

Cicada

by

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EXT. CHINESE HIGHWAY - DAY

The G4 Beijing-Hong Kong Expressway. Packed but flowing. A postmodern Ford assembly-line. Just another 6AM on a Monday when..

JANE (V.O.)

People like to think they're the heroes of their own stories. And why not? For most people, it's true. Their stories are just really fucking boring. Wake up, go to work, go home, sleep. Rinse, wash, repeat.

A Bugatti Veyron needles artfully into the artery of traffic.

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But what if it were all a lie? What if there was an invisible hand guiding them all along, and the free will they thought they had was actually just a sandbox in Rikers?

SCREECH! An armored van BARRELS ANGRILY towards the Bugatti.

The van's tailpipe bounces against the road behind it like a stone skipping on water. TAT-A-TAT-TAT-TAT. In the front, the van's bumper and hood are bunched up, ripped skin hanging over an open wound.

This is a van on a war path.

Inside the Bugatti, JANE (mid 20s, Emperor Furiosa in spirit, Rory Gilmore in shell) swings a hard left, LUNGING INTO THE NEXT LANE JUST SECONDS AHEAD OF A 16 WHEELER.

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

No one wants to think about that, of course. So let's get back to stories. My story.

In her rearview mirror, Jane sees the armored van GUNNING TOWARDS HER, weaving sharply between lanes. She looks at the road ahead, then back at the rearview mirror.

THE VAN IS GONE.

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Most people's stories are about how they lived.

Jane punches the accelerator when--

A STACCATO OF GUNFIRE SPRAYS the body of her car. She turns to her right. The armored van is now neck-to-neck with her -- the muzzle of an AR-15 trained at her head.

Jane pumps the brakes, precipitously slowing down. The 16 wheeler BLARES ITS HORN. It looks like SHE'S GOING TO GET MOWED OVER when --

-- SHE PITCHES RIGHT, CUTTING THROUGH THREE LANES OF TRAFFIC AND CLIPPING THREE CARS IN THE PROCESS. She leaves a wake of sparks and shrieking metal.

The armored van follows in pursuit. Gains speed. Darts onto the shoulder to Jane's right.

THUNK!

A serrated HARPOON RIPS through behind Jane. CATCHES on the steel body it punctured.

The Bugatti JERKS towards the van. The harpoon connects to it via a steel, umbilical-like cord. Ahab and his whale.

Jane looks over and grips the wheel. Braces herself. Hopes she's wrong to be an atheist. Then RAMS HER CAR INTO THE VAN.

BOTH CARS SOMERSAULT HEAD OVER HEELS OVER THE HIGHWAY'S RAISED EDGE.

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Mine is about how I died.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - BOSTON - MORNING

CHYRON: 18 YEARS AGO

Wearing a "Doctors Without Borders" shirt, ALICE (late 30s) wheels a squeaky, weathered suitcase towards the front door.

A teary-eyed young Jane (6) bounds up and throws her arms around her.

JANE
Why do you have to go, Mommy?

ALICE
A lot of bad things happen in the world, sweetheart. We all need to do what we can to put in some good.

Jane looks away, upset.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Want to see a magic trick?

Jane looks back, unsure whether to take the bait.

JANE (V.O.)
I guess I should start at the
beginning. This part was good.

Alice picks up a styrofoam cup and holds it in her hands.

ALICE
Want me to make it float?

Jane nods shyly. Alice stares hard at the cup. Mutters an incantation. Then--

The cup starts LEVITATING ABOVE HER LEFT HAND.

JANE
Wow!

ALICE
Must be magic, huh?

Jane nods vigorously.

Alice turns the cup towards Jane. There's a hole in it, which Alice grips with her thumb.

ALICE (CONT'D)
When you were listening to my voice
and watching my fingers wiggle, I
made this hole.

JANE
Woah!

ALICE
Magicians distract you from the
truth. They direct your attention
to where they want your attention
to be.

(then)
Now, you try.

Alice gives Jane the cup. Jane stares hard at it, then makes it levitate too. Alice smiles.

Jane's dad, BRUCE (late 30s), walks in wearing an apron.

BRUCE
Time for breakfast!

JANE
Pancakes?

BRUCE
Bran Flakes.

JANE
Ugh! GROSS!

ALICE
Gross! Why are you wearing an
apron?

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - BOSTON - NIGHT

Jane performs the cup levitation magic trick for Bruce.

JANE (V.O.)
The next parts were not so good.

Suddenly, red and blue lights flood the window.

Bruce walks to the door. Two POLICEMEN stand outside, grim.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT - BOSTON - NIGHT

A swarm of cicadas crawl over an oak tree in front of the apartment.

VFX: GRAINY GREEN SCALE FOOTAGE of the tree and, in the B.G., the policemen entering Jane's apartment.

It's surveillance footage. Somebody is watching.

CUT TO:

INT. GRIFFIN FINAL CLUB - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

CHYRON: 5 YEARS AGO

An elite college society. Stuffed animal busts. Smoldering cigars. Gilded ashtrays.

A group of tuxedoed MEN IN ANIMAL MASKS file into the dining room and line up on one side of the table. On the other sits a row of the eager and mask-less. The candidates.

A bell is rung. The men in masks take their seats. A MAN IN A PIG MASK sits at the head of the table.

MAN IN PIG MASK

A toast!

Everyone raises their glasses.

MAN IN PIG MASK (CONT'D)

To everyone in this room. Welcome
to the final round of punch.

Everyone cheers.

There are only two women among the mask-less. Jane (19) is
one of them.

MAN IN PIG MASK (CONT'D)

Each of you will now tell us a
story. About what or whom is
entirely up to you. My only advice:
be memorable.

(then)

Who wants to kick things off?

A muscular, TALL PUNCH stands up, his neck thick as a
stockpot.

TALL PUNCH

I will, Sir Don Quixote. When I was
summering in St. Tropez with my
family--

A tale of blustering bravado. An OBNOXIOUS CLUB MEMBER
catcalls.

OBNOXIOUS CLUB MEMBER

Tuck your dick back in your pants!

SFX: The Tall Punch's voice sounds watery and dreamlike. A
world away. It starts to fade as the camera focuses on Jane.

One of these things is not like the others -- in more than
one way.

Another catcall. Then the Tall Punch's voice regains aural
clarity.

TALL PUNCH

So even if you don't remember me,
Taylor Swift's new album will.

The room bursts into applause and more catcalls.

MAN IN PIG MASK (CONT'D)

To Punch Taubman!

Everyone raises their glasses and drinks. The room throbs with inebriation and ritual.

The Man in the Pig Mask turns to Jane.

MAN IN PIG MASK (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Punch Marshall.

Jane nervously stands.

JANE
Hello sirs and vixens, fellow punches.

Jane takes out some notecards from her pocket.

JANE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
I never thought I'd make it here. To Harvard. My mom died when I was young, and it was a struggle for my dad to make ends meet. Luckily, I got a full-ride because someone thinks I'm good at computers. So to be here, at the Griffin Club for punch -- I can hardly believe it.

Eyes glaze over. Sincerity has no currency here.

JANE (CONT'D)
(reading the room)
And you know what? I don't think I do. My guess is I was punched as a joke.

A few members glance around.

JANE (CONT'D)
It's fine. I never wanted to join anyways. I just wanted to drop this off--

She throws a folder onto the table. Papers and photos fly everywhere. The Man in the Pig Mask picks up one of the papers.

JANE (CONT'D)
It's kind of an open secret, isn't it? The bad things that happen here. The really bad things. Like what happened to my roommate.
(then, hardening)
Most of you aren't predators, but the ones who aren't still protect the ones who are.
(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)

You'd think somebody would have a better moral compass--

MAN IN PIG MASK

What is this?

His voice is calm. Tempered. Terrifying.

JANE

It's everything. All the security footage, the emails, the texts, the phone calls -- all the evidence the Ad Board will need to expel you. All of you.

Jane turns to the other woman.

JANE (CONT'D)

Did you know they have three bedrooms upstairs? Three bedrooms with three beds. No dressers, no desks, no chairs. Just three beds.

OBNOXIOUS CLUB MEMBER

How did you get all this??

JANE

Turns out Harvard was right: I am very good at computers.

The Obnoxious Club Member angrily grabs all the files and throws them into the fireplace.

JANE (CONT'D)

Those were your copies. A courtesy. President Brown already has them in his inbox.

(then)

Was that memorable enough for you?

Everyone in the room stares at Jane. Then, the Man in the Pig Mask takes off his mask. Smiles. It's chilling.

MAN IN PIG MASK

Let me tell you what's going to happen.

(then)

Nothing. Absolutely nothing. All of the evidence, the records, every bit of data you've got: it'll be expunged. Wiped off the face of the planet. This whole self-indulgent Joan of Arc anti-establishment play will have been for nothing.

(MORE)

MAN IN PIG MASK (CONT'D)

We come out of this unscathed. Wish
I could say the same for you,
sweetheart.

The room erupts in shouting. Taunting. The men in masks throw drinks and spit on Jane as she walks calmly towards the exit.

CUT TO:

INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - HARVARD - DAY

PRESIDENT BROWN sits, peeved, behind his desk. There's a knock on the door. The Obnoxious Club Member walks in.

A MAN IN A NAVY SUIT (60s) stands by a window. He looks at the Obnoxious Club Member, then at the President.

The Man in a Navy Suit walks over to the President's desk and takes out a checkbook.

JANE (V.O.)

It turned out he was right, of course. Nothing happened to them.

INT. SILICON VALLEY OFFICE - DAY

Jane types away at a desk in a Google-esque office. An ASIAN MAN walks up to her, apologetic.

CUT TO:

INT. SILICON VALLEY OFFICE - LATER

Jane walks away from the now cleared out desk with a box of her things.

JANE (V.O.)

He was right about the other things too.

CUT TO:

EXT. SILICON VALLEY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

VFX: GRAINY GREEN SCALE FOOTAGE of Jane walking out.

It's more surveillance footage. Somebody is still watching.

JANE (V.O.)
 Shitty, I know. But things pick up,
 I promise.

CUT TO:

INT. JANE'S CAR - MORNING

CHYRON: 6 MONTHS AGO

A bedraggled Jane sits behind the wheel of a beat-up old Camry. She waits at a stoplight. Looks down at her almost-empty gas tank.

JANE (V.O.)
 Not immediately. But they'll pick
 up.

As the light goes green, a grey Jeep FLIES in front of her. She SLAMS THE BRAKES, narrowly avoiding collision.

JANE
 Fuck!

Jane speeds up and next to the Jeep. HONKS. Lowers her window to talk to the DRIVER (40s, natural-born dick).

JANE (CONT'D)
 Hey! Hey! Sir! What you just did
 was very dangerous.

The driver gives Jane the finger, then CUTS OUT in front of her and SCREECHES TO A STOP.

WHAM! Jane's car PLOWS into the Jeep. Airbags deploy in an eruption of white. The Jeep driver peels off, leaving Jane's front hood buckled like an accordion.

Jane pounds the gas. Gains on the Jeep. Nearly on him when--

The car lets out a guttural cry, then slows to a stop. She looks down: the tank is empty.

CUT TO:

INT. INSURANCE COMPANY - BULLPEN - DAY

An incredibly sweaty Jane sits in a small cubicle. A nothing job at a nothing company. The prophecy seemingly fulfilled.

STEPHEN (30s, squishy) sidles up.

STEPHEN

Hey.

Jane grits her teeth.

JANE

Hey, Stephen.

STEPHEN

The printer's jammed up again.

JANE

What a shame.

STEPHEN

Yeah.

A beat.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

You gonna fix it?

JANE

For the last time, Stephen, I'm IT,
not Staples.

STEPHEN

You're the closest thing we've got.

JANE

I really don't--

HARD CUT TO:

INT. INSURANCE COMPANY - PRINTER ROOM - LATER

Jane stands at the printer as it spews out copy after copy of
coupons for coyote urine.

A matronly woman, MARGE (40s, the Phyllis in this office),
stands next to her.

MARGE

(explaining)

I only meant to print it once. I'm
so sorry.

(then)

We have a raccoon problem.

JANE

Don't sweat it, Marge.

MARGE

So you went to Harvard, right?

JANE

Yep.

MARGE

I heard you were Phi Beta Kappa.
Top of your class in computer
science. That's very impressive.

JANE

Thanks.

MARGE

How'd you end up here?

JANE

The white male patriarchy. What
about you?

MARGE

Oh, uh, a job fair.

The printer makes a noise like it's choking, and smoke starts billowing out.

CUT TO:

EXT. INSURANCE COMPANY - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jane walks to her car. Looks at the busted front hood.
Frowns.

She walks to the driver's door and notices a flyer on it. It
has an image of a cicada.

Jane picks up the flyer, looks at it, then crumples it up,
tossing it on the ground.

She gets into her car. Backs up. Stops. Gets out. Picks up
the crumpled flyer.

She looks at it again. A beat. Then she walks it over to the
recycling bin near the elevators.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

It's the same apartment Jane lived in as a kid, just older and grayer. She walks in carrying bags of Chinese take-out and a check in her teeth.

Bruce (now late 50s) sorts pills on a counter in the kitchen.

JANE

Hey dad.

BRUCE

Hey honey.

JANE

(re: the pills)

It's two red and two blue.

(then, handing him the
takeout and check)

Got you kung pao chicken. Here's
the rent.

BRUCE

I can cover us, Jane.

(then)

I should be taking care of you.

JANE

You should be on bed-rest.

She kisses his forehead.

JANE (CONT'D)

I need to wrap up some work. I'll
be in my room.

INT. APARTMENT - JANE'S ROOM - NIGHT

A desk with three computer monitors. Tentacle-like wires drape everywhere. Hard-drives litter the floor.

Within this technological nest is a training mannequin in the middle of the room. On its face is a pig mask.

Jane wraps her hands with starch white athletic tape. Walks up to the mannequin. Takes a breath. Then --

BAM BAM BAM! Jane LAUNCHES A STEADY STREAM OF PUNCHES at it.

As she steps back, the mask falls off the mannequin, now just a crumpled piece of plastic.

CUT TO:

INT. INSURANCE COMPANY - BULLPEN - DAY

Jane sits at her desk. RICK (30s, heart of coal), the guy in the cube next to her, is on the phone with a customer.

RICK
Well, I'm sorry for the misunderstanding, but unfortunately, your home wasn't covered by flood insurance.

