

SLEEP WELL TONIGHT

Written by

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FROM BLACK:

INT. BUS, THE DESERT - MOVING - DAY

ELIAS HERNANDEZ, 17, Mestizo, features muddled between ethnicities, squints out the greasy windows of:

THE BUS (EXT. BUS, THE DESERT - MOVING - CONTINUOUS)

as it rumbles through a GOLDEN-BAKED DESERT. There's no signs of life, except A LONE BIRD OF PREY high in the sky.

ELIAS (RESUMING)

jerks up in his seat as the bus hits a BUMP.

He steals a careful peek at his fellow commuters: CONVICTS, whose faded tattoos litter arms, necks, some faces.

INT. PRISONER TRANSPORT, USFP INTAKE GATE - DAY

The BUS stalls by a HEFTY GATE - part of the exterior concrete wall of a UNITED STATES FEDERAL PRISON.

An ALARM SQUALLS, and the gate WAILS as it opens. The BUS drives into a lot enclosed by electric fence systems.

INT. PRISONER TRANSPORT, LOADING COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

A U.S. MARSHAL bangs his hand on the safety gate:

U.S. MARSHAL
Move out! Let's go, let's go!

Restraints CLATTER as the PRISONERS shuffle forward.

EXT. LOADING COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER

The CONVICTS move to an entry that leads to the innards of an ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING, while OFFICERS monitor them silently from the side.

Elias can't help stare at the ARMED GUARDS' SILHOUETTES in the SENTRY TOWERS.

Without warning, he breaks, and COUGHS vomit onto the rough gravel. The INMATE in front of him turns.

INMATE
(angrily)
What the fuck, man?

SGT. JASON SMITHER, 37, emerald army-style uniform over a beefy frame, wraparound shades, and an ORNATE CROSS tattooed into his the back of his bald crown, SHOUTS from the side:

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Cut the Mickey Mouse shit! Keep it moving!

Elias wipes his mouth with his sleeve.

INT. HALLWAY, RECEIVING AND DISCHARGE - DAY

The PRISONERS sit in claustrophobic HOLDING CELLS, lined down the corridor, as they wait for R&D.

Elias holds his legs close to his body inside the cage.

INT. R&D ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A CAMERA FLASH, as an R&D OFFICER takes a picture of Elias in his JUMPSUIT, holding a SLATE with his intake number on it.

Elias turns to side profile. Another FLASH.

INTAKE CASE MANAGER (PRE-LAP)
In order to verify your identity as an inmate to be admitted to this federal facility-

INT. INTAKE CASE MANAGER'S OFFICE - EVENING

Elias sits in front of a FEMALE INTAKE CASE MANAGER, 40's, her station plastered with paperwork.

INTAKE CASE MANAGER
- state the location of your sentencing court, and the name of the judge in your case trial.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
The court was in Las Cruces... I don't remember the judge's name...

She finds his jacket from a pile of manilas on her desk, then takes a LONG BEAT to read the text.

INTAKE CASE MANAGER
 You know a convict called Miguel
 Farro? He's an inmate here. Your
 victim was called Farro, too.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I don't know what that means...

The CASE MANAGER groans.

INTAKE CASE MANAGER
 If they're related, I might have to
 move you.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Can I stay in Arizona? Or move to
 New Mexico, that'd be even better-

She interjects, harshly:

INTAKE CASE MANAGER
 Convicts don't get to make requests
 in the federal prison system. I
 suggest you learn that right now.

Elias sinks into his seat. His gaze lands on a PORTRAIT on
 the CASE MANAGER's desk of a BLACK GIRL - her daughter.

INTAKE CASE MANAGER (CONT'D)
 You have any history of gang
 activity? Any affiliation that'll
 take care of you?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 No, Ma'am...

She chucks the folder on the desk, gives him a once-over.

INTAKE CASE MANAGER
 How old are you?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 17...

INTAKE CASE MANAGER
 Your family close by?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 My mom's a nurse, back home in New
 Mexico.

INTAKE CASE MANAGER
 Your father?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
My dad did photos for, like,
passports and immigration forms.

INTAKE CASE MANAGER
I meant, your father back home too?

Elias doesn't answer. The INTAKE CASE MANAGER lets the moment sit, before she continues.

INTAKE CASE MANAGER (CONT'D)
It'll be a times before they
sanction a transfer. I can put in a
request for PC in the meantime.

Elias shifts uncomfortably in his seat.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
What's PC?

INTAKE CASE MANAGER
Protective Custody. In case we
can't keep you there, I'll sign a
request to have you work yard duty.
You ever help your dad out in his
shop?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Not really, I was-

INTAKE CASE MANAGER
No. You ever help your dad out in
his shop?

She stares at him, waiting for him to get it.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Sure. I helped him out in his shop.

INTAKE CASE MANAGER
We have photographers on the yards,
take photos the inmates can send
home. Since you know photography, I
can place you there. That'd keep
you in the open, where the bulls
can keep an eye on you.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
(softly)
Thank you.

INTAKE CASE MANAGER
What's that?

Elias clears his throat.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Thank you. For helping me.

INTAKE CASE MANAGER
I'm not helping you. I'm just
making sure you serve the full
duration of your mandated sentence.

INT. HALLWAY, PROTECTIVE CUSTODY - EVENING

A C.O. escorts Elias down the white and hospital-green hallway of PROTECTIVE CUSTODY.

They pass singles, where PC PRISONERS pass the time reading, sleeping, vegetating. No life.

INT. CELL, PROTECTIVE CUSTODY - CONTINUOUS

Elias takes in the confined quarters: A bunk, a table no bigger than a paperback novel, a window too high up.

The cell door closes behind him, and the C.O.'s footsteps FADE AWAY, until Elias is smothered in silent solitude.

INT. CELL, PROTECTIVE CUSTODY - NIGHT

Elias turns restlessly in his sleep. Then he wakes with a GASP, his forehead beaded with sweat.

He walks to the cell door, leans down to the HATCH.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Officers, I feel sick...

No answer.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
Officers, I don't feel good.

Still, no answer.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
I'm having a medical emergency!
Please, how long am I gonna be
alone in here?

He BANGS on the door, then turns to pace around his cell.

Finally, he sits down in the corner, and the reality of his circumstances washes over him.

There, all alone in the dark.

FADE OUT.

FROM BLACK:

INT. FRONT ENTRANCE OFFICE - DAY

VICTOR CARRIER, 23, short buzz and smooth chin, waits with FELLOW C.O.s to pass through a METAL DETECTOR.

Victor takes in his surroundings like a newborn foal.

INT. CONTROL POST - DAY

Victor stands behind a SALLY PORT that DRONES as it opens.

The SAFETY CHECKPOINT hugs the outside wall of an EAGLE'S NEST, saturated with monitors and green/red-buttoned panels.

VICTOR CARRIER
Carrier, Victor.

CONTROL C.O.
Slide your ID through here.

Victor slips his ID through a sliver in the glass.

CONTROL C.O. (CONT'D)
First day checking in?

VICTOR CARRIER
Yes, sir.

The CONTROL C.O. turns to a colleague. She exits the room.

CONTROL C.O.
Welcome. Dodson's gonna take you down.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

C.O. DODSON and Victor walk down an administrative hallway in an undisturbed segment of the prison.

INT. C.O. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Smither and C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA, 45, talk casually at their desks when C.O. DODSON knocks on the door pane.

C.O. DODSON
New officer, Sergeant.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Enter.

Smither stands, as Victor moves inside. They shake hands.

VICTOR CARRIER
Victor Carrier, sir.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Sergeant Smither.

Dodson exits, as Montoya stands and shakes Victor's hand too.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Montoya. Where you transferring
from?

VICTOR CARRIER
This is my first set-up, right
here, sir.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Fresh outta pre-service? I like it!
Well, you couldn't have asked for a
better start up. We're a real tight
crew round here.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Uh-huh, that's right.

Smither presses a button on his OFFICE PHONE.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Buster, my office.

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO (V.O.)
Coming down, Sarge.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Buster's gonna show you what's
what. Hang tight for a minute.

Smither sits down, puts his boots up on the table.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
You got any family, Carrier?

VICTOR CARRIER

I got married not too long ago,
sir. We're actually expecting our
first child...

Smither scratches the inside of his nose with his thumbnail.

SGT. JASON SMITHER

Congrats... I got six, myself.
They're a pain in my ass, but I
love 'em to death. How old's your
boy again, Montoya?

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA

My boy would have been four...

Montoya's face falls, and the room goes ice-cold.

SGT. JASON SMITHER

Shit, I'm so sorry, I didn't
mean... Fuck...

(beat)

You know what happened to Montoya's
boy, Carrier?

Montoya grins, a twinkle in his eye as he winks at Victor.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA

I pulled out.

Smither LAUGHS COARSELY, which builds to a COUGHING FIT.
Montoya holds up his hands apologetically.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA (CONT'D)

We're just fucking with you, man.

Victor laughs along carefully, as A PROTECTIVE CUSTODY C.O.
slips his head through the door.

PC C.O.

Sarge, mind coming down to PC?

SGT. JASON SMITHER

Everything all right?

PC C.O.

Yeah, yeah. They just need you down
there.

Montoya follows Smither to the door.

SGT. JASON SMITHER

Buster's gonna be down here in a
second. We'll catch up later, okay?

Smither and Montoya exit, leaving Victor alone in the office.

On Smither's desk: There's a HOLIDAY PICTURE of SMITHER with a Corona, a PERKY BLONDE and SIX KIDS, all in beachwear.

On the wall: A POSTER of a moodily lit PRISON BLOCK, with the foreboding text:

**SLEEP WELL TONIGHT
WE'LL KEEP YOUR NIGHTMARES IN THEIR CELLS**

INT. PROTECTIVE CUSTODY HALLWAY - DAY

Smither and Montoya walk down the hallway of PROTECTIVE CUSTODY. PC OFFICERS wait outside Elias' cell.

PC OFFICER
He wanted to talk to someone,
wouldn't take no for an answer.

Elias' exasperated SHOUTS reverberate from within the room.

INT. PROTECTIVE CUSTODY, CELL - CONTINUOUS

Elias' LUNCH drips down the wall, a TRAY on the floor. An exhausted Elias stops YELLING when he sees Smither outside.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
You did this?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I can't be in here anymore, sir.
I'm sick, or something. I'm having
nightmares-

SGT. JASON SMITHER
That's why you called me down here?
(to the PC OFFICER)
He's in here voluntarily, correct?

PC OFFICER
Correct, sir-

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Why are you wasting my time? I
could care less that he doesn't
want special treatment. Montoya,
oblige him - move him into
population on C. He can clean the
goddamn meatloaf off the wall
himself, too.

Smither exits down the hallway.

The OFFICERS look to Montoya, the oldest of them. He sighs, then turns to Elias.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
I wouldn't opt out of PC if I were you, Hernandez. Once you're out, you can't just go back-

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
He said I was voluntary, sir. I can't be in here anymore.

Montoya looks at Elias with pity.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Here's some advice I recommend you follow if you're going into population: Don't get involved, don't talk to nobody. Just tough it out. You got that?

INT. C BLOCK, SEPARATION GATE - DAY

Elias waits behind the bars of the C BLOCK SAFETY GATE. INMATE WALLA hammers the air.

The GATE CHUTE opens up into the belly of the beast: C BLOCK.

INT. C BLOCK, FLOOR TIER - CONTINUOUS

Elias steps along the FIRST FLOOR of the aquarium: 200 cells, three tiers high. INMATES see Elias, and soon a collage of SHOUTS pummel him:

INMATE (O.S.)
New fish in the fish tank!

The orchestra of MENACING SHOUTS crescendos from above.

INT. JAMES LUTHER SPRING'S CELL - CONTINUOUS

Elias stares at his cellie with wide eyes:

JAMES LUTHER SPRING, 54, BOLD SWASTIKAS placed symmetrically on his neck, and SHAMROCKS bedizened with the number 666 branded onto his arms, is writing at his slim desk.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
New cellie, Spring.

Spring looks up, and his pale blue eyes stare at Elias.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA (CONT'D)
You mind taking him down to laundry
to get his gear?

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
I'll make sure someone gets it
done. Montoya, could you have one
of the C.O.s bring up some cleaning
gear?

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
I'll tell 'em.

Montoya exits down the tier. Elias looks after him.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
You can come on in.

Elias takes a careful step inside the cell, places his few
belongings on the free bunk opposite Spring.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING (CONT'D)
What's your name?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Elias...

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
Full name.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Elias Hernandez.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
What're you in for?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Federal trafficking... I was
trafficking narcotics.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
Muling what?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Marijuana.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
You don't get pen-time for moving
grass. What you lying to me for?

Spring stares at him, expression cold. Elias clears his
throat, buying some time.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I drove sizable quantities. Over
state lines, which made it a
federal offense...

Spring squints.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
You bring anything in with you?
Pot, uppers, hash, amphet, coke,
horse?

Elias shakes his head.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING (CONT'D)
Good, cause I don't want junk in my
cell. You're gonna clean the unit
before breakfast, every morning.
While you're here, be respectful of
the fact that you're a guest, and
we'll get along just fine.
(beat)
My name's James Luther Spring. You
can call me Spring, or Mr. Spring.
I don't care neither way, so long
as it's one of those two.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Yes, sir...

Spring goes back to his writing.

Elias dips into his bunk. He steals a glance at Spring's side
of the cell: Hardcover books under the cot, portraits and
sketches of architectural wonders pinned to the wall.

INT. STAIRWAY, C BLOCK - DAY

Victor's face is locked into a combative frown. Work mode. He
wears fatigues, slightly too big.

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO, 42, morbidly obese, HUFFS with effort as
he leads the way up the C BLOCK STAIRWAY.

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO (PRE-LAP)
350-400 prisoners on C. Then
there's all the other yards.

INT. C BLOCK THIRD TIER - DAY

Victor and Buster stand on the third tier. It's quieter here,
and they have an overview of the whole block below.

VICTOR CARRIER
How many C.O.s on patrol, sir?

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO
Two or three per block.

Victor looks at him incredulously.

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO (CONT'D)
We're at 180 percent capacity. More
coming in every day, son.
(off Victor's expression)
Oh, don't worry. They're so busy
fucking each other up, they don't
have time for us.

Buster checks his watch, pats Victor on the back.

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO (CONT'D)
Walk a round. I'll wait here.

INT. C BLOCK, SECOND TIER - DAY

Victor patrols. INMATE's FACES slip out the gate.

INMATE (O.S.)
Got a cowboy on C, Ty!

VICTOR CARRIER
Do me a favor? Slide your head back
inside your unit?

INMATE
I ain't doing you no muthafuckin'
favors, man.

The INMATE waves him off. Victor hesitates, then exits down the tier, defeated.

EXT. C YARD - DAY

Each corner of the yard is marked by ARMED SENTRY TOWERS.

Elias squints in the harsh sunlight, looks around at the strictly SEGREGATED GROUPS in each section of the yard.

He sees Spring sit with the WHITES, and walks over to their territory, lingering inconspicuously on their perimeter.

EXT. NORTEÑOS SECTION, C YARD - CONTINUOUS

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ, 27, the word "AZTECA" tattooed below his clavicles, is seated amongst the NORTEÑOS.

He sees Elias by the WHITES, turns to the SHOT-CALLER, MIGUEL FARRO, 51, by his side. Miguel looks up, sees Elias.

EXT. ARYAN BROTHERHOOD SECTION, C YARD - CONTINUOUS

An ARYAN BROTHER nods to HANSEN, 26, slicked-back hair, horse-shoe moustache, black sunglasses. Hansen sees Farro and Spectro approaching, with a NORTEÑO BODYGUARD by their side.

Hansen pokes Spring, sitting next to him. Spring turns, sees the NORTEÑOS approach. He whispers something in Hansen's ear.

EXT. C YARD - CONTINUOUS

Elias wipes gravel back and forth with a shoe.

MIGUEL FARRO (O.S.)
(in Spanish)
What you doing over here?

Elias looks up, sees the group of NORTEÑOS approaching.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING (O.S.)
Little far from home, Farro.

At the mention of Farro's name, Elias tightens up, looks at the NORTEÑO SHOT-CALLER with wide eyes.

Spring stands calmly to the side, flanked by Hansen and an ARYAN BROTHERHOOD BODYGUARD.

MIGUEL FARRO
You can't go grabbing our guys just
cause you need soldiers, Spring.

Spring CLICKS his tongue. He turns to Elias.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
What are you, boy?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
(stuttering)
Who, me?

