO FIRE ALARMS go off, all sorts of interesting things happen. The DEALERS rake in all the chips, METAL COVERS slide out to cover the tables, the PIT BOSSES pull the chip carts. Everyone else panics and rushes for exits.

Alex VAULTS up onto one of the craps tables, leaps from one to the next, using the high ground to search.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Cassandra's watching the Majestique's security camers.

CASSANDRA
There a point to this?

INT. MAJESTIQUE - CASINO FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

ALEX
Looking for the kidnappers.

CASSANDRA (V.O.)
How does triggering the fire alarms
help you spot the kidnappers?

ALEX'S POV of FOUR MEN walking. Deliberate, unstoppable, and --

ALEX
They're the only ones not looking
for an exit.

Alex RUNS, fighting to keep his balance on the tables.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - GAMING TABLES

Farid and his crew shove panicking gamblers aside. They don't see the KIDNAPPERS approaching.

Now the GUNS are out. Medina turns. The first Kidnapper points his gun directly at her --

Alex THROWS HIMSELF down from the gaming tables and clears Medina out of the shot. The Kidnapper pulls the trigger a moment late, drops one of the Security Men.

If you thought people panicked when a fire alarm goes off in a casino, add gunfire.

Farid pulls Shada clear. The remaining Security Men scramble, shoot back. One Kidnapper drops, the others fire wildly.

Scrambling desperately, Alex pulls Medina into cover. He spots Farid dragging Shada away to safety.

MEDINA
Shada! SHADA!

ALEX
Stay down! Farid will get her out!

One of the Kidnappers rounds on Alex. Alex pistons up, knocks the gun wide but takes an elbow in the face. They fall into an exchange of blows, Alex taking the worst. He's tough but not a pro fighter. He's getting his ass handed to him.

With a scream Alex LIFTS the Kidnapper and SLAMS him onto a gaming table -- unfortunately it's a ROULETTE WHEEL. The Kidnapper's IMPALED on the wheel. He gurgles once, dies.

Alex gets the man's gun just as another Kidnapper starts FIRING at him. Alex and the Kidnapper run ON OPPOSITE SIDES of the SLOT MACHINES, using them for cover, shooting. Glass shatters, coins go everywhere. Alex's barely a step ahead, dives across the line of fire and empties his magazine. The Kidnapper gets one shot off as he goes down.

Alex rises, clutching his arm. He's hit. He hears a SCREAM, then a GUNSHOT. He limp-runs across the casino.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - PRIVATE ELEVATOR BANK - MOMENTS LATER

Alex finds Farid on the floor. Farid's taken a round in the shoulder, he's in agony. Alex rushes past him.

EXT. MAJESTIQUE - LOADING DOCKS - MOMENTS LATER

Alex bursts out into the loading docks behind the hotel. Shada screams as the doors SLAM on the Black Van. Alex and the driver of the Van lock eyes.

It's the man who killed Ginny.

The Black Van peels out. Alex runs after it, but as the Black Van disappears, POLICE CRUISERS scream into the drive.

Detective Brown steps from his own car. He and Alex see each other. Alex hesitates just for a moment.

No. He runs.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. GINNY'S HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - THE NEXT MORNING

Police tape on the door, a cruiser parked out front.

INT. GINNY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM / VARIOUS - CONTINUOUS

Alex eases in from a back door. He's a mess: gunshot arm, broken ribs, favoring the ankle from the balcony jump. Barely staying upright. He checks a window, clocks the patrol car.

QUICK CUTS of:

-- Alex searches the bathroom for a first aid kit.

-- Alex fires up Ginny's COMPUTER. Accesses a travel website.

-- He pulls EMERGENCY CASH out of a dresser drawer. Then rifles her wallet. Pulls a credit card.

Alex steps on something. Picks it up.

Ginny's wedding ring. All the stress of the last day hits Alex. He loses it. PUNCHES the mantelpiece, punches it again, torn between RAGE and choking SOBS. His knuckles bleed. He looks for the photo of them in the field hospital.

It's gone. And in its place is a SINGLE PLAYING CARD.

Alex takes the card. Ace of Spades. It feels weird. He TAPS it against the mantle. Doesn't sound right -- heavier.

He examines the ornate pattern on the back. His eyes light up. He knows this pattern. Alex exits, excited.

He left the computer on, though -- and ON THE SCREEN, suddenly, LINUX commands pop up in a box. FILES begin to fly by on the screen as the computer's remotely activated. PHOTOS fly by at lightning speed, documents ... all ending with the computer going DARK. Complete hard-drive wipe.

EXT. OCCAM HOTEL - ESTABLISHING - LATER

Unlike the Majestique, the Occam's all steel and glass, like it dropped out of some hipster low-earth orbit onto the Strip.

INT. OCCAM HOTEL - GAMING FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Alex passes the tables, checks the cards: each casino in Vegas has a pattern. His mysterious card matches the Occam.

Alex reaches the main ELEVATORS. They require an RFID KEYCARD to even operate. Tentatively, he TAPS the pad with the Ace of Spades. The doors CLOSE.

INT. OCCAM HOTEL - ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

The elevator doors open, not to a corridor, but a a set of ANTIQUE DOORS, oak and brass. "13" is inscribed on them.

Alex looks at the elevator buttons. The floors go from 12 to 14. There's a hidden floor in the hotel. Damn.