Jane looks over.

RICK (CONT'D)
I'm very sorry to hear that, ma'am. No, I can't imagine what it's like to have three young children. It's just awful, I know.

Rick looks over at Jane. He rolls his eyes and mimes firing a gun into his head.

RICK (CONT'D)
We don't set out to mislead you--

He presses mute.

RICK (CONT'D)
(to Jane)
Oh my goddddd, she won't shut up!

JANE
Did you set out to mislead her?

RICK
I'm an insurance salesman.

JANE
So, yes?

Rick shrugs his shoulders. He un-mutes his phone.

RICK
I can assure you I'm very familiar with your policy, but sure, I'll read it again.

Jane opens up a window of code.

JANE'S POV:

Note: Whenever we are in Jane's POV, we see an enhanced, almost superhuman vision of the world.

Like a computer, her vision superimposes spreads of information like maps, data, profiles, etc. Important details are highlighted and augmented. Anything extraneous cuts out like white noise. Within this vision, we are able to see patterns and details that would otherwise be glossed over.

Within lines of inscrutable code, "BRONZEPKG" is highlighted.

Jane types quickly and ruthlessly, peeking at Rick every few seconds to make sure his eyes are still trained on his screen. Even to a layperson, Jane clearly possesses a level of skill beyond what most Silicon Valley titans could muster.

Finally, Jane types in "replace(BRONZEPKG, GOLDPKG)". Sits back.

END POV.

RICK (CONT'D)

I could have sworn...

JANE

Is she covered?

RICK

There's no way I would have sold her this package at the price she's paying.

Jane smiles. Despite it all, she's still her mother's daughter.

CUT TO:

INT. INSURANCE COMPANY - BULLPEN - NIGHT

Everyone else around Jane is packing up.

Marge walks over.

MARGE

Sorry again about the printing.

JANE

It's okay, Marge.

A beat.

MARGE

I really only needed one coupon.
For the coyote urine.

JANE

Totally.

Marge smiles, relieved she got this off her chest, and waves goodbye.

Jane starts to gather her things when a chat window appears on her screen.

CHAT WINDOW

Hi, Jane Marshall.

Jane furrows her brow. Moves her mouse to close it when another message appears.

CHAT WINDOW (CONT'D)

You saw us. Now we see you.

JANE

(sotto, to herself)

What the hell...?

CHAT WINDOW

The Rick situation was well-handled.

JANE

Rick?

She stands up and looks over. Rick's got earbuds in and plays air drums with pencils which then knock over his mug and spill coffee all over him.

RICK

Fuck!

JANE

Yeah, didn't think so.

Suddenly, a live-feed of Jane appears on her computer.

THE CAMERA IS ON.

She quickly covers it with a post-it. Almost immediately, her phone BUZZES with a text from an unknown number:

TEXT

Don't play hard to get, Jane.

The screen goes dark.

Jane anxiously hits the power button. On. Off. On. Off. Nothing. She unplugs and replugs her computer. Waits.

The Apple logo appears. She sighs, relieved, when--
 THE APPLE IS REPLACED BY A CICADA.

Jane's phone BUZZES with another text:

TEXT (CONT'D)

Join us.

JANE

(texting)

Who is this?

TEXT

We are Cicada 3301.

JANE

(texting)

What do you want?

TEXT

You.

(then)

We have all your records.

A VIDEO appears of a young Jane giving a eulogy at her mother's funeral. Then, SCANS of her social security card, passport, college grades, police record..

JANE

(texting)

WHAT THE HELL DO YOU WANT??

There's no response.

Jane grabs her purse and hurries out.

CUT TO:

EXT. INSURANCE COMPANY - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Skittish, Jane walks quickly towards her car. Freezes.

IT'S COMPLETELY COVERED IN FLYERS. They all have the same image of a cicada comprised of code.

As she tears all the flyers off her car, we see a shadowy figure watching her from several rows away.

EXT. APARTMENT - LATER

Jane parks her car and walks towards her apartment building. Another shadowy figure surveils from a nearby complex.

INT. APARTMENT - JANE'S ROOM - LATER

Jane sits warily at her desk. She JUMPS as the tea kettle starts whistling on the stove in the kitchen. She gets up to turn it off.

Jane walks back to her desk. Looks out the window and sees a digital billboard. A lithe model poses libidiously as she drinks coconut water.

Suddenly, the billboard wipes out to white. A line of red text appears: "LOOK DOWN, JANE MARSHALL."

Jane looks back at her computer and sees a blown-up photo of an old red car.

Jane's eyes WIDEN. *She knows this car. A MAN IN A BLACK HOODIE clips the brakes.*

A chat window pops up.

CHAT WINDOW

Your mom's old car. The day she died.

(then)

She didn't die in a car accident, Jane. She was killed.

There's a pause before the other user starts typing again.

CHAT WINDOW (CONT'D)

They're coming for you too.

Jane's phone starts emitting A HIGH-PITCHED SHRIEK.

She looks down and sees a full screen of code. The code starts to scroll at dizzying clip as it also shrinks and slowly reveals itself to be the cicada, once again.

Jane blanches. Drops her phone as if it were radioactive.

CUT TO:

INT. INSURANCE COMPANY - BULLPEN - NEXT DAY

Jane sits at her desk. Marge walks over.

MARGE
Hi Jane!

JANE
Ah!!

Jane jumps from the sudden interruption.

MARGE
What's wrong?

JANE
What? No, nothing. What?

MARGE
I can't remember my new password.

INT. INSURANCE COMPANY - MARGE'S CUBE - A LITTLE LATER

Jane types away at Marge's computer. She pulls up a file.

JANE
Here's the list of everybody's
passwords. Yours is... here.

Jane points to it. It's under Rick's: "B00bshake".

JANE (CONT'D)
(re: Rick's password)
What does that even mean?

MARGE
You have a list of all our
passwords?

JANE
The company does. The encryption
technology here is Jurassic. I keep
telling them to change it, but they
won't listen.

Then, underneath Marge's desk, she spots a crate of the
coconut water advertised on the billboard last night.

JANE (CONT'D)
(whispering, wild-eyed)
Are you one of them?

MARGE
(noticing Jane staring at
the coconut water)
Do you, um, want one?

Jane stares at her.

JANE

Yes.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - JANE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jane takes a swig of coconut water and pulls up an old home video. A young Jane wears a superhero costume.

ALICE (OFF SCREEN)

What are you for Halloween this year, honey?

YOUNG JANE (ON SCREEN)

A superhero!

ALICE (OFF SCREEN)

Why did you want to be a superhero?

YOUNG JANE (ON SCREEN)

I'm gonna save the world!

ALICE (OFF SCREEN)

Super Jane!

Jane races around the room, pretending to fly. Alice turns the camera around to tape herself. It looks like she's speaking to Jane now, beyond the grave.

ALICE (CONT'D)

That's right, honey. You're going to do big things. You're going to save the world.

Jane cringes. In this ratty old apartment, in her shitty office job -- she's done nothing big. Nothing important.

Suddenly, she freezes. She sees something in the video that chills her to the bone:

ON THE WALL, THERE'S A PINNED CICADA IN A GLASS FRAME. An entomological curiosity now a picture of horror.

Jane looks at her mother's face in the screen.

JANE

Who were you? What were you a part of?

She picks up the lone surviving Cicada flyer. Off Jane's resolved look, we...

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - JANE'S ROOM - MONTAGE

SERIES OF SHOTS

Whereas most hackers have an OCD-like attention to detail, we see through this sequence that Jane's technical strength is pattern-recognition. The ability to see the forest for the trees.

A) The flyer lies on Jane's desk. The coded image of the cicada stares back at us.

Fingers flying over her keyboard, Jane soon finds that the 0's and 1's in the image translate into a website.

She types the web address into her computer and finds a page filled with small dots.

She pauses and thinks. Leans back.

JANE'S POV:

As certain dots fade into the background, we see that THE PAGE IS AN OPTICAL ILLUSION -- A MAGIC EYE FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY. Jane gasps.

RACK FOCUS TO REVEAL WHAT'S HIDDEN: A 4CHAN SUBSITE.

END POV.

Jane navigates to it.

B) Jane reads the text on the subsite aloud:

JANE

"I am a black child sprung from a bright sire... A wingless bird, fleeing to heaven from earth... Each eye that meets me weeps, but not from grief... And in thin air I vanish at my birth. What am I?"

A window with an empty text box pops up.

JANE'S POV:

Jane paces around the room.

JANE (CONT'D)
 A black child sprung from a bright
 sire. Bright sire. Bright sire...

She looks out the window.

JANE (CONT'D)
 The sun? The stars? A streetlamp?

VFX: She superimposes a list of possibilities and mentally
 crosses out each one.

She looks around her apartment. Zeroes in on a candle.

JANE (CONT'D)
 A fire...

She picks up a box of matches from her coffee table. She
 strikes a match and lights the candle.

JANE (CONT'D)
 (realizing)
 Smoke.

END POV.

Jane clicks on the text box and enters the answer.

C) All the windows on her computer disappear. A lone chat
 window pops up.

CHAT WINDOW
 We have installed a Trojan horse in
 your computer that will collect and
 send all records of your previous
 hacks to the FBI. You have two
 minutes to shut it down.

A countdown clock appears.

Jane panics. Her fingers fly over the keyboard. She opens up
 a terminal and types in: "shutdown -r now".

An error message pops up: "The system is locked. Access
 denied."

She tries again: "# wipe /dev/sda2" then "Okay to WIPE 1
 special file ? (Yes/No) yes"

The error message appears again.

JANE
 (looking at monitor)
 Why can't I shut you down?

JANE'S POV:

She scrolls through the code at light-speed, combing for any crumb that might help her. Then she leans back and sees it: the Apple logo on her monitor.

END POV.

JANE (CONT'D)
 (realizing)
 The virus is in the operating system.

She clicks on "System Preferences," then "Software Update".

A window pops up: "Upgrade to Mac OS Delgado?" She clicks "yes".

The upgrade downloads, then completes.

A beat.

A chat window pops up: "Congratulations. Few have made it this far."

D) The window closes and is replaced by a blank, black page.

Jane squints at the page, not seeing anything. She pulls up the source code.

JANE'S POV:

While she scrolls through the code, Jane SEES THE REFLECTION OF HERSELF on the all-black screen.

She hovers her cursor over the black, highlighting it and revealing the next clue.

END POV.

E) To indicate the passage of time, we fly through a TIME-LAPSE of Jane at the computer, then pacing around the room, then scribbling on paper, then writing equations on her window, etc.

F) Hidden in code in her terminal is the final clue:

JANE (CONT'D)
 (reading aloud)
 "To gain entrance, you must knock three times on the sky and listen to the sound."

Jane walks around her room, knocking on walls and doors. She picks up a tennis ball. Tosses it against a wall. Listens to the ambient sounds of the city.

JANE'S POV:

SFX: We focus on different sounds, one at a time: a firetruck gunning down the street, a bird chirping, neighbors arguing, construction workers drilling into the ground.

As Jane continues to throw the tennis ball at the wall, we focus on the sound of the ball. Suddenly, she stops.

Jane pings the web address three times, and a ream of data shoots back. To a layperson, it's unintelligible garble. To Jane, it's El Dorado.

She sits down giddily at her computer and starts decoding the ribbons of numbers.

END POV.

G) A set of coordinates and a time -- 10:33AM -- blink back at her. The gold at the end of this rainbow.

She looks it up on Google Maps and finds a private tarmac at Boston Logan.

Adrenaline pumping, Jane scribbles a note for Bruce on the kitchen table: "Gone on business trip. Be back in a few days. Love, J"

CUT TO:

EXT. PRIVATE TARMAC - MORNING

Jane walks onto the sprawling tarmac, cavernous hangars yawning behind her.

There's nobody around, but, conspicuously, there is one Cessna Citation Longitude jet sitting outside. It hums gently as it idles, seemingly waiting for Jane to board.

Jane looks around. She's alone. She walks around the jet. Inspects it carefully.

After a moment of hesitation, Jane climbs the stairs to the jet's door.

JANE
(to self)
This is crazy, this is crazy, this
is crazy...

She peeks inside. An automated voice startles her:

AUTOMATED VOICE
Welcome, Jane Marshall. Please take
a seat.

Jane takes a deep breath, looks behind her, then steps inside.

The plane door closes, a pneumatic hiss hermetically sealing her in.

CUT TO:

INT. CESSNA CITATION - MAIN CABIN - CONTINUOUS

The interior is sleek, austere, antiseptic.

Jane knocks on the pilot's door. No answer. She opens it and finds:

A bleeding-edge, fully automated, self-navigating aeronautics system. It looks like something Elon Musk might have dreamt up.

Head spinning, Jane makes her way to the lone white, leather seat. She checks its pockets and finds *The Archidoxes of Magic* by Theophrastus Paracelsus.

As she settles in, the wall in front of her flickers into a screen.

Inked illustrations bleed onto and dissipate from the screen -- an allegorical fable depicted in a technological work of art. An animated watercolor tableau.

A voiceover narrates:

WOMAN (V.O.)
There was once a group of prisoners who lived in a deep cave. They were bound so that they could not look to either side or behind them -- only straight ahead. They had been chained in that position all their lives. A great fire burned behind them, and all the prisoners could see were the shadows playing on the wall in front of them.

(MORE)

WOMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The prisoners watched the stories that these shadows played out, and because these shadows were all they ever got to see, they believed them to be the world.

The ink animation fades into white. It is again just a wall.

The blinds on the plane's windows all descend. Jane soon finds herself sitting in total darkness.

AUTOMATED VOICE

We recommend that you take this opportunity to rest, Jane Marshall.

A button lights up on her armrest to convert her seat into a bed.

AUTOMATED VOICE (CONT'D)

You'll find a blanket and pillow under your seat.

Jane reaches under and pulls out a duvet and pillow.

JANE

Well, if I die, at least I die in the comfort of 850-fill goose feather.

CUT TO:

INT. CESSNA CITATION - MAIN CABIN - LATER

A mechanical whir as the blinds rise up. Jane blearily opens her eyes. She sees that the plane is descending, and from the looks of it, into a sprawling city.

The plane glides onto blistering pavement. A compartment slides out of the wall, offering Jane a black hood.

AUTOMATED VOICE

Please place this over your head.

JANE

Hard pass.

AUTOMATED VOICE

We insist that you comply. Otherwise, your candidacy will be terminated.