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
Yeah, you. Where you from?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
New Mexico.

Hansen SCOFFS next to Spring.

HANSEN
Fuck off with the bullshit, you
know what he mean, boy.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
My mom's from here. My dad's
family's from Nicaragua...

HANSEN
Your mom likes jumping on some of
that brown dick, huh?

Hansen SPITS on the gravel, looking challengingly at the
NORTEÑOS in front of him as he does so.

Farro returns his attention to Elias.

MIGUEL FARRO
¿Du nombre, chamaco?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
(nervously)
Hernandez...

Spectro, next to Farro, shrugs nonchalantly.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
Well, his name Hernandez, so...

Elias shakes with fear, but keeps his jaw locked to hide it.
TIME SLOWS, as he looks up at the sky and sees that same
image that he saw earlier:

*A BIRD OF PREY circling above, until its contour is swallowed
by the glare of the sun.*

Hansen whispers something to Spring, who shakes his head.

MIGUEL FARRO
We're taking him, Spring. His
name's Hernandez, he's one of ours.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
I don't care if his name is
Emiliano Zapata. If you're taking
him, I'd like to see you take him.

They stare each other down, but Farro's eyes TICK for just a
second.

MIGUEL FARRO
 Fuck it. Kid's so fresh out the
 water, he's breathing through
 gills.

Farro leaves with Spectro and his BODYGUARD.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
 Sort the kid out, Hansen.

EXT. NORTEÑOS SECTION, C YARD - CONTINUOUS

As he walks back to his turf, Farro looks to the ARYAN
 TABLES, where Spring is sauntering back to his own turf also.

MIGUEL FARRO
 (to himself)
Hijo de puta...

He SPITS, then continues back to the NORTEÑO SECTION.

EXT. C YARD - CONTINUOUS

HANSEN
 Where your papers?

Elias has no clue. Hansen CLAPS his hands.

HANSEN (CONT'D)
 Court documents, legal papers, all
 that shit, man!

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I don't know! I don't have them.

Hansen prods a finger into Elias' sternum.

HANSEN
 If you're hiding something, I will
 find out. And then I'll kill you
 myself.
 (beat)
 How much money you got in your
 account?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I don't have any money...

HANSEN
 Then you best find some, cause you
 start paying rent now, and that
 shit don't go on Layaway.

He turns to the WHITE TABLES. Elias hesitantly follows him.

HANSEN (CONT'D)
Where you think you're going? Go
hang with the fucking Natives.

Hansen points to the back of the yard, where a RAGGED GROUP of INMATES sit in solitude. He exits, back to his locals.

Elias takes a breath to calm his shaking hands.

EXT. NATIVE SECTION, C YARD - CONTINUOUS

Elias looks at who he's been jettisoned with: SENILE MEN, NATIVE AMERICANS, ANCIENT ASIANS. The prison weak. Losers.

Nobody acknowledges him, as Elias sits down on a bench.

INT. TABLES, COMMON AREA, C BLOCK - AFTERNOON

Victor and Buster pass down the aisle, making their rounds.

At one of the tables, TERRY EDWARDS, 24, a white Peckerwood, plays cards with INMATES OF DIFFERENT RACES. He SLAMS his hand into the metal table as the dealer turns a card.

TERRY EDWARDS
Quit pulling that fifth-street-get-lucky-quick shit, niggah!

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO
Slow your roll, Edwards.

Terry looks at the officer, takes a breath to calm himself.

Victor and Buster pass on down the aisle, past Elias, who is on the phone in the common area's corner:

EXT. PHONES, COMMON AREA, C BLOCK - SAME TIME

Elias hears a CRACKLE through the receiver as his MOM, MARY HERNANDEZ, 44, picks up.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
Hello?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Hey, Mom. It's me...

MARY HERNANDEZ
Elias?

Mary starts to CRY on the other end. Then she speed-guns, talking rapidly:

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
Elias, I tried calling, but they
wouldn't put me through to you,
wouldn't even give you a message-

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Slow down, Mom.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
I've been worried sick! Are you all
right?

Elias looks around at the hardened CONVICTS around him.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Yeah, everything's fine.

INT. ENTRANCE, COMMON AREA, C BLOCK - SAME TIME

Victor and Buster stand to the side of the common area. An INMATE stares down Victor as he passes.

Buster JERKS UP, as he hears YELLS from the CARD TABLE. He turns to Victor, nods his head towards the action.

INT. TABLES, COMMON AREA, C BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

Terry hovers over the table:

TERRY EDWARDS
This bitch-ass nigger dealing from
the bottom of the deck-

Victor walks over, Buster supervising in the background.

VICTOR CARRIER
What's going on?

TERRY EDWARDS
Motherfuckers cheating me outta my
commisary!

Victor looks to the PLAYER that Terry points at.

POKER PLAYER #2
What you lookin' at me for? I
didn't do shit.

VICTOR CARRIER
Games over, guys.

POKER PLAYER #3
The fuck it is, little man. We're
still playing.

TERRY EDWARDS
He told you to take a hike, boss.
We'll sort it out ourselves.

Victor looks at the CARD PLAYERS, unsure of how to react.

EXT. PHONES, COMMON AREA, C BLOCK - SAME TIME

Elias looks over at the commotion behind him.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
This has been really hard on me,
Elias... I'm trying to help you, I
really am.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I know.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
But I can't talk to lawyers every
day. I can't think about you in
there all the time, it's too
hard...

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I know, Mom. I'm sorry...

Elias turns away from the fight at the tables, holds a finger
in his ear to block out the noise.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
Mom, do you think you could wire me
some money? Please?

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
I've spent so much money on legal
counsel, everything. I'm working
double shifts. I can't keep running
to catch up, Elias.

Elias looks dejected.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
No, I understand, I understand-

INT. TABLES, COMMON AREA, C BLOCK - SAME TIME

At the card table, Buster walks over to take control of the situation.

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO
You heard what the officer said.

TERRY EDWARDS
It's all good, Officer Brecko-

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO
Not gonna say it again: Get moving, gentlemen!

TERRY EDWARDS
What now, Fat Boy? Playing tough cause you wanna impress the duck?

Terry looks to the CARD PLAYERS, who snicker.

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO
Who are you trying to impress, Edwards? Last I heard, you're just a cheap prison pocket everyone else moves their contraband around in. Or am I wrong?

TERRY EDWARDS
Fuck you, man.

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO
Care to repeat that, Edwards?

TERRY EDWARDS
I said "Fuck you", motherfucker!

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO
I'm confiscating your drawing materials. Go get 'em now.

Terry STARES defiantly at Buster. The officer dips a hand to grasp the handle of his PR-24 BATON.

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO (CONT'D)
Don't make me wait, or I'll put you in the fucking Hole.

Terry reluctantly gets up. INMATES laugh as he passes.

TERRY EDWARDS
The fuck you laughing at?

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO
 Move it, Edwards!
 (to the CROWD)
 Show's over, gentlemen!

Buster takes a hard look around, before he and Victor move back to the side.

INT. ENTRANCE, COMMON AREA, C BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

VICTOR CARRIER
 Sorry, I messed that up...

Buster pats Victor on the shoulder.

C.O. BUSTER BRECKO
 You'll get the hang of it. You
 gotta assert yourself, right away.
 It's like dealing with kids, you
 gotta make 'em respect you.

EXT. PHONES, COMMON AREA, C BLOCK - SAME TIME

Elias looks away from the commotion at the tables as the conflict ends and Terry exits.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 I can probably get an advance on my
 paycheck, wire you some of that,
 but it won't be much. What do you
 need money for?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I just wanted to buy some stuff. A
 toothbrush, toothpaste, snacks...

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 If you write me a list, I can send
 you anything you need?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I don't think they'll let you send
 that stuff in here, Mom.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 Oh... Right...

Mary starts to CRY again on the other end.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 I just can't believe you're in
 there...

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Stop, Mom. It's okay...

Elias looks down. A tear streams down his face, but he quickly wipes it, making sure none of the CONVICTS saw it.

Then Elias' brow arches in concern as he sees TERRY silently approach Buster and Victor with determined footsteps.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
Hey, Mom... I have to go...

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
Something wrong? We hardly talked.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
No, no, no, everything's all right,
I just have to go.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
Can you call in the evenings? I'm
working late, so I-

Elias' expressions turns to horror as:

THWACK! -- TERRY POUNCES. His SHIV moves in a FLURRY, stabs into Buster's BELLY -- eight, nine, ten times IN A SECOND.

Elias fumbles with the receiver, hangs it up with a SMACK!

INT. ENTRANCE, COMMON AREA, C BLOCK - SAME TIME

Terry's BLADE STRIKES into Buster's THROAT and FACE as the OFFICER collapses with a GUTTURAL GROAN, leaking blood.

Victor reacts immediately: DRAWS his baton and BELTS Terry's HEAD. He fumbles with his SpiderAlert transponder -- CLICKS it furiously.

VICTOR CARRIER
(into his radio)
10-33! 10-33! Officer down!

INT. PHONES, COMMON AREA, C BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

Elias stands nailed to the floor. Around him, INMATES make ANIMAL NOISES -- spectators in a perverse zoo.

Above, a SHRILL SIREN BLARES through the block.

The C BLOCK C.O. sprints past Elias:

C BLOCK C.O. (O.S.)
 Requesting immediate assistance to
 C! I need medical down here!

The INMATES around Elias quiet, as Spring approaches calmly.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
 Let's not hang around here until
 trouble starts brewing, gentlemen.

The INMATES listen, and start to disperse.

Spring taps Elias gently on the shoulder, turns him toward their cell. Elias follows, but he can't take his eyes off Buster's body.

INT. C BLOCK ENTRANCE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

BOOTED FEET sprint down the C Block entrance hallway, as a SQUAD OF C.O.s -- Smither and Montoya with them -- burst through the entrance, batons ready to strike.

INT. ENTRANCE, COMMON AREA, C BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

Victor tries to plug the GASHES in Buster's throat with his hands, but blood pools out between his fingers.

Behind Victor, the C.O. RESPONSE SQUAD, led by Smither, pushes back INMATES.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
 Back! Get the FUCK back!

INT. JAMES LUTHER SPRING'S CELL - MOMENTS LATER

Spring shuts the cell door, goes to rests on his bunk, as though nothing's happened.

Elias stays by the door. He listens to the SOUNDS of the C.O.s fighting to save Buster's life below:

SGT. JASON SMITHER (O.S.)
 You're all right, brother... Hurry
 up!

MEDICAL C.O. (O.S.)
 I'm trying!

SGT. JASON SMITHER (O.S.)
 Why isn't the rest of medical down
 here? He's fucking bleeding out!

Suddenly, there's a LONG STRETCH of SILENCE. The PRISONERS CHEER as they realize the grisly conclusion.

Spring reads in his bunk, calmly turns a page.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
Officer Brecko didn't make it.

Elias hasn't blinked once this whole time.

INT. C BLOCK, COMMON AREA - CONTINUOUS

Smither sees the MEDIC's expression. He CHUCKS his baton into the ground in anger.

Victor, shell-shocked, stares at the body with glazed eyes.

VICTOR CARRIER
(stuttering)
I don't know what... It happened-

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Montoya.

Montoya walks over, shakes Victor's shoulders softly.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Carrier. Carrier...

VICTOR CARRIER
It just happened-

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Get him the fuck outta here,
Montoya!

Montoya leads Victor out of the block. Victor wipes his blood-soaked hands off on his uniform.

Smither and the REMAINING C.O.s stand like somber statues next to Buster's inanimate body in the empty common area.

FADE OUT.

FROM BLACK:

INT. JAMES LUTHER SPRING'S CELL - DAWN

Elias is awoken by the BLARE of the MORNING ALARM.

Spring sits on the bunk's edge with a straight back, chin resting on his chest. He breathes steadily: *In-out, in-out...*

A FOOD CART wheels up to the cell, pushed by a C.O., who slides the trays into the cell, where Elias accepts them.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
Pass Jimmy the paper on my desk.

Elias looks down, sees a yellow folded piece of paper, which he picks up, hands to the guard through the hatch.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING (CONT'D)
You need any books or reading materials?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Me?

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
Don't ask if I'm talking to you all the time, it bothers me. What do you read?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I don't really read...

Spring stares at him, as though that's a personal insult.

C.O. JIMMY (O.S.)
I'll bring these up here ASAP.

The FOOD C.O. exits down the tier with the cart. Elias sits down on his cot, with his metal tray in his lap.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
When I ask if you want some literature, that's a courtesy I'm extending you.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Thanks, Mr. Spring.

Spring shakes his head. Then he dips a hand under his bunk, and fishes out a copy of Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, which he tosses to Elias.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
Get started. I got work to do, so you need something to fill your time, apart from bothering me.
(beat)
When you're done with that one, I got another one for you.

INT. LOCKDOWN OFFICE - DAWN

Darkness inside an OFFICE, as Victor sleeps. The door opens, and a SLIVER of light peeks through. FOOTSTEPS, and A CLICK from a desk lamp SNAP Victor awake:

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Easy! It's just me...

Smither is carrying a TRAY with prison breakfast. He sets it down on a table next to Victor's cot.

Smither gets a chair, which he pulls to the side of the cot.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
I wanted to talk to you about...
You know, it was not a good situation... I guess I thought you needed to know that you did everything to help Buster, until we got there. That it wasn't your fault, you know?

Victor picks into his food with his spork, not eating any.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
But what I also wanted to talk to you about is... Do you think you're cut out for the gig?

Smither looks straight at Victor, not padding the blow any.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
What happened to Buster isn't a regular occurrence. But it does happen, and you seem quite shook up about it...

VICTOR CARRIER
All due respect, I'm not planning on being a C.O. forever, sir... I'm going to college once I've got enough saved, sir.

Smither leans back in his chair.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
What you wanna study?

VICTOR CARRIER
Law. If I can get in... Until then, I gotta provide for my family. I'm not a quitter, sir.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
If you're rolling with my guys, I
need to know you've got my six.

VICTOR CARRIER
You can count on me, sir.

Smither gives Victor a thumb clasp handshake.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
I'll hold you to that. Meantime, go
home, take a couple of days with
your family.

Smither stands, walks to the door.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
PD's here to talk when you're up
for it. Take your time.

INT. COMMON AREA, C BLOCK - DAY

C BLOCK is alive with the hustle of INMATES moving around.

Elias walks down the TIER STAIRCASE. He sees the spot where
Buster was murdered: It's sterile. A CONVICT treads through
the site, unaware of its significance.

INT. JAMES LUTHER SPRING'S CELL - DAY

Elias unwraps a packet of FILM EXPOSURES. He tinkers with a
POLAROID IMPULSE CAMERA in Spring's empty cell.

He accidentally presses the SHUTTER, and BLASTS a FLASH into
his own face.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Shit!

Elias blinks rapidly. The camera SPITS out the exposure. He
examines it, shakes the celluloid to develop it.

INT. SECOND TIER, C BLOCK - DAY

Victor walks the tier, toward Smither, who moseys in place
further down, hands behind his back.

A VOICE stops Victor in his tracks:

SHAWN (O.S.)
 You're that new guy that got Fat
 Boy killed, right?

Victor walks back to a CELL, where SHAWN, 27, sits on the bottom of the bunk.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
 I was there when Terry smoked your
 home boy. Never got a chance to say
 thanks for the show!

Shawn FLICKS a cup of BROWN LIQUID into Victor's face through the hatch. Victor WIPES his face, SPITS vehemently.

Victor stops, realizes what the liquid is.

VICTOR CARRIER
 You're gonna throw coffee at me?

Victor HITS his hand against the door, furious, while Shawn CACKLES stupidly inside the cell, laughs in his Southern drawl:

SHAWN
 Aw, man! You thought it was shit
 didn't you? I got you good, boy! I
 got you good!

Shawn CHUCKLES like a drunken idiot.

Victor grabs his keys, unlocks the door. Shawn's face drops.

SHAWN (CONT'D)
 Whoa, whoa, whoa! Take it easy,
 man! Take it easy!

Smither moves toward Victor with quick steps.

INT. SHAWN'S CELL - CONTINUOUS

CLANG! The cell door slides open. Shawn cowers into a corner, but Victor approaches and grabs him by the collar.

SHAWN
 It was a joke, boy! It was a
fucking joke!

Smither enters, his presence filling the confined space. He pushes Victor aside, then:

SMACK! Smither strikes Shawn across the arm with his baton. Shawn CRIES OUT, drops to the ground.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
 He disrespected you, Carrier. Make
 him respect you. Come on!