INT. THE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The doors open. Alex walks in -- and his mind is blown. The House in all its glory is a maze of wood and brass intercut with floating holographic images. The love child of Thomas Edison, Nicolai Tesla and Steve Jobs.

JOHNSON (O.S.)

What are you doing here?

Johnson is frozen in mid-stride. Cassandra steps in.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

You led him here. Unacceptable.

CASSANDRA

He was going to run. He needed to believe.

JOHNSON

There will be consequences.

(she nods)

Welcome to the House, Mr. King.

ALEX

You say you can predict crime? Show me.

Cassandra motions for Alex to move on ahead.

JOHNSON

Why are you so intent on involving him?

CASSANDRA

We need him. That's all.

Cassandra steps forward to tour-guide Alex. Johnson considers her. He does not buy that. Not one bit.

Cassandra leads Alex from a FLOATING EARTH, corruscating INTERNET LINES of light covering it, to a MAP of RIFD's ...

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

We've been inside the world's information infrastructure the day they started stringing telegraph wire. Secretly scanning and tagging every phone call, facial recognition algorithms on camera systems, backdoors in the Justice Department's servers, spyware in bank transaction software ...

... to a COMMAND CENTER of an ornate desk, with floating virtualizations over it.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Here's my girl. Backdoors into every phone server and government database plugged into any power grid on the planet.

She pulls up SAT-MAPS of LAS VEGAS. A TRAFFIC CAM image of Alex chasing the Killer appears.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

All tagged cameras.

IMAGES from a dozen angles showcase the street chase.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Phone logs, incident 99 Alpha 5, ten second window, cell and landline.

Now VIDEO STREAMS, individual people filming and uploading the chase. AUDIO of people: "Hello, police, there's a man running" "Dude, you will not believe what I'm seeing"

Alex's shocked. Shocked but sold. This is incredible.

ALEX

How do you process this much data?

CASSANDRA

A.I.'s do the grunt work. But calculating the odds for specific crimes, that's more of an art.

ALEX

You could end terrorism, human trafficking, hell you could solve half the world's crimes from right here!

JOHNSON

We could. But we don't. That would violate the rules of the Game.

"Game?" Alex reads off one of Cassandra's displays:

ALEX

"Serial Killer Chicago, second victim
5 to 1. Las Muertas drug takeover
15 to 1, conflict with Columbian
gang 20 to 1" --

(remembering, to
Cassandra)

-- you said "5 to 1 they kill Shada,
3 to 2 innocents are killed" these
aren't probabilities, they're odds.

(beat)

You're gambling. You're gambling on
crime.

JOHNSON

No, we are not. We are the House.
We process the data, decide the odds,
take the bets. The House always has
two members. Cassandra is the Dealer.
I am the Pit Boss.

ALEX

That's why you call it the Game.

Cassandra nods. Alex seems calm -- and CHARGES Johnson,
SLAMMING him against a display.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Who's doing this? WHO'S IN CHARGE?!

JOHNSON

You do not need to know that.

ALEX

Shada is a person! Ginny is -- Ginny
was a good person. They don't deserve
to be pawns in a Game!

CASSANDRA

Ginny was a good person!

Cassandra grabs the FRAMED PHOTO of the field hospital, the
one she took to lure Alex here.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

This is her, Doctors Without Borders,
right? The Sudan? That's where you
met her, saving lives, risking her
own life for others.

Alex's eyes flash to the photo, then back on Johnson.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

You don't like why we're helping you, fine, but we are helping you save an innocent girl. What would Ginny want you to do?

(close, whispering)

I've seen your file, Alex. I know how she saved you. You go back to being that guy -- it's like she never existed.

Alex, finally, lets Johnson go.

ALEX

Why bring me into this?

JOHNSON

Because without you there's no bet.

Cassandra calls up Ginny's Killer, henceforth known as:

CASSANDRA

Tomas Edribali, professional kidnapper out of Istanbul. Worked mostly Europe until now. When he targetted the Raqibs, his plan entered the Game and wagers were made.

Gaming odds and bets appear.

JOHNSON

There's no point to a bet unless there's two sides. You, unwittingly, evened the odds. So we were allowed to keep you play.

ALEX

No way. No way I can trust you.

CASSANDRA

You have a better chance to save Shada with us, with me helping you, than anyone else. The police, the FBI, anyone. You can make a difference, right here, right now. Or walk way.

Alex steps away, tormented. He pulls Ginny's wedding ring from his pocket. Forms a fist around it.

ALEX

... I'm not doing this for you, I'm doing it for Shada. And Ginny.

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)
 (to Cassandra)
 I don't need your help. You stay
 out of my way.

Alex's already moving. As he passes Johnson:

ALEX (CONT'D)
 When I'm done, I'm coming back here
 to throw you through that window.

JOHNSON
 I'll take that bet.

Alex is gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. VEGAS HOSPITAL - HOSPITAL ROOM #2 - LATER

Hamid, in his neck brace and handcuffed to the bed, stirs.
 A DOCTOR has walked in past the cop at the door. He's closed
 the door, walked over -- it's Alex.

HAMID
 YOU!

Alex slaps a hand over Hamid's mouth. Jams a NEEDLE into
 Hamid's IV, pushes hard. A moment later, he removes his
 hand. Hamid's already wonky

HAMID (CONT'D)
 What did you ... you put in me ...