Jane picks it up. Reluctantly puts it on.

The plane slows to a stop. Jane hears the door hiss open. Footsteps come onto the plane. She starts to bring her hands to her hood -- maybe she can catch a glimpse -- but she is gruffly handcuffed and pulled out of her seat.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

BLACK.

We see everything from Jane's POV. Chopin plays delicately in the background. She also hears the din of a bustling, metropolitan city.

The car slows to a stop, and Jane is taken out. When her hood is removed, she finds herself deep in some Parisian arrondissement.

MASKED CAPTORS forcibly push Jane into a gray, crumbling building. She hears the locks turn behind her.

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - VESTIBULE - CONTINUOUS

Alone, again.

In front of Jane now is a lectern and a book. She opens it up and finds that it glows with black-and-white pictures -- a continuation of the animation from the plane.

WOMAN (V.O.)

One day, one of the prisoners was set free and dragged up to the mouth of the cave. First, his freed limbs gave him pain. Then, the toil of climbing upward gave him pain. But eventually, he reached the daylight of the outside world, and he was stunned. As his eyes adjusted, he began to see the world. The birds, the trees, the sun, the skies. He had at last seen the real truth.

When the story concludes, a painting before her POPS open, revealing a cavernous shoot behind it.

The only way to go is down.

Jane looks. There's a ladder. She takes a deep breath and nervously threads her right foot onto the ladder's first rung.

JANE
(to self)
Think about it, Jane. If they
wanted to kill you, they would have
already done it.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - VESTIBULE - CONTINUOUS

VFX: GREEN SCALE SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE of Jane climbing down
the ladder.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - VESTIBULE - CONTINUOUS

It's a lot farther down than it looks. As Jane descends, the
little light from the previous room is swallowed up by
blackness.

One step.

Two steps.

Another.

After what feels like an eternity, Jane finally reaches the
bottom.

Light flickers from a candle on an oval oak table. Next to it
is a blank sheet of parchment and a quill.

Jane tries checking her phone. *Fuck*. It's dead.

She touches the walls, looking for a trap door or hidden
room. Then, FOOTSTEPS APPROACH.

She scrambles for her purse and pulls out a taser, bracing
for whoever -- whatever -- is coming.

The footsteps get louder, crisper.

Click. Click. Click. Heels.

GEMMA (early 30s) walks up to Jane. She's the kind of
haunting that would find you in your dreams and your
nightmares.

GEMMA

Welcome to Paris. And
congratulations. You have been
invited to join Cicada.

Gemma gestures towards the parchment next to Jane.

JANE

I don't sign anything without
reading the fine print.

GEMMA

If you don't sign, your candidacy
will be terminated.
(then, looking at Jane's
taser)
Leave that on the table when you're
done.

Gemma walks away.

Jane thinks. *Fuck*. Doesn't have much of a choice. *Fuck*.

She reaches for the quill. No ink. A cursory glance around
the room isn't promising.

She looks again at the quill's sharp edge, realizing.

JANE

A little dramatic, don't you think?

But Gemma's gone.

Jane takes the quill and makes a small incision in her left
forearm. She digs the quill into the wound. Winces. Draws
enough blood to sign.

Jane stares at her signature. A literal blood oath.

She puts the quill down, takes the candle, and walks down the
hallway.

On the wall, glue-like mold drapes over centuries-old stone.
There are errant spatters of red -- origin unknown.

At the end of the hallway, Jane finds a gnarled, wooden door.
She tries pushing it.

Nothing.

She throws all her weight against it. Still nothing.

Jane looks around for clues -- a latch, a key, a symbol,
anything.

JANE (CONT'D)
 (to self, reciting earlier
 clue)
 "To gain entrance, you must knock
 three times..."

Realizing, Jane wraps her fingers around a rusting iron ring.
 Knocks once. Twice. Three times.

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

THE DOOR MOANS OPEN. Gemma stands behind it.

JANE
 Deep cut.

GEMMA
 You're actually supposed to pull
 it.

JANE
 Oh. So the three knocks...

GEMMA
 Had nothing to do with it.

JANE
 Right.

Inside, Jane finds a hacker's paradise: banks of computer monitors and the world's most advanced tech outfits. The monitors all display security footage from the most covert locations in the world: the Oval Office, the bullpen of the NSA, North Korea's Ryongsong Residence, the Cabinet Room at 10 Downing Street, etc.

Sitting underneath the monitors are a dozen men and women all intensely focused on the screens in front of them.

GEMMA
 Welcome to Cicada.

Gemma grabs Jane's bleeding arm and dresses it. Jane's unsure what to make of her... or any of this.

GEMMA (CONT'D)
 Cicada is an elite team of people with extraordinary talents. Some are hackers, like you. Others are former spies, thieves, intelligence analysts.

(MORE)

GEMMA (CONT'D)

Whoever we are, wherever we come from, we follow one simple, guiding principle: to right the injustices of the world.

JANE

So you're vigilantes.

GEMMA

Batman's a vigilante.

JANE

Some people think Batman's a terrorist.

GEMMA

Do you?

Jane doesn't respond.

Gemma finishes dressing the wound.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

You're probably familiar with some of our previous work. Exposing Monsanto, Enron, Cambridge Analytica --

JANE

That was Cicada?

Gemma nods.

GEMMA

But most of the work we do is invisible. You'd never know about it unless you *knew* about it. The 2013 Times Square bombing, the financial crisis of 2012, the Karachi nuclear meltdown... all disasters that Cicada was able to successfully avert.

Gemma leads Jane through the rows of hackers.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

This is Arthur. He's working on exposing the embezzlement of French presidential hopeful Alexandre Berland.

JANE

I heard a report he was on the take, but the story got buried.

GEMMA

We're looking to un-bury it. This is Beatrice. Ever heard of the Lieberman Investment Fund?

JANE

Rings a bell.

GEMMA

It's a ponzi scheme ten times the size of Madoff's. Beatrice is working on "redistributing" their funds.

JANE

Redistributing?

BEATRICE

Siphoning them back into their original accounts.

JANE

How has no one broken the emergency glass?

BEATRICE

Cloaked server-side mirrors. They go down the same day they go up. Protracts the process, but --

JANE

They leave no trace.

Jane takes this in, impressed.

Down the row, DMITRI (30s, lives a very full life online) starts cursing at his screen.

DMITRI

Fuck fuck fuck! Gemma! Get over here!

Gemma looks at Jane, then runs over.

DMITRI (CONT'D)

We've got a situation.

INT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS

In a crowded plane, a WOMAN IN A BLACK BURQA unbuckles her seat belt and walks slowly towards the galley. In the adjacent aisle, another WOMAN IN A WHITE BURQA does the same.

The STEWARDESS sees both women walking towards her. Reaches for a GUN tucked inside a beverage cart, but--

BANG! Then--

THUD. She drops onto the floor, a bullet between her eyes.

People SCREAM.

The women in white and black rip off their burqas to reveal that THEY ARE TWO MEN ARMED TO THE TEETH. PISTOLS. ASSAULT RIFLES. GRENADES.

Shouting in Arabic, both men wave glocks at everyone in the cabin.

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

On Dmitri's screen, we see surveillance footage of the Libyan Presidential Council Chambers. It's a flurry of activity.

DMITRI

ISIS hijacked a plane out of Tripoli. Commercial liner. 347 civilians on board. They're holding everyone for ransom.

GEMMA

How much?

DMITRI

500 million dollars. The Libyan Presidential Council is refusing to pay. They've got their intelligence teams working on it, but--

GEMMA

Is there money we can divert over?

Dmitri snorts.

DMITRI

Yeah, like no one's going to miss 500 million dollars.

JANE

They won't if they don't know it's missing.

Gemma and Dmitri look at Jane. She slides into the seat next to Dmitri and pulls up a terminal on the computer.

DMITRI
(to Gemma)
Who is she?

JANE
Like with Lieberman, if we put in a
server-side mirror, then none of
the data will leave the network.
We'll catch the transaction
internally.
(then)
I'm Jane.

GEMMA
Marshall.

DMITRI
Well, Jane Marshall, we need
someone whose funds are robust
enough--

JANE
Qatar. They can deny it all they
want, but they've sent money to
ISIS before. It'll be the easiest
way for us to get the money in and
then out once they land the plane.

A beat.

DMITRI
Qatar'll do.

Jane types furiously.

GEMMA
It won't work. It's one thing for
Lieberman's people not to find out.
It's another for the bank of Qatar
not to detect a breach.

JANE
It just needs to work long enough
for ISIS to think they got the
money. In the meantime, we also
hack into the plane's systems and
take it over remotely. Get it to
the closest UN country nearby so
they land somewhere safe. Italy
probably. You--

DMITRI
Dmitri.

JANE

Figure out how to get into the plane's MCAS. I'll take care of the money.

Dmitri locks eyes with Gemma. She takes breath. Thinks. Nods.

Dmitri gets to work.

Next to him, Jane hunkers over the computer. Shoulders bunched. Eyes focused.

Gemma looks at the screen. All she sees is a spectral river of 1's and 0's. But when Jane looks...

JANE'S POV:

The reams of code get smaller and smaller until they become Seurat dots making up the faces of the Qatar Emir's five closest associates.

She pulls up classified files. Gemma looks over her shoulder.

GEMMA

What are you doing? We need to get into the bank.

JANE

This is how we get in.

GEMMA

None of these people have the money we need.

JANE

We don't get in through the Emir of Qatar. We get in through his team.

Jane whips through the files.

She creates a graph of all their recent withdrawals. As she squints at the screen, she notices something:

Five identical data points at different times in the same month.

JANE (CONT'D)

See? There's one guy making the same large sum withdrawal five times a month.

She pulls up a different window of code.

JANE (CONT'D)

If he's making five large sum withdrawals a month, it's not bread-won money. It's blood money. He must be linked to the Emir's accounts. He's our back door.

END POV.

A few more keystrokes.

Jane stops. Waits. Then--

JANE (CONT'D)

I'm in. Transferring the money now.

INT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS

One of the men gets a call. He picks up his phone.

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

JANE

They've got the money. Dmitri?

Dmitri has his head in his hands as he stares at his screen.

DMITRI

I'm in, but I haven't been able to take over. The pilots need to cede control.

JANE

Can we get a message to them?

DMITRI

Already sent. Three, actually. They were sent to the main console, so they have to have seen them. I'm not seeing any signal interference.

JANE'S POV:

Jane pulls up Libyan Airway's internal database. Searches through the code. Finds personnel information for the flight.

JANE

The scheduled pilots for this flight called in sick.

(then, realizing)

The pilots are in on it.

(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)

The ransom was a diversion. They're going to crash the plane anyways.

One of her terminals start to flicker. All the code shifts down one line.

To most people, it looks like a momentary blip. But Jane knows:

An unknown user has signed onto the terminal.

END POV.

Without missing a beat, Jane unplugs her computer, then Dmitri's.

DMITRI

What the fuck are you doing??

JANE

They planted a Remote Access Trojan. It was a trap. Someone knew we were coming.

GEMMA

Shit!

Jane plugs their computers back in.

JANE

We need to build new firewalls. Now. Otherwise, they'll get access to everything here. Everything will be compromised.

Her fingers fly over the keyboard, rapidly constructing a digital fortress we can visualize via VFX.

After a flurry of typing, she stops.

A beat.

JANE (CONT'D)

I failed.

DMITRI

You couldn't build the firewalls?

JANE

No, the firewalls are up. The plane...

CUT TO:

INT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS

The plane starts to NOSEDIVE. Unbuckled passengers hit the cabin ceiling. Babies scream. People desperately call loved ones.

With the plane HURTLING downwards, we CUT BACK TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Jane sits quietly, shaken by the repercussions of her failure.

JANE

I don't understand. How could they have known?

ADAM (O.S.)

ISIS didn't. Someone used them to draw us out.

ADAM (70s, avuncular... if your uncle's ordered some hits), enters the room.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Hello Jane.

JANE

Who are you?

ADAM

My name is Adam. Come with me.

Jane looks at Gemma, who nods at her.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - NARTHEX - CONTINUOUS

A circular library. Some of the world's most arcane titles line the linden wood shelves -- *Codex Seraphinianus*, *Heptameron*, *The Picatrix*, etc.

Adam pours Jane and himself each a glass of scotch. Hands Jane a glass.

She looks away, distant. Sick to her stomach.

ADAM

You should be proud of what you just did. You prevented a cyberattack against Cicada.

(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)

(then)

As you found out, that plane was going down no matter what.

Jane's eyes meet his. There's a callousness in the way he speaks that is unsettling.

In this moment, her adrenaline fades. Gives way to the reality of why she's here. She focuses.

JANE

I'm not here to talk about that.

Jane looks suspiciously at her glass of scotch.

Adam holds up a remote and presses play. An audio recording of Jane from the chute plays:

JANE (CONT'D)

(recording)

Think about it, Jane. If they wanted to kill you, they would have already done it.

ADAM

That plane was a trap planted by an organization called Zero.

JANE

I told you, I'm not here to talk about--

ADAM

Your mother was a good woman and a good friend. It was Zero that killed her.

A beat.

JANE

How did you know her?

ADAM

She was one of Cicada's founding members.

JANE

Then why hadn't I heard of it until three days ago?

ADAM

Technically, we don't exist.

Adam takes a sip from his drink.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Your mother died for a cause. One which we still aim to achieve.

(then)

Zero became aware of our existence. Of her involvement. Her loss was a great blow to Cicada.

JANE

I think it was probably a greater blow to the husband and six year old daughter she left behind.

ADAM

Yes.

(then)

I'm sorry about your mother, Jane, but I hope you'll hear me out. We chose you to join us because you are your mother's daughter. You're both able to see the world in a uniquely remarkable way.

He opens a different door at the other side of the library.

ADAM (CONT'D)

There's something I want to show you.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - LATER

Adam leads Jane down a labyrinthine tunnel careening further and further underground. The whole compound is a scene out of an Escher drawing.

ADAM

Jane, tell me, how much do you know about contemporary world macroeconomics?

JANE

Well, I studied Computer Science at Harvard.

ADAM

So basically nothing.

JANE

So basically nothing.

ADAM

Well, this is a fact that even the world's most esteemed economists don't know: all the bank systems in the world are linked by a stateless entity. Zero.