Victor hesitates, but he's amped up on anger and adrenaline.

There's a *CRACK* as Victor hits Shawn's leg bone with his
 baton. Shawn BAWLS in pain, before Victor hits him once more.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
 You respect him now, you piece of
 shit?

SHAWN
 Yes! Jesus, yes!

Victor stops, his senses returning. He looks at Smither, who
 still hovers over a BAWLING Shawn.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
 Don't fuck with him! You got that?

Smither turns to SHAWN'S CELLIE, who huddles in the top bunk.

SHAWN'S ROOMMATE
 I didn't do anything...

INT. SECOND TIER, C BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

They exit the cell. Victor looks down at his stained uniform.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
 I got spare uniforms in the office.

VICTOR CARRIER
 Should we...

SGT. JASON SMITHER
 We held back on him.
 (off Victor's hesitation)
 He's fine. Go get changed.

Smither pats Victor on the back as he passes.

EXT. C YARD - MOMENTS LATER

A HISPANIC CONVICT, 40's, mustache and wife-beater, looks
 straight into the lens of Elias' camera.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Lean back a little?

The CONVICT shifts around uncomfortably, crosses his arms and leans back. Elias looks through the viewfinder of his camera.

There's a *SNAP*, as Elias presses the SHUTTER on the camera. He pulls the exposure, looks at it.

The CONVICT moves over, looks at the developing picture with the curiosity of a child.

HISPANIC CONVICT
This is for my girl. If I don't
look flush, I'll fuck you up, man.

The CONVICT nudges Elias with his shoulder.

HISPANIC CONVICT (CONT'D)
I'm kidding. I am fat, what the
fuck you can do about that?
(seeing the portrait)
I can send this to my lady, right?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Yeah. Yeah, I think so...

The CONVICT hands Elias a PHOTO TOKEN in exchange for the photo, then walks off.

Elias looks at the PHOTO TOKEN - smiles with satisfaction for the first time.

EXT. C YARD, NATIVES - MOMENTS LATER

Elias looks at the world through the camera viewfinder. He moves it up, seeing the faint outline of a bird in the sky.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (O.S.)
Camera man.

Elias looks up, sees Spectro approaching.

EXT. C YARD, CORNER - MOMENTS LATER

Spectro walks to a deserted corner, Elias following. Spectro looks around to make sure nobody's watching.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I think... It might be better out
of the shadows, in the sun-

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
I don't give a fuck where it's
better. Come closer.

Elias takes steps closer to Spectro. He puts the camera up to his eye. Spectro faces the camera with his arms crossed.

CLICK! The FLASH from the camera goes off.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
You're inside for trafficking?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I wasn't... I mean, not that much...

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
Not that much, huh? Just a *little bit* of felony trafficking?
(off Elias' silence)
I ran my own check, though.
Wouldn't call what you did running narco.

Elias' eye opens. His pupil pulls tight in the sunlight.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
I would call what you did, hitting a little girl with your car. Fleeing the scene like a *chingado* coward.
(beat)
You know Miguel, the guy I was with the other day? That's his niece.
(off Elias' silence)
Keep taking photos.

CLICK! Another FLASH from the camera, while Elias' hands shake with fear.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
You think I give a fuck about a dead beaner girl in New Mexico? But now I know something you don't want out there. In return for keeping that to myself, you're gonna do something for me.

Spectro continues to survey the area around them.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
Your cellie, right? Tomorrow, some guys are walking into his cell. They're gonna take him out.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Why are you telling me this?

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
I just saved your life. So now I
own you.

A FINAL *CLICK* hangs in the air. The camera droops from Elias' taut face, as Spectro walks intimidatingly close.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
Your mom is Mary Hernandez. She
works at Mesilla Valley Hospital.
She lives at 966 Augustine Avenue.
If you tell anyone what I just told
you, three guys will show up at her
house before sunset. They'll take
turns raping her through the night,
then cut her head off in the
morning.

He pushes SIX PHOTO TOKENS into Elias' palm, before he nods to the photos in hand.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
Keep the photos. A gesture of our
new friendship.

INT. CHOW HALL, C BLOCK - AFTERNOON

Elias sits at his empty table in the busy CHOW HALL. Across the sea of CONVICTS, Spring sits at the ARYAN TABLE. He doesn't notice Elias staring from across the hall.

Victor stands at the back of the CHOW HALL. He sees Shawn HOBBLE into the dining hall on the opposite side of the room. Victor looks down, disappointed with himself.

INT. JAMES LUTHER SPRING'S CELL - EVENING

Elias walks into the cell, where Spring is resting on his bunk bed, reading. He lies down, with his back to Spring.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
You look like you've seen a ghost.

INT. C BLOCK, LAUNDRY ROOM - EVENING

FLUORESCENT LIGHTS go on in the block's dark LAUNDRY ROOM.

Victor follows Smither into the corner of the room. The sergeant squats down, looks to make sure nobody is coming.

Then he wriggles out his leather wallet, and pulls out an object, which he places between two washing machines:

A BRASSY 9 MM BULLET.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
You and I were doing our rounds
when we came in here, saw this.

Smither picks up the BULLET, holds it up in the light.

VICTOR CARRIER
Sorry, is this a test?

SGT. JASON SMITHER
No, this is a piece of nine
millimeter ammunition for a
handgun. Which we now have to
presume is somewhere on the
premises of this institution.

Victor looks at him, puzzled.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
If we find lethal contraband like
this, we have to force a lockdown.
When we go on lockdown, we get put
on lockdown pay. Which means we get
paid what we're *supposed* to.

VICTOR CARRIER
But we didn't find this, sir?

SGT. JASON SMITHER
You think having a kid is cheap?
You'll be begging for lockdown pay
in a month, son.

Smither puts a hand on Victor's shoulder.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
This is what makes sure that what
happened to Buster, doesn't happen
to any of us for another 24 hours.
This keeps the animals locked up
for another night.
(beat)
Victor, this is the way this world
works in here. Remember when I had
your six? When you lost your head a
little?

Victor looks down, embarrassed. Smither stands, SPEAKS into
his RADIO.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 This is Sergeant Smither with C.O.
 Carrier. We've recovered a
 projectile for a firearm in C
 Block's laundry room. I'm advising
 an immediate lockdown, pending
 further investigation.

COMMAND VOICE (O.S.)
Copy that, Sergeant.

Victor stays squatted on the ground.

INT. C BLOCK - DAWN

A wide view of the silent C Block, the floor of the hall
 empty as the INMATES sleep in their cells.

INT. C BLOCK, ENTRANCE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

A LOCKDOWN PATROL of FIFTEEN OFFICERS, dressed in full combat
 gear (visor helmets, shoulder pads, shields) march down the
 hallway toward C Block.

INT. C BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

The same wide view of a deserted C Block.

Then the SOUND of a TOILET FLUSHING. Then ANOTHER. Soon, the
 sounds of TOILETS FLUSHING dominate the open space.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. C BLOCK, INMATE CELL #1 - MOMENTS LATER

THREE LOCKDOWN OFFICERS tear a cell apart. INMATES are
 detained outside the cell by OTHER LOCKDOWN OFFICERS.

INT. C BLOCK, INMATE CELL #2 - CONTINUOUS

In another cell, the OFFICERS search everything:

They rip mattresses, pull boxes onto the floor, and step on
 the items without care, as they continue their hunt.

INT. JAMES LUTHER SPRING'S CELL - CONTINUOUS

Elias looks down the side of the tier, where the LOCKDOWN OFFICERS are approaching.

Elias retreats into the corner of his bunk, scared of what's coming. Spring calmly chews on his cigarette.

The CELL DOOR slides open, and THREE OFFICERS step inside - one of them VICTOR, dressed in LOCKDOWN GEAR.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
I can't speak for my hardened
cellie, but I have nothing to hide.

LOCKDOWN OFFICERS
(to Victor, quietly)
Easy on this one...

Elias watches the whole ordeal with careful interest, as the OFFICERS take the utmost care to not rearrange anything.

Victor looks at his colleagues with bewilderment. He turns to Elias' part of the cell.

VICTOR CARRIER
This your stuff, Convict?

Elias looks at Spring.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
What you looking at me for? He
asked you a question.

Victor searches through Elias' belongings, while the LOCKDOWN OFFICERS continue their gentle search.

INT. LOCKDOWN OFFICE, C BLOCK - AFTERNOON

The LOCKDOWN OFFICERS arrange contraband on a table: *HOME-MADE WEAPONS, CRUMPLED BAGS OF POWDER, BLOCK CELLPHONES.*

Victor's sweaty hair is pressed flat by the helmet he's been wearing.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
We'll sweep the rest of the house
tomorrow.

LOCKDOWN OFFICERS
(in unison)
Aye-aye, Sergeant.

Victor examines the contraband, focusing on a SHIV like the one that was used on Buster. Smither notices, walks over.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Solid work today, Victor.

INT. JAMES LUTHER SPRING'S CELL - EVENING

Spring meditates. He slowly comes down, then sits at the desk, as Elias eats his tray of food on his bunk, reading.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I don't understand it, Mr. Spring.

Elias holds up a new novel - a copy of Machiavelli's *The Prince*.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
*"How we live is so different from
how we ought to live that he who
studies what ought to be done
rather than what is done will learn
the way to his downfall rather than
to his preservation."*

Elias looks at him with a puzzled expression.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
What does that mean?

Spring sighs, takes off his glasses, wipes his eyes.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
Means that everybody has their own
visions of ideals, morals, ethics.
But if you're enlightened and
intelligent, you'll come to learn
that ain't a correct depiction of
how the world really works. If you
wanna survive, you don't do what
you're supposed to do, you do what
you have to do.

Elias nods quietly, chewing on the words. Spring puts on his glasses again, looks coldly at Elias.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING (O.S.) (CONT'D)
What were you talking to Santino
about in the yard?

Elias freeze.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

With who?

JAMES LUTHER SPRING

Don't insult me like that again,
you know what I'm talking about.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

He just... He wanted me to take
some pictures of him. For his
family or friends...

JAMES LUTHER SPRING

That the complete extent of your
conversation?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

Yes.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING

You sure about that?

The muscle under Elias' eye twitches.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

He told me... That some guys
were... coming for you.

Spring stares down Elias. He stands, walks over to hover over
the kid, who crouches on the edge of his bunk.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING

Why're you telling me this?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

I'm not a bad person. I couldn't
live with myself-

He SLAPS Elias on the side of the face.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING

You're telling me outta the
kindness of your heart? Don't
patronize me, boy. If Santino told
you something, it's because he
wants another something in return.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

I don't trust him.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING

Then you are not as dumb as you
appear.

Spring sits on his bunk, lights a cigarette.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I don't want to be a part of this-

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
But you're in it now. You were hoping I would take care of you in return for telling me?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I see the way you get treated in here...

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
I thought you were telling me this outta magnanimity? Don't pretend like you're more noble than anyone else. You just haven't gotten the veneer of civility washed off yet.
(beat)
You think I believe your story about muling dope over state lines? I know you plowed down Farro's niece with your car. I know all of it, and I have from the start. So don't talk to me about being a good person.

Elias wipes his hands on the fabric of his pants. Spring taps his cigarette into an ashtray, exhales the smoke.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Does he know?

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
If Farro knew, you'd be dead.

Spring walks over to his desk. He fidgets under one of the drawers, probing for: *A BLADE, WRAPPED IN A DUCT-TAPE HANDLE.*

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Wait, wait, wait-

Spring squats down in front of Elias. He holds the KNIFE up, as Elias' leans back as far as possible.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
You either leave the pen a man, a fag, or in a body bag. Nobody's gonna save you. I can handle my own business.

(MORE)

JAMES LUTHER SPRING (CONT'D)
 You ever want to do the same, you
 can borrow my blade to take care of
 Farro any time you want.

Elias shakes his head. Spring pulls the knife away, stands.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 I didn't think so.

INT. C.O. OFFICE - DAY

Montoya puts on his uniform, as Victor walks into the office.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
 Sergeant had to take care of
 something, so I'm covering for him.

VICTOR CARRIER
 Yes, sir.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
 I'm not your superior, man.

VICTOR CARRIER
 Sorry.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
 I'm gonna grab coffee. You want
 some?

Montoya smiles broadly, as he locks in his utility belt.

INT. C BLOCK - DAY

Montoya and Carrier stand in the corner of C Block. Montoya's eyes are animated, as he lectures Victor:

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
 ... indigenous glowworm that's
 called *Arachnocampa luminosa*.
 They're photoluminescent, so you'll
 be walking around dark caves and
 you hit a basin, the whole roof
 covered with them. Looks like the
 night sky, except so close you can
 touch it.

VICTOR CARRIER
 Huh... Where'd you say this was?

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Place called Waitomo. Where I'm
retiring to, living out the last of
my miserable days.

VICTOR CARRIER
Really?

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Probably not. I mean, what the fuck
am I gonna do in New Zealand?

Carrier sees Spring pass through, flanked by Hansen.

VICTOR CARRIER
Who's that?

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Spring. Shot-caller for the A.B.

VICTOR CARRIER
When we were doing lockdown, we
took it pretty easy on him-

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Oh, yeah. He gets special
treatment.

VICTOR CARRIER
Why?

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
You gotta have a king on the block.
He keeps check on the convicts,
makes sure shit is *somewhat*
handled.

Victor nods.

VICTOR CARRIER
How long you been working here,
Montoya?

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Shit... About five years?

VICTOR CARRIER
Working under the sergeant the
whole time?

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
He was here before I was, but he
got promoted just after I started.
He's former Army - Desert Storm.
(MORE)

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA (CONT'D)
 Came home, couldn't get any work in
 PD, or anywhere else. Corrections
 took him.

Montoya scans Victor's expression.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA (CONT'D)
 I know what you're thinking. But
 he's a good leader, Victor. He
 really cares about the guys working
 for him.

Victor nods softly.

INT. C BLOCK, SECOND TIER - DAY

Victor walks the beat alone. He travels along to the shower
 area, where an INMATE hangs out, with clothes on.

VICTOR CARRIER
 If you're done showering, you're
 not supposed to be here anymore.

INMATE
 Sorry, boss.

The INMATE grabs his shower gear and exits the area.

Victor is taken aback by the effortlessness of the
 interaction. A small victory, finally.

INT. C BLOCK, LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

Elias stands in front of an open laundry machine. He fills it
 with dirty clothes.

Spectro approaches from behind, leans in over his shoulder:

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
 Tonight. 8 PM. You got that?

Spectro leaves as quietly as he came. Elias watches him go
 with a grim expression.

INT. JAMES LUTHER SPRINGS CELL - EVENING

Elias sits on his bunk. Sweat covers his forehead, as he
 stares at an electronic desk clock on Spring's table: 7:45 PM

Spring enters the cell. He puts down his writing materials on
 the desk.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Laundry's under the bunk...

Spring sits. Elias stands, walks to the exit of the cell.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
Fold it up before the wrinkles set.

Spring points to the laundry bag by his bunk. Elias steals a glance at the clock: 7:47 PM

MOMENTS LATER:

Elias folds the clothes, putting each folded item onto a pile on the bed.

He looks at the clock, visible over Spring's shoulder, the foreboding green digits displaying the time: 7:55 PM

Elias puts the pile of folded clothes down on Spring's bed.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I'll be right back...

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
What's the matter with you, boy?

Elias looks at the clock: 7:56 PM. Spring notices, turns to see what Elias is looking at, realizes what's going on.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING (CONT'D)
'Bout that time?

Elias looks out at the dim tier: No sign of anyone. Yet.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING (CONT'D)
Tell Hansen to come up here. Don't run, but do it quick.

Spring dips under his bunk and fishes out his SHIV, as Elias swiftly exits the cell.

INT. THIRD TIER, C BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

Elias moves down the tier with quick steps.

Behind him, FOUR HITMEN, dressed in thick layers of clothing, cross the perpendicular connection between the tiers.

Elias looks over his shoulder, just as the HITMEN enter Spring's cell.

INT. HANSEN'S CELL, SECOND TIER, C BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

Elias rushes up to Hansen's cell.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Spring needs you upstairs!

Inside, Hansen lazily reads a crusty magazine.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
Upstairs! He needs you, now!

JUMP CUT:

INT. C BLOCK, FIRST TIER - MOMENTS LATER

Now on the first floor, Elias HEARS the SHOUTS. He looks around, as C.O.'s rush past, hearing the SHOUTS above also.