ALEX
 Used to be married to a doctor.
 Picked up some tricks.

HAMID
 (loopy)
 ... cannot stop us ... We will bring
 down the ... enemiiessszzzstate.

ALEX
 Ah, you weigh less than I thought.
 Hamid, somebody sent you after Raqib,
 who was it?

HAMID
 Cannn't shtop us.

ALEX
 Was it someone you know in the city?
 Or did they call you?

HAMID
Even his own people hate him.

ALEX
Kid, you were a decoy. They used
you. Now focus, the door, who told
you about the catering door?

HAMID
(smug)
His own people ... Hate ... him ...

ALEX
Hamid, I --

Alex suddenly understands what Hamid's saying. Sonuvabitch.
He bolts.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - MAIN ROOM - LATER

Daoud and Farid (his arm in a sling) are arguing with Medina.

MEDINA

I'm telling you, Alex King was not one of the kidnapers! He saved me!

FARID

I didn't see that. I saw him run past me, in the same direction as the kidnapers.

DAOUD

Medina, you're confused, it's understandable. Farid is head of security --

Alex's suddenly in the suite.

ALEX

Wouldn't really go by that.

Alex SLAMS Farid in the face with his gun. When Daoud moves for the door, Alex points the gun at him.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Stay where you are, Mr. Raqib. At least until Farid tells us where your daughter is.

Farid stands, his free hand on the table to steady himself. Alex wobbles a bit himself. He's slowing down, losing his edge after the last two days. Farid registers it -- he just needs an opening, and he'll have Alex.

FARID

How did you get in here?

ALEX

Kitchen catering entrance. Still didn't lock it down.

MEDINA

Tell me you weren't part of this.

ALEX

I'm going to get her back.

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)

(then)

The kidnapper's name is Tomas Edribali. He's a professional. Professionals don't leave witnesses. You should've died in the casino.

FARID

That? That's your entire story?

ALEX

Phone logs. Edribali stayed in constant touch with his crew. If he has an inside man, like I know he has, that inside man has a burner phone on him.

FARID

Mr. Raqib, this man is insane.

MEDINA

Daoud, listen to Alex.

DAOUD

Medina, stay out of this --

MEDINA

Listen to him.

FARID

He's the one pointing the gun at you, he's the one --

Farid awkwardly reaches for his own weapon. Alex hesitates, he needs Farid alive. Daoud RUSHES ALEX. Shit, Alex doesn't want to hurt him, they tangle. Farid's gun is out --

-- Medina grabs a fruit knife and STABS Farid through his hand on the table. Farid howls. His gun falls to the floor.

MEDINA

Give me my daughter!

DAOUD

Medina, no! He's one of us!

Farid's almost screaming, his hand pinned.

MEDINA

Show us this phone, or I will cut it from you piece by piece.

Farid just nods to his chest. Daoud looks to Alex, then reaches into Farid's jacket. Pulls out a BURNER CELL.

Medina pulls the knife free. Farid collapses to the floor, sobbing. Daoud stares at the phone while Alex and Medina share a look. Trust and relief.

ALEX

Told you. Mrs. Raqib is always right.
 (to Farid)
 You have a call to make.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - MAIN ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Farid cradles his bleeding hand. Daoud holds Medina while Alex thumbs the CALL button on the burner.

DAOUD

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

She shushes him, comforting, as the phone rings.

ERDRIBALI (V.O.)

Why are you calling?

FARID

(into phone)
 I need to know everything's going
 all right.

INTERCUT AS NECESSARY:

INT. THE MALL - LOADING DOCK - INTERCUT

Edribali supervises as two other KIDNAPPERS pull old TARPS and DUMPSTERS into place to hide the van in a loading dock.

FARID

(into phone)
 Is she still alive?

EDRIBALI

(into phone)
 Afraid she'll tell them you handed
 her over? Don't worry, Farid. We
 need her to talk. When we don't
 need her to talk, it will be done.

Edribali hangs up. Frowns.

EDRIBALI (CONT'D)

That was Farid.

KIDNAPPER #1

Why did he call?

EDRIBALI

Exactly.

(MORE)

EDRIBALI (CONT'D)

(beat)

I want to see the notes again. On that man. King.

INT. MAJESTIQUE - ROYAL SUITE - MAIN ROOM - RESUME SCENE

DAOUD

What good did that do?

ALEX

Well, when I say the magic words, that call's going to be analyzed by the best equipment on earth.

Alex looks up into thin air.

ALEX (CONT'D)

"I do need your help."

Before they can respond, he's moving again.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Call Brown. Tell him everything.

EXT. VEGAS POOLSIDE - LATER - DAY

A hipster retro hotel. Alex -- limping, bandaged and beaten -- crosses the patio. His phone rings. He answers.

INTERCUT AS NECESSARY:

INT. THE HOUSE - CASSANDRA'S WORKSPACE - INTERCUT

CASSANDRA

And if I hadn't been listening in?

ALEX

When does that happen?

CASSANDRA

Never, actually. You really want my help?

ALEX

Yeah. I don't trust you yet, but I think you really want to help me find Shada. So yeah.

CASSANDRA

Okay, call was too short to trace but I pulled a little trick with signal latency -- they're still inside the Vegas cell tower array. They're here, in the city.