EXT. OLDER CHATEAU - FLASHBACK

Blades beating against a blue sky, a helicopter lands onto the field near a medieval chateau. Out of its steel belly emerges a MAN IN A SUIT (50s, white).

ADAM (V.O.)

Zero works to quietly regulate the banks from behind a curtain no one even know exists. It maintains order and prevents worldwide economic collapse.

INT. OLDER CHATEAU - CONFERENCE ROOM - FLASHBACK

The Man in a Suit walks into a ritzy conference room. A group of other old, white men mill about, sipping thousand-dollar champagne.

JANE (V.O.)

So they all went on a bender in 2008?

ADAM (V.O.)

2008 was sanctioned.

JANE (V.O.)

So Zero is a bunch of assholes.

ADAM (V.O.)

Zero is a group predicated, in theory, on the principle that it acts for the greater good. In practice, it's a whole other story...

The blinds on the window descend. Someone clicks on an old-school projector, which beams images onto a screen.

The first is a headshot of Alice.

ADAM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In reality, Zero has been corrupted for many years.

(MORE)

ADAM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Less than benevolent people have been using it for less than benevolent purposes.

JANE (V.O.)

Why do they have access?

A FAT MAN walks up to the projector. He uses a red marker to scrawl "X" over Alice's photo.

ADAM (V.O.)

They're not the ones you're thinking of -- the ostensibly corrupt. No one like Kim Jung Un or Putin has access. Who we worry about are the much more discreet.

EXT. APARTMENT - FLASHBACK

A man we recognize: THE MAN IN THE BLACK HOODIE. We see him clip the brakes on Alice's red sedan. He scurries away just as Alice walks up to the car.

EXT. BOSTON HIGHWAY - FLASHBACK

Alice drives quickly down a highway. Sees one of the lanes ahead is closed. Traffic slows down.

She puts her foot on the brake. The car doesn't react.

She presses harder. HARDER. The brake pedal is now flush with the floor.

THE CAR'S NOT SLOWING DOWN.

Alice HURTLES towards the stalled cars in front of her -- her car a steel beast of insurgent velocity. Alice's eyes WIDEN as we...

CUT TO:

INT. NEWER CHATEAU - CONFERENCE ROOM - FLASHBACK

It's a different conference room at a different chateau.

The tech's improved. Someone clicks on a much more sophisticated projector, which beams images in all directions.

There are photos of heads of states, maps, government budgets, real-time tickers of global stock markets.

It's a digital war room.

The suited men direct their attention towards a set of proposals projected onto one of the walls.

ADAM (V.O.)

People like the oil tycoons who fund dictatorships, the hedge fund managers who build their billions off the backs of the world's most vulnerable. They're the world's invisible influencers.

We now INTERCUT between the men approving proposals and the executions of those proposals:

-The US stock market plunges 800 points.

-Reporters announce that Xi Jinping will be President of China for life.

-Alarms blare as workers in a nuclear plant are obliterated to dust by a subatomic blast.

-Cartel thugs toss bodies into a mass grave.

-And finally, the Libyan airliner plummets into the Mediterranean Sea.

JANE (V.O.)

When does this "invisible influencing" occur?

CUT TO:

INT. NEWER CHATEAU - CONFERENCE ROOM - FLASHBACK

We ZOOM OUT of the room and into...

INT. NEWER CHATEAU - HALLWAYS - FLASHBACK

We travel down a long, gilded hallway. A Versailles for today.

ADAM (V.O.)

The Bilderberg Conference. It's an annual gathering of the world's political, financial, academic, and media elite.

(MORE)

ADAM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It's where Zero's board meets, and it's where Zero's path for that year is forged and executed. The next conference is in a month.

Men in bespoke suits take bites of foie gras canapés while waiters in white gloves float around carrying \$50,000 bottles of Screaming Eagle.

It's a window to a world most will never see. The 1% of the 1%.

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - LATER

Adam and Jane walk down the tunnel.

ADAM

But this year is unlike any other. This year, Zero is planning their coup de grace.

(then)

When they meet, Zero will funnel trillions of dollars into North Korea's defense program. Not just into their nuclear arms factories but also into their international sleeper cells. It will finally give them the ammo they need to unleash what they want: worldwide nuclear warfare. Complete chaos. Complete destruction. It'll be Zero's carte blanche to completely rebuild the world under their rule.

A beat as Jane digests this.

They arrive at a door. Jane turns to Adam.

JANE

So we need to stop them?

ADAM

The mission isn't just to stop them. The mission is to destroy them.

Adam swipes a keycard, which opens the door.

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - SANCTUM - CONTINUOUS

Adam and Jane walk inside. It's a starkly white room, flood lights illuminating an immaculate marble floor.

It takes Jane a moment to adjust to the blinding white, but then she sees it: the grisly images of war, genocide, human trafficking. They compete over every last inch of real estate.

It's a museum of the world's darkest evils.

JANE

What is this?

ADAM

A reminder of why we do what we do.

Jane sees a photograph of a young girl, 7 at most, her face knotted in both agony and relief. Her dead body lies atop a dozen others.

ADAM (CONT'D)

This is all nothing compared to what Zero is about to unleash.

Jane takes it all in.

ADAM (CONT'D)

The Griffin Club--

Jane tenses.

ADAM (CONT'D)

--they're minnows swimming in an ocean with one very big, very bad Great White Shark.

JANE

How can you be sure that someone won't try to take its place? That Zero won't just continue to exist?

ADAM

We destroy it by exposing it. All of it.

(then)

The free will you think you have... it's Zero's greatest feat to date: making you feel like you're in control of your world when in fact it's all a construct. The world's greatest illusion.

Gemma walks into the room. She's holding a book.

ADAM (CONT'D)

I hope you'll join us.

(then)

(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)

Whenever you have your answer, I'll be in the Narthex.

Adam leaves, leaving Gemma and Jane alone.

JANE

What Adam is talking about... it's big.

GEMMA

It is.

JANE

Do you really believe Cicada can pull it off?

GEMMA

Don't you think we at least have to try?

They share a moment of quiet as they look at the photographs. Then--

GEMMA (CONT'D)

I knew your mother, Jane.

Gemma hands Jane the book.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

This was hers.

It's Plato's *Republic*. Jane opens it. Notices a note her mother scribbled on the back of the cover:

JANE

(reading aloud)

"Sometimes one must die in order to live." What does that mean?

GEMMA

She devoted everything she had to our war with Zero, and she knew the consequences.

(then)

She believed in me the way I believe in you. We need you on this.

Jane swallows. Looks down at the book.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - NARTHEX - LATER

Adam picks a book out of a shelf. Flips through it. Jane and Gemma approach.

Jane straightens her back. Something inside her is different. Hardened. Resolved.

JANE

Whatever you need, whatever I can do... I'd like to help.

Adam smiles.

ADAM

Then I suppose it's time to meet who you'll be helping.

Adam nods at Gemma.

CUT TO:

INT. TATTOO PARLOR - JAPAN - FLASHBACK

Gemma, dressed in a white tank and denim shorts, snaps on a pair of rubber gloves as she sits down next to a JAPANESE MAN (20s, 80% of his body already inked).

ADAM (V.O.)

Gemma is former Yakuza.

She turns on the pen, which starts buzzing and depositing technicolor ink into the Japanese Man's neck.

ADAM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

You'll be glad she's on our side.

He closes his eyes. Narrowing hers, Gemma STABS the pen into the man's carotid artery. Blood BURSTS everywhere. Soaks Gemma's white tank in crimson.

Gemma stands over him as he takes thready, wet breaths. His throat GURGLES with blood. He's dead within ten seconds.

ADAM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And rounding out the rest of the team will be Seo-Jun--

CUT TO:

EXT. NORTH KOREAN FOREST - FLASHBACK

Yoked in munitions and cloaked in camouflage, SEO-JUN (50s, Korean powderkeg) slinks quietly along in a forest.

ADAM (V.O.)
Who is our arms specialist. In
another life, he was a high-ranking
Lieutenant...

Suddenly, the forest is PEPPERED BY GUNFIRE. Seo-Jun takes out a machine gun and SQUEEZES OFF A ROUND with one hand. With the other, he whips out a rifle and starts SPITTING SHELLS in the other direction.

After the smoke clears, we see that he stands alone amongst a sea of bullet-chewed bodies.

ADAM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...in North Korea.

He takes off running farther into the forest, and we ZOOM OUT to reveal that he's headed for the border.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOROCCAN RESORT - FLASHBACK

ROBERT (40s, British, the smoothest criminal) stands sipping a whiskey by a glimmering pool.

ADAM (V.O.)
Robert is former MI6.

A waiter whisks by and slips something into Robert's drink.

Robert notices but takes another sip anyways.

He then covertly follows the waiter behind the bar, and, in one fluid motion, inserts a syringe into the waiter's arm, then himself, while extracting a small black box hidden in a champagne ice bucket.

ADAM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
He gives Bond a run for his money.

CUT TO:

INT. DARK BASEMENT - FLASHBACK

ISABELLA (30s, Mexican, last bullet in the chamber) sits in a damp, dark basement. It's eerily empty.

ADAM (V.O.)
Then there's Isabella.

Suddenly, a group of CARTEL THUGS bursts through the doors and surrounds Isabella.

Isabella puts her arms up, smirking.

CARTEL THUG
(in Spanish)
What are you smiling about? This is the part where you beg for your life.

Isabella continues smiling but does not respond.

As the thugs look at each other, DRONES START FLYING IN THROUGH THE DOOR, DROPPING GRENADES. The thugs look at each other and dive away just as the grenades EXPLODE.

By the time the smoke clears, Isabella is gone, and the thugs' broken bodies litter the floor.

ADAM (V.O.)
She brings the fireworks.

CUT TO:

INT. RUSSIAN CATHEDRAL - FLASHBACK

A face we recognize: Dmitri. He opens the door to a confessional. A PRIEST slides open the partition between the booths.

ADAM (V.O.)
And you've already met Dmitri.

DMITRI
(in Russian)
Forgive me Father, for I have sinned.

PRIEST
(in Russian)
Tell me, my son.

DMITRI
(in Russian)
I was on some... explicit websites. I found some photographs. Photographs of young boys.

There's heavy breathing, but the Priest does not respond.

DMITRI (CONT'D)
 (in Russian)
*Then I traced the source of those
 photographs.*

He holds up his phone to the partition. There's CCTV FOOTAGE OF THE PRIEST UNDRESSING A YOUNG BOY IN FRONT OF A VIDEO CAMERA.

SIRENS BLARE AS RUSSIAN POLICE OFFICERS STORM INTO THE CATHEDRAL.

DMITRI (CONT'D)
 (in Russian)
*Is there anything you'd like to
 confess, Father?*

Police KICK OPEN THE DOORS TO THE CONFESSIONAL.

DMITRI (CONT'D)
 (in Russian)
*Doesn't matter. You're a priest, so
 I don't really trust God to punish
 you. I think that's better left to
 the Russian government.*

A POLICEMAN handcuffs the Priest and starts dragging him out.

ADAM (V.O.)
 He's on surveillance. He's seen it
 all... and then some.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Adam, Gemma, and Jane walk into the bullpen.

ADAM
 And that rounds out the team.
 Including, of course, Gemma, me,
 and you, Jane.

JANE
 Not a big team.

ADAM
 By design.

JANE
 What about everyone I met earlier?

ADAM

They're focused on other missions.
Hurricane rescue. Hostage
extraction. Counter-terrorism. They
keep the world from erupting in
total chaos. Only a select group
can be trusted with this mission,
and you are picking up your
mother's mantle.

GEMMA

Ready to meet the team?

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - GLASS CONFERENCE ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Seo-Jun, Robert, Dmitri, and Isabella debate animatedly in a
glass-enclosed conference room. Adam, Gemma, and Jane enter.

ADAM

Jane, this is--

JANE

(pointing to each in
order)
Guns, spy, surveillance,
explosives, and--
(nodding at Adam, Gemma,
then herself)
--brains, assassin, and I'm the
hacker. Did I get that right?

A beat.

ROBERT

I find that offensively reductive.
I'm more than just a "spy." I
competitively race cars, also.

JANE

That's kinda a spy thing.

DMITRI

Ooh! Burn, baby, burn!

ISABELLA

I like her.

ROBERT

I also ballroom dance.

DMITRI

Spy thing! That's totally a spy thing.

Everybody starts arguing. It's mostly Robert v. everyone else. Seo-Jun, who we'll learn to be a man of few words, silently smirks.

GEMMA

Well, I think you're off to a good start with mostly everyone.

JANE

What now?

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - TRAINING ROOM - LATER

It's a Bond meets Bourne training center with the world's most state-of-the-art equipment. Proprietary weaponry line the walls. Screens beaming with vitals and other stats sit in alcoves, each a bona fide killer incubator.

Jane walks up to a punching bag and gives it a light tap. The screen in the alcove reads "<5 MPH."

GEMMA

Now, we get you trained.

JANE

Sorry, what? Trained?

GEMMA

Our time is limited. In order for you to be operational in the field-

Jane looks around nervously at all the guns on the wall.

JANE

Woah woah woah, I don't know how much you know about me, but running after the ice cream truck is about all the physical conditioning I ever get. I'm not -- I can't be a field agent. I'm a hacker, not Jane Bond.

GEMMA

We know you box. It's very amateurish, but it's a start.

(then)

(MORE)

GEMMA (CONT'D)

Aren't ice cream trucks for children?

JANE

I don't judge you.

Gemma picks a medicine ball off the ground and HURLS IT AT JANE.

Without thinking, Jane WHIPS HER BODY TO THE SIDE AS THE BALL HURTLES BY, MILLIMETERS FROM HITTING HER.

GEMMA

I can work with that.

JANE

What the hell was that??

In one quick motion, Gemma grabs another medicine ball and HURLS IT AT JANE AGAIN.

This time, it PUMMELS JANE IN THE STOMACH. She doubles over in pain.

JANE (CONT'D)

(struggling to breathe)

WHAT -- THE -- HELL -- IS -- YOUR --
- PROBLEM!?

GEMMA

That was less promising.

JANE

(catching her breath)

Can't you get someone else to do the agent-ing part for me?

GEMMA

You can't hack Bilderberg remotely. You need to be on site.

(nodding at the training center)

What we're doing is basic field training.

Without warning, Gemma kicks the feet out from under Jane, who lands with a thud.

JANE

Stop doing things to me!

GEMMA

Lesson one: expect the unexpected.