INT. C BLOCK, THIRD TIER - CONTINUOUS

A bloodied Spring struggles to crawl out onto the tier.

INMATE (O.S.)
They hit Spring! They hit Spring!

Hansen and ANOTHER ARYAN BROTHER sprint down the tier.

INT. COMMON AREA, C BLOCK - MOMENTS LATER

Elias' legs pump nervously, as he sits on one of the benches in the common area. He hears the SHOUTS building:

Spring is wheeled out on a GURNEY by EMTs, flanked by C.O.s, who fight to keep the ARYAN BROTHERS from getting to him.

INT. INTERROGATION - NIGHT

Elias covers his shoulders with a blanket, sitting behind a desk. A C.O. watches him from the corner of the dark room.

Smither enters. Victor follows him, walking over to a corner. Smither sits down slowly, takes his time.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
You were spotted leaving your cell just before Spring was assaulted. You know you're not supposed to be running. Why were you?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I don't know anything-

SGT. JASON SMITHER
I suggest you let that shit fade
real quick. Adding 10-to-life to
your sentence for conspiracy to
commit murder ain't gonna do you no
good.

Elias doesn't answer.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
We both know you don't belong in
here. You tell me what you know, we
can protect you.

Elias shivers. Smither turns to Victor.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
Get him another blanket.

Smither hasn't realized that Elias is chuckling grimly.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I saw what happened to the officer
that got killed. I saw him bleed
out like everyone else did.

Elias' expression grows stern. Victor stays in the background
shadows, his gaze shifting between Elias and Smither.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Were you born a fuck-up or did you
have to work on it, Hernandez? You
should be walking with a fucking
albatross around your neck. You're
bad luck. You're cursed, I can feel
it.

Smither smiles broadly with a shit-eating grin.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
It's not my fault Spring's dead...

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Spring's not dead.

Elias looks at him with surprise. Smither CHUCKLES.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
Doesn't make any sense to me,
either, cause he got hit, like, 30
fucking times. He's in the ICU,
critical, but holding on.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Like I said, I don't know
anything...

Smither claps on the table in frustration.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
We're going in circles.
(to the C.O. behind him)
Set up an ad-seg order on Junior
Hernandez. Give him some alone time
to think things through.

Elias swallows apprehensively at the mention of "alone time".

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
This isn't over. You're still in
it. If you wanna talk, I suggest
you do it as soon as possible.

Smither exits the room.

Elias looks up at Montoya with sad eyes.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I didn't know it was going to be
like this...

It hits Montoya, who opens his mouth to respond. But what can he say?

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE SEGREGATION HALLWAY - NIGHT

Montoya and Victor escort Elias down the red-striped hallway of ADMINISTRATIVE SEGREGATION -- "THE HOLE".

They pass window slivers, where Elias sees INMATES pace around like caged panthers.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Please- I can't be alone. I'll tell
you anything you want to know-

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
(hushed)
Stop talking!
(MORE)

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA (CONT'D)
 You snitch on shot callers, what do
 you think's gonna happen?

Victor studies the interaction silently.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA (CONT'D)
 I already told you: You can get
 through this if you keep your head
 down. Do not start fucking up now.

INT. AD-SEG CELL - NIGHT

Elias is awake, as he hears a TAPPING on the metal door. He looks at the open hatch, where a set of eyes peek through. Elias walks over to the door.

VICTOR CARRIER
 Officer Montoya asked me to bring
 you some of your belongings.

Victor slides a toothbrush, toothpaste, a T-shirt, and some books through the hatch. He holds up a MARS BAR, which he unwraps, and passes through.

Victor's about to close the hatch, but Elias stops him:

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Wait, what's your name?

VICTOR CARRIER
 Carrier. Officer Carrier.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Thanks.

The hatch closes, and Carrier's FOOTSTEPS fade away.

Elias studies the Mars Bar. He consumes it in one bite, the taste so good he has to close his eyes to savor it fully.

He looks down at the rest of the items that he was brought. Among them are his copies of *How to Make Friends and Influence People*, and *The Prince*.

EXT. AD-SEG YARD - MORNING

The ad-seg yard is divided by filled single-man dog cages.

INT/EXT. DOG CAGE - CONTINUOUS

Elias looks at the blue sky above him, cut into fragments by the steel roof of the kennel.

Miguel Farro sits in one of the adjacent cages. Elias turns his gaze away, trying to remain unseen.

INT. AD-SEG CELL - DAWN

Elias WAKES with a jerk. He looks around the midnight blue cell, then takes a deep breath.

He grabs his book, and reads in the faint moonlight that penetrates from a small square window above him.

INT/EXT. DOG CAGE - CONTINUOUS

Elias finishes a last set of burpees. He wipes his sweaty face with the sleeve of his T-shirt.

MIGUEL FARRO
Understand Spanish, kid?

Elias sees Miguel Farro in the neighbor cage. They speak SPANISH:

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
(nervously)
A little bit...

MIGUEL FARRO
You roll with the whites now?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I don't know... I don't think so.

MIGUEL FARRO
How about your cell mate? Spring?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
He was... How do you say "assaulted"? He's in hospital...

Farro laughs.

MIGUEL FARRO
That's not what I meant. You close with him?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
No.

MIGUEL FARRO
Where are you from?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
New Mexico.

MIGUEL FARRO
No, no. Where are you from?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
My mom's from New Mexico. My dad's originally from Nicaragua.

Farro taps his chest.

MIGUEL FARRO
I was born in Managua. But I'm Mexican now. You been to Nicaragua?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Yes, he was from Nicaragua.

Farro CHUCKLES at Elias' mistake, switches to ENGLISH:

MIGUEL FARRO
When you going back?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
To population? In two days.

MIGUEL FARRO
*They're doing asbestos removal on the block, so they've gotten set up in the gym. You gonna hang with the *jipatos*?*

Elias shrugs his shoulders.

MIGUEL FARRO (CONT'D)
Shoulda been hanging with us from the start, man. Fucking Spring thinks he gets to decide shit. Ain't deciding shit now, right?

Farro SPITS through the side bars of his cage.

MIGUEL FARRO (CONT'D)
When you get back to population, find a guy called Luis Padilla. Tell him to start running kites. He'll know what that means. If you need a bunk, tell him I told you that we'd take you.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

Thanks...

Farro winks.

MIGUEL FARRO

De nada, Nicaragua...

He leans back, closing his eyes. Conversation over.

EXT. GYM - DAY

Rain gushes onto the orange gravel, falling from dark clouds.

Elias carries a laundry bag. Flanked by Montoya, they jog to a large looming building: THE PRISON'S GYMNASIUM.

They stop outside the door.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA

You have to figure it out on your own from here.

INT. THE GYM - CONTINUOUS

It takes Elias' eyes a minute to adjust to the dark interior: A SHANTY TOWN of bunk beds, arranged in strict rows. It's a maze, the PRISONERS moving around like it's a Turkish market.

Elias sees the factions: NORTH MEXICANS, SOUTH MEXICANS, WHITES, ASIANS. They stare back challengingly.

INT. THE GYM, THE WHITES - CONTINUOUS

He walks the side of the gym, to the far corner. He sees Hansen sitting on a bunk, surrounded by the ARYAN BROTHERS.

HANSEN

What you doing here?

Hansen stands, takes an aggressive step toward Elias.

HANSEN (CONT'D)

I remember telling you to cough up some rent money. We're looking at about a thousand bucks, with interest. You don't have Spring to lean on no more, so you need to get up some green, son. Fast.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

But, I don't have any-

HANSEN

I already told you to go hang with the Natives. You cough up some money, then maybe we can talk.

INT. GYM - NIGHT

Elias lies awake in the top of his bunk bed. The gym's quiet, the INMATES asleep.

Suddenly there's a PANICKED YELL from one end of the gym. A FLASHLIGHT turns on in Elias' end, the BEAM of light rushing toward the scene accompanied by the C.O.s footsteps.

The LIGHTS go on, and INMATES wake, complaining and SHOUTING with excitement. Elias looks around, disoriented.

CUT TO:

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias stands open-mouthed next to a group of INMATES, all of them examining what must be last night's crime scene:

A bottom cot COVERED in smears of dry, brown blood.

Elias looks at the BLACK INMATE, 23, next to him.

BLACK INMATE

No cameras in here... This whole motherfucker's in the cut, nobody's watching us. Shit's gonna go down every fucking night. Soon as the lights go out...

Elias looks over to the entrance, where a set of BIOHAZARD CLEANERS and TWO C.O.s enter, and walk toward the scene.

INT. THE GYM - CONTINUOUS

Elias passes row after row of INMATES, who stand in his way, as he trespasses on their turf.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (O.S.)

Camera man! Where you been?

Elias sees Spectro waving him down, at the end of one of the aisles. He tries to get away, but an INMATE blocks his way.

Spectro walks down.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
 Why you trespassing here without
 permission? Come on, get your shit.

Spectro slaps Elias on the back of the head, points down one
 of the walkways, leading into the heart of the NORTEÑO CAMP.

INT. NORTEÑO CAMP - CONTINUOUS

Spectro waltzes down the "main street" of the NORTEÑO
 VILLAGE, while the GANG MEMBERS glare at Elias.

Spectro leads Elias to the border of their area, where
 there's a free bunk bed.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
 Grab this one...

Elias puts down his gear onto the bed.

LUIS PADILLA (O.S.)
 (in Spanish)
What's going on, Santino?

LUIS PADILLA, 42, an authoritative gang presence, approaches.

LUIS PADILLA (CONT'D)
 (to Elias)
 You came here to spy on us?

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
It's all right.

LUIS PADILLA
 What you doing snooping round here?

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
 I got it taken care of, Luis.

LUIS PADILLA
 This is one of Spring's fucking
 tricks.

As Luis argues back, Elias' attention peaks.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Are you Luis? Luis Padilla?

LUIS PADILLA
 The fuck did you say to me?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
*Señor Farro, told me to pass on a
 message to Luis Padilla...*

LUIS PADILLA
 Miguel talked to you?

Luis looks surprised, but he moves closer. Elias whispers to him, while Spectro looks on with a befuddled expression.

Luis takes a step back, contemplating.

LUIS PADILLA (CONT'D)
 (to Spectro, in Spanish)
Why you want him around?

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
*Cause, he's one of us. And we need
 someone to clean, do laundry...*

LUIS PADILLA
*He's not one of us.
 (beat)
 He can grab a bunk on the outside.
 If we need it, he's gone. Until
 then, he's your responsibility.*

Luis takes one last look at Elias, then exits down the path. Spectro SLAPS Elias on the side of the head, hard.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
 Don't talk, unless I tell you.

Spectro continues down the same way that Luis departed.

Elias rubs the side of his face. Then he unpacks his gear, most carefully a crumpled standard issue shirt, that he's wrapped around his POLAROID CAMERA.

INT. GYM, PHONE SECTION - DAY

Elias stands by a row of temporary PAY PHONES that have been set up in one of the gym's hallways, receiver to his ear.

Elias TAPS his fingers impatiently on the phone.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Listen, it's not like that. I have
 to ask you something-

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 They don't just put you in
 isolation, Elias. You must have
 done something-

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 They're doing construction on our
 block, so they had to move some of
 us around! Mom, listen!

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 I really wanted to talk to you on
 Monday. Wish you a happy birthday.

Elias does a double-take. He completely forgot.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 I transferred you some money. I
 thought you could use-

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 How much did you send?

MARY HERNANDEZ
 Elias, that's rude...

He SIGHS.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Sorry. That was rude...

MARY HERNANDEZ
 I sent you sixty dollars. I thought
 you could use it to buy something-

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Look, is there any way you can send
 me more?

MARY HERNANDEZ
 What's going on, Elias?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Things are expensive here, Mom. We
 don't get enough food, we have to
 buy extra food, that sort of thing.

MARY HERNANDEZ
 I'm saving up some money to come
 see you-

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Can you send me that?

MARY HERNANDEZ
 You'd rather have that than have me
 come see you?

Mary SIGHS on the other end.

MARY HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
 I can send you another fifty?

Elias SMACKS his palm into the wall in disappointment. He
 wipes his brow, thinking hard.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Never mind, Mom. You keep it.

MARY HERNANDEZ
 I'll send it to you.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 No, it's fine. I'm working next
 week, so it'll be fine. I'd also
 rather see you. Of course...

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 I'm picking up supervising shifts
 at the hospital, which means better
 pay. I was thinking... If it's all
 right, I could come up there in
 about a month?

Despite everything, Elias smiles.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Yeah, that sounds good, Mom.

INT. C.O. OFFICE - DAY

Victor is pouring over paperwork. Montoya slips his head in
 through the door.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
 Sarge wants you in his office.

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE HALLWAY - DAY

Victor knocks on Smither's office door.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (O.S.)
 Enter.

Victor opens the door. As he steps in, he's met by:

INT. SMITHER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A BLARE OF CELEBRATORY NOISE from SMITHER, OFFICERS and SECRETARIES, standing under an "IT'S A BOY" BANNER.

OFFICERS & SECRETARIES
(variations of)
Congratulations!

CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS overwhelm Victor with felicitations. Smither beams at the head of a table with an ICE CREAM CAKE, and half-gallon bottles of OFF-BRAND SODA.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Just cause we don't carry guns,
don't mean we shoot blanks.

The CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS laugh.

MOMENTS LATER:

NANCY, 55, a BLACK SECRETARY talks to Victor, who's digging into a plate of CAKE - as is everyone around him:

NANCY
You and Holly getting any sleep?

VICTOR CARRIER
(laughs)
None. Not at all...

NANCY
Sweetheart, the next two years will feel like you're living the head-end of the worst tequila-bender hangover you've ever had. Oh, and buy a tumble dryer, cause-

SGT. JASON SMITHER (O.S.)
Listen up!

The room quiets, looks to Smither.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
As you all know, Officer Carrier joined us not too long ago. We're here celebrating the birth of his first child. You found a name yet, Carrier?

VICTOR CARRIER
Henry.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
 We're celebrating Victor and Holly and Henry. We're celebrating the fact that we're a family here. All of us. We're blessed to be in a place where we care about the people around us. Their wellbeing, their safety. Their ability to build their own lives outside of here. Victor, if you ever need anything, just let us know.

Everyone nods in agreement.

VICTOR CARRIER
 Thanks, everyone. This really means a lot...

SGT. JASON SMITHER
 Now, back to work before this turns into a sobfest.

The OFFICERS put down plates, file out the cramped room.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)
 How are things back home?

INT. C.O. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The office door's closed, the room quiet. The two men sit.

VICTOR CARRIER
 They're, uhm... They're good. It's challenging, definitely. I mean, you know what it's like...

SGT. JASON SMITHER
 How's the monetary situation?

VICTOR CARRIER
 It's... okay. Not great. Insurance didn't cover as much of the hospital bills as we hoped for...

Smither looks at the PORTRAIT of his own family, nodding as though he doesn't quite know what to say. But he does:

SGT. JASON SMITHER
 I'm gonna cut straight to the chase, Carrier. You remember that convict you beat the shit out of? He filed a complaint against you.

Victor swallows, looks at Smither apprehensively.

VICTOR CARRIER
What are we gonna do, sir?

SGT. JASON SMITHER
He filed a complaint against you,
Victor. Not us, not me. You.

Smither takes a long drag on his coffee.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
Don't worry, I'll take care of it.
Talk to the people in charge of
handling this whole business...

VICTOR CARRIER
Sir-

Smither holds up a hand.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Victor, you've shown me that you
understand the difference between
the real world and what goes on in
here. That's a really important
fact of life, and you get it.
(beat)
So, here's what we're gonna do: I'm
in contact with a CONVICT who needs
some help with his...
"communication".

VICTOR CARRIER
What do you mean, sir?

SGT. JASON SMITHER
He's paying me to bring in some
cellphones. Paying us.

Victor looks at him confused.

VICTOR CARRIER
I can't do that, sir.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Victor, there's motherfuckers in
Florence ADX, sitting in isolation
24 hours a day, no outgoing mail or
phone calls. They're communicating
with the outside world, no problem.
You think here's any different?

VICTOR CARRIER
I'm not doing this, Sergeant.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
I'm not asking you, Victor. I'm
telling you.

Victor shakes his head, still not quite understanding.

VICTOR CARRIER
This is black-mail...

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Don't be dramatic, Victor. When you
come in here, you notice how this
whole place is segregated? That's
not an accident. We're outnumbered
200 to one. They unite against us,
we don't stand a fucking chance.