ALEX

Then we have a shot. How big would you estimate his crew is, based on the cell intercepts?

Cassandra calls up the audio logs, mutters calculations.

CASSANDRA

Maybe ten, less the two you put away in the casino.

ALEX

Big enough crew, plus holding the girl, he needs a base of operations.

CASSANDRA

I'll pull up a database of possible properties.

ALEX

Call me if you find anything, I'm going to check with a friend.

CASSANDRA

You have access to the greatest intelligence database in the world's history, and you "have a friend."

ALEX

Low tech's the best tech.

EXT. VEGAS POOLSIDE - BAR

A gaggle of YOUNG ACTORS AND ACTRESSES lounge and drink. SALLY RIDE (30's, exotic as hell) strolls up in a gravity-defying swimsuit. Smoothly, Sally palms the lead ACTOR a baggie of CRYSTALS.

ACTOR

Thanks. Now those parties, you can hook us up?

SALLY

Five parties, all off-book, two in the desert, invite-only for famous pretty people. I'll text you GPS.

ALEX (O.S.)

Sloppy.

Alex rolls in, takes the baggie from the Actor.

SALLY

I assume you're talking him, not me.

ALEX
You're flawless as ever, Sally Ride.

ACTOR
That's not mine, that's, um ...

Alex tosses back the baggie.

ALEX
You want a high-end party someplace
very private, Sally Ride's your gal.

SALLY
You almost said "man", I was going
to smack you.

ACTOR
Wait. You used to be a guy?

SALLY
I was never a guy, white bread. I
just looked like one for a while.

ALEX
There's a crew in town, enough men
and equipment they need to hole up
somewhere abandoned with access to
power. Someplace big enough to throw
a rave, boring enough not to. Figured
you'd know all the spots.

SALLY
Anytime, Alex. Text you a list.

ACTOR
Mustang Sally, right?
(off Sally)
"Ride Sally Ride", that's where you
took your name? Cool.

SALLY
Sally Ride, America's first woman in
space, you ignorant --

INT. THE HOUSE / EXT. VEGAS - VARIOUS - MONTAGE

-- Cassandra at the House, surveying cell tower intercepts.

-- Alex kicking in the door to a warehouse. Empty. He steps
inside to dodge a POLICE CAR going by with the lights on.

-- Cassandra has multiple video feeds up. Daoud and Medina
in their suite. Brown in a squad room briefing police.

-- Alex's searching an abandoned construction site. Nothing. He checks his list: too many entries. Checks his watch: not enough time. He's not going to make it.

-- Cassandra's ripping through bank statements, literally pulling them apart as they float in the display. A PHONE RINGS in one of her audio feeds.

DAOUD (V.O.)

Hello?

KIDNAPPER #1

Mr. Raqib. We have your instructions.

Cassandra scrambles to trace it we land on:

EXT. OLD STRIP - SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

The streets with the cheap hotels, penny slots. A knock-off ELECTRONICS SHOP is across the street from a HOMELESS SHELTER. A couple dozen homeless are on the afternoon line-up for beds. A SHELTER WORKER runs down a checklist.

Alex hands one of the homeless, VICTOR (18, hard-living) a fistfull of cash.

ALEX

Counting on you, Victor. And remember, black van!

Victor runs off. The Shelter Worker's cell phone rings.

SHELTER WORKER

(into phone)

Hello? ... Alex King?

Alex glances over. What's this?

SHELTER WORKER (CONT'D)

(into phone)

You have the wrong number. No I'm not going to ask if he's here.

She hangs up. The phone rings AGAIN. She button-kills it, goes back to her presentation.

SHELTER WORKER (CONT'D)

You must sign in, if you have a state I.D. you must --

Her phone rings. But as she moves to hang up again, a passing TOURIST'S phone rings. Then another. Then another. Every phone in a block radius, cell or landline, is ringing.

Alex grabs the Shelter Worker's phone. Answers it.

ALEX
I got it, thanks.

SHELTER WORKER
Hey! I'm, I'm calling the police!

CASSANDRA (V.O.)
Tell her average 911 response time
is five minutes forty --

ALEX
(into phone)
Five minutes forty-three seconds,
yeah.
(to Worker)
I'll give it right back.
(into phone)
What was that rule about secrecy?

INTERCUT AS NECESSARY:

INT. THE HOUSE / EXT.SHELTER - INTERCUT

CASSANDRA
Your cell battery's dead, you idiot.
I need to show you this.

Suddenly on the TV in the ELECTRONICS SHOP WINDOW, right
next to Alex, a GRAINY VIDEO OF SHADA appears.

ALEX
I'm officially terrified of what you
can do.

SHADA (V.O.)
*Father? Mother, please, pay them
what they want.*

Shada's fighting tears, holds a CARD with a NUMBER on it.

SHADA (CONT'D)
*They say wire the money by midnight.
They say all you need is this number.
(breaking)
I love you both. I love --*

Just as Shada breaks, the video cuts out. Alex's furiosus.

ALEX
They'll keep Shada alive in case of
a last minute proof-of-life, then
kill her as soon as the funds clear.

Now that the TV's in the Electronics Shop are back to their
own feed they show, as most do, what the CAMERAS for sale in

the store are looking at. And they're looking at Alex.
He's staring at a wall of himself, staring back.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Not again. C'mon, not again.