Jane gets up.

JANE
(annoyed)
Alright, lesson learned.

Gemma sweeps Jane's feet out again. THUD.

GEMMA
Apparently not.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - TRAINING ROOM - LATER

Fists flying, Gemma delivers blow-after-blow. An outmatched Jane finally crumples to the ground..

GEMMA
Lesson two: pain is only temporary.

Jane groans and curls into a ball. Gemma frowns.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - TRAINING ROOM - LATER

Jane stands over a deep, gaping pool with tall poles that bridge the gap from one side to the other.

JANE
So are there alligators at the bottom too? Or is that too Scooby Doo villain for you guys?

ROBERT
Don't be ridiculous. The fluoroantimonic acid is a thousand times worse than any alligator could be. It'll eat through flesh, bone, metal, pretty much everything.

(grinning)
Plus, we don't have to worry about feeding it.

JANE
That was a joke, right?

Taking a few steps back, she LEAPS ONTO THE FIRST POLE, barely holding her balance.

The poles are thin, unforgiving. Jane takes a deep breath and LUNGES ONTO THE NEXT ONE, which is over six feet away.

Jane lands but WOBBLES WILDLY AS SHE TRIES TO MAINTAIN HER BALANCE. Once stabilized, she looks back at Robert and gives a thumbs up. Robert smiles, but Jane SLIPS, TUMBLING OVER THE EDGE.

At the last second, the tips of Jane's fingers manage to catch the edge of the pole. Robert hops over. He hoists Jane up onto the little real estate that remains.

ROBERT

Lesson three: never get comfortable.

Robert pushes Jane off the pole. SPLASH.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

It's just water. The markup on acid is absurd.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - TRAINING ROOM - LATER

Jane stands at a firing range in front of a row of mannequins. She nervously holds a glock.

Seo-Jun nods at her, and she begins firing. POP. POP. POP. POP.

A beat.

None of the bullets have hit a mark.

SEO-JUN

Lesson four: aim.

He takes the glock and fires four shots. They each hit a mannequin in the middle of the forehead.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - PARIS - LATER

A gaping maw with teeth of crates, raw steel, boxes, corrugated machinery.

ISABELLA

You have thirty seconds to get out.

JANE

What happens if you find me?

ISABELLA

Let's hope you don't find out.

Isabella grins. A Cheshire smile. It's unnerving.

Jane's eyes dart around the room.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

(calling out)

Thirty! Twenty-nine! Twenty-eight!...

She continues to count down as Jane DUCKS behind a pile of crates.

Jane tries to make sense of the space. She makes her way to one of the walls and starts sprinting along the warehouse's perimeter.

As she does, she trips over a wire, SETTING OFF AN EXPLOSION BEHIND HER. She dives behind a pile of scrap metal for cover.

JANE

WHAT THE FUCK!?

She makes her way towards the door they entered from but sees Dmitri stationed next to it. He's holding a machine gun.

JANE (CONT'D)

Guess that's not the exit...

ISABELLA

Eighteen! Seventeen!

Jane sets her eyes on an old Caterpillar hydraulic excavator... but it's at the other side of the warehouse.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Ten! Nine!

Jane hesitates, then decides to make a run for it.

BOOM! She's SET OFF ANOTHER EXPLOSION BEHIND HER.

Weaving between pieces of falling, smoldering rubble, Jane slides behind a pile of scrap metal just as Isabella reaches the end of the countdown.

Silence.

THUMP. THUMP.

Jane hears heavy footsteps on the other side of the warehouse. Looking around, she tries to find something that could serve as a shield, a weapon -- anything.

The footsteps get closer.

THUMP. THUMP. THUMP.

Jane trains her eyes on a lever in the Caterpillar, but it's still a good twenty feet away.

THUMP. THUMP. THUMP.

In a panic, Jane squeezes herself in a pocket of space beneath the scrap metal.

Thick, rubber boots appear. Jane holds her breath.

The boots walk away. Jane sighs.

Suddenly, the scrap metal above her is lifted off, and SHE IS DRAGGED AND THROWN ONTO THE FLOOR.

She looks up and sees that it's Dmitri. CLICK. He raises his gun--

JANE

Wait, wait! What the fuck!? This is TRAINING, isn't it!?

--And FIRES! Jane DUCKS AND ROLLS AWAY, BARELY MISSING THE BULLET. She lunges into the Caterpillar and shuts the door, locking it.

Inside, Jane finds the lever and wraps her fingers around it.

Before she can pull it, Dmitri BREAKS THE GLASS BEHIND JANE AND STARTS CLIMBING THROUGH. Jane grabs him by his hair and SMASHES his head against the roof of the Caterpillar.

While he's momentarily stunned, Jane reaches back for the lever. She pulls it and--

Nothing.

DMITRI

(whispering)
It's not on.

Jane looks around, then back at Dmitri.

JANE

(whispering too)
What?

DMITRI

The machine. You have to turn it on.

ISABELLA (O.S.)

Hey! Hey! Stop helping her!

Jane looks around the panel and finds a key. She twists it to the right, and the machine roars to life.

JANE

(to Dmitri)

That was my next move.

A beat.

Dmitri LEAPS TOWARDS JANE. She DUCKS AND GETS BEHIND HIM, SMASHING HIS HEAD INTO THE PANEL.

She reaches once more for the lever. The arm of the Caterpillar mirrors her movements, which then HURTLES TOWARDS THE WALL. It SMASHES against it a few times before finally BLASTING THROUGH to the other side.

Jane slides out and onto the ground, where Isabella awaits her.

JANE (CONT'D)

I thought you were the one I was supposed to be worried about.

ISABELLA

Who says I'm not?

She kicks over a black box, its cavity bursting with wires of different colors.

Jane leaps towards the box and examines the wires. There's green, blue, red, orange..

She makes a decision.

Jane trepidatiously untangles a blue wire. Brings its frayed end towards a red wire. Then--

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

STOP!!

Jane freezes. The wires are a razor's edge apart.

JANE

You told me blue and red have a 89% statistical probability--

ISABELLA

This falls into the other 11%.

Jane thinks, trying to recall the protocol.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

You have thirty seconds, Jane.

She thinks. Thinks. Thinks.

JANE

White. I need the white one.

Jane's fingers tremble as she combs through the wires, searching desperately for white. She finds it in the very back, knotted underneath a tangle of others. She tries to pick her way through, but--

Isabella grabs the box from Jane and HURLS IT OUTSIDE.

BOOM!!

THE BOX EXPLODES.

Smoke billows from the bones that remain. Fire and charred detritus rain everywhere.

JANE (CONT'D)

(staring in disbelief)

What's lesson five?

ISABELLA

Stay alive.

Isabella points a pistol at Jane.

Jane ROUNDHOUSE KICKS the gun out of Isabella's hand.

JANE

That's my plan.

Isabella smiles. Not bad.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - MONTAGE

Over a SERIES OF CUTS, we see Jane relive the past few scenes -- only this time, she's achieves an almost clinical perfection:

-Jane spars with Gemma. It's a flurry of blows and kicks that end with Jane SWEEPING GEMMA'S FEET OUT FROM UNDER HER. Gemma lands. Hard. Jane smiles.

-Jane leaps from pole to pole with surprising alacrity and grace. Robert stops his watch. 15 seconds.

-Jane shoots. BANG. BANG. BANG. BANG. She squints through the smoke. When it clears, we see that there's a hole in the heads of all four mannequins.

-At the warehouse, Jane TRADES PUNCHES WITH FIVE LARGE, BURLY MEN. She DUCKS JUST AS ONE SLICES A MACHETE TOWARDS HER. Jane weaves and launches from one pile of metal to another, expertly avoiding the trip wires and taking down a Burly Man as she goes. One-by-one, Jane KNOCKS OUT EACH OF THEM, sending the last one FLYING THROUGH THE WAREHOUSE DOOR.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARIS STREET - DUSK

In a sleek Lamborghini Murcielago, Jane WHIPS OUT of an underground garage.

She SURGES onto a street of commuters. Her driving is graceful, poetic.

She slows at a stoplight. Out of nowhere, a Range Rover CHARGES THROUGH THE LIGHT, NEARLY MOWING OVER A WOMAN PUSHING A BABY IN A STROLLER.

Jane's eyes narrow. When the light turns green, she BLASTS TOWARDS THE ROVER IN PURSUIT.

Jane catches up to it by the next light. Jane rolls down her window.

The DRIVER (30s, aspirationally thug-ish) looks over. He grins, apparently liking what he sees. He rolls down his window too.

DRIVER
(in French)
Hey sweetheart.

From Jane's POV, she sees the driver as FLASHES OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE:

-The Man in the Pig Mask.

-The Man in the Jeep.

-The Man in the Black Burqa on the Libyan plane.

She blinks. Back to normal.

Jane pulls out a gun and aims it at the Driver.

He SCREAMS.

She points the gun at one of the Rover's front tires.

BANG.

She aims it at his back tire. Shoots again.

BANG.

The tires hiss as gas gushes out.

JANE

I'm not your sweetheart.

She smiles and speeds off.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - TRAINING ROOM - LATER

Jane and Gemma stand in front of the wall of weapons. Gemma holds an unassuming black pen.

GEMMA

If you hold the button at the end, the pen will emit high-frequency waves that can shatter pretty much any glass. But you can think of it more as a Swiss army knife. It can also--

She swivels the pen.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

--Serve as a laser.

A laser shoots out and burns a hole in the wall.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

If you open this compartment, an injectable sedative comes out.

She switches open a side of the pen, and a syringe slides out.

JANE

Sweet. What else can it do?

She clicks a button, and a tip comes out.

JANE (CONT'D)

(excited)

Poison?

GEMMA

No. It's also just a pen.

(then)

We'll of course arm you with higher grade weapons, but it's something easy to hide just in case.

Jane takes the pen and tucks it into a back pocket.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

Let's see what the rest of the cavalry's cooked up, shall we?

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - GLASS CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Jane, Gemma, Adam, Robert, Isabella, Dmitri, and Seo-Jun sit around the conference table.

Gemma drops a photo of François (60s, obviously French) in the middle of the table.

GEMMA

Alright, let's catch Jane up. This man's name is François Terrien. He's the Founder and CEO of Corveta.

JANE

The agrichemical firm?

GEMMA

Among other things. More importantly, he's also the Director of Zero. The drive will be with him.

JANE

What's the drive?

ROBERT

The only way to gain access to Zero's systems.

DMITRI

Which is why this drive also has a fail-safe. Should François's heart stop beating, a signal will be triggered for the drive to self-destruct.

Adam turns on the projector. On the screen, we'll see a high-tech computer simulation of their mission, which Adam narrates:

ADAM

François is scheduled to meet with Patrick Anderson, an Exxon board member, on Friday afternoon. Gemma will distract and disable the real Patrick while Robert takes his place. In the meantime, Isabella will set up and detonate a bomb in the basement of the chateau. That should draw out all the guards, leaving François unprotected. Seo-Jun will be set up with his rifle on the roof of a neighboring building. Dmitri will be on surveillance nearby. Jane, you will be deployed on site. You'll only be able to gain access to the hotel's systems through a direct connection to the network.

He pauses. Looks around.

ADAM (CONT'D)

We only have one shot to get this right. If we fail...

GEMMA

We won't.

Everyone sits back, metabolizing the gravity of the mission.

Jane looks around. This is the first time she's seen anyone at Cicada -- even Gemma -- betray a hint of uncertainty.

CUT TO:

INT. CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT - PRIVATE TARMAC - LATER

A large jetliner sits on the tarmac, its engine humming and ready to go.

Robert, Adam, Isabella, Seo-Jun, Dmitri, Jane, and Gemma walk towards it.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - DALIAN - NEXT DAY

The rich and powerful mingle at a palatial Chinese seaside estate modeled after a Bavarian fairytale castle. Zuckerbergs rub shoulders with Vanderbilts. The demographic here is very white, very old, and very male.

A fountain of Armand de Brignac bubbles next to a giant goblet dripping with caviar.

Manufacturing magnates and banking titans discuss their latest vineyard acquisitions like grocery store hauls.

It's disgusting -- a sickening look into excess at its most wanton.

VFX: We now see everything through a tactical scope.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEARBY BUILDING - DALIAN - NEXT DAY

Seo-Jun peers through the lens of the scope. He's lying on the ground, finger laced through the trigger guard of a long-range rifle.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - DALIAN - AFTERNOON

We see the back of a BELLMAN walking into the lobby. He carries a messenger bag. A SECURITY GUARD stops him.

SECURITY GUARD

Where's your ID?

We now see that the bellman is Jane. She flashes a smile, then an ID badge at the guard. He scans it.

Jane holds her breath. The scanner beeps.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)

Alright.

(then)

Wait.

She blanches.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)
You're late. Hurry up and put your
things away!

Jane nods and walks briskly towards the service elevator. We now see that she has an earpiece in. It connects her to every other member of the team.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - BASEMENT - A LITTLE LATER

Elevator doors open. Jane steps out. Locates an unmarked door.

She takes out a small, metal disk and sticks it on the door, near its handle.

Jane looks around. The coast is clear. She spots an alcove thirty feet away and runs to it.

Jane takes out a black detonator. Takes a breath. Presses it.

Boom!

A small, controlled explosion. A few tendrils of black smoke lick the disk. Other than that, the explosion has left no other trace.

The door is now open. Jane slips inside.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The brainstem of the hotel. Technicolor wires hang everywhere. It's a canopy of cords and circuits.

Jane takes out her computer and connects it to one of the wires.

Her eyes scan a terminal of code. She types. Waits. Clicks.

JANE
(into earpiece)
I'm in.

INT. VAN - DALIAN - CONTINUOUS

Dmitri sits inside a van with monitors that line the entire right wall. Some of the monitors are on. Others are not. The monitors that are show surveillance footage from each operative's POV.

Suddenly, the inactive, black monitors all light up with CCTV footage of the hotel.

DMITRI
(into earpiece)
I have eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - SPA - CONTINUOUS

Dressed in a maid's uniform, Isabella discreetly mops in the women's locker room.

DMITRI
(over earpiece)
Isabella, you can head towards the
electrical room.

Isabella sets down the mop and walks out and into...

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Isabella smiles at a GUEST. Then hurries quickly down the hallway, round the corner, and to the door of the electrical room.

There's a keypad next to the door.

ISABELLA
(into earpiece)
I need the code.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jane types furiously on her computer.