Victor interjects, but Smither cuts him off:

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
Listen, Victor! The convicts get
things, that we want them to. It's
a dirty little secret that nobody
talks about, but we all know it.
Phones keep the convicts happy.
(beat)
I can't move 'em, cause if I get
caught, I can't protect guys like
you. Know what happens if you get
caught? A slap on the wrist, and a
week's suspension. So you can
continue this holier-than-thou
bullshit, or you can play ball.

VICTOR CARRIER
This a part of being in the family?

Smither looks at him with a frosty expression.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
I'll meet you in the parking lot
tomorrow morning, hand off the
phones and explain the logistics-

VICTOR CARRIER
I'm not doing it, sir.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Then good luck paying the bills
while you're suspended, under
active investigation, and good
fucking luck passing the bar with a
felony conviction for assault!

Victor and Smither stare at each other.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
You want to pay off hospital bills?
Go to school? Make something of
yourself that Henry can be proud
of? Then get started. Not that you
have a choice, but it might help to
tell yourself you do.

Victor stares at Smither

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
Shut the door on your way out.

Smither returns to paperwork on his desk. Victor reluctantly
turns, and heads for the door.

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

Elias pulls clothes out of a washing machine, folding them
neatly.

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias walks the main street of NORTEÑOS' CAMP, picking
garbage from each bunk into a black plastic bag.

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias scrubs the pathway with a wet mop.

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias has a collection of SHOPPING LISTS in his hands.

A NORTEÑO GANG MEMBER is slouched lazily on a bunk. Elias
grabs his list from him, looks it over.

INT. GYM, PATHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Elias walks the pathway. Spectro crosses out in front of him.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
Where you going?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Headed down to the commissary-

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
Not now. Come here.

INT. GYM, UTILITY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Spectro hooks a BUNGEE CORD to a doorhandle to lock the door shut from the inside.

He looks at the fidgeting Elias, realizes what he's thinking.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
You think I'm a *bugaron*, man? We're not fucking. We're talking.

Spectro pulls on the cord, making sure it's tight.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
Listen up, cause I don't wanna tell you twice. I got a deal set-up with an officer, who's bringing in some stuff for me. You've been transferred to lunch duty in another section. Pig's gonna give you gear during rounds, and you bring it back to the kitchen, where a *negro* called Jayceon's receiving.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I don't really know how to-

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
Ah, sorry I wasted your time. You can go back to cleaning now.

(beat)

I set up your work transfer. You start tomorrow.

Spectro stands, wriggles the bungee to loosen it. He opens the door, peeks out the sliver before he exits.

WORK OFFICER (PRE-LAP)
Fill this out with your information...

INT. WORK DETAIL OFFICE - DAY

Elias stands at a counter, filling out a form, while a WORK OFFICER puts together an ID BADGE in a plastic clasp case.

WORK OFFICER

You'll need to wear this when you leave C Block. There's a security checkpoint where you get it, then they'll let you through. Any questions?

Elias shakes his head.

WORK OFFICER (CONT'D)

Says here you checked out a camera package. Where is it?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

What do you mean?

WORK OFFICER

You've been transferred, so you have to turn in your gear.

Elias opens his mouth to answer. He hesitates, before:

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

I lost it, sir...

WORK OFFICER

You lost it?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

It was in my bunk when I was showering. When I came back it wasn't there, sir...

The WORK OFFICER shakes his head.

WORK OFFICER

You gotta take better care of your gear, Hernandez.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

It won't happen again, sir.

INT. FRONT ENTRANCE OFFICE - DAY

Victor takes out his keys and metallic items from his pockets. He puts them in a PLASTIC BOWL, then passes through a METAL DETECTOR, while a SUPERVISING C.O. looks through his DUFFEL BAG behind a counter.

While Victor steps through the DETECTOR, the C.O. places a SMALL BAG into Victor's DUFFEL BAG, looking around to make sure nobody has seen anything.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Elias, wearing his ID BADGE, works in the busy kitchen, surrounded by INMATE KITCHEN WORKERS wearing hair caps.

He opens an industrial-sized can of FRUIT SALAD. He sloshes out the liquid into smaller plastic buckets.

Across the room, a BLACK INMATE catches his glance, and gives him an acknowledging nod. This is JAYCEON, 27.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Elias and a KITCHEN WORKER fill LUNCH TRAYS into a ROLLING SERVING CART with a tambour slider.

INT. PRISON HALLWAY - DAY

Elias waits with the SERVING CART behind a sally port. A C.O. opens the gate.

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE SEGREGATION HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The C.O. escorts Elias down the hallway outside of the AD-SEG AREA. An AD-SEG C.O. meets them halfway through the hallway.

AD-SEG C.O.
I got it, Gary.

The AD-SEG C.O. flanks Elias and the CART down to the AD-SEG SAFETY REMOTE OFFICE, where Victor waits inside.

The AD-SEG OFFICER leads the SERVING CART to a SAFETY DOOR, which opens electronically: Behind the door, the AD-SEG CELLS align both sides of the dark corridor.

Elias pushes the SERVING CART, but the OFFICER stops him.

AD-SEG C.O. (CONT'D)
Hold it there.

The AD-SEG OFFICER takes over, pushes the cart into the restricted area.

Elias waits. He looks at Victor, who eyes him attentively behind the bullet-proof glass. Elias gives him a polite nod.

INT. SAFETY REMOTE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Victor surveys Elias. Then he turns his attention to the CONTROL PANEL, a slew of CCTV MONITORS in front of him.

With a JOYSTICK, Victor turns one of the SURVEILLANCE CAMERA'S VIEW down the opposite side of the AD-SEG HALLWAY.

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE SEGREGATION HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The AD-SEG OFFICER rolls out the SERVING CART, now filled with EMPTY TRAYS.

AD-SEG C.O.

Let's go.

VICTOR CARRIER (O.S.)

I'll lead him out, I'm gonna go grab a smoke in the parking lot.

Elias looks up. Victor leaves the REMOTE OFFICE, an OVERCOAT and the BAG that Smither gave him in his hand.

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE SEGREGATION HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Elias rolls the SERVING CART forward, Victor by its side.

Victor looks up, sees the CAMERA that he panned. He checks the hallway, as they pass under the CAMERA.

VICTOR CARRIER

Stop.

Victor slides the CART DOOR open. He moves trays to the side, then places the CELLPHONE BAG snugly into the cart's corner.

VICTOR CARRIER (CONT'D)

Anybody searches you, you don't tell them anything. Got it?

Elias nods.

INT. UTILITY ROOM, KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Inside the kitchen's utility room, Jayceon sits on a bucket, zips the sack open, pulls out the CELLPHONES - BLOCKY MOTOROLA INTERNATIONAL 3200's - from the bag.

JAYCEON

Open up the rest of 'em for me...

Jayceon SNAPS the cover open, revealing a BAG OF POWDER where the battery should be. Elias sees what he's doing, helps him open the rest of them, fishing out the BAGGIES.

JAYCEON (CONT'D)
C'mon, gimme the rest.

Jayceon collects them, and the cellphones in a KITCHEN TOWEL, that he places in a metal tray.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jayceon moves out of the space with the tray.

Elias exits too, looks around the large kitchen, ablaze with work activity. Nobody noticed a goddamned thing.

INT. GYM - EVENING

Elias moves down the path between the bunks. He finds Spectro, engaged in discussion with another INMATE.

Spectro sees Elias, pats the INMATE on the shoulder to end the conversation. He approaches Elias.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
How'd it go?

Elias nods, confirming the transactions gone through.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
Shit, that's pretty good.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I know what you're doing.

Spectro stares at him.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
I know you're moving drugs to the other side of the prison. I'll do it, but I think it's fair I get something out of it...

Spectro looks at Elias, maybe even slightly impressed.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
Sure, you're doing a job. Why shouldn't you get paid a little?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
How about a thousand dollars?

Spectro laughs. Elias doesn't miss a beat:

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
900.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
500.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
500, then. I'll still clean, I'll
do everything I already am. You can
transfer the money to my account.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
It's gonna take me awhile to get a
feed to you, but you got my word.

Elias extends his hand. Spectro shakes it with a laugh.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
Federal drug trafficking, right?

Spectro lets go of his hand, ponders a moment.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
Tell you what, I'll do you one. You
got someone looking at your case?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Why?

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
I got legal counsel on retainer.

INT. ACCOUNTS OFFICE - DAY

Elias waits, as an ACCOUNTS C.O. prints out a receipt, hands
it to him.

Elias looks at the balance: *527.87 dollars.*

EXT. PRISON PARKING LOT - DAWN

Morning sunlight peaks through thick clouds, as Victor pulls
into the prison parking lot.

He steps out of his sedan, grabs his duffel bag from the
passenger seat.

SGT. JASON SMIHTER (O.S.)
Carrier!

Victor looks over, sees Smither getting out of his FORD LIFTED PICK-UP TRUCK.

Victor closes his car door, walks toward the prison entrance.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Carrier!

Victor hesitates, then walks over to Smither, who's smoking a cigarette next to his truck.

VICTOR CARRIER
My shift hasn't started yet, sir.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
That's really funny, kid.

Smither fishes something out of his truck: An envelope, which he hands to Victor. Victor looks inside, sees that it's filled with CRISP HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I'm fair.

Victor steps past him, chucks the envelope into the truck.

VICTOR CARRIER
I applied for a transfer.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
You're just moving the whole family up the block to the next prison?

Victor doesn't answer.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
Who do you think approves those transfers? You don't think I talk to them? I decide what happens to you, Victor.

Smither looks at his watch.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
Your shift just started.

Victor exits, heading up to the prison entrance. Smither flicks his cigarette after him.

INT. COUNSEL OFFICE - DAY

Elias sits behind a desk in the middle of an austere counsel office. A C.O. watches him from the corner.

A female Hispanic lawyer, CAMILA LOPEZ, 31, steps inside.

CAMILA LOPEZ
Sorry, I'm late.

She opens a BRIEFCASE and shuffles documents onto the desk.

As she does this, Elias steals a glance at her black skirt, moving up to her beige blouse, which reveals a hint of cleavage, and a gold pendant hanging around her neck.

CAMILA LOPEZ (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Can I help you?

Elias snaps out of it, but she's addressing the C.O. in the corner.

CAMILA LOPEZ (CONT'D)
I'd like to discuss some matters
with my client in private.

The C.O. nods curtly, steps out of the office.

Elias looks at her lean wrist, the bottom outline of a TATTOO visible just below the cut of her blouse sleeve.

CAMILA LOPEZ (CONT'D)
How old are you?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
18.

She SIGHS, then moves to the door.

CAMILA LOPEZ
Come on.

Elias walks over to her, confused. She pulls him close, still looking out the window keeping a watch that nobody's coming.

She UNTIES the string of his pants, slides a hand down his boxers.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
What are you doing?

CAMILA LOPEZ
Santino didn't tell you?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
No, uhm...

Elias scratches his head, not sure how to say it.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
Uhm, I've never had...

CAMILA LOPEZ
What?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
This is my... I've never...

She looks at Elias, realizes what he's saying.

CAMILA LOPEZ
Then this shouldn't take long.

She dips her head down to Elias' crotch. Elias takes a deep breath, closes his eyes.

INT. HALLWAY, COUNSEL OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

A C.O. opens the door, and Camila, put together, steps out without a word. Her heels CLICK as she exits down the hall.

The C.O. holds the door open for Elias. As he walks down the hallway, he grins stupidly to himself.

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias walks over to Hansen, who's discussing something with his FELLOW BROTHERS. One of them nods to Hansen, and he turns to see Elias approach.

HANSEN
I thought I fucking told you not
come around here no-

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I can pay you what I owe. How do I
transfer it to you?

Hansen looks at Elias with surprise.

INT. ACCOUNTS OFFICE - DAY

Elias stands by the ACCOUNTS COUNTER, looking down at his balance: 2214.38 USD.

ACCOUNTS C.O.
You send a request for the amount,
which goes to the assistant warden.
He approves it, based on what it's
for. What's it for?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I'm sending some money to my uncle.

ACCOUNTS C.O.
It's a verified account?

Elias nods.

ACCOUNTS C.O. (CONT'D)
Then that should be fine. A portion
of your transfer goes to the
Arizona Crime Victims Commission,
you know that right?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
What do you mean?

ACCOUNTS C.O.
If you transfer out 200 dollars,
some of it goes to your uncle, some
of it goes to help pay reparations
for victims of crimes in the state.

Elias thinks for a minute.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Is there something like that for
New Mexico, sir?

ACCOUNTS C.O.
Yes.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Then I'd like to make a deposit to
that one too. Is that all right?

ACCOUNTS C.O.
If that's how you wanna spend your
money. You wanna fill out a form?

He hands Elias a form, which the boy looks over.

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

A) INT. AD-SEG HALLWAY - DAY: A SECURITY CAMERA pans to the
side.

BELOW: Close on the CONTRABAND BAG and Victor's hand holding
it, as he moves down the hallway to the REMOTE OFFICE.

B) INT. AD-SEG HALLWAY - DAY: Elias rolls the SERVING CART
forward, is let through a sally port by a C.O.

C) INT. KITCHEN UTILITY ROOM - DAY: Elias and Jayceon CRACK open the BATTERY COVERS, pull out the BAGGIES.

D) INT. ACCOUNTS OFFICE - DAY: CLOSE ON: A BALANCE RECEIPT being printed out.

An ACCOUNTS C.O. hands Elias a copy of his balance. Elias focuses on the digits: *A cool 1500-and-pocket-change-dollars.*

E) INT. C.O. CAFETERIA - DAY: Victor sits alone at a table, eating lunch, while a crew of C.O.s, SGT. SMITHER among them, sit at their own table.

Smither entertains: LAUGHS BOORISHLY at a joke he just made, while the other C.O.s join in.

It's not hard to read the disdain in Victor's expression.

F) INT. THE GYM - DAY: Elias' grasp is filled with COMMISSARY GOODS.

He walks the NORTEÑO beat, handing out the appropriate deliveries to each gang member. They thank him with pats on the back, the generous of them with a handshake.

A CAMERA FLASH brings us to:

G) EXT. YARD - DAY: The COMPLETE CREW OF NORTEÑOS, seen through the viewfinder of Elias' POLAROID CAMERA pose in a group tableau.

Elias nods, confirming that he got the picture, and the MASS of gang members splits up.

ANOTHER CAMERA FLASH, which brings us to:

F) INT. GYM - DAY: An INMATE focuses on Elias, who stands in front of a wall with his arms crossed, through the viewfinder.

SNAP! The INMATE takes a picture of Elias. Elias takes back the camera, pulls out the exposure.

We stay on it as it develops: A PORTRAIT of Elias.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (PRE-LAP)
Don't inject too deep...

END OF MONTAGE.

INT. GYM UTILITY ROOM - EVENING

Elias hovers over Spectro, who's sitting down, his sleeve rolled up as Elias handles a syringe clumsily.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
Aw! The fuck you doing?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Why can't you do it yourself?

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
I fucking hate needles, man.

Spectro looks away, biting his lip as Elias finds a vein.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
Pull back on the plunger.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Like this?

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
What don't you get, man? I don't
wanna fucking look at it! Is it
pulling red into the hypo?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Yeah.

Elias concentrates, presses the plunger. Spectro exhales, and his body melts a tiny bit.

He undoes the tourniquet around his arm, then looks at Elias with wet eyes.

MOMENTS LATER:

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
The Sergeant's bringing it all in,
using the new pigs, so he don't get
his feet wet.

Spectro chews on a cigarette, his eyes still glassy.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
Big ugly dude with the skull
tattooed on his dome? That
motherfucker...

Spectro takes a puff on his cigarette, while Elias processes everything.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
 You can't talk about what we're doing with anyone. You know that right? I mean anyone, man... You'll be the first to go, I'll follow quickly after you. We don't deal with the black cars, Farro doesn't allow it.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Farro would...?

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
 Farro would take me out? In a heartbeat, yeah. Luis would, too. You don't follow orders, you gotta go.

Spectro rolls the tip of his cigarette into the palm of his hand, extinguishing it.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
 I never see you buy any shit for yourself, man. How much money you have now?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I don't have that much.

Elias shrugs.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
 Why, what happened to it?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I spent it all.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
 Spent it on what?

Elias waves him off. Spectro grows serious.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
 (sternly)
 I asked you a fucking question.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I sent it to victim reparations...