Cassandra hesitates then, softer than before:

CASSANDRA

Alex, how did it happen?

(no answer)

I wasn't kidding, your file, you
were a Boy Scout. Clean and square.
 Until they put you on that task force.
 You got out in the world and ...
 bodies started dropping.

Alex is talking to Cassandra, but looking at himself on the screens. Performing his own confessional. Indicting himself to himself. Angry at first, then slowing. Lost in the pain and guilt.

ALEX

Yeah, well, that's it, right? "Out
 in the world". Hunt terrorists here,
 in America, you got the badge, the
 warrants, the power. There are rules.
 But you hunt bad guys out there, in
 the world, they got home field
 advantage. No rules. You hunt them,
they hunt you back. The local cop
 who helps you, they kill him. And
 his wife. And his kids. Car bomb
 gets the Foreign Services girl,
 outside of Karachi.

(beat)

She was from Montana. That's weird
 to remember.

(then)

And you understand, no, there is a
 rule. One rule. You or them.

(beat)

It's not a big step to go from
 shooting back to shooting first.
 Not a big step at all.

He rests his forehead against the glass. Bone tired. ON
 CASSANDRA, we see she's ... satisfied. She's decided
 something. We don't know what. But she's decided.

ALEX (CONT'D)

(soft)

Please tell me you pulled something
 useful from the video feed.

CASSANDRA

Narrowed it down, but not exact.
Northeast corner of the city, in the
route 95 pocket. Why are you at a
homeless shelter?

EXT. SHELTER - END INTERCUT

ALEX

A friend gave me a list of places
the kidnappers could be holed up in,
but there's too many to search. Ten
thousand homeless in Vegas. If
there's an abandoned building in
this city, somebody's sleeping in
it. And if that place were suddenly
filled with guys with guns, they'd
warn each other.

CASSANDRA

Look at you, low tech.

Victor runs up. Alex tosses the phone to the irate Worker.

VICTOR

Mr. King, got a place. Out by the
highway so not a lot of us use it,
but a week ago Diego got cleared off
by guys with guns. Said they were
security, but no uniforms and they
had the black van.

ALEX

North of the 95?
(Victor nods)
Take me.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

EXT. THE MALL - LATER - DUSK

Alex and Victor consider the sprawling ruin of AN ABANDONED MALL, a victim of Vegas's boom/bust economy.

VICTOR

Diego said they mostly stayed down
this end.

HIS POV of the main doors. A FIGURE moves behind the glass. New MOTION DETECTORS by the doors.

ALEX

They rigged the entrance. Cops show
up, they kill her and bail.

Alex hustles down the edge of the lot, checks another angle.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Loading dock's clear, but wrong end
of the mall. How the hell do I get
from one end of the mall to the other
fast enough?

A SOUND disturbs them. Engines nearby.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Victor. Go. Don't look back.

EXT. THE MALL CAUSEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Some DESERT PUNKS are DIRT-BIKING in an on-ramp into the mall. Working little jumps, go-pro camera stunts.

One 20-something BIKER grinds to a halt as Alex steps in front of him. Alex's holding a HELMET.

ALEX

You really should wear your helmet.

BIKER

Screw you, man.

Alex SMACKS the Biker with his own helmet. The guy goes flying. Alex leaps onto the dirtbike and roars off. The other punk dials 911.

INT. THE MALL - NORTH END - FOOD COURT - MOMENTS LATER

There's an ad hoc headquarters set up here. Beds, gun cases, tables with computers hot-wired into cable lines.

Shada's handcuffed to a folding chair in the center. Various MIRRORED PILLARS break up the space. ABANDONED BANNERS hang, some half-falling, from the roof three floors above.

Kidnapper #1 walks patrol. Edribali monitors a computer.

KIDNAPPER #1
Wire transfer done yet?

EDRIBALI
Any second now.

The Kidnapper nods. Casually moves behind Shada and pulls a PISTOL from his belt. Screws on a silencer.

INT. THE MALL - SOUTH END - FIRST FLOOR

The mall's lit only by the moonlight coming through the glass roof. Some stores are protected by closed steel doors, some are just glass windows.

One Kidnapper guards this end. A BUZZ distracts him. He follows it.

INT. THE MALL - SOUTH END - ACCESS CORRIDORS

Every mall has corridors that run behind the stores. The Kidnapper pries a door open. The noise is coming from here. Not a buzz -- an ENGINE. Growing louder. The Kidnapper thumbs his mic.

KIDNAPPER #2
(into)
Hey, I think I've --

Alex ZOOMS UP on the dirtbike, grabs the Kidnapper and GUNS the engine. He drags the man along, slamming and bouncing him off walls. Pries the Kidnapper's radio and gun free. Drops him.

Alex keeps driving. As he does, he bites down on the comm wire, jams the comm set down by his front wheel.

INT. THE MALL - SOUTH END - FIRST FLOOR

Two more Kidnappers walk the floor. They react as their comms suddenly BUZZ. What the hell?

Then the same engine buzz grows from nearby. Before they can react, Alex and the bike SMASH through a storefront.

They scramble, fire. Their bullets track behind Alex. He's too fast on the bike. He TEARS down the length of the mall.