JANE
(into earpiece)
On it.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Two WAITERS walk past Isabella.

JANE
(over earpiece)
The code is 78537.

She waits until they're out of sight. Once they are, she punches in the code.

The keypad beeps, then turns green.

Isabella opens the door and steps inside.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - ELECTRICAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A long row of steel, grey electrical panels. They stand next to each other like grade school lockers.

Isabella takes a BLACK BOX out of her jacket pocket. She puts it down near one of the panels.

ISABELLA
(into earpiece)
The package is in position.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Draped in a figure-clinging gown, Gemma walks into the lobby. She draws more than a few stares. Smiles politely.

DMITRI
(into earpiece)
Gemma, Anderson is in the main ballroom.

Gemma starts walking.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

A crowded room teeming with men in Italian wool suits. The air is thick with cigar smoke and privilege.

Gemma spies PATRICK (40s) next to a THIN MAN near the bar and floats towards them.

She makes a face of recognition.

GEMMA
Patrick! Darling!

Patrick looks a mix of surprised, confused, and delighted. Gemma kisses both his cheeks.

GEMMA (CONT'D)
 I was hoping I'd see you here.
 (to Thin Man)
 Do you mind if I steal him for a
 minute?

THIN MAN
 Not at all, *mademoiselle*.

The Thin Man leaves.

GEMMA
 Don't tell me you forgot about
 Vegas. The Wynn.

His eyes are searching. Hoping she's right.

GEMMA (CONT'D)
 (suggestively)
 Master.

He blushes.

GEMMA (CONT'D)
 We had a lot to drink.

She walks up next to him, her lips whispering a siren song
 into his ear.

GEMMA (CONT'D)
 I had a lot of fun.

PATRICK
 Wo-would you like to have a drink
 with me upstairs?

Gemma smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - PATRICK'S ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Patrick and Gemma burst in, laughing.

PATRICK
 I'm so embarrassed I don't remember
 our first meeting. You seem like
 you'd be a hard person to forget.

Gemma laughs.

GEMMA

I'll take that as a compliment.
 (then, firm)
 Take off your shirt.

Thrown but taken by her boldness, Patrick starts unbuttoning his shirt.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

Get one of your toys.

Patrick nods vigorously and leaps towards his suitcase.

While Patrick digs through, an elbow wraps around his neck from behind.

Gemma starts CHOKING him.

He flails, bucking wildly. Gemma tightens her grip until his limbs fall slack to the ground.

He's out.

Gemma drags him towards the closet. While she does, we ANGLE ON Patrick's suitcase and see some rope and a ball gag.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - PATRICK'S ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Gemma slams the closet door on a tied and gag-bound Patrick, then walks out of his room.

GEMMA

(into earpiece)
 Patrick's been neutralized.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

With a scotch in hand, Robert navigates towards François, who chats with some ASSOCIATES. Two GUARDS stand discreetly nearby.

ROBERT

(with a Texan accent)
 François Terrien?

François looks up.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Patrick Anderson.

Robert extends his hand and flashes a smile. He's got more charm than a senator from Oklahoma.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I do believe we've got us a tête-à-tête in the books. And I hope you don't mind me sayin': I'm a big fan of your work.

FRANÇOIS

Ah, yes, Mr. Anderson. Pleasure.

ROBERT

Call me Pat. I know I'm a little early, but--

FRANÇOIS

No, no. It's quite all right. Why don't we head up to my room?

He nods at his two guards. They all walk towards the..

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - ELEVATOR - A LITTLE LATER

François stands with Robert and his two guards. Chamber muzak plays softly.

FRANÇOIS

(in French, to guards)

Did I order the chicken or the beef?

GUARD 1

(in French)

I believe it was the chicken, sir.

A beat.

FRANÇOIS

(in French)

I've changed my mind. I want the fish.

The guards look at each other.

GUARD 1

(in French)

I don't think that was one of the choices.

Guard 2 puts one of his hands to his mouth, in shock at the faux-pas, as François shoots Guard 1 a withering look.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - FRANÇOIS'S SUITE - A LITTLE LATER

Robert and François walk inside, guards in tow.

FRANÇOIS
(in French)
Check the room.

The guards flick on the lights, then spread out.

They knock over chairs, shake the curtains, lift the couch, point their flashlights under the bed -- they leave no corner unturned.

FRANÇOIS (CONT'D)
(to Robert)
A formality, really. But one can never be too careful.

ROBERT
I do the same thing every time I go home.
(then, winking)
Make sure the missus never meets the mistress.

They laugh.

GUARD 2
(in French, calling out)
All clear, sir!

François and Robert walk towards the sitting area. Robert opens his briefcase and takes out a file of papers.

ROBERT
I appreciate you taking the time to meet with me. Am I under the correct assumption that you still have the appetite to take us private?

FRANÇOIS
We'll get to all that business later, Mr. Anderson. Let's have a drink first. I take it you're a scotch man?

Robert smiles politely.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - ELECTRICAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Isabella stands near the black box.

ADAM
(over earpiece)
Isabella, get ready to detonate.

ISABELLA
(into earpiece)
Copy.

She casts one last glance at the box, nudges it an inch closer to the electrical panels, then hurries out, shutting the door behind her.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Isabella runs into two female SPA WORKERS outside.

SPA WORKER 1
(in Mandarin)
I think my daughter is gaslighting me.

SPA WORKER 2
(in Mandarin)
How old is she?

SPA WORKER 1
(in Mandarin)
Three.

SPA WORKER 2
(in Mandarin)
Of course she's gaslighting you.

ISABELLA
(to both Spa Workers, in Mandarin)
Didn't you hear? Boss is docking everyone's pay this weekend. Someone's been stealing from the tip pool.

SPA WORKER 1
(angrily, in Mandarin)
I bet it was that handsome Swede!

Clucking obscenities, the Spa Workers storm away.

Isabella makes a quick dash down the hall to make sure no one else is around.

Once the coast is clear, she heads towards the service stairwell.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - SERVICE STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

As she leaps up the stairs, Isabella takes out the detonator.

Stops. Takes a breath. Clicks it.

There's a distant BOOM. The walls of the stairwell RATTLE.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

All the lights are out.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - FRANÇOIS'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Clink. Clink. Robert swirls the thick ice cubes in his glass of scotch.

Suddenly, the lights in the room flicker, then go out.

Guard 1 draws the curtains open.

ISABELLA
(over earpiece)
The bomb's been detonated.

DMITRI
(over earpiece)
The whole hotel's blacked out.

Guard 2's phone starts buzzing. He answers.

GUARD 2
(on phone, in French)
I understand.
(then, to François)
*They're saying it's an electrical
outage. They're working on it.*

He hangs up. Continues to stand sentry. The other guard walks back and joins him.

ADAM

(over earpiece)

Why aren't they moving? They're trained to secure and isolate the area around a bomb.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

Dmitri's eyes scan the monitors.

In the CCTV of the electrical room, a team of hotel staff investigates the scene. All trace of the black box is gone. The guards litigate the wiring in the electrical panels.

One of the staffers throws on the switch for the emergency generator.

All the lights in the hotel turn back on.

DMITRI

(into earpiece)

The bomb was too clean. They're focused on the panels. They think the wiring short-circuited. Fuck!

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jane pulls up the surveillance footage of François's room.

JANE'S POV:

She quickly scans the room: the windows, the closet, the bathroom, the guards. Spots something next to the guards.

It's a digital thermostat.

END POV.

JANE

(into earpiece)

I think I can draw one of them out.

She pulls up a terminal and starts typing.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - FRANÇOIS'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

A single bead of sweat falls down François's face. He takes a sip from the glass of scotch he's holding.

Robert clocks this.

ROBERT

Oo-wee! It is hotter than a fur coat in Marfa in here. Hope you don't mind--

Robert sheds his jacket.

FRANÇOIS

It is a bit uncomfortable, isn't it?

Guard 1 takes this cue to check the thermostat. He tries to turn the temperature down, but the screen seems frozen.

GUARD 1

(in French)

I can't change the temperature on this. It's broken.

FRANÇOIS

(in French, losing it with this idiot)

Then fix it. Or get someone who can.

Guard 1 walks towards the phone.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jane types furiously.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - FRANÇOIS'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Guard 1 picks up the phone. Tries the front desk.

GUARD 1

(in French)

I can't get through.

FRANÇOIS

(in French, snapping)

Just get it fixed!

Guard 1 nods sheepishly and hurries out of the room.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Guard 1 walks briskly towards the elevator. He presses the down button. As he waits, Gemma steps out behind him and buries her gun into the back of his head.

GEMMA

Don't move. Put your hands in the air.

Guard 1 slowly puts his hands up.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

I'm going to need you to call someone for me.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - FRANÇOIS'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Guard 2's phone starts buzzing. He picks it up. Listens.

GUARD 2

(to François, in French)
He's saying he needs my help.

FRANÇOIS

(in French)
He needs your help getting help to get the thermostat fixed?

GUARD 2

(on phone, in French)
Do you really need my help for this?
(then, to François)
He's saying he does.

FRANÇOIS

(in French, exasperated)
Fucking moron. Fine. Go.

Guard 2 nods and exits.

ROBERT

Good help is so hard to find.

FRANÇOIS

He had such great references.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Guard 2 waits by the elevator. The down button is lit.

DING. The doors open.

Guard 1 is slumped against a corner, unconscious.

Guard 2 cautiously steps inside.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

WHOOSH!

Gemma lands on top of Guard 2.

They trade blows. WHAM. PUNCH. CRUNCH. CRACK.

It's a FUCKING MELEE.

Guard 2 reaches for his gun, but Gemma's too fast. She knocks it out of his hands and LANDS A HOOK to his face.

Bellowing in pain, Guard 2 SLAMS Gemma against the wall. He manages to untangle himself from under her, then THROWS her onto the floor.

He unsheathes a knife from his belt. He pitches forward towards Gemma's chest. She rolls out of the way just in time. But--

Gemma CRIES OUT. Guard 2 has managed to SLICE THROUGH THE MUSCLE IN HER CALF. Blood oozes from the wound. Gemma looks up at Guard 2, steeling herself for battle with this handicap, when--

SLAM!

The elevator PLUMMETS, LAUNCHING GUARD 2 AND GEMMA ONTO THE CEILING.

JANE
(pre-lap)
Gemma, can you get him on top of
the elevator?

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

On Jane's screen is a blueprint of the elevator shaft.

Jane's POV:

Superimposed math equations fly across the blueprint as Jane does supersonic calculus in her head.

We HIGHLIGHT the height of the shaft and the velocity of the elevator.

END POV.

JANE
(into earpiece)
There should be a hatch on the
ceiling.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Gemma finds the hatch above her. She opens it and starts to
crawl outside while Guard 2 is still disoriented.

The elevator slows down.

She's almost out, but Guard 2 CATCHES HER FOOT BEFORE SHE
MAKES IT. He DRAGS HER BACK IN.

At the last second, Gemma manages to grip the lip of the
hatch. She KICKS Guard 2 in the head, then hoists herself
back up to the top of the elevator.

Guard 2 climbs out behind her.

JANE
(over earpiece)
Gemma, I'm going to open the doors
to the tenth floor. That's your
stop.

There's a mechanical whir.

JANE (CONT'D)
(over earpiece)
Here we go.

The elevator SHOOTS UP AGAIN.

The doors to different floors flash by: One. Two. Three.

Guard 2 sends a fist into Gemma's right cheek. The punch
connects.

Four. Five.

Gemma reels. Recalibrates.

Six. Seven.

Gemma sweeps the feet out from under Guard 2. He falls.

Eight. Nine...

The brass doors to the tenth floor glide open. Gemma LAUNCHES
HERSELF OUT. THE ELEVATOR CONTINUES TO FLY UPWARD AND--

SMASHES AGAINST THE CEILING OF THE SHAFT!

Bones CRUNCH.

Then, SILENCE as blood seeps down the side of the metal car.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

Just as everyone breathes a sigh of relief, the monitors of operative feeds cut into digital snow.

DMITRI
(into earpiece)
I've lost everyone's feeds. Looks
like the signal's out.

EXT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

From afar, Isabella takes one last look at the hotel.

ADAM
(over earpiece)
Isabella, let's get you back to the
van.

Isabella starts walking.

A bullet TEARS THROUGH THE SKIN OF A TREE NEXT TO HER HEAD.

A MAN IN BLACK steps out from behind another tree with a gun trained at her head.

MAN IN BLACK
Don't move.

There's a faint WHISTLING that crescendos into...

A THUD.

The Man in Black's eyes glaze over. THERE'S A BULLET IN HIS FOREHEAD. He falls, dead before he hits the ground.

EXT. NEARBY BUILDING - DALIAN - CONTINUOUS

Seo-Jun looks through his scope. More guards materialize around Isabella, guns pointed and cocked.

But before he can aim at his next target, HE FINDS HIMSELF STARING DOWN THE BARREL OF A GUN.

Another MAN IN BLACK looks down at him and puts his index finger to his lips.

MAN IN BLACK 2

Shhh.

There's a GUNSHOT.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - SERVICE STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Still in stilettos, Gemma clips up three steps at a time.

GEMMA

(over earpiece)

Did anyone hear that?

ADAM

(over earpiece)

Dmitri, get the feeds back. NOW.
Gemma, what's your ETA to Robert?

GEMMA

(into earpiece)

I'm almost there.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

Dmitri exhausts every option on his keyboard.

DMITRI

(into earpiece)

I don't know what's blocking our
signal.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jane pulls up a signal coverage map of the whole compound.

JANE'S POV:

Jane's eyes scan the map. Different areas of the hotel pulsate with varying signal strengths.

Then, in a VFX RACK FOCUS, she sees a DULL BLUE SIGNAL which permeates the entire map.

JANE

(into earpiece)

There's a digital GSM signal
jammer. It's in the whole hotel.

She pulls up a terminal. Thinks. Types in a block of code. Enters.

The dull blue signal fades, then disappears.

END POV.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

The monitors of operative feeds turn back on.

DMITRI
 (into earpiece)
 We're back online.
 (then)
 Except for Isabella and Seo-Jun. I
 can't see their feeds.

ADAM
 (over earpiece)
 Isabella, Seo-Jun -- do you copy?
 Isabella? Seo-Jun?

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - FRANÇOIS'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

François dips his hand into a pocket and pulls out a handkerchief. Wipes his brow.