It registers with Spectro, who LAUGHS mockingly to himself.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
 You're buying a clean conscience?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
It's not like that-

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
Fuck it, who am I to judge? Do
whatever you want.
(beat)
But you gotta ask yourself who
you're doing it for. That money
ain't bringing her back, so my
guess is you're only doing it cause
it makes you feel better.

Elias clearly hasn't thought of this. Meanwhile, Spectro
lights another cigarette.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
You wanna know why I don't feel
guilty about none of the things I
done?

Elias just stares at Spectro's droopy, high eyes.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
It's cause I'm honest about the
fact that I don't give a fuck about
nobody but me. You'll get there
too, sooner or later.
(beat)
Do up the gear again for me...

INT. GYM, COMMON AREA - DAY

Luis talks in hushed tones with TWO NORTEÑOS by a round
table. Elias sets down COFFEE MUGS in front of each man.

The NORTEÑOS speak Spanish:

NORTENO #1
How far southwest are we going?

LUIS PADILLA
*Delano. As close to the border as
we can get without starting a war.*

Elias wipes the table clean with a dishcloth, listening
circumspectly.

NORTENO #2
You got word from Sinaloa?

LUIS PADILLA
*That's all Miguel. I need to know
 what to do, who to talk to.*

NORTENO #1
*Any news on when's he coming out of
 isolation?*

LUIS PADILLA
*Not anytime soon. He's dead and
 buried. For now.*

NORTENO #2
*We gotta figure something out
 before that connection expires. We
 don't move down on it soon, we lose
 all that ground.*

The NORTEÑOS nod respectfully, then leave the table.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (O.S.)
I can get you in touch with him...

Luis looks up. Elias switches to ENGLISH.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
 I can get messages to him. From
 him, too.

Luis stares intensely at Elias.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
 I move the food to ad-seg. I have
 the roster of meals, so I know what
 cell's his... I can give him a
 message, let him know there's a way
 to communicate with you.

LUIS PADILLA
 Why would you do that?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Farro said I was one of you.

Luis weighs the option. Doesn't sound like a too dumb idea.

LUIS PADILLA
 What time you going on shift?

INT. SECURITY HALLWAY - DAY

Elias is frisked by a C.O. by the block exit point. They are thorough, which makes Elias look nervous.

They finish, give Elias his ID BADGE and he continues on.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Back in the heated kitchen, the SUPERVISING COOK sees Elias enter, walk through the kitchen.

SUPERVISING COOK
You're late, Hernandez! Where you
going?

Elias continues on.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I gotta go to the bathroom, sir.

SUPERVISING COOK (O.S.)
Tell your ass to hurry its shit up!

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Elias sits on the toilet. He's cringing, pulling something out from between his ass cheeks.

MOMENTS LATER:

A stream of water from the sink washes a CONDOM, while Elias turns his gaze away, disgusted.

He dries the condom with toilet paper, rips it open and slips out a KITE - a piece of paper folded tightly.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Jayceon opens the door to the utility room, and looks around cautiously before he exits.

Elias' head slips out, before he closes the door, remaining inside the room.

INT. UTILITY ROOM, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Elias shuffles through the TRAYS, marked with numbers. He finds the right one, sorting through the utensils and food: Nothing.

But then his eye catches something. He sifts through mashed potatoes. Sheathed in a plastic wrapper is another KITE.

He hesitates, but then unfolds it. Elias looks down at the series of non-connected letters, forming a CRYPTIC PARAGRAPH.

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias walks through the gym. He sees Luis, in conversation at a table.

But he hesitates, and instead of going over, he walks the opposite direction.

INT. ELIAS' BUNK, GYM - DAY

Elias lifts the mattress on his bed, fishing out his CAMERA. He looks around, making sure nobody is watching him.

Then he lays out FARRO'S KITE on the bed. He focuses, takes a picture of the note. He pulls out the exposure, looks at it.

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias walks over to Luis, taps him on the shoulder.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

Here...

Elias hands Luis FARRO'S KITE, which he unfolds, looks over. He pulls a notebook from his back pocket, writes a big 3 on the top of the page, which Elias sees.

INT. GYM - NIGHT

The gym is dark, the rows of INMATES quiet, except for a few LOUD SNORES. A LIGHT from a passing C.O. cuts through the darkness, before a door closes and the light disappears.

Elias points his own weak light into his mattress, as he examines the POLAROID that he took of Farro's kite.

He's got a notebook, with the number 3 printed on the top of the page, trying to decipher the code.

But then he shakes his head, giving up. He hides the PICTURE in his copy of *The Prince*, on the shelf above his head.

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

Victor stands in the back of the PRISON CHAPEL, prudently packed with INMATES. Some listen intensely, others pass in and out of sleep.

The PRISON CHAPLAIN recites a passage:

PRISON CHAPLAIN

My son, if sinful men entice you, do not give in to them. If they say, "Come along with us; let's lie in wait for innocent blood, let's ambush some harmless soul; let's swallow them alive; we will get all sorts of valuable things and fill our houses with plunder; cast lots with us; we will all share the loot"— my son, do not go along with them, do not set foot on their paths; for their feet rush into evil, they are swift to shed blood. How useless to spread a net where every bird can see it! These men lie in wait for their own blood; they ambush only themselves! Such are the paths of all who go after ill-gotten gain; it takes away the life of those who get it.

Victor's gaze drops.

INT. C.O. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Victor opens his locker. He pulls out the CONTRABAND BAG, puts the strap over his shoulder. He lingers, and instead of leaving, he squats down and opens the bag.

He fishes out one of the CELLPHONES, and runs a finger over the battery cover. He CRACKS it open, and fishes out the BAGGIE filled with BROWN POWDER.

INT. C.O. OFFICE - DAY

Montoya's face is serious, as he stares at the TEN CELLPHONES on the table in front of him.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA

Who else have you talked to about this?

VICTOR CARRIER
Nobody else.

Victor scratches the back of his head.

VICTOR CARRIER (CONT'D)
I thought I should go to the
warden, he could get IDOC involved-

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Internal Affairs?

Montoya exhales for emphasis.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA (CONT'D)
Don't do anything rash, Victor.
Cause it'll come back and bite you
in the ass. You start snitching-

VICTOR CARRIER
I'm not snitching-

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Lotta officers are gonna take it
that way. How long you known about
this?

VICTOR CARRIER
Since this morning.

Montoya looks at Victor with a sceptical glance.

VICTOR CARRIER (CONT'D)
I guess I knew something was up
since the start. But I didn't want
it to be, so I didn't check on it.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
That's the way they're gonna look
at it, too. They're gonna think
something soured, and that's why
you're coming to them now. They'll
take you down, just like everyone
else involved.

VICTOR CARRIER
This is so fucked.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
So far, no damage done.

Montoya looks at the CELLPHONES.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA (CONT'D)
 You don't tell anyone anything.
 Yet. Leave these here, I'll take
 care of 'em, get 'em outta here.
 But I need some time to come up
 with a plan for how to handle the
 situation.

Victor nods quickly, his hands on the back of his head.

VICTOR CARRIER
 Okay. Okay... Thanks...

INT. AD-SEG HALLWAY - DAY

Elias pushes the SERVING CART down the AD-SEG HALLWAY. He reaches the REMOTE OFFICE, does a double-take when he sees a NEW C.O. sitting inside. No sign of Victor.

MOMENTS LATER:

The NEW C.O. pushes the SERVING CART out of AD-SEG. Elias stays put, looking between the NEW C.O. and the REMOTE C.O. behind the bullet-proof glass.

NEW C.O.
 What you looking at?

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Elias enters the kitchen. Across the room, Jayceon is washing dishes. He sees Elias, walks over.

JAYCEON (PRE-LAP)
 The fuck you mean you didn't get
 anything?

INT. UTILITY ROOM, KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Elias and Jayceon look into the SERVING CART.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I told you, it was a new C.O. over
 there. He didn't give me anything.

Jayceon SLAMS the SERVING CART door shut.

JAYCEON
 Motherfucker! What'd Spectro say?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
He didn't say anything-

JAYCEON
You trying to pull a fast one on
me, nigger?

Jayceon peers at him angrily.

JAYCEON (CONT'D)
You best figure this shit out real
quick.

Jayceon turns, exits through the door, SLAMMING it shut.

Elias massages his neck, where Jayceon grabbed him. He looks
at the door, which stays shut.

He turns to the SERVING CART, fishes out Farro's tray and
sifts through the food, finding his KITE.

INT. GYM, COMMON AREA - DAY

Spectro and Elias stand in the back of the gym's common area.
They stand close, keeping the conversation down.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I'm just saying, I don't know how
you handle that deal. I'm not the
one that talks to Smither.

Spectro's nostrils flare.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
And what the fuck are you doing
running kites to Farro, huh?
Slipped your mind to tell me you're
doing work for Luis now?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
It's got nothing to do with this-

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ
You do something, you tell me!

Spectro notices that INMATES are looking.

SANTINO "SPECTRO" MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
I'll tell 'em we're bringing in
double next time...

INT. C.O. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Victor puts on his uniform in the locker room, next to TWO OTHER OFFICERS, who do the same.

Smither enters, spots Victor.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Jackson, Ryan, gimme a minute alone
with Carrier.

Victor looks over his shoulder, sees Smither, but doesn't acknowledge him. He continues buttoning his shirt.

C.O. RYAN (O.S.)
Just a second, boss-

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Now, Ryan.

Jackson and Ryan move out quickly.

Smither moves close, hovers behind Victor. He pushes him into the locker, and Victor hits his eyebrow into the edge of it. He tries to resist, but Smither pins him against the locker.

VICTOR CARRIER
Get off me!

Smither pushes him into the wall, holding him by the chin.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
Where is it?

Victor scrambles for his BATON, but Smither knocks his hand away with ease. He grabs it, chucks it onto the floor.

VICTOR CARRIER
Get the fuck off me!

SGT. JASON SMITHER
You gonna calm down?

Slowly, Smither lets go of Victor. Victor pushes him away, moves past him. He wipes his face, buttons his uniform.

SGT. JASON SMITHER (CONT'D)
You best start following orders,
Victor, or else-

VICTOR CARRIER

Or else what? I go to fucking Internal Affairs and have them handle this shit? I'm done. You get that? *Done.*

SGT. JASON SMITHER

You're starting problems that we can't control right now. I don't think you realize-

Victor gets close into Smither's face.

VICTOR CARRIER

Fuck your problems. I'm *done*, so are you. I find out you're still doing this, I'll take you down. I don't give a fuck if it means that I go out too. And I flushed your dope down the toilet. Consider it sunk cost, motherfucker.

Smither glares at him. Victor turns, leaves the office.

INT. AD-SEG REMOTE OFFICE - DAY

Elias taps his feet quickly, waiting outside the AD-SEG SAFETY GATE.

The C.O. exits, hands the CART over to Elias, who looks at him with an anticipatory glance.

INT. AD-SEG HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The C.O. walks next to Elias. Elias looks over at him, the C.O. noticing.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

You know when Officer Carrier's going to be back here?

AD-SEG C.O.

None of your concern, Hernandez.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Jayceon grabs Elias by the collar, shoves him into the shelf.

JAYCEON
 Might been an accident first time,
 but now I know you're pulling some
 shit, motherfucker.

Jayceon GRABS a SHANK, pushes it up against Elias' windpipe.

JAYCEON (CONT'D)
 You and your boy owe me a hundred
 K.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I'll talk to Spectro-

JAYCEON
 You finished talking, you about to
 do some doing. You have a week.

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias walks down row after row after row, passing through
 HORDES of INMATES.

INT. NORTEÑO CAMP, GYM - MOMENTS LATER

Elias, in the NORTEÑO CAMP, pats a NORTEÑO GANG MEMBER lying
 on his bunk on the shoulder. They speak SPANISH:

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
You seen Santino?

The GANG MEMBER shakes his head. Elias continues down the
 tier.

NORTENO GANG MEMBER (O.S.)
*You gonna clean soon? It's getting
 fucking gross-*

INT. SHOWER, GYM - MOMENTS LATER

Elias walks into the shower. Nothing, except NAKED INMATES.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Spectro? You seen him?

INMATE (O.S.)
 Get the fuck outta here, faggot!

INT. GYM - MOMENTS LATER

Elias passes down the hallways, head turning from side to side, while INMATES continue their lives uninterrupted.

Elias sees ANOTHER NORTEÑO GANG MEMBER waving him down.

NORTEÑO #1
Luis wants to see you.

INT. COMMON AREA, GYM - DAY

Luis is sitting at a table, engaged in a heated debate with other SENIOR NORTEÑOS.

The NORTEÑO GANG MEMBER and Elias walk up, stand on the outskirts of the conversation.

NORTEÑO GANG MEMBER
(quietly, to Elias)
Spectro's been dealing with the black cars. He's gone into lockdown.

Elias swallows, looks at Luis nervously as he continues to talk to the SENIOR NORTEÑOS.

LUIS PADILLA
The last thing we need is trouble with black cars.

SENIOR NORTEÑO
I'll handle him, Luis...

Luis stands, sees Elias.

LUIS PADILLA
You got something for me?

Elias walks over, hands Luis the KITE.

LUIS PADILLA (CONT'D)
You're always hanging with Spectro.
You know anything about this?

Elias shakes his head calmly. Luis turns to the SENIOR NORTEÑOS.

LUIS PADILLA (CONT'D)
I want Spectro handled. Talk to your guys, take care of it.

INT. UTILITY ROOM, GYM - DAY

Elias paces around the dark utility room. He grabs one of the metal gate shelves and topples it over in anger, frustration.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

Fuck!

He sits down on the ground, while industrial cleaner seeps out onto the floor between the mess next to him.

INT. WORK DETAIL OFFICE - DAY

Elias stands by the WORK DETAIL COUNTER.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

I just want to be transferred to a different work detail.

WORK DETAIL OFFICER

You need to give a valid transfer reason, or you wont be able to apply for a different job-

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

Then I quit.

EXT. YARD - DAY

Elias sits to the side of the yard. He looks around nervously at the faces of the CONVICTS. Nobody seems to notice him.

INT. SHOWER - DAY

Water pelts Elias in the back of the neck, as he stands in the steaming shower amongst other NAKED INMATES.

A BLACK INMATE, KERSHAW, 35, enters. He steps over to the spot next to Elias, starts washing up.

KERSHAW

You think J can't touch you, cause you're back on your own block?

Elias looks at him with wide eyes. Kershaw spits water out, washing his closely cropped hair.

KERSHAW (CONT'D)

You got five more days. Then I come to collect.

INT. NORTEÑO CAMP, GYM - DAY

Elias, dressed, wet hair, walks the main street of the NORTEÑO camp.

He reaches his bunk, where a NORTEÑO is setting up. Elias' stuff is thrown onto the floor next to it.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

What are you doing? That's my bunk... That's my bunk.

The NORTEÑO looks past Elias, to Luis, who approaches.

LUIS PADILLA

You're not working kitchen anymore, not passing any messages.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

Luis, please?

LUIS PADILLA

You were Spectro's boy. What use I got for you now? Take your things.

Elias sluggishly packs his stuff into his laundry bag. As he picks up the copy of *The Prince*, one of the KITE PICTURES falls from between the pages. It lands face-down, right in front of Luis. Elias looks at it with wide eyes.

Luis glances at it. Then he turns, walks away. Elias moves over, and stuffs it into his back pocket.

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias walks the outside column of the gym, his hands filled with his possessions. He makes his way to the NATIVE section.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

This bunk free?

He points to an empty bunk. One of the NATIVES responds with a tired shrug.

As Elias organizes his stuff, he looks to the side, where the BLACK VILLAGE borders the NATIVES.

Kershaw stares back. He WHISPERS something to the BLACK GANG MEMBER next to him, who looks at Elias, and then gives Kershaw an understanding nod.

Elias avoids their stare, continues to stow away his effects.

He peaks up as he hears COMMOTION from the gym entrance:

INT. GYM ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

The group of ARYAN BROTHERS hug Spring, whose face is covered with cicatrices. He supports himself with a CANE.

Elias moves up to stand with a group of on-looking INMATES.

Spring hugs Hansen. As he does so, he sees Elias behind them. He smiles faintly, gives the kid a curt nod.

INT. GYM - NIGHT

Elias lies awake in the gym's darkness. He stares at the BLACK VILLAGE. A DARK SILHOUETTED FIGURE gets out of its bunk, creeps toward Elias. *Closer, closer.*

Elias jerks up in his bunk, prepared for the worst. But it's just a PASSING INMATE, headed to the bathroom.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Elias hides behind a book in the library, the KITES laid out in front of him. He rips out a page from his notebook, crumbling it up. His eyes fill with juvenile frustration.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
(quietly)
Come on... Come on!