INT. THE MALL - NORTH END - FOOD COURT - CONTINUOUS

Edribali and Kidnapper #1 react to distant gunfire.

EDRIBALI

(into mic)

What is that?

The engine buzz on the comms blocks out all communication. Edribali checks his computer. Wire transfer's not done.

INT. THE MALL - SOUTH END - SECOND FLOOR

Another pair of Kidnappers run and FIRE DOWN on Alex as he drives the dirtbike through the abandoned mall. He's too fast, no sightlines. Bullets everywhere but none scoring.

KIDNAPPER #3

(into mic)

It's the guy from the Casino!

(engine buzz)

He's coming! Do you hear me?!

INT. THE MALL - SOUTH END - FIRST FLOOR

Alex sees a ROADBLOCK ahead: two more Kidnappers, firing straight down the length of the mall at him.

Alex swerves, barely in control, and cuts his bike UP the main stairs.

INT. THE MALL - SOUTH END - SECOND FLOOR

Alex and the upstairs Kidnappers run-and-gun from opposite sides of the walkway gap.

INT. THE MALL - NORTH END - FOOD COURT

Edribali and Kidnapper #1 both look up as the bike engine grows louder and louder --

The Dirtbike SOARS off the upper level, comes arcing toward them. Alex's just behind it, in mid-air.

They dodge as the bike SMASHES onto the floor. Alex clumsily hits one of the banners halfway up. It all comes down in a heap. Then he's up, firing, almost to Shada -- he spots Edribali.

EDRIBALI

You're kidding me.

The distraction costs Alex. The Kidnapper fires as he grabs Shada. It's a three-point gunfight. Everyone takes cover by the nearest pillar.

KIDNAPPER #1

I will kill her!

Alex takes a moment, panting, clearing his head from the rough landing. He checks the reflections, strategizes.

He tries to move on Edribali. Edribali moves at the same time. The triangle shifts, each man checking for the others in the reflections of the mirrored pillars.

EDRIBALI

Hey King, on the off chance you get out of this alive, I want you to remember something ...

SHADA

Alex!

Edribali moves for a nearby FIRE DOOR. Triangle shifts again, gunfire. Alex lines up his shot. He's got that door covered. He's got the man who killed Ginny dead to rights.

EDRIBALI

... remember. There are always three.

SHADA

ALEX!

The Kidnapper's dragging Shada farther away. Alex swings his aim, fires. That lets Edribali move for the door. Alex's losing his sightlines.

EDRIBALI

Me or the girl, King!

He's right. Alex can't get both of them.

Alex steps out and draws a clean line on the Kidnapper. Edribali sees, dashes for the door, firing on Alex. Mirrors shatter but Alex doesn't flinch. The Kidnapper draws on Alex. Alex drops him, Shada tumbling free.

Alex rushes over, gather up Shada. Pulls her behind a pillar.

SHADA

What are we doing? We have to get out!

Gunfire ERUPTS all around them. The six other Kidnappers Alex left in the dust back in the mall? They just caught up. Alex and Shada huddle, helpless, behind the pillar.

ALEX

Hold tight. There's too many.

SHADA
Hold tight for what?

SIRENS cut the air.

ALEX
Five minutes and forty-three seconds.

The Kidnappers SCATTER as --

INT. THE MALL - FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Police swarm through the now-unguarded front doors.

INT. THE MALL - NORTH END - FOOD COURT

Alex and Shada peek out as police and SWAT overwhelm the Kidnappers. The police spot them. They rush forward, screaming at Alex. He drops his weapon, raises his hands.

SWAT tackles Alex. CLOSE ON ALEX as he's face down, cuffed. HIS POV as Shada's pulled to safety.

He turns his head to the Fire Door. It's still half-open. Ginny's killer is gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MEETING ROOM - VEGAS PD - THE NEXT MORNING

Alex is handcuffed to the table. Brown slaps Alex's thick FBI FILE onto the table. They both stare at it like a snake.

ALEX
You read it.

BROWN
What wasn't redacted. Jesus, Alex, I knew you were a Special Agent, I didn't know you were suspended.

ALEX
"Suspended" is nice word. FBI frowns on killing people they want you to arrest.

BROWN
You were under pressure, these people killed Americans, I get it --

Alex SNAPS at him. Cutting off the justification. He's disgusted with himself.

ALEX

No. You don't understand. I liked it. What I did was wrong, I know that, but I'm wired for it. FBI called me home, I kept going for three years. Pulling new names off every body, working my way down the list. Until --

Alex chokes at the memory, plows on.

ALEX (CONT'D)

-- I take a bullet in the Sudan and get sewn up by this weird, funny, doctor who believes people can be saved. Who saves me. So I come home with her. Marriage doesn't work but hell, we're both addicts. What do you expect.

Brown stares at him. Finally:

BROWN

How did you know the kidnapppers were going to hit the Majestique?

(no answer)

How did you find the girl?

(no answer)

Reports have you in a hot pursiit, got called off, I can't a straight answer, what the hell was that about?

ALEX

You'd never believe me if I told you.

BROWN

I'm the only friend you have here. You don't talk, you'll go down for every crime they can't clean up.

ALEX

(quiet)

You still my friend? Even after reading that?

BROWN

... yeah, man. Yeah.