FRANÇOIS
 Now, shall we get down to business?

ROBERT
 It's why I'm here.

FRANÇOIS
 I meant the real business.

Standing up, François puts the handkerchief back in his pocket and PULLS OUT A GUN.

ADAM
 (over earpiece, pre-lap)
 Gemma! Get in there, NOW!

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Gemma bolts towards François's suite. Looks at the electronic lock.

GEMMA
 (into earpiece)
 Jane, I need access.

JANE
 (over earpiece)
 Working on it, but--

GEMMA
 (into earpiece)
 I'm going in.

Gemma backs up ten feet, then CHARGES AT THE DOOR, using her shoulder to slam against it.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - FRANÇOIS'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Gemma BURSTS THROUGH, GUN AT THE READY. But François is not there.

Gemma looks down. Robert's dead body is sprawled out on the floor, a bullet in his temple.

Before she can process this data, she feels a cold muzzle in the small of her back.

FRANÇOIS (O.S.)
 Hands up.

CUT TO:

INT. VAN - DALIAN - CONTINUOUS

On the monitor, we see the scene above unfold from the POV of Robert's dead body.

DMITRI
 Oh fuck, oh fuck, oh fuck.

ADAM
 (over earpiece)
 CODE BLACK. CODE BLACK. ALL
 OPERATIVES STAND BY. Isabella, Seo-
 Jun? Do you copy?

There's still no response.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jane peers at her screen.

JANE
 (into earpiece)
 Their comms are working. Which
 means...

ADAM
 (over earpiece, distant)
 They must have been compromised.
 Dmitri, Jane. You're the only ones
 left.

There's a beat as this sinks in.

DMITRI
 (over earpiece)
 I'll go in.

ADAM
 (over earpiece)
 No. Jane: you're already on
 location. I'm sending you in.

JANE
 (into earpiece)
 Copy.

Jane reaches into her bag and pulls out a .64 caliber pistol.

She takes a deep breath, lingering for a second before
 opening the door and disappearing into the hallway.

ADAM
 (pre-lap)
 You'll need to take him by
 surprise.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jane walks briskly towards the elevator.

ADAM
 (over earpiece)
 Head to the mailroom.

JANE
 (into earpiece)
 Why the mailroom? François is on
 the twentieth floor.

ADAM
 (over earpiece)
 He's expecting a package. You'll
 bring it to him.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - ELEVATOR - A LITTLE LATER

Jane checks to make sure her gun is ready.

ADAM
 (over earpiece)
 He's going to immediately suspect
 you. Try to act normal.

JANE
 (into earpiece)
 Like the fate of the world isn't in
 my hands. Cool. Got it.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - HALLWAY - A LITTLE LATER

DING. The elevator doors open and deposit Jane, package in
 hand.

Jane walks towards François' suite. Knocks.

François barely cracks open the door. The chain's still on.

FRANÇOIS
Où est mes hommes?

JANE
Pardon, je ne parles pas français.

FRANÇOIS
 American, hm?

JANE
 Yes, sir. I have a package for you.

FRANÇOIS
 My guards should be out here. Where
 are they?

JANE
 In the lobby.

FRANÇOIS
 Is that so?

He's not buying it.

FRANÇOIS (CONT'D)
For what purpose?

JANE
To bring you this package.

FRANÇOIS
Then why is it you bringing me the package?

JANE
The hotel's apologies, sir, but our policy requires that you sign for it yourself. I couldn't release it to them.

FRANÇOIS
Why were there two of them?
(then, scowling)
Never mind. I have an idea. Give me the pen.

He unhooks the chain, then opens the door. Jane hands him the clipboard and pen.

As François signs, Jane catches a glimpse into the room. Robert. Gemma...

François clears his throat, impatient.

JANE
Oh, sorry.

She hands François a large, flat box.

FRANÇOIS
Do you know what this package is?

JANE
No, sir, I don't.

François rips it open, revealing its contents to be a mirror. He turns to go back inside but then stops to look at Jane in the mirror's reflection.

FRANÇOIS
This package tells me Cicada's next target.
(then)
Chérie, this is the part where you get out your gun.

Thrown, Jane scrambles for the .64 and thrusts it into the back of François's head.

JANE

Drop the mirror, and put your hands
in the air.

François does as he's told.

FRANÇOIS

First mission, I presume?

JANE

Into the room. NOW!

François walks inside, Jane right behind him.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - FRANÇOIS'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Jane closes the door behind her.

Gemma sits, hands bound, on the floor. Robert's dead body is
beside her.

JANE

Gemma!

GEMMA

Don't worry about me, Jane. Just
get the drive.

JANE

(to François)

Where is it?

FRANÇOIS

No small talk? You really must be
new.

JANE

(pushing on)

Where is it!?

FRANÇOIS

You mustn't be so bull-ish. You'll
never get anywhere acting so bossy.

Jane spins him around so that he faces her.

JANE

I'm sorry, did you have a stroke?
You must have forgotten who's
holding the gun.

FRANÇOIS

You see that suitcase in the corner
by the bar?

Jane's eyes dart over, clocking the suitcase.

JANE

Yes.

FRANÇOIS

It's in there.

JANE

Open it.

Jane walks François over to the suitcase. Using his
thumbprint, the suitcase opens. Inside is another locked box.

JANE (CONT'D)

Keep going.

François punches in a set of numbers, at which point a prick
appears. He presses his thumb against it, allowing it to draw
blood.

The box makes a purring sound, then opens, revealing a small,
obsidian-lacquered drive.

JANE (CONT'D)

Give it to me.

François obeys. Jane pockets the drive.

FRANÇOIS

You'll do well to remember that not
all is what it appears to be.

ADAM

(over earpiece)

Get out of there, Jane. He's buying
time. He knows they'll miss him at
dinner.

François continues.

FRANÇOIS

We knew you were coming, but that's
not what should frighten you. What
should frighten you, Jane Marshall,
is what you're now a part of.

(then)

Do you know what really happened to
your mother?

Jane stiffens, unsure whether to take the bait. Then--

JANE

Yes. Zero killed her.

FRANÇOIS

She was working against us. That part's true. But it wasn't Zero that killed her.

ADAM

(over earpiece)

Don't listen to him, Jane.

FRANÇOIS

It was Cicada.

Jane's eyes narrow.

JANE

You're lying. If they killed her, then why would they recruit me?

FRANÇOIS

You're the fall man. In case this fails, which it will. Who better to pin this on than the daughter of the insurgent?

JANE

Insurgent? What are you talking about?

François stands and turns to face her. Jane keeps the gun pointed, though her hand trembles.

Seizing the opportunity, François kicks Jane in the shin. Then KNOCKS the gun out of her hand. He pulls out his own gun and aims it at her.

ADAM

(over earpiece)

Jane! JANE! Don't move! Stay absolutely calm. We can talk you through this.

FRANÇOIS

You can tell the little voice in your ear that there's no need.

François URNS THE GUN ON HIMSELF.

FRANÇOIS (CONT'D)

You'll never get in now.

BANG!

Shellshocked, Jane stares as François' body crumples onto the ground.

ADAM
(over earpiece)
Jane? Do you copy? Jane?

GEMMA
Jane, we need to go. NOW!

Still stunned at the turn of events, Jane shakes herself out of her haze and unties Gemma's ropes.

As they rush out of the room, we catch the fastest glimpse of a tattoo on François's wrist. A tattoo of a cicada.

CUT TO:

INT. VAN - DALIAN - MOMENTS LATER

Dmitri opens the back door as Jane and Gemma scramble inside.

DMITRI
Are you guys okay??

JANE
(breathless, panicked)
François... he killed himself! We only have minutes--

GEMMA
Do you have the drive?

Fumbling, Jane fishes the drive out of her pocket. She hands it to Gemma.

JANE
What are we going to do??

Gemma looks at the drive, then at Jane.

Gemma turns back to Dmitri and SHOTS HIM IN THE CHEST.

Before Jane can even process what has happened, Gemma RAMS THE HANDLE OF HER GUN INTO JANE'S TEMPLE.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. UNKNOWN CICADA BUNKER - SMALL CHAMBER - LATER

Head spinning, Jane wakes up bound and gagged. Vision swims, the room throbs and undulates.

Looking around, she sees that she's in a cement-lined room. A single fluorescent bulb swings overhead.

Jane's stunned to see that Adam is bound and gagged next to her. For the moment, he's still out.

An intercom crackles to life.

ENCRYPTED VOICE

Hello, Jane.

JANE

Where am I??

ENCRYPTED VOICE

You're safe.

JANE

What the hell is going on?

(then)

The drive...

ENCRYPTED VOICE

We have terminated Zero's fund transfer to North Korea.

JANE

Then why am I here?

ENCRYPTED VOICE

Cicada's plan was never going to work.

Adam stirs.

ENCRYPTED VOICE (CONT'D)

Zero will always exist. Exposing the organization will do no lasting damage to it. The current leadership would be sacrificed, but new leadership would take over. It's a Hydra -- you can cut off one head, but another will appear in its place.

JANE

What do you want?

ENCRYPTED VOICE

One percent of the world controls
99 percent of the world's wealth.
Capitalism is simply a clever veil
-- a euphemism -- for oligarchy.
Governance by the few. The elite.
Whistleblowing is not enough. We
believe a global restructuring is
in order. A redistribution. An
equalization.

JANE

What you're talking about...
(wide-eyed, realizing)
You don't want to destroy Zero. You
want to become Zero.

The door opens. Gemma walks in.

JANE (CONT'D)

I trusted you.

GEMMA

A wise decision.

JANE

How long has this been your plan?

GEMMA

It wasn't my plan. It was your
mother's.

JANE

You're lying.

GEMMA

Once she realized that Cicada would
never succeed, she created a
splinter group that would. But
leadership found out.

(then)

She recruited me just before they
ordered her assassination. I was
the only member of the splinter
group who was never discovered.

Jane shakes her head, not wanting to believe any of it.

ENCRYPTED VOICE

Child trafficking, chemical
warfare, genocide -- the worst
evils imaginable have come to pass.
The world deserves a clean slate.

JANE
Who are you??

ENCRYPTED VOICE
Sometimes one must die in order to
live.

Jane's blood runs cold.

CREAK. The doorknob turns. Stops. Then--

Jane's mother, Alice (now in her 50s), walks in. She's older.
Grayer. Her face lined with years of fighting a shadow war.

ALICE
Hello Jane.

Jane stares. Her reality has been ruptured. Wrung. Twisted
inside out.

JANE
This -- this isn't real. You're
dead.

ALICE
It's me, Jane.

Jane shakes her head.

JANE
No. No. This doesn't -- this
doesn't make any sense.

ALICE
Cicada tried to kill me, and they
thought they did. I had to go
underground. You have no idea how
long I've waited for this moment.
To see you again.
(then, softly)
I'm so sorry, Jane.

JANE
No. No. No. This is a dream.

Alice walks up. Pauses. Then wraps her arms around Jane.

ALICE
I'm so sorry, sweetheart. I'm so
sorry for everything.

Adam groans. As he starts to come to, his eyes dart around,
taking stock of the situation. His voice is raw, guttural,
desperate.

ADAM

Alice...?? What's going on? You're still alive?

Alice turns to him, her eyes cold and unforgiving.

ALICE

Sorry to disappoint you.

In one fluid movement, she unholsters a gun and SHOOTS ADAM IN THE HEAD. He slumps off the chair, then onto the ground.

JANE

No! Adam!!

Jane stares in disbelief at Adam's lifeless body. She looks at her mother. Doesn't recognize, doesn't believe the woman she sees.

ALICE

He was the one who ordered the hit on me, Jane.

Jane struggles against the ties binding her wrists.

As she squirms, her fingers brush against the pen tucked in her back pocket -- the pen Gemma gave her.

JANE

You always said... we should put good into the world.

Jane contorts her fingers around the tip of the pen.

ALICE

And that is what we're doing.

Jane's able to shimmy the tip of the pen between her middle and ring finger. Subtly, she coaxes it up.

JANE

No. What you're planning is -- it's all wrong.

Alice holds Jane's head in her hands, admiring her.

ALICE

You're here. You're finally here. My baby girl.

The pen is in Jane's fingers. She swivels the top open...

JANE
 How could you leave us?
 (then, small)
 How could you leave me?

Alice looks at her, then turns away.

ALICE
 You have to understand -- what
 we're doing here, it's bigger than
 any of us. We're rebuilding the
 world, Jane. That necessitates some
 sacrifice.

Alice turns back around, but now --

JANE IS STANDING IN FRONT OF HER. The ropes are curled around
 her feet.

Gemma draws her gun. Then--

BAM! Jane KICKS IT OUT OF HER HANDS AND CATCHES IT.

Jane's movements are primal, instinctive, lethal.

ALICE (CONT'D)
 (to Gemma)
 Don't hurt her.

Alice walks out.

Gemma edges slowly towards Jane.

GEMMA
 Give me the gun, Jane.

JANE
 (sarcastic)
 Oh totally, let me just give you
 the gun.

Jane's hand shakes, which Gemma notices.

In less than the blink of an eye, Gemma CHARGES AT JANE. They
 both hit the deck. Hard.

Bang! Bang!

Two errant bullets lodge into the ceiling.

Gemma DRIVES a fist into Jane's wrist, and HER GUN SKITTERS
 AWAY.

They trade KICKS, BLOWS, SWINGS.

It's raging, unfettered kinetic energy.

WHAM! Gemma DELIVERS AN UPPERCUT INTO JANE'S JAW.

While Jane's disoriented, Gemma clocks her gun. Starts to DIVE towards it but--

Jane DRIVES A SHOULDER INTO HER. CRASH! Jane pins her to the ground.

Jane reaches into her pocket. Plucks out the pen. She flicks open the side and--

STAB! Jane SHOOTS the syringe into Gemma's neck. PUSHES the plunger.

Before she realizes what's happened, Gemma goes slack.

CUT TO:

INT. UNKNOWN CICADA BUNKER - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jane surges after Alice. Whatever tunnel this is twists deep and long. The belly of the beast.

As Jane runs, she sees the bodies of the first Cicada members she met -- the hackers in the bullpen. They now marinate in their own blood.

Jane pauses for a moment, finally feeling the weight of what has happened.

Then, turning, she breaks into a sprint.

CUT TO:

INT. UNKNOWN CICADA BUNKER - LARGE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jane bursts into a vast room. Thousands of monitors stare down at her from towering columns.