He looks down at the FIRST KITE. Suddenly, his brow drops as he realizes something. He shuffles onto the next kite, counts the number of words in the first line:

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
(quietly)
One, two, three, four...

He circles every fourth letter, nodding as he writes out the resulting sentences they form.

Onto the next KITE. He counts the number of words.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
(quietly)
One, two...

He circles every second letter, his pen now SCRIBBLING cohesive sentences into his notebook.

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias walks toward the ARYAN CAMP. Hansen sees him approach, immediately stands.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I need to talk to Spring...

Hansen punches Elias in the gut as he tries to push past him. Elias collapses.

Spring walks forward with slow steps.

INT. UTILITY ROOM, GYM - DAY

Elias sits across from Spring and Hansen in the utility room, the door shut, giving them privacy.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I don't know what some of it means,
but if you read it through-

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
I know exactly what it means.

Spring reads Elias' notebook. He turns to Hansen.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING (CONT'D)
They're moving further south.
Delano.

HANSEN
Where they getting it from?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I heard Luis talk about Sinaloa.

Elias points to the notebook.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
That's their whole outside trade. I
have the name of their contact and
how to get in touch with them.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
That's not in here?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
No.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
That's the trade you want to make?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
It's a valuable name to know.

Spring CHUCKLES.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
Looks like we have a new prince on
C Block...

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
*"He that cannot obey, cannot
command."*

Spring looks at him with genuine surprise.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
I'm not coming to you to save me,
and I'm not expecting a hand out.
This pays for itself. I want a
guarantee you'll keep me safe until
I'm out of here. I want it to end.

Spring nods, looks to Hansen.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
Talk to the black cars.

HANSEN
Really?

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
Get their outside accounts, find
someone to do the transfer. I'm not
paying interest on it. They'll get
their money, but the clock stops
now.

Spring turns to Elias.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING (CONT'D)
I want that name. And I wanna know
everything about the trade inside
the prison, too.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Do I have your word on it?

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
You have my word on it.

Spring extends a scarred hand, which Elias shakes firmly.

EXT. C YARD - DAY

Elias sits in the baking sunshine of the yard. He looks up at the empty sky: Empty, no birds flying...

INMATES file outside, including Kershaw. As he walks onto the gravel he catches Elias' glance, gives him a concluding nod.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. C YARD - DAY

The ARYAN BROTHERS pose as a group, Spring standing proud in the middle of the pack.

There's a SNAP, as a CAMERA takes a picture.

FADE OUT.

FROM BLACK:

INT. MAIL - DAY

Elias opens a piece of mail in his bunk, pulls out a form. He reads it - at first confused, but then a smile spreads across his face.

MARY HERNANDEZ (PRE-LAP)
They're transferring you?

INT. PHONES, GYM - DAY

Elias holds the PHONE RECEIVER up to his ear.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I'm coming back to New Mexico.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
What does that mean? How long-

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Three weeks. They're moving me to a lower security facility, too.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
I can't believe it-

There's a LOUD CRASH on the other end of the PHONE.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
What was that, Mom?

The RECEIVER CRACKS violently.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
(worried)
Mom?

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
I'm fine - God, damn it! - I just
knocked over a pan... I got
excited.

(PHONE CRACKLES)
That's the best news I've gotten in
a long time, Elias.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I know.

MARY HERNANDEZ
Do you mind if I come up there in a
week still? I don't think I can
wait three weeks to see you.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Yeah, I should be free.

He smiles.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
I'm really looking forward to being
closer to home, Mom.

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias reads a book on his bunk, when Hansen walks up.

HANSEN
I need a spotter.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
What do you mean?

HANSEN
I'm exercising. I need someone to
spot me. I'm going heavy.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Now?

HANSEN
You can finish reading Louis
L'Amour some other time.

EXT. YARD - DAY

Hansen lifts a HEAVY BARBELL, Elias hovering over him, ready to grab it. Hansen RE-RACKS the weight easily.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Do you even need my help? Looks
like you're doing fine on your-

HANSEN
Hey, listen...

Hansen ignores Elias, gestures for him to come closer.

HANSEN (CONT'D)
Spring is in contact with Farro's
outside affiliates.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
That's good, right?

HANSEN
Could be. Could be really good.

Hansen changes his tone, speaking so softly it's eerie.

HANSEN (CONT'D)
You're rolling with us now, right?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I'm not rolling with anyone.

HANSEN
You're not working with Luis or
anyone else, at all?

Elias shakes his head.

HANSEN (CONT'D)
Good... So, since you're rolling
with us, you're gonna work with us.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I'm keeping to myself, Hansen.

HANSEN
You don't get benefits without
doing work.

Hansen nods, thinking something over real well.

HANSEN (CONT'D)
Spring wants you to take out Luis.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
(laughs)
You're joking...

HANSEN
No. I'm not.

Hansen looks at him with expressionless eyes.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I can't do that... I don't
understand, that wasn't our deal?

HANSEN
We paid off your old debts, but you
still gotta pay us for now, boy.
You think any of that changed?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
But-

Hansen shushes him, still speaking calmly.

HANSEN
You ever kill anyone? I mean, where
it wasn't an accident?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I never killed anyone...

HANSEN
It's not hard. You just gotta do it
right.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I wanna talk to Spring.

HANSEN
He don't have nothing to talk to
you about. He's the one told me to
tell you this.

INT. CHOW HALL - DAY

There's a stir of INMATES in the busy CHOW HALL.

Hansen sits closely to a blank-faced Elias, at an empty
table.

HANSEN

They're not expecting anything, cause they think the hit on Spring left us weak. But we're stronger than we've ever been. Spring came back from the dead, that's how strong we are.

Hansen takes a slurp from his water cup.

HANSEN (CONT'D)

You're gonna hit Luis in the showers. He gets it for himself at quarter to four, so he'll be alone. We'll cause a distraction to draw away anyone guarding him.

Elias looks to the other side of the room, where the NORTENO GROUP, including Luis, are eating their food.

Hansen continues to chow down hungrily beside Elias.

HANSEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You mind I grab your cornbread? I'm hungry like a motherfucker today.

EXT. YARD - DAY

Elias walks next to Hansen on the outskirts of the yard.

HANSEN

That's the most important part - surprised. He won't see it coming, unless you freeze up when it matters.

He stops Elias. They stand across from one another.

HANSEN (CONT'D)

You run in, and don't slip on them tiles, or make any other stupid mistake, that fucks it all up.

Hansen points to his neck, then jabs a finger into Elias' to illustrate his next point:

HANSEN (CONT'D)

You don't cut into his neck. Cut's superficial.

(MORE)

HANSEN (CONT'D)

You *hit* that motherfucker in there,
and then you keep going, until
there's so much blood on the floor
there ain't none left in him. Until
you drained that fucking spic.

Hansen slaps an open hand into Elias right side, which makes
Elias jump with shock.

HANSEN (CONT'D)

If he's blocking his neck with his
hands, you hit him right here, in
the liver. Ain't no ribs, bones
there to protect it. It's all
tissue, so it's easy to pierce.

INT. VISITOR'S ROOM - DAY

Elias' leg taps like a speeding metronome.

He looks around the thriftily filled VISITOR'S ROOM, where
FELLOW INMATES sit with loved ones.

Elias looks at the CLOCK above the entrance, craning his neck
out slightly to see if anyone's on their way in.

INT. VISITOR'S ROOM - DAY

The INMATE'S FAMILIES file out. Elias sits at the table,
looking over at a VISITATIONS C.O.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

Where's my visitor?

VISITATIONS C.O.

I don't know what to tell you,
Hernandez.

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias is on the phone.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

They said I couldn't come in
because I wasn't "appropriately
dressed"...

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

What were you wearing?

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 It wasn't cause of what I was
 wearing. Other visitors got to go
 in without any issues, while
 this... this *fucking* officer just
 stood there and laughed at me.

She's really upset, her voice shaking with anger.

MARRY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 I'm outside now.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 You're outside now?

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 I'm outside, and they won't let me
 in. I took the trip, seven hours,
 and they won't let me in now I'm so
 close...

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Change clothes, and-

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 I tried that, but they said it was
 too late-

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 (angrily)
 So come in tomorrow, Mom!

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 They don't open up until Monday,
 and I have to be back for work.
 You're coming back to New Mexico in
 two weeks, Elias. I can see you
 then?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I really needed to see you, and you
 weren't there. You were never
 fucking there!

She doesn't answer.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
 Mom?

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
 Yeah, I'm here... I mean, I'm
 "here"...

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

Elias, I promise I'll come visit all the time when you're back in New Mexico.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

(quietly)
It'll be too late...

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

What?

Elias smiles weakly.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

I said, "that sounds great", Mom...

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

I'm here, Elias. On the other side. I wanted to see you, too. But I'm here. Just, please, for a second pretend that I'm there with you. Please? If I was there, what would we talk about?

Elias nods with closed eyes, playing along.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

If you were here... If you were here, I'd want you to know that if anything happens, I'm sorry. For a lot of things. For ending up in here. For what I did... And putting you through that.

(beat)

I love you, Mom. I know I haven't said that after Dad. But I do, I really do.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

What's going on, Elias?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

I just really wanted to see you.

MARY HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

But I'll see you in New Mexico. Only two more weeks, right?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

Sure.

EXT. GYM, YARD - DAY

Elias walks across the orange gravel, ominous storm clouds building above his head. INMATES play HANDBALL against one of the walls, while others do PUSH-UPS, or JOG around.

As Elias walks closer to the gym, he sees Victor, who is walking the beat on yard patrol.

They catch each other's eyes, but Elias quickly looks away, continuing toward the gym.

INT. GYM - DAY

Hansen sits next to Elias on his bunk, talking softly to him, as Elias is keeled over.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

I have to throw up.

Hansen grabs Elias by the neck and turns his head toward him.

HANSEN

We don't have time for bullshit.
We'll be there to take care of you
once it's done.

Hansen looks around, then hands Elias a SHIV.

HANSEN (CONT'D)

Hide it. Back of your trunks.
Here...

Hansen hides the SHIV in the back of Elias' pants. Elias looks at him with wet eyes.

HANSEN (CONT'D)

You can do this.

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias walks down the side of the bunks with soft steps and a dazed look on his face.

INT. GYM SHOWERS - CONTINUOUS

He makes his way to the back of the gym, where the SHOWERS are located. He lingers in the corner close by, the entrance to the showers visible behind him.

With his back turned, he fidgets with one of the PHONES that hangs on the wall, pretending to make a call.

Behind him, Luis walks to the SHOWERS with TWO BODYGUARDS.

INT. GYM ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Elias peeks around the corner, where he sees the BODYGUARDS waiting by the shower entrance. He dips his head back again.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

Fuck...

He walks away from the entrance.

Suddenly, a NORTEÑO jogs to the SHOWER ENTRANCE. Elias turns his face away, but listens:

NORTENO

(in Spanish)

*Ramon, Carlos! Some of the Brothers
are starting some shit!*

One of the BODYGUARDS replies, but the NORTEÑO cuts him off.

NORTENO (CONT'D)

*We need you, both of you! There's a
lot of them!*

The NORTEÑO runs back, and the TWO BODYGUARDS follow him.

Elias sees them leave, shivers with excitement and fear as he walks back to the SHOWER ENTRANCE.

INT. SHOWER ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Elias' head turns from side to side as he walks across the bathroom section just outside the shower: Nobody there.

INT. SHOWERS, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Elias prowls through the SHOWER HALLWAY, hugging the wall.

Steam from the MAIN SHOWER ROOM spills into the hallway, enshrining Elias in a translucent mist.

His feet hit into puddles as he moves forward.

Water drips from patches of moisture on the ceiling.

As he sneaks closer, he hears Luis HUM from the MAIN ROOM.

Elias reaches the corner of the short hallway. He squats, making himself as small as possible. Then he glimpses around the corner, where he sees:

INT. SHOWERS, MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Luis, naked, washing his scalp, as he HUMS peacefully. Luis turns toward Elias, rinsing off.

INT. SHOWERS, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Elias dips his head back before Luis sees him.

Through tense breaths, Elias slowly dips his hand toward the small of his back. The ELASTIC band of his pants SNAPS, as he pulls out the SHIV.

Slowly, he stands to his full height, his eyes closed. He takes DEEP BREATHS, opens his eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. GYM - MOMENTS LATER

Elias, clothes splashed with water, walks with rapid steps down the side of the gym.

He passes the NORTEÑO CAMP BORDER, where Hansen and a GROUP OF BROTHERS are engaged in confrontation with the NORTEÑOS.

Hansen sees Elias walking. He catches the boy's glance, nods to confirm. Elias looks away.

Hansen squints, unsure. He sees Elias speed up, and breaks away from the confrontation, pursuing the boy.

INT. GYM, ARYAN BROTHERHOOD CAMP - CONTINUOUS

Elias jogs through the gym, looking over his shoulder. Behind him, Hansen runs after him.

HANSEN (O.S.)
Yo, Tommy! Grab that fucker!

Elias passes TOMMY, 30's, resting in his bunk. Tommy looks over his shoulder, sees Hansen coming toward them, and Elias running away.

He jumps out of his bunk, joining the pursuit on Elias.

INT. GYM - DAY

Elias pushes past INMATES, as Hansen and Tommy close in.

Ahead, the GYM DOOR stands open. Elias continues, pushing over an INMATE that's in his way.

EXT. GYM - DAY

Elias runs into the yard, slowing his gait immediately. He looks up at the towers, around to make sure none of the C.O.s have been alarmed.

Elias walks with determined steps toward Victor, who's standing in the corner closest to the gym.

Behind him, Hansen and Tommy exit the gym. They look up at the GUARD TOWERS, then to Elias.

HANSEN

Shit!

EXT. GYM YARD, CORNER - CONTINUOUS

Elias walks toward Victor.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ

You need to help me.

Elias comes closer, a little too quickly, still skimming up at the GUARD TOWERS to make sure they're not alarmed.

Victor instinctively grabs for his SpiderAlert transponder.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)

Please, please, please!

Elias holds out his empty hands. Victor hesitates.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)

You don't know what you got me into.

(MORE)

ELIAS HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
 I know the sergeant made you, cause
 Spectro told me, I know you were
 forced into it, cause I was too,
 but you gotta help me out of it.
 Please. Help me.

Victor sees the pleading look on Elias' face.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Elias sits in the interrogation room, a CUP OF COFFEE in front of him. Victor rests in a chair next to him.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 (softly)
 Your name's Carrier, right?

Elias looks at him with tired eyes.

VICTOR CARRIER
 Yeah.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I'm Elias...

VICTOR CARRIER
 Victor.

The DOOR OPENS, and Montoya steps inside the room. He looks between Elias and Victor, shakes his head with exacerbatation.

VICTOR CARRIER (CONT'D)
 You need to hear him out, Montoya.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA (PRE-LAP)
 I gave you a very clear instruction
 to not do anything stupid.

INT. OUTSIDE INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Montoya stands across from Victor, outside the interrogation room.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
 His problems ain't ours-

VICTOR CARRIER
 Why else are we here?

Montoya takes a moment, sizing up Victor.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
So what do you wanna do?

VICTOR CARRIER
I want to go to the warden.
Combined with what he has to tell
us, I've got a strong case
indicating a network of narcotics
conspiracy involving prison staff-

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Including you.

VICTOR CARRIER
I'll corroborate everything he
says. It's the right thing to do...

Montoya wipes his chin, thinking it over.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Let me talk to my guy with IA-

VICTOR CARRIER
You promised me you'd find a way to
solve this already-

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
This changes things. I'll talk to
him tomorrow morning, off the
record. I'll ask him how you get
immunity. And how to help him. Just
gimme until tomorrow.

Montoya waves a finger at the door, indicating Elias.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA (CONT'D)
He's safe now, okay? That's what
matters. Now it's about covering
your ass.

INT. PROTECTIVE CUSTODY - DAY

Victor and Montoya escort a shackled Elias down the HALLWAY
of PROTECTIVE CUSTODY.

They make their way to a cell door, that gives an ELECTRONIC
BUZZ as it opens.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
What's gonna happen to me?

VICTOR CARRIER
You'll be all right. You're safe.

Montoya shakes his head.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
(quietly)
You're going up against some evil,
evil people. The information you
have is valuable to agencies who
will do a lot to... accommodate you
in exchange. And their protection,
you can count on.