There's a commotion. Alex and Brown look out to see Shada reunited with her parents. Medina and Alex make eye contact. Medina nods. Alex turns back to Brown.

ALEX

Now that Ginny's gone, all I want to do is make another list. You understand? Put me inside.

Brown's interrupted by the same Officer he left watching Alex in the hospital.

OFFICER

Detective, there's an FBI agent here. About Mr. King. Do you want me to watch him?

BROWN

That worked out great last time. Take him with us.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - VEGAS PD - LATER

ON A SCREEN where GRAINY SECURITY FOOTAGE runs. It's a high-and-wide of a parking lot, with a glimpse of the street.

JOHNSON (O.S.)

Here you can see Mr. King and the other man come into frame.

WIDEN to reveal the footage is being narrated by JOHNSON. He's in a cheaper suit, speaking in a sincere Midwestern accent. A completely different persona.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

And here's where the gunman stops, turns to fire at Mr. King, and here the car hits Mr. King. And here, the gunman escapes in the black van. Which I believe you have tied to your kidnapping case.

BROWN

Where did you get this footage?

JOHNSON

The Bureau is pursuing an interstate car theft ring. We were grinding out surveillance videos looking for suspects. We just found this on the cameras from the Regency Casino parking lot.

BROWN

Would've been nice to see this yesterday.

JOHNSON

We had no idea what was on the tape until we reviewed it as part of our investigation. I assure you, both the Las Vegas Police Department and Mr. King have the Bureau's full apology. I believe this video evidence completely exonerates him.

BROWN

Whoa whoa. This is a start. We still have a full investigation, and Alex is in no way --

JOHNSON

Perhaps I was unclear.

He presents a letter.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Both the State and District Attorney have reviewed this evidence and decided Mr. King is to face no charges. He is free to go. Now.

Brown gets angrier and angrier as he reads the letter.

BROWN

I still need him to answer questions about the kidnapping.

JOHNSON

Oh, yes. The FBI has agreed to take that off your plate, it is after all in our jurisdiction. You're welcome.

He presents a second letter.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Again, you're to turn over all evidence and records.

BROWN

Ginny Lee's murder is still mine.

JOHNSON

And I wish you luck with it. But the kidnapping is ours.

(to Alex)

I genuinely feel awful about this. May I offer you a ride home?

ALEX

I'm fine.

JOHNSON

I insist. I'll take you where you
need to go.

Johnson steps away, keys in hand. Patient. Alex considers
what's probably going to happen next. As Brown uncuffs him:

ALEX

Hey, for what it's worth, you're the
best cop I've ever known.

BROWN

What the hell are you into, Alex?

Alex leaves with Johnson. The Officer sidles up to Brown.

OFFICER

Can't believe we didn't find that
tape first.

BROWN

Don't beat yourself up about it. We
never would've gotten a warrant for
that footage.

OFFICER

Because it's a federal case?

BROWN

Because there aren't any security
cameras in the parking lot of the
Regency.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

FADE IN:

EXT. VEGAS DESERT - ESTABLISHING - LATER - DAY

Johnson's government sedan raises dust on a desert road.

INT. SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

Johnson and Alex ride in companionable silence.

ALEX

That was smooth.

JOHNSON

The Pit Boss's job is to make sure loose ends are wrapped once the bet is closed. No evidence back to the House.

Alex puts out his hand. Johnson hands over his badge.

ALEX

I used to carry one of these. This is real. You're FBI.

JOHNSON

Glove compartment.

Alex does. Pulls out MORE BADGES, examines them.

ALEX

DEA is genuine, State Police badge -- Fisheries and Wildlife?

JOHNSON

More useful than you'd think. We are dug in very deep, Mr. King. Have been for a long time.

They stop. Johnson gets out. Alex follows a moment later.

EXT. MOUNTAIN VIEW - CONTINUOUS

Way off the main highway. Vegas is in the distance, a shining city in the desert. Cassandra waits for them by a CLASSIC CONVERTIBLE.

ALEX

This where you shoot me?

CASSANDRA

Shoot you? Alex, we're offering you a job

JOHNSON

I'm afraid I lied to you earlier, Mr. King. When I said there were always two employees of the House, Dealer and Pit Boss. There are always three.

ON ALEX, fighting to keep his face controlled. Edribali -- why did Edribali know that?

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

My predecessors understood that it is not enough to bet against crime. One needs someone to bet on, to root for. So we created the Player. One man, one man's resources and ingenuity, cast against the worst humanity has to offer.

ALEX

So yourbettors, whoever they are, wherever they are --

JOHNSON

You are assuming there is more than one.

ALEX

-- would bet on me to stop these crimes.

JOHNSON

And occasionally against you. Every wager has two sides, after all.

ALEX

So this was all a test?

JOHNSON

We prefer to think of it as seizing an opportunity. What do you say? Will you be our Player?

Alex laughs. A dark, ugly laugh we haven't heard before.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

You disapprove of the Game.

ALEX

I know evil. I've done it. What you have, what you can do -- you could prevent endless misery.

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)

Instead you gamble with peoples' lives, for your amusement. As bad as I broke, the worst I ever was ... I'm going to hell, but you people will beat me there. No.

Johnson looks to Cassandra. They head for their cars.

CASSANDRA

Nice riding with you.

ALEX

Just like that, you go find some other guy.