Each monitor displays the CCTV footage of banks, private villas, presidential offices -- the most secure places in the world. No longer.

Jane hears footsteps, but the cacophony from the screens makes it impossible for her to place where they're coming from.

ALICE (O.S.)
Join us, Jane.

JANE

You can't take all the money in the world and just redistribute it willy-nilly. That's playing God. It's wrong.

Jane hears Alice's footsteps and follows them to a column.

Suddenly, all the monitors show surveillance footage of Jane from different angles. It's like a twenty first-century hall of mirrors.

ALICE (O.S.)

The world is broken, and this is how we fix it. It's the only way forward.

(then)

I'd like for us to work together, Jane.

The words hang. A threat unspoken.

JANE

You've been gone for twenty years of my life. Twenty years. How could you lie to me this whole time?

ALICE (O.S.)

It was for your own protection. The less you knew, the better.

Her voice is louder. Her footsteps, closer.

ALICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I did all this for you, Jane.

(then)

I did this because I love you.

JANE

You sure have a shitty way of showing it.

The footsteps stop.

HOLDING A GUN, ALICE STEPS OUT FROM A COLUMN BEHIND JANE.

Jane puts her hands up.

ALICE

I'm giving you a choice.

JANE

Really? Doesn't look like it.

ALICE
You can join us.

Alice cocks the gun.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Or you can not.

Jane's eyes brim with tears. Betrayal, confusion, rage all course like blood through her veins.

JANE
You're not who I thought you were.

Jane looks down. Steels herself. Then LUNGES towards Alice.

It's a battle both are reluctant to fight. There are more parries and deflections than actual blows.

Alice shoots. Jane ducks. Alice swings. Jane dodges.

Eventually, they find themselves with Jane's hands locked on Alice's arms.

Alice is surprisingly strong, but Jane is stronger. Jane SCREAMS, then--

TWISTS Alice's arm behind her and wrests control of the gun.

JANE (CONT'D)
I've spent my entire life trying to live up to you. But this whole time -- I was chasing a ghost.

ALICE
Maybe it's better if that ghost lives and this one dies.

Jane closes her eyes. The room's walls start shaking. A distant rumble crescendos.

JANE'S POV:

We ZOOM OUT to see a superimposed map of the base in relation to the rest of Beijing. There's a hidden tunnel to the subway.

JANE
My ride's here.
(off Alice's look)
We were in Dalian, so the closest city with a Cicada base is Beijing.
(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)

There's an underground tunnel that connects it to the Orange Line on the metro.

ALICE

Impressive.

Jane tears off a piece of cloth from her sleeve and ties it around Alice's wrists.

Still in Jane's POV, we superimpose digital manifestations of what she describes:

JANE

But you expected that, didn't you? I bet you have five guards stationed at the end of the tunnel. Am I right? Based on the look on your face, I'd say I'm probably right. So I did a little digging, pun semi-intended, and I found where Cicada keeps a reserve of cars. I can understand why it's not on the map. It's quite the collection. Anyways, the point is: I think I'd rather take a car.

ALICE

(speaking a little frantically)
Jane, you really don't--

JANE

I really do.

END POV.

Jane tears off another piece of cloth and wraps it around Alice's mouth.

JANE (CONT'D)

You might want to clean up a bit. Interpol, the DOJ, the NSA, the CIA, and even the local Chinese police are all going to want a piece of you. I'll make sure they're all notified.

Alice makes frantic muffled noises from behind the cloth.

Jane walks towards the end of the room. Takes out her pen. Clicks it.

The back wall, made of glass, SHATTERS INTO A BILLION PIECES. IT'S A HAILSTORM OF BLACK SHARDS.

Jane steps through it to the other side, where a fleet of cars await.

She looks back at Alice.

JANE (CONT'D)
Lesson one: expect the unexpected.
(then)
Goodbye, mom.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHINESE STREET - DAY

A familiar Bugatti Veyron EXPLODES out of an underground garage. It HAIRPIN TURNS around a corner onto a street specked with motorbikes and early commuters.

JANE'S POV:

The road ahead, SUPERIMPOSED WITH A PRECISE TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP OF THE CITY. Jane hones in on the most efficient route out.

JANE
(thinking aloud)
It's early, but it's a Monday.
School day. Surface streets'll be
crammed with kids, parents.

INSERT OF: Parents herding children across crosswalks.

Jane hears a SCREECHING of tires as an armored van PEELS out of the garage and barrels towards her.

JANE (CONT'D)
(thinking aloud)
Can't go to the Embassy. They're in
the government's pocket. Cicada'll
blackmail them.

INSERT OF: A morass of military infantry surrounds the American Embassy.

END POV.

Jane BLOWS through a red light.

The armored van is not so lucky. It SLAMS into a passing sedan.

JANE (CONT'D)
 (thinking aloud)
 If I can get to the airport...

Jane guns down the street. Spying an opening, she WHIPS the car into a tiny alley. Vendors of a night market closing up for the day SCREAM and JUMP out of Jane's way. An EXPLOSION of woks, tarps, and skewers rain down on her windshield.

In the chaos, Jane looks in her rearview mirror: the van is nowhere in sight.

Suddenly, it SCREECHES OUT OF A HIDDEN ENTRANCE IN FRONT OF HER. A MAN IN A BLACK SKI MASK leans out of the passenger window with an assault rifle trained on Jane.

Jane THROWS her car in reverse, sending vendors leaping out of the way again. She PINWHEELS sharply onto the perpendicular street and pops the car into drive.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHINESE HIGHWAY - DAY

Back to our opening scene.

Jane's on the highway.

She swings a hard left, millimeters from a 16-wheeler.

In her rearview mirror, Jane sees the armored van in pursuit.

Jane turns to her right and sees the armored van now neck-to-neck with her. The AR-15 comes out.

Jane slows down, then lunges right, cutting through three lanes of traffic.

The armored van follows. Then maneuvers onto the shoulder to Jane's right.

The harpoon blasts into Jane's car.

Jane looks over.

JANE (V.O.)
 I wasn't getting out of this alive.

JANE'S POV:

We see a superimposed decision tree on the windshield:

-Get to the Embassy

- Get to Hong Kong
- Get to the airport
- Give yourself up

One by one, Jane mentally crosses out each option on the list until she arrives at the last one:

- Take them out

END POV.

She braces herself.

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But neither were they.

Resolved, she CUTS THE WHEEL TO THE RIGHT. Her car SLAMS into the van, then somersaults in slow-motion through the air.

The Bugatti careens wildly down towards a roiling river. The van tumbles around it, their fates still tethered.

WHAM!

Shockwaves RIPPLE through Jane's car as it SLAMS into the river. When it hits, there's a DEAFENING SILENCE. We now hear nothing.

As brackish brown water BURSTS in through the holes punched into the car's body, Jane sees a swarm of shadowy figures swim towards her.

The water gushes in. It churns. Rises.

As the shadowy figures get closer, Jane realizes that they're SCUBA DIVERS. One of them uses an oxygen tank to hit Jane's driver-seat window.

There's only a pocket of air left. Jane claws at the glass. Takes one last gasp before--

She's completely submerged now. Looks around desperately.

CRACK! The window spiders.

Jane pounds her fists against the glass. Her vision starts to fade. It's dark. Darker. Then--

The cracks BURST INTO SHARDS AS THE SCUBA DIVER PUSHES THROUGH.

The diver slips an oxygen mask around Jane's mouth as we...

CUT TO BLACK

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Or so I thought.

INT. UNKNOWN WHITE CHAMBER - LATER

Jane's vision swims as she comes to. It's all a blur of shadowy figures and fluorescent hospital lights.

She hears the strident beeping of a heart monitor. The shadowy figures disappear.

Straining her eyes, she finds herself hooked up to a tangle of IVs on a hospital bed.

A NURSE (50s) comes in to administer a shot. Jane doesn't feel anything.

JANE
What's going on? Where am I?

The nurse looks at her but says nothing. She touches Jane's forehead just as Jane's vision begins to melt into more black.

INT. UNKNOWN WHITE CHAMBER - LATER

Jane wakes up again, her head throbbing.

She strains her eyes. Manages to make out...

JANE
(still groggy)
Dad?

Bruce sits next to Jane's bed. He takes her hand.

JANE (CONT'D)
What's going on...? Is this a dream?

She looks down at her arm. A thin, transparent tube still pumps her veins with saline and narcotics.

BRUCE
Hi sweetheart.

There are male and female voices in the doorway. Jane makes out three figures.

JANE

Dad, who is that? What's going on?

The voices stop.

One of the figures moves closer. IT'S ADAM.

ADAM

Welcome to the other side.

Jane shakes her head.

JANE

You're dead. I saw you die.

Another figure steps forward. IT'S FRANÇOIS.

JANE (CONT'D)

You should also be dead.

FRANÇOIS

It would appear.

JANE

Does anyone here not speak riddle?
Am I in purgatory?

FRANÇOIS

Physically, you are as alive as
ever.

ADAM

Well, except for the two minutes
when you were medically dead.

JANE

What the hell is going on!?

The final figure walks into the room. Stepping into the
light, we see that IT'S GEMMA.

GEMMA

Hi Jane.

JANE

Gemma.

ADAM

To reiterate François's point, none
of us are dead, Jane. We are all
very much alive and well. As are
you.

JANE

Then what in the actual fuck is going on!?

François smiles.

FRANÇOIS

You've been initiated. Reborn.

ADAM

Cicada never had any intention of following through with the Zero plan. In fact, Zero never existed at all.

Jane takes a deep breath and closes her eyes. *What the fuck!?*

GEMMA

We needed to see every fold and curve of your brain. Every nucleic acid that constitutes who you are and what makes you tick.

FRANÇOIS

The code you live by.

Jane is apoplectic.

JANE

So this was all a test of what? Character?

GEMMA

It was more than that.

JANE

This is crazy. You're all crazy. How you could even *think* to do this to someone is fucking criminal.

Gemma, Adam, and François all soften, sympathetic.

ADAM

We had no choice. This was your training.

JANE

Training for what?

ADAM

That's a question for Cicada's #1.

There's a knock on the door.

Alice walks in.

ALICE

Hello Jane.

Jane says nothing. She looks practically catatonic.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I didn't want to leave, Jane.
Please believe me. I'm wanted by
some very bad people. But I knew
that if they thought I was dead,
they'd stop looking. It's killed me
every day since I left, but I did
it to protect you and your father.

Her voice is desperate. Pleading. *This is the real Alice.*

Jane looks at her. Then Bruce. Then turns away.

BRUCE

She left because she loves you,
Jane.

ALICE

I've thought about you every second
of every day since I've been gone.
Your father sent me photos, videos,
anything he could.

Jane looks at her mother. Then her father. She's angry.
Conflicted. Betrayed.

JANE

My whole life, you were both lying
to me.

ALICE

I'm sorry, Jane.

BRUCE

This was the only way to keep you
safe.

A long beat.

JANE

Who was looking for you?

ALICE

A group called The Order.

JANE

So what was all this?

ALICE

This was to get you ready to face them. If you thought this was bad--

JANE

Why couldn't you have just told me?

Her eyes are wet. Her voice is raw.

ALICE

Think about the day I left. What I told you that morning. Then think about everything that's happened since you joined Cicada.

We see FLASHBACKS OF ALL THESE MOMENTS FROM EARLIER SCENES:

INT. APARTMENT - BOSTON - FLASHBACK

Alice kneels next to a six-year-old Jane.

ALICE

Magicians distract you from the truth. They direct your attention to where they want your attention to be.

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - VESTIBULE - FLASHBACK

The black-and-white animation:

WOMAN (V.O.)

Eventually, he reached the daylight of the outside world, and he was stunned. As his eyes adjusted, he began to see the world. The birds, the trees, the sun, the skies. He had at last seen the real truth.

INT. PARIS CICADA HQ - SANCTUM - FLASHBACK

Jane stands next to Adam.

ADAM

The free will you think you have... it's Zero's greatest feat to date: making you feel like you're in control of your world when in fact it's all a construct. The world's greatest illusion.

INT. THE CASTLE HOTEL - FRANÇOIS'S SUITE - FLASHBACK

The tattoo on François's wrist: a cicada.

CUT TO:

INT. UNKNOWN WHITE CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Jane looks up at Alice.

JANE

"Sometimes one must die in order to live."

ALICE

You had the ruby slippers all along, Jane.

Alice reaches out, placing her hand on Jane's. Jane instinctively flinches. Takes a breath. Then allows it. It's a brave new world.

JANE

What now?

ALICE

Now, we go to war.

Gemma holds up a photo of the Man in the Pig Mask, now five years older.

GEMMA

The Order is a secret society that has shaped and controlled human history since World War I. This man has just been inducted into their ranks.

ADAM

The Order is like our fictional "Zero" but far more insidious. They have agents everywhere. In every government agency, legislative body, and executive branch in the world.

FRANÇOIS

They've infiltrated the private sector as well. The boards of every Fortune 500 company -- they've all been compromised.

(MORE)

FRANÇOIS (CONT'D)

Their collective power and access to capital grants them the latitude to shape the world to their whims.

GEMMA

Because of the nature of their organization, it's been impossible for us to even land a blow. Until now.

Jane takes this all in. She's quiet. It's a lot of data.

Alice notices. Leans in.

ALICE

It's a lot to process, I know. We can pick this up later. But first...

A beat.

ALICE (CONT'D)

It's been almost twenty years, Jane. Twenty years of one long story we were telling you.

Jane looks up.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Now, we want to hear yours.

Jane looks around at everyone. François. Adam. Gemma. Her father. Her mother. She takes a deep breath. Thinks. Then, smiling to herself, she kicks off the opening narration.

But as she recounts her story to them, what we hear is a slightly different version:

JANE (V.O.)

People like to think they're the heroes of their own stories. It took me a long time to be the hero of mine. But here's the thing about heroes...

We ZOOM OUT to reveal a massive, underground compound. There are munitions testing facilities, an Olympic-sized training room, sleeping quarters, a server farm... this is much more vast than anything we've seen.

We also see that the compound spreads under the entirety of Beijing.

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Every time they think they've saved
the world, they've got to do it
again.

The screen now flicks into GREEN SCALE SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE
OF EACH ROOM IN THE ENTIRE COMPOUND.

SOMEBODY IS STILL WATCHING.

SMASH TO CREDITS