Victor looks at Elias, who's listening closely to all this.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA (CONT'D)
You'll debrief on all the gang
activity that you've been involved
with. Before that, you need to talk
to a lawyer, make sure you get
something in return. Sentence
reduction, or immunity. Depending
on what happens, you may be put
into Witness Protection.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
How about my mom?

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
She'll be all right. Don't worry
about that now. Get some sleep.

Montoya nudges his head toward the open cell door.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
Thank you. Thank you, Victor.

Victor nods gently in return.

INT. PROTECTIVE CUSTODY, CELL - CONTINUOUS

The door closes behind Elias, and he walks to the corner of
the cell, where he crumbles.

He leans his head back against the cement wall. Then he
CHUCKLES, relieved. Gradually, his CHUCKLE turns into a SOB
and he sits there weeping, letting it all out.

EXT. PRISON PARKING LOT - EVENING

The red sun sets, washing the clouds in orange and pink.
Victor sits on the curb by the prison, lost in thought.

A SEDAN drives up through the parking lot. Victor sees it, walks to meet it with his duffel bag.

Inside, his WIFE, HOLLY CARRIER, 23, smiles back at him.

HOLLY CARRIER
Hey, honey-

VICTOR CARRIER
Could you pull over?

Her face falls when she sees his serious expression.

HOLLY CARRIER
You all right?

VICTOR CARRIER
Just pull over, Holly. Please...

She pulls the car over, puts it in park. Victor opens the back door, fidgets with HENRY'S BABY SEAT.

He pulls the SLEEPING TODDLER out and holds him so close to his chest.

HOLLY CARRIER (O.S.)
Victor? What are you doing?

VICTOR CARRIER
I just needed to hold him for a second...

Holly exits the car, and walks over to Victor.

HOLLY CARRIER
Victor, you're scaring me...

He smells the top of Henry's soft head, before he turns to Holly, gathering the necessary courage.

VICTOR CARRIER
I have something I have to tell you.

EXT. PRISON - DAY

The sun rises over the PRISON, striking onto the vast expanse around it, sweeping it bright and clean.

INT. PROTECTIVE CUSTODY, CELL - DAY

Elias is sound asleep in his cell, as the door BUZZES open. Elias calmly wakes, sees Montoya standing in the doorway.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
You sleep all right?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I slept really well, actually...

It's true: Elias looks rested for the first time.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Victor opens his locker, and pulls his UNIFORM out of a DUFFEL BAG, while the OTHER C.O.s do the same around him.

He looks over his shoulder, sees Smither approach. He ignores him, continues prepping. Smither hovers behind him.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
We need to talk.

VICTOR CARRIER
I don't have anything to say to you.

SGT. JASON SMITHER
A little bird told me that you're preparing to do something drastic, and I think if we talk about it-

Victor looks surprised.

VICTOR CARRIER
Who told you that?

SGT. JASON SMITHER
You think anything happens in here I don't know about?

Victor rushes out of the locker room.

INT. AD-SEG CONTROL POST - SAME TIME

Montoya escorts a SHACKLED ELIAS to the sally port leading into AD-SEG. The CONTROL POST C.O. BUZZES the gate open.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Warden asked me to move you here, until we can transfer you out.

Montoya gives him a reassuring nod, and Elias continues into AD-SEG. Montoya leads him to a CELL DOOR, which BUZZES open.

Elias looks at him with a puzzled expression.

INT. PROTECTIVE CUSTODY, CONTROL ROOM - SAME TIME

Victor stands inside the PC Control Room.

CONTROL C.O.
It's empty, ain't nobody in there-

VICTOR CARRIER
Where's Hernandez?

CONTROL C.O.
He got moved.

VICTOR CARRIER
Who moved him?

The CONTROL C.O. shrugs, not sure.

INT. AD-SEG CELL - SAME TIME

Elias stands inside the austere cell. There's nothing there, except new bedsheets on the single bunk.

As Elias moves past a break in the wall, he also moves past A FIGURE, leaning against the cement in the corner.

MIGUEL FARRO (O.S.)
Hernandez...

Elias turns and sees a smiling Farro standing in the corner.

MIGUEL FARRO (CONT'D)
Long time no see. Sit down.

INT. GYM - SAME TIME

Victor scampers through the rows in the gym. He points at one of the INMATES.

VICTOR CARRIER
Where's Hernandez' bunk? Young guy?

INT. AD-SEG CELL - SAME TIME

Elias slowly descends onto the bunk.

MIGUEL FARRO
 You were the one running kites to
 Luis, right?

Elias nods, while Farro moves to the chair by his slim desk,
 across from the boy.

MIGUEL FARRO (CONT'D)
 I've learnt a lot of things about
 you this night.

Elias doesn't answer.

MIGUEL FARRO (CONT'D)
 Like how you were working with
 Spectro. Is that true?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Yes.

MIGUEL FARRO
 Did he threaten you?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 He said he'd hurt my mom.

Farro shakes his head.

MIGUEL FARRO
 I apologize about that. Spectro
 used to be an Azteca. Then he
 became a coward. In any case, you
 don't have to worry about Spectro
 anymore.

INT. GYM, ARYAN CAMP - SAME TIME

Victor stands by Elias' empty bunk. Hansen is drooped on his
 bunk across the walkway.

HANSEN
 Man, I don't fucking know where
 he's at.

Victor looks to Spring, who approaches with his cane.

VICTOR CARRIER
 Where is he?

Victor takes a step toward Spring, which triggers all the
 BROTHERS to jump to attention.

JAMES LUTHER SPRING
Get out of here, Officer. For your
own good.

INT. AD-SEG CELL - SAME TIME

MIGUEL FARRO
But then you got greedy. Just like
Spectro. You talked to Spring.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I had to-

Farro holds up a hand.

MIGUEL FARRO
Turns out Spring's got a lot of
pull with the C.O.s. He's got a lot
of pull outside, too. He suggested
working together. Expanding with
their help so that it would benefit
us both.

Elias foot TAPS into the ground, which Farro sees.

MIGUEL FARRO (CONT'D)
You didn't mean to do it, but you
helped everyone out. We can expand
to places that we never could
before without their help. As for
old grudges, there's a lot of
things we can let go, when there's
money to be made.

Miguel CHUCKLES for just a beat, then his stare grows cold.

MIGUEL FARRO (CONT'D)
But, in the interest of building a
solid working relationship, Spring
felt like he needed to disclose
some things with me. You know what
I'm talking about.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
I don't know-

MIGUEL FARRO
Nothing you say will save you,
Elias. You know that I'm talking
about Manuela. About my baby
sister's twelve-year-old, beautiful
girl.

Miguel clears his throat.

MIGUEL FARRO (CONT'D)
 You left her there. Left her there
 alone to die in the middle of the
 road... You think she would have
 survived if you'd have stopped?
 Called an ambulance?

A tear rolls down Elias' cheek.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I don't know.

MIGUEL FARRO
 You don't know...

Miguel nods swiftly, forcing a wide smile as his eyes brim.

MIGUEL FARRO (CONT'D)
 Do you think about it?

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I can't sleep when I'm alone, cause
 every time I do, it comes back...

MIGUEL FARRO
 Stand up.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 Señor Farro, please-

MIGUEL FARRO
 Elias, nothing you say will save
 you. Stand up.

Miguel stands. Elias' knees buckle under his weight. Miguel
 takes a slow step toward Elias, holding out his empty hands.

MIGUEL FARRO (CONT'D)
 I forgive you.

ELIAS HERNANDEZ
 I'm sorry...

MIGUEL FARRO
 I forgive you.

He pulls Elias into a hug.

MIGUEL FARRO (CONT'D)
 I forgive you.

Elias SOBS into his shoulder, while Miguel comforts him. He pulls away from Elias, staring into the boy's eyes.

MIGUEL FARRO (CONT'D)
I forgive you, because God won't
for what you did. I forgive you so
that I can let go of my pain. You
understand?

Elias nods, wipes his eyes. Farro smiles at him, taps him fatherly on the side of the face with one hand.

In one flash move, Farro SWIPES a SHIV across Elias' throat. It cuts a gushing, deep gash which sprays the white wall behind Farro in a neat, maroon curve. Elias drops to the ground.

Farro takes a seat on the chair, lights a cigarette, takes a drag as he watches Elias bleed out on the ground by his feet.

INT. C.O. OFFICE - SAME TIME

Victor RIPS open the door to Montoya and Smither's office. Montoya looks up from his paperwork.

VICTOR CARRIER
Where'd you take him?

Montoya sighs, closes up his paperwork. He stands.

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
Carrier, let it go-

VICTOR CARRIER
You spoke to Smither?

C.O. JAVIER MONTOYA
You think you're the only one who's
done some work? You shouldn't have
gotten everyone involved-

The PRISON ALARM goes off, blares through the hallway outside the office. Victor turns and runs out the office.

INT. AD-SEG HALLWAY - DAY

A team of C.O.s, PARAMEDICS and POLICE OFFICERS stand outside Farro's cell.

A CORONER exits, pushing a GURNEY with a closed BODY BAG.

EXT. BACK ENTRANCE - EVENING

A small circus: An AMBULANCE, SEVERAL POLICE CARS, with the appropriate PERSONNEL surrounding them.

Victor talks with a POLICE OFFICER. He looks over to an AMBULANCE, where Smither talks to ANOTHER POLICE OFFICER.

POLICE OFFICER
Wait here for me, Officer?

The BACK GATE opens. The CORONER pushes the gurney with Elias' body out into the courtyard, toward a CORONER'S CAR.

Victor sees it being pushed into the CORONER'S VAN.

With quicks steps, Victor walks over to Smither and the COP that he's talking to. Neither of them see it coming, as Victor SMACKS a FIST into Smither's face. The sergeant stumbles to the ground, shaken.

The COP jumps in, holds Victor off. Surrounding COPS and C.O.s rush to assist.

INT. PRISON HALLWAY - LATER

Victor waits on a bench next to a COP, still handcuffed.

Down the hall, Smither and Montoya are escorted out of the prison by A SET OF COPS each.

As they pass Victor, Montoya looks to the ground, while Smither, bruised nose, stares daggers at him. They're led out of the door, toward POLICE CRUISERS that wait in a COURTYARD.

COP
(to Victor)
Let's go. Move out.

FADE OUT.

TRANSITION: WATER beats on a glass surface, as we:

FADE IN:

INT. SHOWER, CARRIER HOME - DAY

Victor scrubs his body inside his family shower cabin. He turns off the water, and steps out.

He's got an ANKLE MONITOR attached around his shin.

INT. RALPH'S - DAY

Standing in the PAPER TOWEL SECTION of the busy supermarket, Holly and Victor, his buzz grown out an inch, bicker over toilet paper.

HOLLY CARRIER
(hushed, irritable)
Cause we don't have money to pay
for it, Victor-

Henry is attached to Holly's chest in a BABY STRAP.

VICTOR CARRIER
We're still good for a little bit-

HOLLY CARRIER
No, we're not. I looked over our
accounts.

VICTOR CARRIER
Holly, we're fine-

HOLLY CARRIER
Victor, don't tell me we're fine-

Victor interrupts her, as he puts a roll of BOUNTY into the cart. Holly immediately grabs it, puts it back on the shelf.

HOLLY CARRIER (CONT'D)
I'd prefer not to spend money on
things like name-brand kitchen
towels if you're going to jail.

This shell-shocks Victor. Holly catches herself:

HOLLY CARRIER (CONT'D)
I didn't mean that.

Victor nods, looks into the ground, ashamed.

HOLLY CARRIER (CONT'D)
Hey, I'm sorry. Victor-

She takes a step forward, Henry making a sound on her chest, as she takes Victor's face in her hands.

HOLLY CARRIER (CONT'D)
Victor, I'm sorry.

VICTOR CARRIER
I shouldn't have gotten us into
this...

HOLLY CARRIER
 You did the right thing. I'm
 just... I'm scared about what's
 gonna happen.

VICTOR CARRIER
 I should have kept my mouth shut
 about everything.

HOLLY CARRIER
 No, hey-

He gets his attention, and he looks up.

HOLLY CARRIER (CONT'D)
 You're a good man. I wouldn't be
 with you if you weren't.
 (beat)
 Just... Please get the store brand.
 We'll figure everything out, but we
 gotta start shopping somewhere
 cheaper first... Okay?

VICTOR CARRIER
 Okay.

She gives Victor a kiss on the top of the head.

HOLLY CARRIER
 I'll go get in line. Can you grab
 diapers?

INT. RALPH'S BABY SECTION - CONTINUOUS

Victor walks down the BABY SUPPLY AISLE. He grabs a package
 of DIAPERS, looks it over to make sure it's the right one.

MAN (O.S.)
 Which ones you looking for?

Victor looks up, sees a LEAN MAN, 38, next to him. He's
 cleanly dressed, but is obviously a VETERAN - an ARMY TATTOO
 on his FOREARM and worn combat boots on his feet.

VICTOR CARRIER
 Just looking.

Victor returns his attention to the diapers.

VETERAN
 Sorry, I didn't mean to intrude. I
 just had my first kid, not sure
 which ones to get.

The VETERAN pulls a PACK OF DIAPERS off the shelf, looks at the back of it.

VICTOR CARRIER

Sorry - We used to get those ones.

He points at the NAME BRAND DIAPERS on the shelf, which the VETERAN picks up.

VETERAN

23.99 for diapers? He's just shitting in them.

Victor laughs politely. The VETERAN shakes his head, still looking at the PACK OF DIAPERS.

VETERAN (CONT'D)

My friend's got six kids. I have no idea how he does it.

Something about that stops Victor's laugh.

The VETERAN's phone CHIMES in his pocket. He flips open the CELL, checks a MESSAGE.

He puts the PHONE back in his pocket, grabs the PACK OF DIAPERS.

VETERAN (CONT'D)

Thanks for the help, man. Don't forget to stay on your kid's six. You never what kind of trouble they'll get into, right?

He passes Victor, continues around the aisle.

Victor quickly walks the opposite way, toward the STORE'S COUNTERS - toward Holly and Henry.

INT. COUNTERS, RALPH'S - CONTINUOUS

Holly is putting ITEMS onto the belt, when Victor walks up with a PACK OF DIAPERS.

HOLLY CARRIER

What took you so long?

Victor looks down the row of COUNTERS, the VETERAN nowhere in sight.

HOLLY CARRIER (CONT'D)

Victor?

VICTOR CARRIER
Just wanted to make sure I got the
right kind.

He turns to Holly, smiles at her.

EXT. RALPH'S, PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Victor loads groceries into the trunk of their sedan, while Holly struggles with Henry and the baby seat.

Victor sees TWO SHADY-LOOKING MEXICAN GUYS smoking cigarettes, gazing at him from across the lot.

HOLLY CARRIER (O.S.)
You ready?

Victor stares at them, still loading groceries, before the MEXICANS get in a PICK-UP carrying A LAWN MOWER and GARDEN UTILITIES, and exit the parking lot.

INT. VICTOR'S CAR - DAY

Holly TALKS to Victor, who's driving, but her VOICE is drowned out.

He's busy looking at his REARVIEW MIRROR: There's a MENACING BLACK SUV tailing them, the DRIVER obstructed by the glare off the front windshield.

HOLLY CARRIER
Watch out!

Victor swerves the car to the left to avoid a car that's stopped ahead.

HOLLY CARRIER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Can you keep your eyes on the road,
please?

Victor looks in the rearview, where the SUV pulls off to a side road.

Henry WHIMPERS in the backseat.

INT. CARRIER HOME, LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - DAY

Victor is holding Henry close to his chest. Holly cooks in the couples cramped kitchen behind him.

EXT. CARRIER HOME - DUSK

Victor walks the garbage bag to the curb, where he opens the lid of a trash can and dumps it.

He wipes his hands on his pants, skimming a quick look at the small, but tranquil houses in the desert suburban area.

Up the road, about fifty yards, is a CAR, no license plates, at the curb with A GROUP OF GUYS inside.

He keeps his stare locked on the car, as he walks toward it.

VICTOR CARRIER

Can I help you?

The CAR starts up, and SPEEDS past. THREE SCRUFFY MEN stare at him as they pass. Was one of them the VETERAN from the store? They're gone so quickly it's hard to tell.

Victor watches the car exit down the road, leaving the neighborhood serene again.

He stands there, so fragile and alone, in the middle of the street, looking down both sides of the road, as we:

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.