JOHNSON

Mr. King. There is always the Game. There is always the House, always the Pit Boss and the Dealer. And there is always, no matter what, another Player.

Cassandra hesitates. Drifts back to Alex:

CASSANDRA

But another Player who'd never save an innocent mother caught in the crossfire. Never risk his life to save a kidnapped girl.

Alex hesitates. Cassandra's careful. Her voice is neutral, but her eyes lock him in. Some part of her desperately wants to get through to him. Why, we don't know. But it's there.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

You're the first Player who cared about what happened to the innocents caught in the Game. A Player who actually wanted to help people, with access to the secrets of the House... imagine the good he could do.

"Do good." An echo of Ginny's words.

ALEX

As long as he played by your rules.

Cassandra smiles.

CASSANDRA

As long as he made it interesting.

Johnson and Cassandra drive off. Alex takes out Ginny's wedding ring. Looks at it. ON THE RING --

INT. VEGAS HOSPITAL - MORGUE - LATER

-- still in Alex's hand as he stands in the Morgue. Dr. Poole approaches with a clipboard.

POOLE
You know I shouldn't be doing this.
She's already processed.

Alex holds up the ring.

ALEX
This is hers, not mine.

Dr. Poole pulls out the MORGUE DRAWER. Ginny's body is covered by a sheet.

POOLE
I'll, uh, let you have a moment. I have a ton of paperwork. One of the bodies' clothes went missing, if you can believe it.

Poole walks away. Alex pulls the sheet back.

It's Ginny. But not Ginny. Empty Ginny. Alex steels himself. This is killing him. He takes her hand. Slides the ring onto her finger --

-- stops. No, he's tired, this can't be right. Raises her hand close.

There's no tattoo on her ring finger.

CUT TO:

INT. GINNY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - FLASHBACK

ALEX
... and so nobody can see your shame.

Ginny glances down at her ring finger. She has a RING TATTOO, a Celtic pattern usually hidden by her wedding band.

GINNY
Ugh, I was nineteen! You used to tell me it was cute.

ALEX
That would be a lie. I was lying.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. VEGAS HOSPITAL - THE MORGUE - RESUME SCENE

Alex turns her hand over and over. No mistake. There's no tattoo. This looks like Alex's ex-wife. Exactly like her.

But it is not Ginny's body.

POOLE
Everything okay, Alex?

ALEX
Yeah. Who brought her in?

POOLE
Some FBI agent signed off on the paperwork.

Alex covers the body, his hands trembling. He doesn't know whether to laugh or flip the gurney. Was this a mistake? A hint? A clue? What does this mean?

INT. THE HOUSE - LATER

Cassandra and Johnson review a display. Alex walks in.

JOHNSON
Told you.

CASSANDRA
He might be here to throw you out the window.

ALEX
I'm your Player.

JOHNSON
You understand it is a lifetime appointment.

ALEX
You let me do it my way.

JOHNSON
As long as you never reveal the existence of the Game, you're free to do the job as you see fit.

Johnson walks away. Alex turns expectantly to Cassandra. She hands him one of her CUTTING EDGE PHONES.

CASSANDRA
Welcome to the House. I call, you come. It means a bet is in play. You have until midnight that night to stop that crime.

ALEX

Any way I want.

CASSANDRA

As long as you play by the rules,
any way you want.

(beat)

I wasn't sure. That you'd come.

Alex and Cassandra are careful. Both know they're in a game.

ALEX

I'm not good on my own. Idle hands.
And hey, you have the best data in
the world. Maybe I can find the
people responsible for Ginny.

CASSANDRA

What then? What happens when you
find them?

ALEX

Whoever is responsible, no matter
who they are, how powerful ... I
will tear their world apart.

CASSANDRA

... fair enough.

ON ALEX, idly spinning Ginny's ring, as he walks among the
House's tech. Closer on the ring, closer, closer --

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - VEGAS PD - SAME TIME

Brown has a laptop open to the FBI PERSONNEL DATABASE, files
stacked. He's on the phone.

BROWN

Yeah, hi, Detective Calvin Brown,
Las Vegas Police. I wanted to ask
you about an Agent ... Johnson?

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - CASSANDRA'S WORKSPACE - THAT NIGHT

Cassandra's working alone. Something on-screen's DECRYPTING,
code streaming past. She pulls the FIELD HOSPITAL PHOTO
from a drawer. Is looking at it when her display DINGS.

PHOTOS zoom by. We caught a glimpse of these earlier. They
were the files pulled from Ginny's computer. For some reason,
Cassandra remote-wiped Giny's hard drives.

Mostly just home photos, Ginny with friends, Ginny with Alex back in the day. The DATES roll farther and farther back.

Finally, more of the field hospital. There's the digital photo matching the framed photo, then more from other trips, other countries -- Cassandra stops the scroll. This photo's taken in a BAR in some Third World Country: Ginny's got a drink in her hand, mid-laugh.

Next to her is Cassandra.

She's not dressed like a doctor, more like an experienced traveller in-country. This Cassandra is less guarded, amused.

Next photo, Cassandra has her hand on Ginny's shoulder. Eye contact, smiles. Close friends.

"DELETE ALL Y/N?" pops onto the screen.

Cassandra's expression now, in the modern day, is unreadable.

CASSANDRA
Place your bets.

She hits a key.

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW