

**PAIN ANGEL**

by

Lin Robinson

Music and lyrics by Lin Robinson

Registered WGAw

FADE IN:

EXT. CESAR CHAVEZ PARK - DAY

Once the jewel of Barrio Lobo, the park now looks sad and deserted: playground broken down, grass in retreat, the Mexican Pride murals covered in gang tags, the sign barely legible. Houses fronting the park show no activity, *bodegas* are boarded up. The place has the look of a ghost town.

NOVENA ROSAS, who would be a very pretty young Chicana cop if she weren't so muscular, starched, and forbidding, stands by a curbside police car writing on a clipboard.

She takes down info from MAX FLETCHER, a clean-cut, athletic anglo in his early thirties. He wears wide "Elvis" glasses and is missing a joint on his left index finger.

ROSAS

You realize that signing the complaint makes your name and address public, Mr. Fletcher?

FLETCHER

No. Is that why nobody complained? Well, I like to do my duty.

ROSAS

What I'm saying is that anybody can access it, including the people you're complaining about.

FLETCHER

Well, that's fair. If it goes to court they'd know, right? We have to clean up that park, and I guess it starts with me.

He's affable and admirable. Rosas regards him a minute, drumming her fingers on the clipboard.

ROSAS

Let me put it this way. The *cholos* you're reporting are a pretty tough gang called La Neta. They're the reason the park is what it is.

FLETCHER

That's pretty much what I thought.

Rosas gives Fletcher an exasperated look, glances meaningfully at the driver of the squad car.

SERGEANT CAMERON COLE, a rangy California beach jock pushing forty, slips out of the car and walks over, sizing Fletcher up. He extends his hand for a shake.

COLE

Hi. Cameron Cole, Duty Sergeant.

FLETCHER

Max Fletcher. Nice to meet you.

COLE

Did Officer Rosas inform you...

ROSAS

(Nodding)

...that they can find out who you are and where you are and come mess you up. It's what they do.

FLETCHER

Sounds illegal.

(Pause, then a smile)

I'm sure I'll be all right, Officer Rosas. You can protect me, right?

ROSAS

Okay then, let me put it this way. Why are you doing this?

FLETCHER

I rent rooms across the street. That park is a disgrace. Girls aren't safe there, kids are buying drugs, children can't play there. And it's ruining property values.

ROSAS

Property prices aren't our concern. We try to keep people from getting hurt or killed. See what I mean, Mr. Fletcher?

COLE

It's brave of you to do this, but I'd like to talk you out of it.

FLETCHER

I always do my duty. I've got medals for it.

COLE

Sounds like I'm not going to talk you out of it.

Fletcher shakes his head, the aw-shucks demeanor slipping for the first time, revealing steel below.

FLETCHER

Well, if anything looks suspicious, I'll call 911.

Now Cole gives him a long once-over, then shrugs.

ROSAS

Barrio Lobo is pretty isolated.  
Our precinct has one car and it's a  
long way to the next cops. So  
calling 911 won't always save you.

COLE

So don't call 911, call us. Cell  
phone. Officer Rosas?

She already has a business card in her hand and passes it to Fletcher. He examines it, pockets it, smiles at them.

FLETCHER

Thanks. You make me feel better  
already.

ROSAS

Just please be very careful Mr.  
Fletcher. These aren't kids,  
they're dangerous criminals.

FLETCHER

I'll keep a low profile. Thanks.

He heads across the street and into an older house.

ROSAS

*Pendejo metiche.*

COLE

Come on Nova, he's a concerned  
citizen. Brave one, too.

ROSAS

Easy to be brave when you're too  
*pendejo* to get the message. We'll  
end up cleaning him up.

COLE

Well, we were hoping somebody would  
file about that park. Let's baby-  
sit him a little.

ROSAS

If you say so.

EXT. CHAVEZ PARK HANDBALL COURTS- DAY

A small group of tattooed La Neta "*cholos*" hang out, smoking and playing languid handball. They include two who'll show up later: SHYBOY, a slim, shifty-looking dropout, and HOODLUM, a brash, stocky bully.

A police cruiser pulls up beside two "lowrider" cars parked on the grass. The gangbangers ignore it.

Cole gets out of the side of the patrol car closest to the *cholos*, Rosas slides out the other side and stands behind the engine compartment, obviously combat-ready.

Cole puts on his hat, grips a clipboard, walks over as the bangers pretend to have just noticed him.

SHYBOY

*Trucha!* It's the *migra, ese!*

HOODLUM

Hey, we don't got green cards.  
Cause we ain't "green gos".

COLE

So why park on the green belt?  
Illegal parking, disturbing the  
peace, sales of narcotics and beer  
to minors, littering. Did I forget  
anything?

SHYBOY

I think you did, Cole-slaw. Like a  
witness?

WASTED CHOLO

*Huachate*, homes. It's an ambush.  
He brought Kevlar Tits Rosas with  
him. And she shoots to kill.

Sure enough, Rosas has moved in behind them, stands in a covering position, rock solid and stone-faced.

ROSAS

What you shoot will kill you  
anyway, *bicho*.

COLE

We have a signed complaint. I'm  
issuing you summons to appear. The  
summons names anybody with La Neta  
tattoo or car insignia.

SHYBOY

Somebody filed on us? You sure?

WASTED CHOLO

Peeps in this 'hood that stupid?

Cole starts to respond, but sees Rosas' incredulous look across the street, where Fletcher is standing on his front porch. He smiles and raises both thumbs to the cops.

HOODLUM

I might see somebody that stupid,  
*ese*.

ROSAS

I told you he was a *pendejo*.

COLE

When you're right, you're right.  
Let's keep a close eye on that  
idiot.

EXT. CESAR CHAVEZ PARK - NIGHT

The park is deserted except for Fletcher, smoking a nightcap  
cigarette on a bench under a tree.

A police cruiser ghosts by, Rosas at the wheel.

Fletcher stands, grinds out his butt, and heads across the  
street to his porch. As the cruiser rounds the corner, he  
blows a kiss in the direction of Rosas and enters the house.  
A light goes on in a curtained bedroom.

INT. LA NETA LOWRIDER - NIGHT

Four shaved heads rise in a car parked down the block. These  
La Neta *cholos* are bigger, older and meaner than the park  
dealers. Except for fourteen year-old CHUCHO, not yet  
jumped in and hot to make bones. PAYASO, their seasoned  
leader, drives, KOLO sits shotgun, SNEEKY in the back.

KOLO

We just go in and do him, *mano*?

PAYASO

*Chale*, Kolo. There's old people in  
that house, *ese*. With phones, you  
know.

SNEEKY

That's black Camaro back there is  
his. We could trip the alarm.

PAYASO

That fucking Rosas would be back  
with a radio and a bazooka.

CHUCHO

Let me go in, Payaso. See if I can  
get him to come out.

PAYASO

No way, *chavito*. You're here to  
hold guns if we need it. *Nada mas*.

CHUCHO

You need guns? It's one guy.

KOLO

You never know. That's why you'll be holding them. It could be a trap, you ever think about that?

CHUCHO

I just want to help.

PAYASO

Then shut up.

SNEEKY

*Mira!* He's coming out to play.

Sure enough, Fletcher is on the porch locking up. He has put on a light jacket and heads out for a walk, striding purposefully down the street away from the car.

KOLO

Let's play something educational, homies.

EXT. PROVERBIAL DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

Fletcher's saunter down the alley to a rancho bar is cut off by the lowrider, skulking in without lights to deploy three education-minded gangbangers.

They stride up to Fletcher immediately. Behind them Chuchó gets clear of the car and watches, hands under his hoodie.

PAYASO

You shouldn't cross us, *gabacho*. Especially not to the cops.

FLETCHER

You guys should be ashamed of yourselves. Can't you set a better example to the kid?

PAYASO

I'm just telling you why this happened, asshole.

He motions to Sneeky and Kolo, who move to Fletcher's flanks as the powerful Payaso stalks in. Fletcher stands relaxed with a slightly puzzled expression on his face.

The henchmen jump to grab Fletcher's arms, but he's gone. Stepping forward, he almost lazily kicks Payaso's kneecap out of position. The big man screams and goes down.

Fletcher whirls, striking Kolo on the side of the throat and driving him down towards the feet of the charging Sneaky, who stumbles forward. Fletcher kicks him in the face so hard he flips over backwards and lies still.

Kolo is up to his knees, not at all a good place to be. Fletcher spins 360, his foot catching him on the neck, flattening him.

Payaso fights through the pain of his ruined knee to regain his feet. He shambles towards Fletcher, all guts and no hope. Fletcher applauds silently, nodding his head, then takes a step towards ending it.

Chucho appears from nowhere, sprinting into the fight.

CHUCHO

Payaso! *Cachalo!*

He bolts past Fletcher, tossing a pistol to Payaso, who manages to catch it without falling, racks the slide.

Fletcher's arm flashes out, catching Chucho's forearm on the upswing and jerking him off his feet.

He pulls Chucho to him, does some footwork. There is a loud snap as the kid's arm breaks, a piercing scream.

He fires Chucho into Payaso, knocking him down again, then steps to the screaming, grunting sprawl of bodies. As Payaso lifts his head to see what's happening, it happens: Fletcher's foot flattens his nose, recoils, slams into his temple for a knockout.

Chucho still howls in pain, so Fletcher grabs him by the nape, lifts his head to punch him unconscious.

FLETCHER

Only humane thing to do.

He stands still, listening, then grabs the legs of two cholos and drags them towards the car.

EXT. THE M 13 BAR - NIGHT

The rancho bar's door is blocked. By a crumpled lowrider car parked in it with four flat tires. The scene is lit by the familiar red and blue strobes, Rosas looking into the trunk of the lowrider, holding a revolver and a radio.

ROSAS

(Speaks to radio)

I have no idea, just telling you.  
Can you get me that aid unit?

(Pause)

I got three adult Hispanic males,  
severely injured, bleeding,  
breathing. Hispanic juvenile male  
with severely fractured right arm.

(Pause)

Because I can see the ends of the  
bones, okay?

She holsters the radio and revolver, stares into the trunk.

ROSAS

What happened here, *idiotas*?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Chucho lies limp in one of four beds in a tacky room, his  
arm in traction and his face a map of hurt and shame.

Standing by the bed are POKER, the battle-scarred La Neta  
leader, and INDIO, Chucho's brother. Both men are obvious  
drive-by warriors and as down with the 'hood as it gets.

INDIO

No, you stepped up good, *carnalito*.  
You got a gun to Payaso, even  
though.. well look at you. Purple  
heart, *pues*.

CHUCHO

I was nowhere, bro. He took me down  
like a little kid. He was  
something else. Barely moved, but  
kicked shit, bro. *Barbaro*.

POKER

He took out Kolo and Payaso, too.  
Some tough *matones*. You're in all  
the way, kid. Not just Indio's  
brother, you're *pura* Neta now.

INDIO

And my brother. You did good.

POKER

So what happened to the guns?

CHUCHO

I don't know, Poker. I was...

POKER

I know, I know. *Calmate*. We got  
plenty more guns.

INDIO

And he's going to find out about  
that. *Pronto*.

COLE (O.S.)  
 Sounds like something we should  
 talk about.

The Netas look to the open door, which frames Cole and Rosas. Cole has a clipboard, Rosas a pile of comic books.

POKER  
 I got nothing to say to you.

ROSAS  
 Let guns say it for you, right?  
 Get more kids shot up?

INDIO  
 Look who's talking, Anita Oakley.

COLE  
 I get a bad feeling about this.  
 Let's go to the station, talk about  
 it.

POKER  
 You arresting me'n'shit, Cabbage?

Poker and Indio are taking belligerent postures, the situation getting tense.

Rosas breaks the tension by moving to the bed, laying the comics books beside Chucho, smiling at him.

ROSAS  
 How you doing, *chivato*?

CHUCHO  
 (Sullen)  
 I'm okay.

Rosas turns to the older gangsters, determinedly calm.

ROSAS  
 I think the more we talk, the  
 better for the barrio, huh? Why  
 don't we get together tomorrow? In  
 Victor's office. He'll check your  
 rights and stuff. We just don't  
 want anymore people hurt.

Poker and Indio scowl and posture, but give stony nods.

COLE  
 Meanwhile, could we talk to your  
 brother a minute? While he's still  
 alive.

ROSAS  
 No thanks to you two.

Indio and Poker exit. Cole gives Rosas the eye.

COLE

I could use some coffee. How about  
a soda, Chucho?

Rosas nods, Chucho gives Cole a toughguy glare. Cole exits.

INT. HOSPITAL SNACK BAR - DAY

Cole waits for a cup to fill with coffee from a vending  
machine, holding a tray with soda can and another coffee.

ALICIA (O.S.)

So there are worse things than  
Starbucks, after all.

Cole turns to see ALICIA CHILDERS, attractive in her late  
thirties, wearing a conservative business suit and holding a  
slim leather attache case. She poses for him slightly.

ALICIA

Hi, Cam. Do you know where they  
put Paez? Kid with a broken arm?

COLE

Four eighteen. Just talked to him.  
And his cholo-ass bros.

ALICIA

I'll go up and waste my time, too.

COLE

You sound better, look better.

ALICIA

Than when, back when I was worse?

COLE

Been staying out of jail?

ALICIA

(Smiles wryly)

Lately, yeah. So see? That's an  
improvement, right there.

COLE

And here we are, serving the same  
community.

ALICIA

Protect and serve isn't quite the  
same as "community service".

COLE

I'd love to hear you explain the difference. Maybe over dinner, glass of wine. Chardonnay, right?

ALICIA

I won't say it wasn't fun being one of your women. Within my limitations.

COLE

When you were around, you were the whole show.

ALICIA

If you say so. But for how long?

COLE

Maybe we should find out?

ALICIA

Recycle projects never work out.

COLE

I don't think of you like that.

ALICIA

I meant you.

She turns, does a femme fatale exit from the snack room. But she's smiling. Until she almost bumps into Rosas, who was just outside the door and gives her a highpower glare.

ROSAS

You dump a great guy like him twice? What are you, stupid?

ALICIA

And just who the hell are you?

ROSAS

Novena Rosas, Cole's partner. I know about you. Some social worker. You should get a clue.

Alicia draws herself up, gives Rosas a long look. She glances at Cole, standing there nonplussed with his tray.

ALICIA

You're right: I should. I probably have been stupid.

She stalks off, heels clicking, as Rosas and Cole eye each other uneasily.

EXT. BARRIO ALLEY - NIGHT

Alicia is working late, walking absent-mindedly through an alley while stuffing a manila folder into her case. She snaps the case closed, produces a keychain and clicks it. Her car, an expensive BMW defaced by layers of gang graffiti, chirps a welcome.

She jumps, startled by the appearance of JONES, a nicely dressed but tough-looking customer with an air of jock gone bad. He smiles reassuringly.

JONES

Do you know where's 746 Javalies?

ALICIA

The next street over. Seven hundreds would be down that way.

JONES

Thanks. But you know what? I think you'll do.

Nervous, Alicia tries to pass him with wide berth, but he quickly sidles in front of her.

JONES

You know, "do" as in "do it".

Alicia turns to run, but Jones is on her before she gets turned, grabs her arm and uses her motion to effortlessly twist it behind her, bringing her up on her toes.

Spinning, he unwinds her against a fence. Stunned, she shrinks against it, but Jones pushes up to her, giving it some pelvic action. He grabs her blouse and tears it open.

JONES

Oh, yeah. These'll so do.

He grabs and nuzzles as Alicia struggles feebly. He runs her hand up under her skirt.

JONES

What else we got here? Nice and damp for daddy?

Alicia yelps as he jerks his hand out from her skirt, holding ripped peach panties. He passes them under his nose, inhaling theatrically.

JONES

Victoria's Secret. That demure, but somehow challenging, bouquet.

Alicia remembers to scream, but before she can do it, Jones pops the panties in her mouth, covers them with his palm.

JONES

You can scream later, when it counts, honey. I'm not ready to take you public yet.

He turns her, pushes her towards a dumpster enclosure, Alicia moaning muffled pleas through hand and underwear.

Jones' face is avid in the dim streetlight. But a hand slams down out of the night, slapping him on the head and clutching his hair. A hand missing the tip of a finger.

Jones jerks backward, leaving Alicia disheveled, panicked, and spitting out lingerie. Fletcher twists his head, tossing him to the ground. Jones rolls to his knees, catches a kick in the stomach.

Alicia runs to her car, clawing at the door, then her pockets. No keys. Frantic, she turns to spot them on the pavement. Over where Fletcher is kicking the living shit out of Jones.

Her back pressed against the car, Alicia watches transfixed as the fight continues in the dim shadows. After absorbing incredible punishment, Jones decamps, limping down the alley leaning on fences.

Fletcher turns, his shirt in tatters. He sees her, retrieves her case, replaces the folders. He scoops up her keys and walks over towards her, his face very concerned.

Alicia cringes back as Fletcher approaches.

FLETCHER

Are you all right?

Alicia nods dumbly.

FLETCHER

Are you sure? A woman attacked like that is traumatized, and can overlook damage. Or go into shock.

In fact, she is a little unsteady on her feet. Fletcher takes her elbow, but she snatches it away.

FLETCHER

Sorry. I know you're afraid. I didn't want you to fall over.

He reaches past her, unlocks the rear door of the BMW.

FLETCHER

Can I suggest that you lay down awhile? Raise your knees? Button up, keep warm.

Alicia looks down at her exposed breasts, tugs her blouse together. Shakily, she sits down on the back seat, feet on the street.

ALICIA

Whoa, I am a little out of it, here. Thank you so much. You were wonderful. I'm Alicia Childers.

FLETCHER

Max Fletcher. Look, lock yourself in, lay down, lift your knees. Here's your stuff.

He places the case and keys on the front seat.

FLETCHER

But listen, you have to be more careful in this barrio, okay? You're a good-looking woman, you need to take precautions.

He's playing her tunes. She relaxes a little, but the adrenaline is still working. She leans back on her hands.

FLETCHER

Here. May I?

ALICIA

Well, I guess I can trust you to look after me. After all...

Fletcher smiles helps her scoot onto the seat. She leans against the seat back, looking at him.

ALICIA

A knight to the rescue. Wow.

FLETCHER

Anything for a fair lady.

ALICIA

Come here a minute. You've got a thank you kiss coming.

Fletcher leans into the car and Alicia gives him a ladylike kiss. He remains in the position, lowers to his knees on the rocker panel. She takes in his sexy musculature and handsome face. Recovering from her fear, she's impressed.

FLETCHER

Would you feel better if I escorted you home?

ALICIA

I think probably so.

EXT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Cole edges the patrol car along the side street of the park, lights off. He studies Fletcher's house, where a light is on in the front room. He sits, mulling over.

The car radio emits muted crackles. He picks up the mike.

COLE

Yo, Rosas. Working late?

(Listens to crackle)

Not really. Just a hunch drive-by.

(Pause)

You guessed it. Something just smells wrong about that guy.

The radio crackles in reply, but Cole has lost interest. He sits, mike to his mouth, flabbergasted, as Alicia's BMW speeds around the far corner and skids to a stop in front of Fletcher's house.

Fletcher steps out of the car, laughing as Alicia tries to pull him back inside. He bends down to speak to her and she lunges, throws an arm around his neck, gives him a sizzling, explicit kiss.

He paws her perfunctorily, fights free and heads up the steps to his porch, where he turns to wave to her.

Alicia waves out the driver's window, blasts out.

Fletcher keeps waving, but suddenly shifts the direction of his gaze, directly through the trees to Cole in the squad car. He laughs, enters the house.

Rosas cracklepop on the radio is more urgent. Cole breaks his stunned stare, keys down the mike.

COLE

Over. Out. And like that.

INT. EL CENTRO DEL BARRIO - VICTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

VICTOR MONCALDO, an elegant thirty-something Chicano in a suit sits under the law degrees behind his desk, calmly presiding over a sitdown between Cole, who leans forward aggressively in his chair, and Poker, who abides it with a ticking-bomb aplomb.

VICTOR

That question is out of line here, Sergeant. Mr. Cabrales came in to help you investigate a matter of mutual concern. Not rat people out.

COLE

Yeah, you're right. Look, Poker, let's just stick to who the hell this guy is and what he's up to.

POKER

Ain't no ordinary *vato*, *sabes*? Some kind of ninja. Somebody's fucking with us, trying to roll us up.

COLE

Roll up what? Who the hell would want your shot-out turf?

Offended, Poker stands to leave, but drops a parting shot.

POKER

*Eso, wey.* Who?

He exits. Cole looks at Victor and shrugs. Victor returns the shrug, shakes hands with Cole, who exits. Victor looks very thoughtful, turns to his computer and gets to work.

INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Victor sits facing his monitor; Alicia perches on his desk.

VICTOR

The point is, they feel like they're under attack.

ALICIA

So they get a license to kill because they feel vulnerable?

VICTOR

You're sure changing your tone. What happened to La Neta as community soldiers driven to organize by evil black and white racist gangs and police states?

ALICIA

It's come to my attention that they are vicious little shits dealing drugs to kids and seizing the park by threats of mayhem.

VICTOR

Really. I wish I could grab your attention like that.

She shoots him a look, then relaxes.

ALICIA

You come to my attention every time I blunder into reach of you.

VICTOR

Well, you have to admit you're pretty tempting.

ALICIA

So I've seen. Not my favorite self-concept. But can we stray off your favorite topic for awhile?

VICTOR

If you insist, can I refuse you? You know Poker, head of La Neta?

ALICIA

Not to speak to.

VICTOR

Something he said got me thinking. So I did a little research, asked some questions downtown.

ALICIA

You and Poker share interests?

VICTOR

Yes, he also finds you attractive. But what I'm talking about is just as hard to pin down.

He spins the monitor so she can see it, too.

ALICIA

What is that, plats? Zoning?

VICTOR

It's Barrio Lobo. The area around the park. The blue shading is properties that have been sold or optioned in the last two years.

ALICIA

Wow. Is there a politically correct Chicano equivalent term for "white flight"?

VICTOR

There's a term I'm grasping for. See, you weren't around two years ago, but that's when La Neta got out of hand.

ALICIA

Previously they confined themselves to helping old ladies cross the street?

VICTOR

No, they were the illiterate savages you have decided they are. But they weren't as numerous, as belligerent, or as visible.

He taps the screen with his pen.

VICTOR

About six months before all this realty activity they got heavily armed, took over the whole border drug market, and staked out the park as their private rumpus room.

ALICIA

And you make something of that.

VICTOR

That's what I'm grasping for.

EXT. BARRIO ALLEY - DAY

Fletcher, nonchalant, strolls a Barrio backstreet. Behind a fence Chucho, hampered by his full-arm cast, skulks along, trailing him. He's chosen to bide his time, but obviously has a major hatred worked up.

Fletcher turns the corner, then steps back to survey the block. He looks around, smiles slightly.

Chucho freezes to the fence until Fletcher walks on.

INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Alicia is in Victor's chair, staring at his monitor. He leans against a case of legal books, eyeing her.

ALICIA

You can't connect those titles and the gang activities.

VICTOR

Why would we? We just oppose the take-over of the properties. It's obviously a gentrification scheme.

ALICIA

Weren't you telling me there's nothing wrong with gentrifying? It converts decay to productive, constructive occupancy?

VICTOR

You do pay attention. I'm so flattered. But this isn't your normal gentry. Those homes were well kept, working class.

ALICIA

It's like extortion. Stampede.

VICTOR

That was the term I was grasping for. Thanks. It's fairly evil, actually. So, we oppose it.

ALICIA

Now that we can agree on. Organize, mobilize, publicize.

VICTOR

All those commie techniques you picked up at Berkeley. And... a little dose of realpolitick.

ALICIA

What's more real than grass roots actions for people's homes?

VICTOR

Backstage manipulations. You're so quaint, Alicia. Look, I talked with people I know downtown, some people in the party.

ALICIA

Uh, oh.

VICTOR

They're tossing together a quickie proposal to declare the park and adjacent streets a historic area, cultural monument, whatever.

ALICIA

And every Hispanic politico will jump on it like a horny mutt.

VICTOR

Viva la smoke-filled rooms.

ALICIA

So you know people more powerful than real estate assholes? Wow.

VICTOR

Worst case, it'll delay motions and hearings. Maybe even mandate the dreaded "studies".

ALICIA

Giving us time to look into this more. Mobilize the community.

VICTOR

And maybe by then things will escalate and get some media attention.

ALICIA

Yes, let's all pray for a massacre.

VICTOR

Pestilence or famine would do, too.

EXT. EL CENTRO DEL BARRIO PARKING LOT - DAY

The exterior of El Centro is a drab, defeated-looking storefront plastered with papers. Barrio locals mill on the sidewalk outside, pass through the doors with kids and shopping bags.

Alicia edges through the ragged clients and heads for her car. She stops when she sees Cole standing on the other side of it, apparently perusing its spraypaint scribbles.

She regards him with neutral expression, one toe tapping.

COLE

Hard to say which is harder to read, the graffiti or your collection of bleeding heart bumper stickers.

And the rear end of the BMW is definitely a maze of Tibet, Anti-Bush, and other leftie stickers.

ALICIA

Better they read my bumpers than gab on cell phones.

COLE

I particularly noticed this one.

He beckons her to the rear of the car, points out a faded sticker reading: "I RECYCLE".

COLE

Now who should I believe, you or your bumper?

ALICIA

Oh I think I am fairly believable.

Cole turns to her, smiling but earnest.

COLE

You know, a lot of guys would have taken your last comments to me as well, actually, a brush-off.

ALICIA

A lot of guys are perceptive.

COLE

But I know you a little bit. And I sort of see you looking around for something. In the wrong places. When what you really want is somebody you respect, who understands you. Likes you, even.

ALICIA

And you're my only hope for finding that, correct?

COLE

I just like hanging out with you, talking about, you know, life in the jungle. Your bullshit leftie ideas. I miss you. Is that so bad?

ALICIA

Did you use to talk to me that way?

COLE

What I'm getting at here... What is "use to" really worth? How's your future looking?

She eyes him searchingly. He stands up to her scrutiny.

COLE

Does it maybe include a glass of chardonnay? A plate of *pahd thai*?

ALICIA

My future: the last frontier.

INT. THAI RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Alicia and Cole sit together comfortably, dinner half-eaten, wine glasses almost empty. She has obviously warmed up to him, but retains the skepticism of the once-burned.

ALICIA

I'd just feel like I'm... buying back a used car or something.

COLE

A creampuff, though.

ALICIA

Original guarantee voided.

COLE

But they just plain don't make 'em  
like this anymore.

ALICIA

Not exactly one owner, lots of hard  
miles.

COLE

But good shape under the hood,  
below blue book.

Frowning slightly, she twitches his jacket open, takes in  
his sidearm and communicator.

ALICIA

Radio and heater, standard.

As if to confirm her reservations, Cole's cell phone goes  
off. He smiles at her, cups the phone to his ear.

COLE

This is Cole. I'm a little busy  
right now... Rosas? What the  
hell... When, right now? Hey,  
I'm... Whoa! No, I'll be there.

Alicia is listening to this with jaundiced ear, and gives  
Cole a sour eye as he collapses the phone.

COLE

I'm really sorry. This is great.  
But I really have to move on this  
right now.

ALICIA

Well, don't let me stop you.

COLE

(Oblivious)

Thanks, babe. I'll make it up.

He moves quickly to the register, swipes a credit card,  
hustles out the door.

Alicia leans back in her chair, disgusted. A WAITER appears  
with a wine bottle, pours her a glass, which she grabs.

WAITER

Will the gentleman want a glass?

ALICIA

I don't really give a damn what he  
wants. Hold on there, amigo.

She deftly snatches the bottle from him, waves him off.

ALICIA

I'd suggest you don't come between  
a bottle and a woman scorned.

INT. DOWNTOWN JAIL - NIGHT

The blue-painted interrogation room nicely sets off the blue jail coveralls of a small-time weapons seller named CORSO, an aging, thickening non-entity. He is obviously ill at ease with his surroundings.

SMITH, a coldly sleek Federal Agent, is bad enough. But now there are also Cole and some bellicose Chicana cop who looks like she's dying to get him alone in the stairwell.

SMITH

Oh, we've got Mr. Corso about as cold as we ever get anybody. Sitting on a whole truck full of guns so illegal we'll run out of hyphens to write them up with.

COLE

How many years would you say, tote it all up?

SMITH

I'd say the word is "terminal". Get this, he even had a case of stamp-free hooch. Shame he didn't have any Cuban cigars, we'd have had the ATF hat trick.

COLE

Wow, arms retailer and bootlegger?

SMITH

I'd guess the booze was personal stash. You don't get veins like that without working at it.

COLE

So he's looking at a lot of time. But ironically, very little time to do anything about it.

SMITH

Nicely put. Soon as they get his booking papers up here, it's a redeye to Denver. Look like a stimulating travel companion?

ROSAS

He looks like dead meat.

COLE

And we can't even help him much.

SMITH

Well, every bit helps when you are truly, totally, solidly fucked.

CORSO

Okay, okay. You made your point. Whataya want from me? And what good does it do me?

SMITH

Co-operation of any kind looks good to twelve peers. And parole boards, let's not forget.

COLE

And we aren't looking for much. Not even names, really. Just tell us about Men in Black Camaros.

ROSAS

The more you've got, the better we like you. At the moment, you suck.

SMITH

Oh right, the Camaro. Meant nothing to me. Just buyers. I had the choice of following them or grabbing Bad Santa here with his truck full o' death. The guys here said you were looking for hotrods.

CORSO

(Flat, resigned tone)

Flat black, hood scoop, major hop-ups. Two males, thirties. One missing a finger, the other missing a few cards from his deck.

SMITH

Thanks for giving me information I already had just from surveiling.

CORSO

That's it. You're all over the Camaro: that's what I know.

COLE

Well, enjoy Denver.

CORSO

Hang on, dammit. Look, I don't know if this means anything...

ROSAS

Let us decide that, okay?

CORSO

Right. Back a while I sold  
shitloads to this spic gang out in  
the boonies.

COLE

Barrio Lobo? Shitload of guns?

CORSO

That was it. Lobo. Yeah, major  
military guns. And also some blow.  
Not my usual line of goods, see.

COLE

And this interests me because...?

CORSO

Beats me. It was just a bizarro  
deal because I was kind of referred  
to these assholes. Got a guarantee  
to front them the dope. Which I  
never saw, by the way, just  
brokered a delivery.

COLE

This was about two years ago?

CORSO

About that. But look at this. Last  
week those same bangers were back.  
Looked over some heavy stuff I had,  
but couldn't afford it.

SMITH

What stuff? How heavy?

CORSO

You should know. The ones on your  
fucking tapes. The AR's I sold to  
those Camaro cowboys.

SMITH

He's talking about current issue  
assault rifles with integral M-79  
grenade launchers. The Tony  
Montana special everybody wants.

COLE

Oh, just peachy fucking dandy.

CORSO

Hot item. Can't keep 'em in stock.  
Those guys will unload them quick  
at a big markup. Maybe in Mexico.

Rosas moves toward him, but catches herself. She leans on the table, staring at him, breathing heavily and obviously not adverse to tearing him a couple of new ones. He quails.

CORSO

Jesus, is she like, under control?

COLE

Most of the time. But when she loses it, it's spectacular. One more question for you. A biggie. Who referred you? Guaranteed it?

CORSO

I really don't know, not exactly, you understand. But the thing is, those Camaro cats work for them. And the first time I dealt with them, I had them tailed.

COLE

You're almost there. Tailed where?

CORSO

Just some bullshit office building. Probably a rented front. Some sort of realty thing. Assurance.

Cole leans back, pries Rosas' attention away from Corso.

COLE

Does that add up to anything at all for you?

ROSAS

Not really.

INT. EL CENTRO DEL BARRIO MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

The drab community room is crammed with locals, all Hispanic, mostly women, some with babies, and older men.

Alicia, in the same dress as in the restaurant, shows the effects of more than one wine bottle. At a battered folding table, Victor has their undivided, motions her up to speak.

VICTOR

*Favor de escuchar su trabajadora social, la Maestra Alicia Childers.*

Alicia stands, slightly unsteady, but maintaining. She and the huddled masses eye each other warily.

ALICIA

I know you don't like me.

Victor is shocked, by keeps still.

ALICIA

You think I don't belong here.  
Well I don't like working here.  
It's punishment, you understand?

The crowd looks at her impassively.

ALICIA

I don't like you, either. I work  
hard for you people. Who the hell  
are you to judge me? Label me  
because I'm a different color?  
Don't speak your damn language?

Pugnaciously, she looks for opposition, finds only placid  
faces. She loses her chip a little, softens up.

ALICIA

Look, I'm on your side. I know how  
these things get done. We can win  
this, but not by falling back on  
race and kinship and old country  
bullshit. If you want your park  
back, fine. Let me help you  
organize to fight for it.

Victor moves uncomfortably in his chair, draws her glance.

ALICIA

With Victor's legal help. I don't  
like Victor, either. I'm sick of  
him sniffing my pants. But who I  
really, really don't like is cops.  
They can't help you get peace. I  
can. Take me or leave me.

She storms out of a deep silence.

EXT. EL CENTRO DEL BARRIO PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Alicia sits in her much-tagged Beemer, pulling on a bottle  
of Chardonay, fuming, listening to ego-lacerating MUSIC on  
her CD player. She starts to key the ignition, then stops,  
just sober enough to know better than to drive drunk.

ALICIA

No, no, no, dearie. No drunk  
driving tickets. Let's save our  
leverage for vehicular copicide.

The doors of the Centro open and the meeting files out.  
They see Alicia in the car and stop, talking among  
themselves and pointing towards her. Alicia waves her bottle  
at them, takes a swig.

ALICIA

Yeah, what ya gonna do with a  
drunken gringa, earlie in the morn?  
*Feliz Navidad* ya beaner sobersides.

Two women leave the group and move to Alicia's window. She  
hides the bottle, looks at them with a drunken expectancy.

FIRST SEÑORA

*El licenciado nos dijo su plan,  
Maestra. La apoyamos y lo  
agradecemos. Gracias por su ayuda.*

SUBTITLE: Victor told us about your plan. We support you  
and appreciate your help.

SECOND SEÑORA

*Gracias, Maestra. Llamame.*

SUBTITLE: Thanks, teacher. Call me.

The entire bunch files by, mumuring thanks to Alicia. They  
leave in small groups or in the back of old pickups.

Alicia stares after them, stunned. She looks up to see  
Victor standing by her car. She gives him a weak smile.

VICTOR

Good thing they don't speak much  
English.

ALICIA

And that I can't speak Spanish.

VICTOR

In a lesser way. I told them what  
you planned, got their phone  
numbers and contact points.

ALICIA

Thanks, Victor. You've done great  
on this whole thing. I'll do my  
best to pull off my end.

VICTOR

Sorry you think I do nothing but  
try to seduce you. But I have to  
ask: will this put me in?

ALICIA

No way, Jose. But you get respect.

VICTOR

I always crave respect of people  
who drink wine in parking lots.

EXT. BARRIO ROOFTOPS - DAY

Chucho continues to dog Fletcher's tracks. He perches on a roof above the park area, scoping out Fletcher's side windows with cheap plastic binoculars.

Blurred by the crappy lens, Fletcher moves around his kitchen.

Chucho lays his arms on the roof crest, points an imaginary pistol, "fires", "recoils". His eyes are like obsidian.

INT. EL CENTRO DEL BARRIO - ALICIA'S OFFICE - DAY

Even shabbier than Victor's law office, the social work section is grim, no personal mark on it. It's a cell.

Alicia sits at her plain, battered desk, looking at Victor, who for once seems more interested in what she's saying than how her chest moves when she says it.

VICTOR

Cole told you this?

ALICIA

Yeah, not bad considering I'm not talking to that dickhead.

VICTOR

But why? I mean why tell you?

ALICIA

I'd say he's telling everybody. Hoping somebody adds it up or tosses him the missing piece.

VICTOR

Why didn't you?

ALICIA

What the hell do I know?

VICTOR

Don't play that. You're a sharpie. You put it together, didn't you?

ALICIA

Put together what? Your theories, Cole's paranoia about a guy I... Some BS from a scumbag trying to weasel out of federal time.

VICTOR

Well, just theoretically then. Two years ago La Neta steps up in firepower and connections. Aided by a realty company. They take over the park, start a crime wave. People start selling out, leaving.

ALICIA

Okay, okay. Then a month after the last parcel is nailed down, somebody shows up to start harassing them. Run them out and the park is safe, somebody gets to build Yuppieland On The Park.

VICTOR

Somebody called Southwest Assurance Corp, apparently.

ALICIA

Too pat, Vic.

VICTOR

However much I crave your intimacy, I have to say: don't call me Vic.

ALICIA

Sorry. But look at it. How could somebody predict all this? And sending in thugs to beat up La Neta isn't going to make them go away. Not when they're armed and pissed off. And it would still be ghetto.

VICTOR

But you see the structure, don't you? And the main point is somebody bought that land up and wants an empty park. Can you accept that?

ALICIA

That I won't accept. I'm going to do something about it.

VICTOR

That's what I'm saying. To the barricades, bitch.

She starts, glares, then laughs.

SEQUENCE OF SHOTS: *ORGANIZATE*

MUSIC OVER: A SONG OF POPULAR PROTEST AND SOLIDARITY

-- Victor stands before the group again, introduces Alicia to polite applause. She starts speaking, pauses while he translates.

-- Alicia points to an easel with a picture of Ghandi, speaking to a group of Local Women. A Schoolgirl stands beside her, obviously translating her remarks. She flips the Ghandi picture over to a picture of Martin Luther King.

-- Alicia leads the group through the park, speaking in animated fasion while pointing out strategic areas.

-- Alicia lectures the group. A Schoolboy translates while Victor watches from the door. Her easel shows Cesar Chavez: she flips it to a shot of Emeliano Zapata. Victor smiles.

-- The easel shows Commandate Zero, ski-masked leader of the Chiapas Zapatistas. Alicia directs an exercise in non-violence, women sagging to resist being moved by other women wearing red armbands.

-- Victor looks on, nodding approvingly. Alicia moves to him, pointing to the group, speaking. Victor replies, putting his hand on her shoulder. She looks at the hand, gives Victor a look. He quickly removes it. She laughs, holds out her palm for five and an elaborate handshake.

END OF SEQUENCE

EXT. GARAGE ROOF - DAY

Chucho, his cast covered with gang graffiti, lies on the roof of a garage with a view of Fletcher's house flipping a steel-handled butterfly knife open and closed. His stalking is rewarded when Fletcher's Camaro backs down the driveway and stops behind the house.

Chucho's eyes narrowing in hatred as surreptitiously spies on the car. Fletcher gets out, pulls a blanket off the tiny back seat. A man hiding under the blanket gets out and stretches. It's Jones, Alicia's assailant.

The two men lay the blanket behind the car, pop the trunk to unload a collection of ammo, assault weapons, and shotguns. Jones hefts two identical rifles with grenade launchers under the barrels.

JONES

Joo know who jure fockin' wit'?

FLETCHER

So Corso's sure these are the ones  
he showed to those La Neta lamos?

JONES

Positive. It's beautiful. He even got them to load some magazines before he priced them out. Their prints are over all over the clips, slugs, receivers.

FLETCHER

Nice to work for somebody who isn't a moron for a change.

JONES

Long as the checks are good I don't care about their IQ scores.

They carry the arsenal into the house.

EXT. BARRIO STREET - DAY

Chucho is running as fast as a kid with a big cast can move, pumping up the street with clinched teeth.

He uses his cast to swing around a light pole, jumps a fence, vaults onto a porch and blasts through a front door.

INT. CHUCHO'S HOUSE - DAY

Heaving mightily, Chucho leans over a table, cowing DORA, a busty girl in typical gang "*jaina*" dress and make-up.

CHUCHO

Don't fuck with me, Dora, this is the bomb. Where the fuck's Indio?

DORA

You'd know if you'd been around, *chamaco*. They're all gone over to the park to take out that asshole that broke your arm. Why aren't you with them, *ese*? No balls?

EXT. BARRIO STREET - DAY

Chucho bursts from the house, sprints to the sidewalk. An unlucky ten year old passes on a Stingray bike. Chucho uses his cast to swat the kid out of the saddle. He jumps on the bike and clumsily rides off, the kid screaming behind him.

INT. ALICIA'S OFFICE - DAY

Alicia, brow furrowed, tries to fathom a grubby mope showing her yellowed "documentation" from plastic shopping bags.

Suddenly her door slams open, scaring the street psycho into throwing paper all over the room. Chucho enters the room like the Tasmanian Devil, grabs Alicia and tugs at her.

ALICIA

Chucho? Are you out of your mind?

CHUCHO

It's jumping off! They're going to Fletcher's and he's got a shitload of guns. We have to do something. It's a trap!

Alicia grabs her purse and runs. Left alone, the mope grabs his papers off the floor and starts lovingly xeroxing them.

EXT. EL CENTRO DEL BARRIO - DAY

Alicia and Chucho burst through the front door onto the sidewalk, almost knocking Victor over.

ALICIA

Be happy. They're throwing a massacre for you.

Chucho breaks for the bike, but Alicia grabs him by the cast and spins him to her heavily graffitied Beemer. They jump in, reverse, blast away; Victor staring after them.

INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Inside at his desk, Victor sits, picks up his phone, pauses.

VICTOR

Ah, fuck 'em all.

He hangs up.

VICTOR

*El Diablo* can sort it out.

EXT. FLETCHER'S STREET - DAY

The view through Alicia's windshield is horrific. A line of lowriders fill the street in front of Fletcher's house, La Neta members crouched behind them shooting up the house.

Returning fire from the front windows is riddling the cars and there are already a couple of bodies lying in the street. The cars at both ends of the line are exploded: scorched and deformed.

Alicia brakes precipitously, gapes at the firefight.

ALICIA

Oh shit! Oh God! I have to get in there and talk to him. There has to be a way to explain all this.

CHUCHO

This isn't the sort of thing you can talk out.

ALICIA

There's always something you can say to stop violence.

Chucho shrugs elaborately, climbs out of the car.

CHUCHO

Sure, give it a shot. Come on.

Alicia jumps out to follow, leaving her car in the street.

EXT. FLETCHER'S BACK YARD - DAY

Chucho stands in the back yard, near Fletcher's Camaro. He is bellied up to the fence, his good arm between two boards. He pulls his arm through, holding Alicia's hand, helping her squeeze through the gap in the fence. She brushes herself off, fluffs her hair, and heads for the back door.

At the top of the porch, she pauses, looks into the house through the glass paned door. An empty kitchen, an empty hall to the living room. She raises her hand to knock, realizes the absurdity, turns the knob. The door opens.

Instantly Fletcher appears at the end of the hall, pointing the rifle/launcher at her. She flinches, stares at him.

Then another shooter peers around the other corner of the hall. She recognizes Jones and it all falls into place. Jones returns to blasting out the window, Fletcher laughs at the expression on her face.

FLETCHER

Hey, "Dee Licia"! Get on in here.  
Ever had sex with machinegun fire?  
You'll orgasm on full auto.

Chucho pushes past her, the knife swinging open. She grabs him by the waist to keep him from charging Fletcher.

Fletcher laughs uproariously.

FLETCHER

First you bring a gun to a fistfight, now you bring a knife to a firefight. Come on, get your other arm broke, have to wipe your ass with your tongue.

Sobbing in anger and shame, Alicia drags Chucho back out the door and pushes him off the stoop. He jumps up, clutching the knife, but she stands against the door. He subsides, whirls the knife closed and into his pocket.

CHUCHO

Let's get out of here, lady.

INT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - DAY

Jones and Fletcher are relaxed as they pour lead into La Neta. Just a couple of working stiff's. Fletcher racks the grenade launcher on his rifle, points it and fires.

In the street outside, a lowrider explodes, tossing two gangbangers as it bursts into flame.

FLETCHER

God, I love doing that.

JONES

It's definitely habit-forming.

FLETCHER

I'd say we've got about ten more minutes to waste these chumps and burn a trail out of here.

JONES

Sounds about right. Hey, I never got to screw that social worker.

FLETCHER

She was right here in the house, so don't blame me.

JONES

Man, you always have all the fun.

FLETCHER

If you're gonna pout, I'll let you blow up that Bel Air convertible.

Jones levers the launcher, spins into the window, fires. The explosion lights up the room.

FLETCHER

Feel better now? No more whining?

JONES

It's not quite as good as sex.

FLETCHER

Pays better.

EXT. FLETCHER'S STREET - DAY

The fight is still raging, and bodies piling up, as Chucho and Alicia return to the street. She heads for her car, then veers off to a phone booth. Chucho tags along, his eyes glued on the fight.

A grenade ignites a lowrider, blowing a banger onto the grass. Indio, Chucho's brother, stands up, his clothing on fire. He takes two steps, beating at the flames, then gets two bursts of automatic fire from the house. He staggers, falls, lies motionless in flames.

Chucho bolts towards him, but Alicia grabs him once again, pulls him fighting, kicking and screaming back to the safe ground by the phone booth. As she holds him there, he continues to scream inarticulately, sobbing.

Poker crawls to Indio, beats out the flames, kneels over him. He looks up and sees Chucho, turns away. He crawls to a car, points a gun over the hood and fires maniacally.

At the phone booth, Chucho slowly collapses into a fetal position against the wall, sobbing. Alicia squats beside him, hugging him to her.

EXT. FLETCHER'S HOUSE - DAY

The Barrio patrol car screams up the street, siren blasting, horn honking, lights flashing. It jumps the curb to get around the ruins of lowriders, bumps across Fletcher's driveway, smears the front lawn with a skidding stop.

The creates a sudden ceasefire. The driver's door opens slowly and Cole steps cautiously from the car and faces La Neta. He holds a microphone on a coiled cable.

The other door opens and Rosas, crouching, glides out and faces the shot-up front of Fletcher's house.

Cole speaks into the mike, echoing across the park.

COLE

That's it. No more of this.  
There's a zillion cops on the way.  
Knock it off and go home. Leave  
the wounded for the ambulances.

Poker stands up from behind the ruins of his precious lowrider. As soon as he is visible, Jones pops up in the front window, taking a bead on him.

Rosas draws, fires in one motion, hitting Jones at center of body mass. He gapes, slumping: she drills him again. She stays in her crouch, revolver pointed at the window.

COLE

(Amplified)

Chill out! We will handle this. Go home.

POKER

They killed our homies, Cole!

COLE

We'll handle it. Backup is on the way. You guys stand down.

POKER

Fuck that, *placa!* This is our fucking set.

Cole laughs harshly.

COLE

Your *set*? We're not a rival gang, you morons. We're the law. There are thousands of us, with helicopters, tanks. Get your story straight.

POKER

One way or the other, we're here until that cocksucker is dead.

Which is exactly the moment when that cocksucker chooses to leave. Fletcher exits the side door, unhurried and nonchalant, heads for his Camaro at the back of the driveway.

Rosas is in action immediately, gun out. She runs to the corner of the house, aiming down the driveway at Fletcher. He grins at her, waves, shows her an assault rifle.

FLETCHER

Sorry to leave you, beautiful. But I think this says I walk.

ROSAS

No, it says, "Put me down right now or get shot."

FLETCHER

I like your attitude. But I'm a pro, baby. I got you cut. We should have a drink, though.

Cole stands in the driveway, blocking the car, hand on his holster, holding out his other palm in a "halt" gesture.

COLE

Stop. Drop it. You're under arrest.

FLETCHER

Arrest? For self defense?

COLE

With a machine gun and grenade launcher?

FLETCHER

It was theirs. Check the prints.

COLE

Then you've got nothing to worry about. Drop it and put 'em up.

FLETCHER

I think I should explain something.

He swings the gun up and fires. Cole runs towards the house, but gets hit in the side and goes down.

FLETCHER

My "little friend" says it better.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Alicia sees Cole get hit, screams and tries to run to him. Chucho tackles her at the waist, pushes her back into the booth. Sobbing, she claws at him. He forces the doors shut and leans against them while she freaks out inside.

EXT. FLETCHER'S YARD - DAY

Rosas stares at Cole, rolling in pain, holding his ribcage. Infuriated, she steps out into the driveway and starts moving towards Fletcher. He laughs, gives her a thumbs-up, then swings the gun on her.

Rosas dives into a roll, but Fletcher fires a quick burst, hitting her in the upper thigh. She yells in pain and collapses, but brings her revolver up to fire. Fletcher fires again, hitting her in the upper arm. The gun flies out of her hand.

Bleeding and disabled, she crawls towards the gun, gritting her teeth in pain and frustration. A burst from Fletcher knocks her gun out of reach. She falls over on her back.

Fletcher moves close to her, squats for a better look.

FLETCHER

Cutiepants, you are so hot. We should get together, I mean it.

Playfully, he kisses his index finger and leans over to touch it to her lips.

Rosas snaps her head forward, grabbing the finger in her teeth, grinding it, trying to tear it off.

Fletcher grimaces, yanks his bleeding finger out of her mouth, swings the muzzle of his gun into her face.

FLETCHER

I just can't do it. You're too damn gorgeous. And got too much heart. See ya later, beautiful.

He moves back to the Camaro and opens the door, still covering Rosas and Cole. Rosas squirms in impotent rage.

As steps into the car, Rosas manages to get her left hand to the Glock at the small of her back. She pulls it and fires, hitting him in the calf below the cover of the door.

He grunts, pulls his foot into the car.

ROSAS

I'm a pro, too, asshole.

Fletcher fires a burst from the window that blows the gun out of her hand and bloodies her fingers. He pulls up the driveway, almost hitting the fallen Rosas. He sticks his head out the window.

FLETCHER

Yeah, you are. We definitely should hook up. Hasta la vista, baby.

He throws the Camaro into reverse, roaring back up the driveway. Rosas watches him pull away. Her hearing is vague and echoing. Her vision is blurry, whiting out. She slumps slowly over on her back, staring straight up at the sky.

Cole appears, kneeling over her, yelling at her in distorted slowdown. Her sky clouds over to a white glare.

FADE TO WHITE:

FADE IN:

MONTAGE: THE TAKING OF THE PARK

MUSIC OVER: A sad, stirring Mexican ballad.

-FLETCHER'S DRIVEWAY

Cole kneels by Rosas, feels for vital signs. He looks at the Camaro patching out in reverse. It crashes through the back fence and peels backwards across a backyard.

He throws down towards the Camaro, firing until his pistol is empty. Furious, he grabs Rosas' gun and empties it after the fleeing Camaro.

He raises a portable radio to his mouth, yelling into it while pressing Rosas' wound with his other hand. His hands bloody, he gestures for help.

Rosas regains a measure of consciousness, moans. Cole is intent on her as she moves her lips. He leans his ear down, trying to hear what he thinks she is saying. Painfully, she raises her head, kisses his cheek, then passes out.

-BARRIO KITCHEN

Three generations of Chicana women prepare a meal. They hear gunfire, look at each other a long, searching moment. The oldest woman, a black-clad ABUELITA, unties her apron, hangs it on the door. She gives the others a look and exits. The younger women take off aprons and follow.

-FLETCHER'S HOUSE

Bleeding, his gun empty, Cole slumps over Rosas' body.

La Neta members, still armed and pissed, raise angry faces towards Cole, on his knees across the street. One by one they stand and face towards him. They start across the street.

-PHONE BOOTH

Alicia, crying and fighting hysteria, jabbars into a phone.

-SPLIT SCREEN: PHONE BOOTH/BARRIO LIVING ROOM

Alicia on one phone, alarmed Chicana Woman on the other.

-QUARTERED SCREEN: FOUR LOCAL HOMES

Four different Chicana women speak and listen to phones.

-MULTI SCREEN

The screen continues to divide into smaller vignettes: a phone chain in operation to eight, sixteen, thirty-two, dozens of resolute local women.

-THE PARK

Cole looks up from Rosas, sees the line of gang-bangers crossing the street towards him. He pulls a loaded magazine from his belt, ejects and replaces the clip in his pistol, grips the pistol in both hands.

-THE STREETS

A large band of women and children, the black-garbed Abuelita at their head, march through the streets of Barrio Lobo. They walk resolutely, their faces grim but unafraid.

As they march, their numbers are swelled by more women and kids stepping out of doorways, running out garden gates.

## -THE PARK

Kneeling behind Rosas body, Cole holds his pistol low but ready, staring into the approaching line of La Neta.

## -THE STREET

The parade of women bursts into the street by the park. Silently, they move into the park and the street between the gang and Cole. They take their children to the playground and place them on swings and jungle gyms. They sit at the table with their children.

Some move to help Rosas. Others face the gangsters, staring the down with the fierce, stolid face of Mexican Mother. Abuelita gives Cole the look, he holsters his gun.

The La Neta guys look away from the line of maternal disapproval. They see a park full of children and women. They see a young Chicana lying wounded, their comrades shot to pieces, their own families.

Slowly, one by one, they stand down. Their pistols disappear, they attempt to hide their rifles. They slide away to put the guns in their cars.

Poker's mom comes over to him, speaks, draws him to a table with kids. Other gangsters then head into the park to greet their families with hangdog demeanors greeted with hugs.

An ambulance pulls into the street, paramedics scramble.

## END MONTAGE

## EXT. CHAVEZ PARK - DAY

Cole stands by the ambulance, watching the paramedics slide Rosas' gurney in and secure it. She is out, unmoving.

The paramedics grab Cole and pull him into the car, already cutting away his uniform to examine his wound.

Alicia runs up, grabs Cole, holds him tightly, crying.

## ALICIA

Oh, God, Cam. I saw... you're all right? Oh, Cam...

## PARAMEDIC

He will be, but you have to let go and let us take care of him.

## COLE

I'm fine, Alicia. Look, I have to go. See you at Valley General.

## PARAMEDIC

Great. Now can we get this girl to surgery?

Cole turns to smile reassuringly at Alicia as he gets into the ambulance. His cheek is implanted with a bloodprint of Rosas' lips.

Alicia falls back from that sight. Cole waves, then leans over Rosas body. The door closes, the ambulance rolls.

Alicia stands alone and stricken amid the swarm of squad cars and increasingly joyous scenes at the park. She stares after the ambulance. She can see Cole's profile through the rear window, the bloody lip print, his focus on Rosas.

## ALICIA

Christ, Cam. Who can compete with that?

MONTAGE: DOWNTIME BLUES

MUSIC OVER: DEPRESSING INSTRUMENTAL

-ROSAS' BATHROOM

Rosas leans close to her mirror, glaring at her bandages, picking at them impatiently. She stares into the mirror, a picture of frustration and vexation.

-ROSAS' LIVING AREA

A very modest studio kept in almost military style with few decorations of lived-in touches.

Rosas lies prone, feet elevated on a dinette chair, attempting pushups. Her wounds and the bandages won't let her do it and you can see her anger.

She jumps to her feet and kicks the chair over, then drops again, lying on her good side to crank out one-handed reps.

-GYM

Rosas punches a speed bag one-handed, clumsily at first, then finding a fist/wrist/backfist rhythm.

-ROSAS' LIVING AREA

She slumps in a chair by a pile of magazines featuring weapons and martial arts, watching daytime TV.

She clenches her fist and yells, jumps to her feet and starts jumping up and down in frustration.

-ROSAS' BATHROOM

She rips a bloody bandage off her shoulder, revealing torn stitches. She punches the wall, crying in frustration.

-GYM

She kicks a heavy bag, checks the healing wound on her leg, kicks again, fiercely.

-ROSAS' BED

She sits lotus-style on the tightly-tucked bed, eyes closed, assembling a pistol. She slaps in a magazine, shoots the slide and regards the weapon for a long moment.

Briskly, she shoots the slide again and again, spewing rounds all over the room. She flops down on the pillow, holding the gun across her chest. Not a happy camper.

-ROSAS' BATHROOM

She regards her shoulder wound in the mirror. It has healed considerably.

Tentatively, she begins a series of slow movements of her arm and shoulder. She moves faster, suddenly stops, glares at the offending wound. Fists on the sink, she droops her head, shaking it from side to side in slow resignation, then faster and faster in fury.

END MONTAGE

INT. COP BAR - NIGHT

A slightly tacky bar of the kind cops seem to prefer. Country rock on the jukebox, sketchy females. Darts.

Cole, carrying a fresh drink, moves towards the dartboard, but is waylaid by a table where SMITH, ANDREWS, and HUGGINS obvious cops despite civvies, have already had a few.

HUGGINS

Yo, Cole. Wanna judge a lesbian beauty contest?

COLE

Okay, you got me. I gotta hear this one even if it means drinking with vice scumbags.

He joins them with perfunctory nods and handshakes.

HUGGINS

Yeah, what we got. We think, you know?

ANDREWS

Yeah, what we think we got.

HUGGINS

Is a lezbo coke ring.

COLE

I think I saw this on Bravo.

HUGGINS

True story, my man. And that makes it a little harder to get a handle on, you see what I mean.

ANDREWS

They're already pretty underground. Their own hangouts, signals. Tight community.

SMITH

And hard for a guy to get into. Pardon the pun.

COLE

Don't you have any lesbian cops working on whore stings? Like most of them?

HUGGINS

Haven't had much luck. They walk like cops.

SMITH

And talk like men.

ANDREWS

And smell like whores.

HUGGINS

So we're hunting up somebody a little fresher. Queerbait centerfold. Do some stakes, some stings. Go deep.

SMITH

Pardon the pun.

HUGGINS

We're thinking about tapping the academy.

ANDREWS

Actually, we're mostly thinking about reviewing the tapes.

HUGGINS

What is it with that, anyway?  
Chicks won't pay money to see two  
guys getting nasty on each other.  
What does that say about us?

COLE

That we're sick, immature pervert  
bastards hung up on mommy's tits.

HUGGINS

Amen, brother. Praise be.

ANDREW

Thank the lord for the night time.

SMITH

Lez be friends.

COLE

Like I said. Look, I might have the  
perfect candidate for you.

SMITH

Your mama might be a little old for  
this sort of thing.

COLE

Serious. She's young, cute. And  
bored shitless from being on  
medical for a month.

HUGGINS

But will she do it? This is pretty  
above and beyond your normal police  
work, you know. People putting  
their hands on you.

COLE

Want me to ask her?

HUGGINS

Absolutely. We might could get her  
busy a little.

ANDREWS

Could she do an audition tape?

COLE

By the way, she's my partner.

HUGGINS

He was just kidding around, Con.  
Have her call me if she wants.

INT. SHELBY'S BAR - NIGHT

MUSIC OVER: "FREE FALL ZONE" - Urgent, slamdance techno.

Yes, it's definitely a lesbian bar. One of the funner ones, a good blend of lipstick and old school. On either side of the blinking neon "SHELBY'S" sign, big closed circuit screens show whatever happens in front of two remote cameras that roam the floor, peering into booths, poking in dark corners. Must-see TV for fans of girlplay and sassiness.

JUKEBOX

Take a long look at the way you look  
Cause it's who you are and it's all you have  
Practice your smile, touch up your style  
They'll be taking you in like a photograph  
Put on a pout, let it hang out  
The lights are up and you're part of the cast  
Saunter right in, flash 'em some skin  
Whatever you want you can get it too fast

Rosas, in bike shorts and softball jersey, slides in gingerly, scoping it all out. She might as well be wearing a "BiCurious" ballcap.

Two bouncy little Shaveheads flaunting gym muscles and damp tank tops are all over her, but are brushed off by a somewhat older and immensely more attractive woman, SHELBY.

Of a certain age and no uncertain pose, Shelby wears a gown that flows around her neck, back under her arms, then around to tie in front. As she sits on the stool next to Rosas and leans forward to speak the dress makes it obvious she is either very well-preserved or very cunningly restored.

FIRST SHAVEHEAD

That's it, Shelby, always grab the pick of the litter for yourself.

SECOND SHAVEHEAD

Privileges of age, money and treachery.

SHELBY

It's a privilege just not to be a hormone-addicted little idiot.

(To Rosas)

So honey. A jillion joints in the world, why'd you walk into mine?

Rosas stares around the place a moment.

ROSAS

This is yours? *Hijole*, it's a really nice place.

Shelby sits very close to her, looks deeply into her face.

SHELBY

But not, you know, all that nice.

Rosas looks at the bigscreens, which feature her burrhead buddies squeezing both torsos into the same tank top.

ROSAS

I see what you mean.

SHELBY

Do you now?

INT. SHELBY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

MUSIC OVER: STEREO PLAYING SULTRY CHANTEUSE JAZZ

The office seems to double as a boudoir, really well done. Shelby sees no reason to waste time, and backs Rosas up against a dresser, standing so close that her breasts brush the letters on Rosas's jersey with every breath.

Shelby strokes Rosas's cheek, moving her hand down to her throat. She undoes her gown, which falls away, hanging only from her neck and revealing her entire naked back. Rosas doesn't know what to do with her hands.

Shelby steps backwards, sits on the bed, her gown hanging in front of her. She rolls over onto the bed, revealing her naked back to Rosas, and undoes the strap.

Rosas stares at her, frozen in place. Shelby smiles, motions her to sit on the bed. Rosas cautiously sits, looking back and forth between Shelby's inviting face and the rocking sway of her lovely ass.

Shelby moves her head, sweeps her eyes down her body, then back to meet Rosas' stare. Gingerly, Rosas reaches out. Her hand brushes Shelby's waist, hovers indecisively over her buttocks, which suddenly rise to meet her touch.

Rosas is obviously gripped by major conflict, fascinated and repelled as Shelby moves her ass against her hand. Rosas yanks her hand back, stares at it, then at Shelby.

Shelby chuckles, shrugs, makes a wry face. She grabs Rosas hand and kisses it tenderly, places it back on her own waist. Then she opens a box on her bedside table, pulls out an ornate mirror decorated with lines of white powder.

She rolls over, swinging her legs around Rosas, sits up facing her with the mirror between them. She hands Rosas a thin silver tube and slides her free hand up under her baseball shirt.

SHELBY

So what do you have for me, cutie?

Rosas stares at the toot, dips a finger in it, tastes it at the corner of her mouth while Shelby unbuttons the jersey. Rosas is not wearing a bra.

On the other hand, she's not enjoying the toot. Just as Shelby tweezes her nipple between two long-nailed fingers, Rosas explodes. Her hand comes up fast, shattering the mirror into a cloud of white dust and glass splinters.

Shelby falls back in shock and pain, but Rosas snatches her by the throat and shakes her like a ragdoll. Rosas jumps to her feet, pulling the naked Shelby with her, and punches her in the stomach, doubling her over.

Rosas' knee spears into Shelby's face, knocking her onto the bed. Panicked, she rolls away from Rosas' attack, cutting her pale skin with glass shards. She falls behind the bed.

Rosas stalks around the bed, stares down, drops to her knees on top of her victim. She punches down at Shelby's hidden body again and again, her face a stony mask.

Suddenly she snaps out of it. She stands up, looks down at Shelby, then at her hands. She turns to look at herself in the mirror. Sees a woman entirely out of control.

She stands gripping the dresser, staring at herself in the mirror. She reaches into her shorts and pulls out a wallet. She flips it open, takes a long look at the badge inside.

She holds the badge up by her face, studying both in the mirror. She tears herself away, pockets the badge.

She walks to the bed, looks down at Shelby, not enjoying the sight. She reaches for a glass by the bedside, tosses the contents on the unseen Shelby. She squats down and leans forward, hands on the other woman.

ROSAS

Hey. Hey, listen. We have to talk. Where'd you get that shit?

SEQUENCE OF SHOTS: DYKES ON BIKES

MUSIC OVER: REPRISE, "FREE FALL ZONE"

BOOMBOX

Toss back your hair and dial it on  
Go for the most you can get it for  
Play it by ear and hope you can hear  
Some laughter through the pain  
Rack up the score and try to be more  
Than the final net and gain  
Body count bliss, search and dismiss  
You're a prisoner of warmth, you're on your own  
Engage and deploy, close and destroy  
Missing in action in the free fall zone

## BOOMBOX

Better stay fresh when you're  
 dealing your flesh  
 Best learn the rules if you forget the laws  
 Pick up the rap, find out the traps  
 Polish your teeth and sharpen your claws  
 Don't take it hard if you let down your guard  
 And feel the touch of somebody else  
 Take it in stride, it was something you tried  
 No need to expose yourself

Buff your nails and burn it out  
 Play it for the pros in the center ring  
 Live in the streets and whoever you meet  
 Will be part of your next scene  
 Get on a roll, out of control  
 Cut it all close and clean  
 Take the high ground, divide and surround  
 You're a prisoner of warmth, you're on your own  
 Rally the troops, retreat and regroup  
 Catching the action in the free fall zone

-- Agile even favoring her shoulder, Rosas scampers up a fence and jumps to a rooftop. Creeping to the eaves, she's at good vantage to stake out "BLAZING SADDLES MOTORSPORTS", a run-down garage across the street. She sets up a small spotting scope, peers into it.

-- In the scope, the garage shows a few old taxis, but mostly motorcycles in various stages of repair. And a crowd of large, rough female motorcycle enthusiasts wearing leathers with the colors, "DIKES ON BIKES".

-- One of the biker gals enters the garage from a door at the back, tosses a package in her saddlebags, kicks over a Harley, and blats off into the night.

-- Rosas slumps low in her pickup, squeezing a handgrip exerciser while waiting. When a hog roars out of the garage, driven by a Member with a black backpack, she pulls out to follow it.

-- A nice, discreet façade has a tasteful sign reading, "THE FISHBOWL: BATHS, SAUNAS, STEAM". A smaller sign on the door reads, "WEDNESDAY NIGHTS, LADIES ONLY". Judging from the traffic, it's Wednesday night. The Dikes On Bikes Member swaggers out, eyeing the clientele. No backpack.

-- Down the block in her truck, Rosas jots in a notepad.

-- One of the "Dikes" rolls out of a "Curves"-style gym as Rosas walks by on the sidewalk. She gives Rosas the once-over, whistles. Rosas walks around the corner, makes a notation.

-- In an alleyway, one Member looks out while the other hands a gym bag in the door of a restaurant kitchen.

-- As the two bikes roll away, Rosas cruises the alley, counting businesses. She rounds two corners, counts down the street, notes the name of the restaurant, "OLIVER'S".

-- Rosas takes a seat in a working class pool-table bar, watches a Member shake hands with a female Manager in jeans and Carhart jacket. The two women walk to a inner door, obviously discussing the paper sack under the biker's arm.

-- Rosas sits in her truck, a box of shotgun shells visible on the dashboard. The box reads, "BLAMMO AMMO : NON-LETHAL". Rosas reaches into the box, loads her shotgun.

END SEQUENCE

EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

MUSIC OVER: "FREE FALL ZONE" CONTINUES

Rosas stands by a streetlight pole, waiting calmly.

At the sound of an approaching motorcycle, she steps to the curb, looking in that direction.

A lowslung chopper rumbles up, driven by a butch female Rider in Dykes colors. The bike slows for the turn.

Rosas reaches behind the light pole, retrieves a metal baseball bat. She swivels, steps into the swing, and swats the Rider right off the bike.

She steps to the Rider and squats. No signs of resistance. She opens the leather jacket, pulls out a plastic-wrapped package and a cellular phone.

She tosses the package up and powders it with a powerful swing of the bat. Then tosses the phone up and blasts it over the fence.

She walks to the riderless bike, lying on its side still rumbling, lifts it up, straddles it, and roars off.

INT. BLAZING SADDLES MOTOR SPORTS - NIGHT

Inside the garage proper, it's business as usual. Several leathered Members sit around a table drinking beer and coffee. A few more tinker with bikes. One lays under a cab on a creeper dolly.

They barely look up as a powerful Harley engine approaches. But when it blasts through the door, it's not who they expect and they react... but too late.

Rosas rides in with the front wheel off the ground. She wears boots and goggles; the pistol grip of her shotgun protrudes over her right shoulder, the handle of her baton over her left. She steps off the plunging bike, lets it plow into the table, scattering Members.

She draws the shotgun and starts blasting, pumping, blasting. Each shot knocks somebody on their ass or other vulnerable anatomy point. There is no bloodshed, just rubber projectiles knocking down anybody who moves. Resistance is spotty and futile.

Rosas has been watching the inner door, and keeping a cab between it and herself. Finally it bursts open and two Members run out, firing pistols. Leaning over the cab, Rosas punches them up against the wall.

Any member who moves gets another blast.

Pumping the shotgun, then holding it one-handed like a pistol, Rosas pulls the baton and stalks through the garage giving the *KO de grace* to anybody too conscious to suit her taste.

She approaches the door from the side, peeks in, enters, then returns to the garage floor, stalking through the inert bodies of her enemies.

She pulls a cellular phone from her jacket pocket, punches a speed-dial, waits for an answer.

ROSAS

Hey, Huggins, I got a line on your coke ring for you.

(Pause to listen)

Absolutely. They're sitting on pounds of the stuff. 1635 La Mona. It's a garage, drive right in.

(Pause to listen)

Yes, they're there right now.

(Pause to listen)

No rush, actually. They'll wait.

(Pause to listen)

Not necessary. But could you bring me a 32 oz. Pepsi?

She hangs up.

ROSAS

Like Cole says, you have to build your own legend.

She walks towards a chair. One of the bikers groans and lifts her head as she passes. Rosas kicks her unconscious, sits down to wait, shotgun at ready.

She pulls out the grip-builder and squeezes it left-handed to stave off boredom.

MONTAGE: THE ANGEL OF PAIN

MUSIC CONTINUES OVER: LAST VERSES OF "FREE FALL ZONE"

SOUND SYSTEM

Try to look hip when you're starting to flip  
 When it gets to be too much for you  
 In the fast lane, try to maintain  
 Get some quick before it gets to you  
 Prop yourself up, pour the last cup  
 You gotta have guts, that's what's on the line  
 Start something rash, move in a flash  
 Close encounters of the distant kind

Hold back the tears and move on in  
 Try to remember what you came here for  
 Live on the edge, hang on the ledge  
 And watch the scary parts  
 Don't catch the fear that starting from here  
 Everything's off the charts  
 Make your last stand with the last one you can  
 You're a prisoner of warmth, you're all alone  
 Shot down and shamed, falling in flames  
 Missing in action in the free fall zone

-THE FISHBOWL

Rosas, a towel wrapped around her, tosses her shoes into a locker and pins the key on her towel. As she walks through the glass doors from the lockers to the baths she slides the towel down around her waist.

The tile steam rooms present a dream landscape of naked female bodies wreathed in fog. Rosas prowls nude through the mist and faceless flesh. Faces and bodies appear, recede.

She straddles a wooden bench in an alcove. Women pass by clothed only in steam.

A tall Willowy Blond straddles her bench, facing her knee to knee. She gives Rosas the once-over, an exploratory stroke of the thighs. Rosas arches, presenting her breast.

Blond lifts the atomizer that hangs around her neck on a cord. She takes a big nose hit, offers it to Rosas, who looks around into the mist.

Willowy Blond ejects white powder from the atomizer onto her nipples, leans forward.

Rosas strikes blindingly fast, grabbing Blond by the hair and pulling her face down to smack the bench between her thighs. She lifts her bloodied face and lands a roundhouse blow that knocks Blond into the murky corner.

Rosas rises deliberately, steps to the dark corner, where the huddled Blond is barely visible, and starts kicking her to pieces.

Rosas face is a study in excitement and fury. She bites her own lip, drawing blood.

Finished, she shakes like a dog, flips sweat out of her hair, and stalks off into the steam.

-POSH AEROBICS GYM

Most of the resident hardbodies eye the awesome symmetry of Rosas' glutes as they master the Stairmaster. But the Busty Redhead with a bod chisled by gym and surgery and artlessly displayed in lycra and peek-a-boo has the inside track, scaling along step for step while chatting vivaciously.

-APARTMENT HOUSE ELEVATOR

Inside a moving elevator, the Redhead is all over Rosas, excited and laughing. She takes her hands off her ass for a minute, and pulls something out of her purse. The two huddle conspiratorially a moment.

A cloud of white powder explodes out from between them and Rosas drills Red a good one to the ribs. The Redhead is no pushover, however, and replies with karate blows. But she's no match for Rosas sheer ferocity. She takes some scary blows before the light blinks, the door opens, and Rosas kicks her out of the car then jumps after her as the doors slide closed.

-OLIVER'S RESTAURANT ENTRANCE

Rosas, in a slick black dress, clicks out of Oliver's in the company of a Black Woman dressed like Tina Turner. Laughing together, they walk towards the parking lot.

-LOVERS' LANE

A sleek luxury sedan is parked without lights, jostling slightly on its expensive suspension. Suddenly the door flies open and the dome light pops on as the Black Woman is catapulted out onto the ground. Rosas, the black shift down around her waist, leaps out on top of her, kneeling on her arms. The door swings shut again and the light goes out.

-BILLIARDS BAR

The bar is empty, after hours. Rosas swings a cue stick, completing her demolition of the carpenter-dressed Manager. Sated, shaking, she stomps toward the door where she saw the drug bundle disappear.

-ANONYMOUS BEDROOM

Rosas is visible, the victim she is pounding is not. Her face is a stiff mask of hatred, her teeth clenched and nostrils dilated as she batters away.

END MONTAGE

INT. EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

Rosas sits on a paperclad examining table, wearing one of those fiendish open-backed hospital gowns that reveals her strong back and a peek of tight rearend cleavage.

DR. SYLVIA REDFERN, a highly attractive late thirties, expensive suit under a crisp white clinic coat, sets a chart on the table and pockets her reading glasses.

SYLVIA

Well, you look good on paper anyway. Let's take a peek at the scene of the crime.

At her motion, Rosas shrugs off the shoulders of the gown, lowering it to her waist. The exit wound on the back of her arm still looks pretty bad.

Sylvia peers at the unseen entry wound, reaches to palpate the tissue.

SYLVIA

How does that feel?

Rosas shrugs. Sylvia grips her arm, moves it through a motion range. She holds the arm horizontal.

SYLVIA

Can you lift it over your head?

Rosas seems surprised when she can't raise her arm against Sylvia's grip.

SYLVIA

See? It still hasn't knitted in there. White tissue takes the longest. I can already tell I'm not clearing you back to duty for another few weeks.

ROSAS

Shit.

SYLVIA

Sorry. Let's look at the thigh wound, too.

Rosas pushes the gown aside: it slides to the floor. Sylvia's eyes and hands move down to Rosas' leg. If she is fetching from the rear, we can only imagine how provocative she must look from Sylvia's viewpoint. And Sylvia is the exactly the type to be provoked.

SYLVIA

Coming along nicely. When was your last breast cancer exam?

ROSAS

I never had one.

SYLVIA

Not good. You should start getting them every year. You have lovely breasts; you should care for them.

Sylvia shifts her gaze and hands to Rosas chest, concentrating on palpating her breasts. Rosas stares at her throughout the exam, her eyes wide and breathing shallow.

Sylvia steps back and regards Rosas overall.

SYLVIA

Everything checks out fine.

She steps back up, touching Rosas knees, and places her hands palms out, on her breasts, massaging them slightly.

Rosas continues her intense stare, arches her breasts slightly into the touch. Something Sylvia does causes her to catch her breath.

Sylvia takes a deep breath of her own, and moves her hands down to Rosas' thighs. Captivated by the young cop, she's about to take a big gamble.

Whatever she does, Rosas' eyes close, her head lolls and she shifts toward Sylvia. Sylvia speaks in a husky purr.

SYLVIA

Everything coming along nicely.

Rosas' eyes snap open and she explodes off the table, her hands gripping Sylvia's throat as her lunge carries them back against the wall with a thud.

She chokes Sylvia, their faces close together. Rosas pants, her hotly, face inflamed with anger and confusion. Sylvia swoons in a blend of fear and sexual desire.

Very slowly, as if under great pressure, Rosas moves her face closer to Sylvia's. She releases her throat: Sylvia draws in a shuddering gasp of air. Rosas gasps, too.

Sylvia lowers her eyelids, moves her lips out, awaiting the touch. Fighting the impulse all the way, Rosas brings her mouth closer. When their lips meet, they share a tremor.

The kiss drives Sylvia wild. She moans, moves her head violently. Rosas throws her arms around her, bends her over for a kiss of rising passion. Sylvia's hands appear, clutching Rosas' buttocks and pulling her closer.

INT. SHOWER STALL - DAY

Rosas seems intent on getting extremely clean. She scrubs diligently in a cloud of steam.

The stall door opens and Sylvia appears in a plush robe.

SYLVIA

Help you with anything, love?

Rosas, startled, shoots her a very guarded look. She looks down at herself, embarrassed. Sylvia grabs another robe from a door hook, motions Rosas out of the shower and slips the robes onto her shoulders. She can't resist a caress.

Rosas doesn't react well to her touch, tightens the robe and draws the waistband closed with a tight jerk. Sylvia steps away from her, leaning on the washstand.

SYLVIA

I know, I know: this is all you need just now, right?

ROSAS

Listen I... Look, thanks for...

SYLVIA

You might be all I need, too.

Rosas has no idea how to handle any of this.

SYLVIA

Can I get a good morning kiss?

Reluctantly, but expectantly, Rosas leans forward and kisses her. The two immediately fall together in a hot embrace that works both robes open and has them panting.

SYLVIA

Question is, what do you need?

INT. SYLVIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Sylvia sits on her bed, completely bummed, watching Rosas move around the room gathering her clothes and belongings while avoiding Sylvia's eye.

Ready to leave, she looks at Sylvia, but is miles from knowing what to say. Sylvia starts to rise, Rosas gives a very final "back off" gesture, both palms pushing outwards. She waves her palms side to side in a "no mas, no mas" sign, walks out. Sylvia slumps.

SYLVIA

Aw, shit!

EXT. BARRIO LOBO PRECINCT PARKING LOT - DAY

Alicia pulls into the parking lot, noses into a slot near the precinct storefront. She starts to get out of her car when a dusty, "Baja-ready" compact truck with canopy squeals into the lot and brakes in the "RESERVED FOR POLICE" spaces.

Rosas, in civilian khakis, jumps out and slams the door. She barges into the station trailing urgency, leaving the door open behind her.

Alicia eyes this development, heads gingerly to the door.

INT. PRECINCT OFFICE - DAY

Cole is in the inner office, holding a clipboard and running his finger down a shelf of office supplies.

Rosas blows the door open and slams into the office. He turns to face her, smiling quizzically. His smile fades as he takes in her demeanor; obviously extremely upset.

She opens her mouth, closes it, clenches her fists and paces explosively.

COLE

Something on your mind, sports fan?

She shoots him a wild-eyed look, thrusts her hands into her pockets, simmers.

ROSAS

Listen, Cam.

COLE

I'm listening. You're not saying anything.

ROSAS

I need... Look, I trust you... Can I just... Shit!

Cole moves towards her, just as she explodes out of her inarticulate fumbblings.

ROSAS

Cole, what the fuck am I?

That takes him aback, all right. He makes soothing gestures, confused.

ROSAS  
I need you to tell me, Cole! I need to know!

COLE  
Look, Novena, you're...

She thrusts up close to him, pressing him towards the desk.

COLE  
Am I good looking, Cole? Am I an attractive woman?

COLE  
Well, sure you are...

Frantic, she pulls her blouse open, showing him her breasts. She grabs him by the hips.

ROSAS  
Do you like me, Cam? Do you want me? Am I...

COLE  
Listen, Novena...

ROSAS  
Quit fucking around! Kiss me, goddam it! Make me feel it!

In the outer lobby, Alicia stops in her tracks, taking in the scene.

Cole leans over Rosas feverish face, holds her immobile while he gives her a gentle kiss on the forehead.

Outside the door, Alicia turns away, out of sight from the office. She sinks into a chair, leans her head against the wall behind her.

Inside, Rosas struggles for more intimacy, pushing against Cole. He holds her off firmly but gently.

COLE  
This isn't going to happen, Novena.

ROSAS  
Why? Why? The rules?

COLE  
You bet. You're the best I've ever seen. I admire you. Hell, I love you.

ROSAS  
Well then, what?

COLE  
So we aren't going to screw in the duty station because it's against the rules. And who are we, Rosas?

ROSAS  
I don't know. That's what's freaking me out!

COLE  
You know this much. We're the ones who keep the rules, that's who.

Rosas takes that like a bucket of cold water in the face. She subsides, draws away, wipes her lips. She looks down, buttons her shirt, can't look back at him.

COLE  
I don't care what you are, Rosas, just who you are. You're top notch.

Crushed and bewildered, Rosas turns to the door.

ROSAS  
Sorry, man. Forget this crap, okay?

COLE  
Nova, what you are, you're a woman. What you decide to do about that is up to you.

ROSAS  
Ahhhhh, fuck!

She exits, flipped and humiliated. But it gets worse: she sees Alicia sitting outside the door, obviously in earshot.

ROSAS  
What are you looking at, bitch?

ALICIA  
You tell me.

Rosas swings around, infuriated. Cole runs out of the office to stand between the women.

COLE  
Rosas, settle down will you? Look...

ROSAS  
You look! She looks! You got no idea who's what!

She spins and stomps out, slamming the door.

As Cole and Alicia eye each other sheepishly, they hear Rosas' truck fire up and patch out. Now Cole wipes his lips. Alicia gives him a weak smile.

ALICIA  
So maybe you're all right, after  
all, Cole.

COLE  
Am I?

He slumps into a chair, gives a violent shudder.

COLE  
Arrrrggghhh!

ALICIA  
No pain, no glory. Cameron Cole,  
martyr to the true faith.

COLE  
If I were you, I'd run. You're  
fair game.

ALICIA  
(Raises eyebrow)  
Only fair?

She exits, leaving Cole in a bit of a state.

SEQUENCE OF SHOTS: WORKING IT OUT

-- Rosas lies on her spartan bed, staring upward, tortured and fuming. Suddenly her face relaxes and she leaps up.

-- She runs through out her front door.

-- She runs down city streets, her boots pounding in a regular, military dogtrot.

-- She runs into a neighborhood boxing gym. The desk man nods, flips her a towel she grabs without breaking stride.

-- Still in her khakis, she pounds crap out of a speed bag. Young boxers stare, awed by her fury. And damp shirt.

-- One foot hooked behind her other knee, she grinds out pull-ups on a bar.

-- Soaked with sweat, she skips rope at 180 RPM.

-- Standing flatfooted, wearing striking gloves, she hooks high, then low into a leather heavy bag. She is pumping power into the bag, keeping it at a 45 degree angle, grunting with each blow.

-- Other boxers stand staring at this point. She's like a robot with the controls jammed.

--She stops abruptly, allowing the bag to swing vertical, slamming her back on her heels. She notices the gawkers, turns to them with clenched fists and screams a war cry.

-- She spins back to attack the bag with a series of Thai kicks and sweeps, pounding it relentlessly, her face blank.

END SEQUENCE

INT. SYLVIA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

To a background of heavy CLASSICAL MUSIC appropriate to her mood, Sylvia sits in a recliner, staring into space rather than the charts in her lap. The doorbell chimes.

EXT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Seen through the spherical distortion of a security peephole, a red rose seems ephemeral and emblematic.

Sylvia opens the door to see Rosas standing bashfully by her duffle bag. She shrugs eloquently, hands Sylvia the flower.

Sylvia smells the rose, kisses it. They stare at each other, Rosas' embarrassment and shyness mounting by the second.

Sylvia darts out a hand, grabs Rosas by the lapels, and jerks her into the apartment. The two roll on the floor joyously. Sylvia kicks the door shut, leaving the duffle bag in the hallway.

INT. POSH CABERET - NIGHT

Decorated like the days when nightclubs ruled the night, booths surrounding a dance floor with a jazz combo playing cool and torchy from a dramatically draped stage.

The clientele are women, with a scattering of gay males.

Sylvia and Rosas are intimately cozy in a front booth, Rosas staring around like a kid at her first circus.

ROSAS

Man, I've never seen anything like this. Not in real life.

SYLVIA

Not many people ever do. Which is really a shame.

A gowned female SINGER comes on without announcement, but to a nice applause. Sylvia claps, Rosas follows suit. Singer holds a flower basket with sign: "ROSES \$5 EACH". She ignores the audience, heavily into a wistful/blasé Dietrich/Piaf hauteur, sings in a throaty, Frenchy lisp.

As soon as she begins, the lights drop to two spots: one on her and the other on two dancers personifying the lyrics. A knockout Blonde Dancer does Marilyn in white chiffon, a Blonde Drag King goes for a gauche hyper-masculinity. All three dance teams brush by the Singer's proffered roses.

SINGER

She's long-stemmed and outrageous  
 Out of Texas or Vegas  
 A big burst of blonde  
 From the society pages  
 She's so bloody blatant  
 Just goddam gorgeous  
 She lights up the square  
 Like those patio torches  
 But does he pant at her heels?  
 Does he melt in her eyes?  
 Nah, he elbows her ribs  
 Like she was one of the guys

If she was mine  
 I'd sweep her right off the street  
 Take her up to a suite  
 Fall down at her feet  
 Kiss off her clothes  
 And place a pale golden rose  
 Where it would do the most good  
 Brother, that's what he should  
 One supposes  
 Cover her, smother her  
 Lover her with streetcorner roses

At the second verse, the spot moves to second dance duo, a stunning Black Dancer and a Black Drag King doing clueless pimp/player.

SINGER

She's got eyes from El Greco  
 Straight out of the ghetto  
 She's got angles as sharp  
 As a hockshop stiletto  
 She's bodacious Black Magic  
 She's just egregious  
 Twitching her tail like some  
 Endangered species  
 But look at those shoes  
 And what's wrong with hair?  
 And this is the best  
 He can buy her to wear?

## SINGER

What I would do  
 I would decorate her  
 Drench her in fur  
 Just to hear how she'd purr  
 Give her red fishnet hose  
 And a rare purple rose  
 Gracing her breast  
 That's what I would suggest  
 If he proposes  
 To drown her, surround her  
 Abound her with streetcorner roses.

The bridge shuts down to a single tight spot, Singer playing the hell out of her streetwise lesbian shtick.

## SINGER

I've got roses for sale  
 Buy one or a dozen  
 Give them to that sweetie  
 That you swear is your cousin  
 Petals scattered on sheets  
 A bud pressed in a book  
 In a flute on the nightstand  
 The first place she'll look  
 There's not enough light  
 There are not enough hours  
 We run out of love  
 But I've got plenty of flowers...

Third verse: third dance duo, a devastating Latina Dancer unappreciated by a Chicano Drag King doing an oblivious, macho El Pachuco turn.

## SINGER

She's all hot-eyed and manic  
 Some kind of Hispanic  
 With a swell to her hips  
 That could sink the Titanic  
 Carmel cream cleavage  
 With a dangling rosary  
 Lethal high heels  
 And exposery hosiery  
 But dig Mister Macho  
 Playing her cool  
 All of that wasted  
 On this little fool

## SINGER

What I'd like to do  
 Would be build her a shrine  
 Toast her with wine  
 Just to see how she'd shine  
 Then get her to pose  
 With one blood red rose  
 Clenched in her teeth  
 And nothing on underneath  
 Cherish what she exposes  
 Pleasure her, measure her  
 Treasure her with streetcorner roses.

The singer and dance pairs bow off to a soft, but heartfelt applause. Rosas is speechless, staring at the stage.

She turns to Sylvia and spontaneously throws her arms around her neck, hugging her like a child. Sylvia glows, hugs her back, kisses her hair.

## INT. SYLVIA'S BATHROOM- NIGHT

Sylvia and Rosas sit facing each other, up to their lovely necks in bubble bath, surrounded by candles and buffered by relaxing MUSIC from a stereo somewhere.

Sylvia leans back, eyes closed, one hand on the tub rim marking time with the music. Rosas massages her foot, moves it to her mouth to kiss the instep.

She moves the foot away from her face, stops kneading it, just stares at it a moment, then at Sylvia's face.

## ROSAS

Can I ask a probably really dumb question?

## SYLVIA

You can ask me for the world, babe.  
 Ask my secret name, my darkest  
 fear, my sinful shame.

## ROSAS

So am I really "Gay"? Is this it?  
 I'm a Lesbian? Or is this just  
 something special? Just you?

Sylvia opens her eyes and looks at her. She sits up in the tub, leaning forward until their faces almost touch. She puts one hand behind Rosas' neck and gives her a long, tender kiss. She speaks in a soft whisper.

## SYLVIA

It's something very special. But  
 it's not just me. It's also you.

Rosas leans back, not looking right at her.

ROSAS

I don't know. That seems kind of freaky. I mean, other people are queers and junkies and things.

SYLVIA

Queers and junkies and things???

ROSAS

Not like that. I guess that's cop thinking. Us versus The Others. But I meant... it seems like something that's trouble.

SYLVIA

Novi, anytime you get involved with another person, put your feelings on the line, it's trouble.

ROSAS

Then why do it?

SYLVIA

Because it's worth it. And it's worth having your real feelings, whatever they are.

ROSAS

I just tried to keep life simple. No complications.

SYLVIA

I'd suggest that for now you not worry about anybody outside this tub. Groups, labels, samples... I'm not into politics. What do you feel, right now, right here?

ROSAS

I feel better than I ever have in my life. I love you more than anybody I ever knew. All I want to do is soak until the water cools, then drag you to bed.

SYLVIA

Sounds healthy to me.

INT. SYLVIA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sylvia, curled up in her recliner, watches Rosas cranking out one-armed pushups on the carpet.

SYLVIA

Hey, Novi.

Rosas answers steadily, without breathing hard.

ROSAS

Yeah?

SYLVIA

What's your reaction to the idea of having sex with a man?

ROSAS

Nothing. I've never thought about doing it with anybody. There's just you... and strangers.

SYLVIA

Well, you're not a virgin, Novi.

Rosas stops her exercise, leaning up on one arm. She looks up at Sylvia, puzzled.

ROSAS

I don't remember anything about that.

INT. SYLVIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rosas lies under the covers, Sylvia sits at a vanity, putting in some last touches before bed. She glances at Rosas with raised eyebrows, smiling.

SYLVIA

Well, I'm an MD consulting to the Police Department for half what I charge private patients. Why is that, you might ask?

ROSAS

I figured that one out.

SYLVIA

So I've got a taste for rough trade. Not as rough as you, though. Christ, who is? Girls of the WWF?

ROSAS

(Snorts)

I'd kick those posers' pussies off.

Sylvia rises, moves to the bed and slips in.

SYLVIA

I believe you. But what if you couldn't? What if you run into somebody you can't handle, who can do whatever they want to you, the way you do? Ever think of that?

ROSAS

Well, in that case...

She reaches under the mattress and brings out her service revolver, caresses it, clicks things on it, while Sylvia stares wide-eyed. Rosas lays it on the bed between them. It's getting Sylvia hot.

ROSAS

Know where we should go sometime,  
instead of those nice clubs?

INT. INDOOR FIRING RANGE

Sylvia sports Ruger ballcap, shooting goggles, and ear protectors as she squints timorously down the barrel of a large handgun. Rosas, also in cap and earmuffs, stands beside her, coaches her with light touches, moves her elbow.

ROSAS

Good. Now don't jerk the trigger.  
Squeeze it soft. Just like...  
well, you know.

SYLVIA

How soft should...

The gun discharges and she jumps, yelping. Rosas spots the pistol, smiling. Sylvia settles down, closes an eye, and squeezes off another round.

SYLVIA

Now that's more like it. Cooooool.

She fires again, smiling. Then blasts off a dozen quick shots.

SYLVIA

Whoo! Yeeeehaw! Did I hit  
anything?

Rosas smiles at her, shaking her head. Sylvia cocks a hip, blows smoke from the barrel, spins the gun on her finger.

INT. SYLVIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rosas and Sylvia tumble around suggestively under the sheets: sounds of arousal and exertion.

Suddenly the motion stops and Sylvia cries out in frustration. She kicks her feet like a baby, punching the sheets, which subside to reveal the two women's' faces.

ROSAS

Sorry, Syl. I guess I'm still not  
very good at this stuff.

Sylvia is unsatisfied and unhappy, but cuddles her head affectionately.

SYLVIA  
No, that's silly. You're very,  
very good. I'm just tense is all.

She gives Rosas a weary smile.

SYLVIA  
You've been wearing me out, kid.

ROSAS  
So get some sleep. How about I go  
down to the store for some wine? Or  
cocoa or something?

Sylvia gives her a ragged smile, relaxes against the  
pillows.

SYLVIA  
Awww, you're such a sweetheart.

ROSAS  
I know, I'll make somebody a great  
husband.

She slips out of the bed, pulls on her jeans and a cop-  
looking jacket with nothing on underneath. She steps into  
sandals and exits the room.

Sylvia lies still for a moment, staring at the ceiling.  
When she hears the apartment door close, she pounds her  
fists on the bed, shaking her head from side to side.

She jumps from the bed and storms into the bathroom,  
slipping into a silky nightie.

INT. SYLVIA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Framed in the mirror, Sylvia leans on the sink counter,  
staring at her own face. She reaches up and pats her cheeks  
with both hands, then bends down and reaches deep into the  
cabinet below the counter. It takes her a minute, but she  
finds what she wants and pulls it out.

She places a pharmacy bottle on the shelf below the mirror  
and eyes it critically. She nods her head, smiles, opens it  
and looks inside.

She picks up a hand mirror from the counter and carefully  
shakes out two lines of white powder from the bottle. She  
caps the bottle and lifts the mirror to her nose and takes a  
big whiff. She tosses her head, sniffs and poses to snort  
the other line.

Just as the door behind her opens and Rosas steps into the  
room.

ROSAS

I just wanted to tell you...

She stops, her face going tight and pale at the sight of the blow on the mirror.

Sylvia, busted, hunches over the mirror then drops it and backs away, terrified at what she sees in Rosas' face. She starts babbling in fear.

SYLVIA

Why can't I have some fun, Novi?  
You get to. You get to drive too fast, shoot people. The rest of us get in trouble for that stuff, but you get to be a gunslinger. Enjoy your own little addictions because you have a badge.

Rosas doesn't move or speak: a smoldering volcano.

SYLVIA

It's just a chemical, Novi. Just a stupid law. Not like hurting anybody, stealing anything. Please, don't look at me like that. Loosen up a...

ROSAS

You lying, treacherous, bitch. I thought you loved me. I thought...

Rosas stops talking, goes silently ballistic. She backhands Sylvia off-balance, grabs her robe and throws her through the door into the bedroom.

Crying, Sylvia lands on her back and scuttles crab-style away from the furious Rosas.

Rosas stands in the door fuming, betrayed and furious. She slams a fist through the door, jerks it out and pounds it through the sheetrock wall.

SYLVIA

Oh God! No, Novena! Please, don't...

Rosas comes through the door, moving towards her with a merciless certainty.

SYLVIA

Oh, shit. You're her, aren't you?  
You're the Pain Angel! Oh, Christ, it is you.

Rosas stops in her track, her face strained with ambivalence. She stares down at Sylvia, waiting.

SYLVIA

Why didn't I realize it before?  
You're a dark legend in LesbiLand,  
kid. Nobody knows who you are or  
when you show up. You just keep  
hearing about women picking up this  
cute young thing and ending up in  
intensive care.

Rosas stands motionless, listening as Sylvia speaks with a rising hysteria.

SYLVIA

Oh, it added to the thrill, all  
right. I mean, the guys had AIDS  
and we had you. But I'm the one  
lucky enough to have you move in  
with me. To fall in love with you  
before you fuck me up.

Sylvia is in an orgasmic state of excitement/terror, hyperventilating, dilated, her legs spread, breasts heaving.

Rosas speaks slowly, drawing each word through clenched teeth.

ROSAS

I don't want to hurt you, Sylvia.

Sylvia's eyes widen with the shock of hope, she gasps a deep breath.

SYLVIA

Then don't! Why would you want to?

Rosas speaks haltingly, breaking into a sobbing shout.

ROSAS

I don't fucking know!

Sylvia stares at her, quaking.

Rosas grabs her belt buckle and starts unbuckling it. Sylvia is in a panic, closes her eyes to await blows.

But Rosas skins out of her pants and tears her shirt off. She kneels over Sylvia, shaking. She gently touches Sylvia's cheek: Sylvia flinches away from her hand. Rosas throws her head back and growls like an animal.

Tentatively, Sylvia reaches up, puts her arm around Rosas' neck. Rosas whines like a dog, shudders, then falls on her, clutching her with abandon, burrowing into her.

Sylvia's arms and legs come up around Rosas and she starts rocking her. Rosas continues to clutch her, sobbing herself. Then explodes into a compulsive sexual rapprochement, the two women thrashing wildly on the floor.

INT. SYLVIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Rosas and Sylvia lie entwined on the floor in the early light, covered with bedclothes torn off the bed.

ALICIA

I think you should request therapeutic leave. You've got an awful lot going on and could use some time to deal with it.

ROSAS

Snivel off for on psych call? Not a good career move. The force isn't like cubicle land.

ALICIA

We'll make it a medical hold. I'll recommend it officially.

ROSAS

Based on what?

Alicia gives her a mischeivous grin, tousles her hair.

ALICIA

Complications.

INT. SYLVIA'S KITCHEN - DAY

The couple finish up breakfast, Rosas straddling a chair backwards, Sylvia leaning back, examining her.

SYLVIA

I had a problem with drugs, like lots of medical people. I still like to sniff a little fun now and then, I admit it.

ROSAS

Not to me you didn't.

SYLVIA

I was afraid to. You're so gung ho. How was I going to tell you I was breaking the law?

ROSAS

Well, yeah. I'm all about upholding the law. It's who I am, Syl. All the way.

SYLVIA

And is beating girls up part of your public service?

Rosas takes awhile to answer that, but gets it out.

ROSAS

No. It's against the law.

SYLVIA

What's worse, baby? Getting a buzz... or kicking the shit out of people for doing what you really want to do yourself?

Rosas stiffens at that, turns to stare at her.

ROSAS

That's what you think?

SYLVIA

Don't you? And now you know you want it and you...

She stops in mid-sentence, thoughtful. Rosas hangs on her words, waiting.

SYLVIA

So why didn't you ever punch me up before?

ROSAS

I never saw you with coke before.

SYLVIA

You think that's what it's all about? Not sex? Drugs?

ROSAS

That's what I came after in the first place.

SYLVIA

What? Why? Why?

ROSAS

Work, Syl. I'm a cop.

SYLVIA

Oh, Novi. For Christ's sake, girl. This is really messed up.

INT. SYLVIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sylvia and Rosas lie spooned together in bed, Sylvia speaking into Rosas ear from behind. Rosas wears a pensive expression, trying to figure it out.

SYLVIA

I thought the violence was all about sexual ambivalence. Trying to destroy your secret desires.

ROSAS

Maybe so. But it didn't feel that way. It was more about the dope.

Sylvia turns that one over for a moment.

SYLVIA

See, I assumed that was your justification. Your license to kill.

ROSAS

I see those white lines and something snaps. Did you notice?

Sylvia rolls away, staring straight up.

SYLVIA

It's even more complex than I thought, figuring out where you're coming from.

ROSAS

How about if I show you?

EXT. MIGRANT CAMP - DAY

A tattered sprawl of blue plastic tents, cardboard huts, and palletwood shacks is mostly hidden by scrub trees in a dry gully. Cooking smoke wreathes the trees, women carry water up the wash in buckets, ragged children play in the dust, rusty old cars litter the camp.

A child chasing a ball made from a plastic softdrink bottle suddenly freezes, looks up at the rim of the gulch, and runs towards a shack. The other kids run behind him, looking over their shoulders.

The source of their alarm is Rosas, stepping to the edge of the gulch to look down at the pitiful village of trash. Sylvia steps carefully up beside her, and stares down into the huts, shocked and saddened at the sight. There is nobody visible in the camp anymore.

SYLVIA

Here? You lived in this? My God, Novi, it's... wretched.

ROSAS

It's hard to tell. The camps get torn down and the people run off. Or floods take them out. Then they build back. But this is where I lived when I was little.

SYLVIA

How can they... There's no water,  
no lights, no sewer... it's not  
legal.

ROSAS

They aren't legal, either. They've  
been here forever, though, one way  
or the other.

SYLVIA

And this is where you came from.

ROSAS

I was born here. So I am legal. I  
don't think of this as U.S.  
territory, though. It's more  
like...nature. The jungle. Earth.

SYLVIA

The wretched of the earth.

ROSAS

Not really. They're the lucky  
ones. The unlucky ones are still  
over there, picking things out of  
the garbage dump. Or worse, still  
down in Chiapas or Oaxaca or  
Nicaragua or wherever they left to  
come here.

SYLVIA

Jesus, Novi. I... I don't know  
what to say. To think. I'm going  
to have to process this a little.

ROSAS

That's what they're doing. The  
ones that'll make it.

SYLVIA

Make it? Get out of that? How?

ROSAS

I did. Some of them will, too.

EXT. BARRIO DIRTPATH - DAY

Rosas and Sylvia walk down a dirt lane leading from the  
encampment towards the scattered shacks of the *barrio*.

MUSIC comes from one of the cribs, *rancheros* from a Mexican  
station. The two women talk to each other, seriously but  
inaudibly.

They pass a doorway. Two local RAPISTS, barrio scum in western hats, boots and rags, slide out of the doorway and follow them, extremely interested in the two beauties.

A shift in Rosas' pace and bearing alert Sylvia, who looks behind her and grabs Rosas' upper arm in alarm.

SYLVIA

Whoa, those guys mean business.

ROSAS

They're more interested in pleasure.

SYLVIA

I hope you know where we're going. This is the dark alley they warn us about.

ROSAS

Wait until we turn this corner.

SYLVIA

Oh, I can't wait.

They turn off the path and walk ten paces down a filthy alley that abruptly ends at a cement wall.

SYLVIA

Shit, shit, shit. There's no way out.

ROSAS

That's the idea.

SYLVIA

Oh fuck, we're trapped.

ROSAS

No. They are.

Rosas slides her hand into her shoulder purse, pulls out a collapsible sidehandled baton. She pulls it open, hidden by her body, then tucks it to her side.

SYLVIA

Oh my God, Novi.

ROSAS

Walk slightly ahead of me. When I move, go over there and turn to face me. If I back up towards you, talk to me so I know where you are.

SYLVIA

This is your combat mode here,  
isn't it? Jesus! It's pretty damn  
exciting, though.

ROSAS

Stick around.

The pair stop ten feet from the wall and turn around,  
waiting for the Rapists to catch up to them. Rosas' face is  
tense and wide-eyed, but her body is relaxed as an  
athlete's.

Suddenly Sylvia puts her hand on hers.

SYLVIA

But look, why do this? Why not  
just let them live?

Rosas stares at her a moment, unwinds a little.

SYLVIA

It'll be good for you, trust me.

ROSAS

You got any ideas for getting rid  
of rapists in a gentle, medically  
approved way?

SYLVIA

Didn't they teach that at Police  
Academy?

That gets Rosas' attention. She stares at her a moment, then  
glances at the Rapists, who have halted, licking their  
chops. Her lips curl in hatred, but she takes a deep breath,  
shudders. Sylvia touches her shoulder, nodding.

Rosas collapses the baton, tucks it in her bag, and moves  
toward the entrance, Sylvia in tow. Surprise, surprise: the  
Rapists move to block their path.

ROSAS

Excuse me, but we'd like to leave.

FIRST RAPIST

Why you want to leave, *mamacita*?  
We just got here.

SECOND RAPIST

You ladies want to have a little  
fun, *que no*?

ROSAS

We just want to pass by without any  
trouble, okay?

FIRST RAPIST

Hey, what if we like trouble?

ROSAS

Then it's your lucky fucking day.

She steps towards him, pulls a snub-nosed hammerless revolver from her bag and jams it right into his mouth.

In the frozen silence of the next second, she audibly cocks the hammer.

The Rapist is immobilized, breaks a sweat, his eyes jitterbug in fear. His eyes dart to Sylvia in supplication.

SYLVIA

Please co-operate. I'm trying to get her to quit killing assholes.

ROSAS

Take out your wallets and drop them on the ground. I hope you do something I don't like. I'm not convinced killing assholes is such a bad idea.

The assholes obey, instantly.

ROSAS

Did you just piss your pants? Or do you always smell like this?

The guys is too scared to speak. Rosas looks disgusted.

ROSAS

Is there valid ID in those wallets?

Both men nod vigorously.

ROSAS

Good. I'll know who you are. And I'll keep an eye out for you. If I were you I'd get out of this area. And stop bothering women.

SYLVIA

They can go, right?

ROSAS

If they hurry.

They hurry.

SYLVIA

Well, that was pretty exciting, too. I'm so hot I can barely walk.

Rosas stares like a predator after the fleeing men, her gun still drawing bead on their fugitive asses. She is close to exploding from conflicting impulses. She trembles, her nostrils flared.

Sylvia steps very close to her, pushes the gun down with effort. The Rapists round the corner and Rosas turns to face her, looking savage and aroused.

SYLVIA

Oh God, wait'll I get you home.

Rosas pushes her up against the wall, leans into her.

ROSAS

What's wrong with here?

INT. SYLVIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rosas and Sylvia lie in bed, après-sex postures and moods. Sylvia strokes Rosas thoughtfully.

SYLVIA

I think I get it. Do you?

ROSAS

How the hell would I know?

SYLVIA

You fought your way out of that cesspool to be a cop, right? And if you break one rule, don't cross one "T", you'll fall back in.

ROSAS

Maybe. It makes sense, I guess.

SYLVIA

How did you, anyway? I've never gotten clear on the details.

ROSAS

How did I what?

SYLVIA

Get out of the gutter? End up in the Academy?

ROSAS

They took me out, really. Put me in group homes.

SYLVIA

That's horrible. How did you ever cope with that?

ROSAS

Fought. Won.

SYLVIA

You always won?

ROSAS

You had to. Anyway, I got emancipated, got that scholarship.

SYLVIA

Community College?

ROSAS

Yeah. Athletics did me a lot of good on the force, too. Softball, judo: they still like jocks in the department, even chick jocks.

SYLVIA

And it got you an education.

ROSAS

Sure. But what was more important to me, it was a place to stay. Dorms, you know. But I had my own place to live.

SYLVIA

Could you have gone on to a four year school?

ROSAS

I think so. Girl's soccer was getting big. San Diego State talked to me. Arizona.

SYLVIA

Are you sorry you didn't do that?

ROSAS

I guess. Looking back, with a few years experience like that I might have been able to make the Mexican women's team. Be in the Olympics and shit. Almost their whole team is from U.S. college programs.

SYLVIA

I meant educational opportunities.

ROSAS

I'm not much of a brainiac, Syl. I locked in on Police Science right off the bat. A.A. and Academy was all I needed. They have funds to continue, get a Bachelors on the job. Help me make Sergeant.

SYLVIA

Why Police Science? For you?

ROSAS

Well, I always, when I see cops it's like they're the good guys. They're clean, in control. They'll rescue me. Us.

SYLVIA

Maybe they took you out of your home environment?

ROSAS

Who knows? That's probably why I didn't gangbang, do crimes like everybody else. I didn't want to fuck over cops. Be the bad guy.

SYLVIA

So you went from Barrio Shithole to live in gyms, dorms, barracks.

ROSAS

Yeah. Especially gyms. I love that, you know? Hard, mindless exercise. Just crank it out.

SYLVIA

Your body was the only thing you could count on. And it took care of you pretty well.

ROSAS

Until this.

Sylvia shoots her a sharp glance, then relaxes.

SYLVIA

Until you found out it isn't bulletproof? That's what's scaring you, isn't it? You can't count on your bod to win them all.

ROSAS

Getting handled on stretchers and beds and shit? Lying in the hospital? Fuck. Fuck that!

SYLVIA  
Your body didn't let you down,  
honey. Your emotions did. Your  
macho bushido code.

ROSAS  
Maybe so. What can I do about it?

SYLVIA  
I'm working on that one, kiddo. I  
really am.

Rosas rolls over, looks her in the face.

ROSAS  
Can you work on that? Fix up, you  
know, feelings? Reactions?

SYLVIA  
It's not an exact science, that's  
for sure. But there's something I  
see going on. A picture that won't  
quite come into focus.

ROSAS  
What?

SYLVIA  
Sex. Drugs. Rock and Roll.

Rosas tenses, her stare becomes guarded.

ROSAS  
Dope has nothing to do with me.

SYLVIA  
It might be what you're all about.  
The messed-up part anyway. You  
think about it...

Rosas jumps out of bed, highly agitated.

ROSAS  
To hell with that shit.

SYLVIA  
Nothing you know about. I'm  
betting men. Men with drugs. Does  
that ring any bells?

Rosas turns violently away. She pulls on sweatpants and  
jacket, heads for the door. Sylvia stares, shocked.

ROSAS  
I'm out of here.

At the door she turns, steps back to the dresser, pulls the gun out of her bag. She glares at Sylvia.

ROSAS

While you're fixing shit up, think about this one. How many more girls are those two assholes going to have their fun with?

She tucks the gun in her back waist, under the windbreaker, and heads out the door again.

SYLVIA

Novi!

Rosas turns in the doorway, ready to escape.

SYLVIA

Do you know one major thing that fixes messed up feelings?

ROSAS

What? What?

SYLVIA

Having somebody love you and touch you and care about you.

Rosas looks at her a minute, wheels turning.

ROSAS

That's really true, huh?

SYLVIA

Swear to God.

Rosas shivers, vacillates. She pulls the gun out, empties it, tosses it on the bed. Then she turns, steams off, calling over her shoulder.

ROSAS

Thanks, Syl. I'll see you later.

Sylvia slumps on the bed, staring after Rosas. She picks up the gun and examines it critically. She holds it by the grip, points it. She sits up, points at her reflection in the mirror, pulls the trigger. She flinches at the click of the hammer, so she pulls it again, then again.

She lays back on the pillows, carefully tucks the gun underneath them. She reaches to turn out the light, then speaks to herself in the darkness.

SYLVIA (O.S.)

Okay, I see where this needs to go.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - NIGHT

Sylvia looks at a bulletin board with AA and NA notices beside the usual church announcements. Another woman moves up beside her.

CHURCH WOMAN

Glad to see you coming back. The program works if you work it.

SYLVIA

I've slipped a little. But I'm lucky. I was never as heavy into it as some of these people were.

CHURCH WOMAN

Some people never quit until they hit bottom. Some see the bottom coming and figure out what to do about it.

SYLVIA

I lucked out.

CHURCH WOMAN

You mean your higher power came through?

SYLVIA

Yeah. And somebody gave me a wake-up call.

CHURCH WOMAN

Great. But you know you have to do this for yourself. Nobody else can keep you clean.

SYLVIA

(Smiling)

What if they're a cop?

CHURCH WOMAN

If cops could make us quit, nobody would have a problem, would we?

SYLVIA

Good point.

Sylvia points to bulletin board.

SYLVIA

Do you know where Room 11 is?

CHURCH WOMAN

Upstairs. You know that's not really a 12 Step Program, right?

SYLVIA

It is what it is. Thank God.

INT. CHURCH MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

Sylvia and Rosas stand in front of an open door. Rosas is reluctant, intimidated. Sylvia rests her hands on both her shoulders, looking intently into her face.

SYLVIA

Look at it this way. What can it hurt? Sit there for an hour. Nobody is going to make you do anything or say anything. Just listen, then walk out here.

Rosas doesn't like it a bit, but sullenly nods.

SYLVIA

I'll be right here at nine. Okay?

Rosas steps to the door sill, looks back at her, heaves a breath and enters the room. Sylvia gently pushes the door closed behind her.

The door has a number: "11" And a handwritten paper sign: "ADULT SURVIVORS OF CHILD ABUSE TUE 7:30-9"

INT. CHURCH HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sylvia paces the hallway, drawn and nervous, glancing at a big wall clock that says it's minutes to nine.

The door opens and Rosas practically lunges out of the room, tearful and agitated. Sylvia opens her arms and Rosas runs into them, breaking into open sobs.

Sylvia's puts an arm around her shoulders, another cupping the back of her head, rocks her gently, smiling and tearful.

Other women file out of the room. As they pass, they pat Rosas back or forearms, murmuring support.

INT. ALICIA'S OFFICE - DAY

A tiny, very Indian, woman leaves the office with a baby at her breast and three more in her wake. Sylvia holds the door open for her, steps in, and takes the seat Alicia motions to.

ALICIA

Can I help you? I hope so. I could use a win today, however small and insignificant.

SYLVIA  
I know exactly what you mean. I'm  
Dr. Redfern. Sylvia.

ALICIA  
Alicia Childers. Human race,  
retired.

Sylvia smiles at this, Alicia returns a tired version.

SYLVIA  
You used to be at Child Protective  
Services, right?

Alicia is instantly on guard.

ALICIA  
Do I know you?

SYLVIA  
Consulting physician with the P.D.

ALICIA  
That has something to do with me?

SYLVIA  
No. I've heard of you, though.

ALICIA  
Great.

SYLVIA  
Please don't take me wrong. I don't  
blame you for anything you did. I  
think you should get a medal.

ALICIA  
The assault and battery medal. I  
just bloody love it.

SYLVIA  
It might be a better world if they  
let people like you and Novena just  
go out there and mop up rapists and  
child molesters.

ALICIA  
Novena? Are you talking about  
Rosas, the cop?

SYLVIA  
Also a bit of a vigilante.

ALICIA  
Tell me about it.

SYLVIA

I was hoping you could tell me.

ALICIA

Okay, you've completely lost me.

SYLVIA

She was a CPS case. Placed in the foster system. I'd like to see her records.

ALICIA

I could get them. By pulling favors, breaking fifty rules and a few laws. So there is the question.

SYLVIA

Why should you? I understand. I'm supposed to clear her back to duty. I'd like to know more about her early background. Than she knows herself. She worries me.

ALICIA

(Sour laugh)  
She worries you?

Sylvia gives her a leading look.

ALICIA

You know her partner, Cameron Cole?

SYLVIA

Just the name.

ALICIA

Well, since you're so up on my background, I'm surprised you don't know he and I were an item. After my arrest. Well, during, actually.

SYLVIA

Ah.

ALICIA

That's what I said. And I think there's a chance we could be something again. Except he drives around at night with this cute little sexually disturbed partner.

SYLVIA

Well, I...

ALICIA

Who's also known to get him shot.

SYLVIA

It sounds like we have a mutual worry, then. Can you help me out on this?

ALICIA

Oh, you bet your ass I will.

SYLVIA

And I assume you wouldn't mention any of this to her partner.

ALICIA

And give her a sympathy rap on top of everything else? Fat chance.

INT. DOWNTOWN JAIL - DAY

Rosas, in civvies, talks to NUGENT, a chunky blond female cop. They stand just out of earshot of a holding cell occupied by ANA, a skinny *chola* somewhat worse for the wear of drug abuse and street traffic.

ROSAS

Medical leave. Another week or so.

NUGENT

Oh, right. So, you know Miss Congeniality here?

ROSAS

Not really. Face in the crowd.

NUGENT

She's some guy in La Neta's "jaina". Says she has information you want. Needs some slack.

ROSAS

You got any to cut?

Nugent laughs cynically.

NUGENT

I don't have as much on her as she thinks. If she hadn't asked for you, she'd have walked by now.

ROSAS

Perfect. I owe you one, Nugent.

NUGENT

No problemo. She's freaking about her kids. Scare the shit out of her, we let her walk.

ROSAS

Can you dump her in the Blue Room  
for me?

NUGENT

You got it. Hey, get well soon.  
You're missing all this fun.

EXT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Rosas leans back in her chair, elaborately unconcerned about the fate of Ana, who hunches forward over the table, extremely concerned with her immediate destiny.

ROSAS

Look. Even if I knew what you think is so important, what could I promise you? It's a cold collar and they're already down there writing you off.

ANA

Ay, *porfa*. Please. I can't leave my girls over there with him. He...

ROSAS

Your best bet is tell me why I'm in here on my day off. Then I'll tell you if I can do anything.

ANA

Okay. Okay. Listen, I heard you're interested in this guy. A shooter.

ROSAS

Depends. Who'd he shoot?

ANA

Who you think? You.

That information galvanizes Rosas. She drops her nonchalant air, rocks forward into Ana's face.

ROSAS

Here's the deal. You tell me everything you know. Everything. I'll make a call and you'll walk out of here right now. I'll drive you over to your kids myself.

ANA

Ay, *gracias*. I...

ROSAS

But Nugent and Aquilar are going to be really pissed. They're dying to get you back in here and hang serious time on your ass. If you screw up, you won't be seeing your brats at all. *Entiedes, Mendez?*

ANA

I understand. Thanks for...

ROSAS

What do you know about this guy?

ANA

I don't really know anything...

Rosas stands abruptly, knocking her chair over, and heads for the door.

ANA

Wait. No, *wait!* My *ruco*, ShyBoy. Paco Hernandez. You know him? He knows when it's going down.

EXT. CESAR CHAVEZ PARK - DAY

Several young *cholos* claiming La Neta, including Shyboy and Hoodlum, sit on a picnic table smoking.

HOODLUM

Look out, *compas*. It's Two Gun Novena.

ROSAS

Everybody but Paco can leave. Now.

The *cholos* are indecisive about this, some starting to move, others breaking petulant.

Rosas grabs one of them by the arm and jerks him off the bench onto the ground. He jumps to his feet, furious, she slams her hands in his chest, drives him back a few feet.

ROSAS

Keep walking. Out of the park.

She turns back to the *cholos*, who are all standing.

ROSAS

Everybody. But ShyBoy. Leave. Now.

The gangsters and wannabes trail off, muttering and posing. Hoodlum and ShyBoy stay put.

HOODLUM

Fuck this, ShyBoy. You don't have to take shit from this bitch.

He slugs ShyBoy on the shoulder, motions to him.

HOODLUM

C'mon, carnal. We're outta here.

ROSAS

What are you, in charge of him?

HOODLUM

We're road dogs. Fuck with him, you fuck with me.

ROSAS

So who are you?

HOODLUM

Hoodlum.

ROSAS

Beautiful. Why don't you all just call yourselves "Asshole"? You could get rubber stamps to do your graffiti faster.

Rosas spins, kicking Hoodlum's knees out from under him. He falls to his side but Rosas grabs a flailing arm and twists it behind his back, plastering his face to the table with a sickening thump.

She jerks his dangling chain, producing a heavy-duty trucker's wallet, which she opens and examines while Hoodlum sputters impotently on the table top.

ROSAS

Well, it doesn't say "Hoodlum" here. It says Tomasino Flores.

HOODLUM

You can't do this. Police brutality!

ROSAS

I'm off duty. This is personal brutality.

She tugs his arm, generating a yelp of pain, then twists it again to spin Hoodlum into a seated position. She looks at ShyBoy and glances at the bench. He immediately sits down. She fixes the two with an unforgiving stare.

ROSAS

We need to talk.

INT. HOODLUM'S VAN - DAY

Through the cracked windshield and dingleball fringe, it's just one abandoned warehouse on a block of several others. The mesh gate in the block wall has fallen down.

Hoodlum and ShyBoy point it out like they found El Dorado.

ROSAS

Okay, so that's where. Let's get to when. And who.

HOODLUM

Next couple of days. We're gonna know.

ROSA

Okay, let's get to why. You guys are fifth string losers. You're talking about big boys here, big money, big dope. So, why?

HOODLUM

We've muled for them, before. Stood pony.

SHYBOY

But what it is, my *prima* hooks up with this guy who drives for them. He told her, talking big shit. When they call him for this he'll be in bed with her. She'll call me if she gets paid.

ROSAS

I can arrange that. But let's get back to why Fletcher will be here.

SHYBOY

I don't think that's his name.

ROSAS

You think, Paco? Bring him into this thing for me.

HOODLUM

The driver brought him to see them.

ROSAS

How do you know?

HOODLUM

ShyBoy said...

ROSAS

Then let's let him tell it.

SHYBOY

That's it. Thing was, he's telling her this guy is like this street samurai. Freelancer. Ex-cop, straightup killer. Well known.

ROSAS

And he drove him. Wow. Was your cousin impressed?

SHYBOY

I guess. She asked what he looked like.

ROSAS

Aha.

SHYBOY

Same Elvis glasses, missing finger. It's the guy who did Indio and Payaso and..

ROSAS

Grumpy and Sneezzy and Sleepy. I got it. You're going to hook me up on this then? When it jumps off?

SHYBOY

Sure. But you'll owe us, right?

HOODLUM

See, we were thinking we could cut ourselves in here. All that money and dope on the table...

SHYBOY

But these guys are out of our league. You...

ROSAS

Could swing a SWAT truck, right? Come in, bust it up, give you guys the dope for being good citizens?

HOODLUM

All we're saying, you'll owe us. *Que no?*

Rosas takes a pause and a breath.

ROSAS

You got it. You put me there with Fletcher and I owe you.

INT. ALICIA'S OFFICE - DAY

Sylvia and Alicia face each other across the desk. Two aged manila folders lie between them.

ALICIA

Reading between the lines a little,  
I get the impression Moms wasn't so  
much a bag whore as a coke pimp.  
Rented out little Novena in  
exchange for her buzz.

Sylvia stares at her, shocked speechless. Alicia shrugs.

ALICIA

It happens. I've seen worse.

SYLVIA

Wait. You read her files?

ALICIA

Why? You can see them but I can't?

SYLVIA

I'm an official physician with her  
case on my desk. Determining  
fitness to return to duty.

ALICIA

So official you have to come in  
here and get me to sneak these  
files for you? Are you a  
psychiatrist?

SYLVIA

No, a GP.

ALICIA

Too bad. As far as I'm concerned  
she's emotionally unfit for duty.  
She loses control, kills people.

SYLVIA

You, on the other hand, never lose  
control and attack people.

ALICIA

And I was unfit for duty. I admit  
it. I took a long time off, got  
therapy, changed jobs. You know  
what he did to her, right?

SYLVIA

Just what I got from the news.

ALICIA

Trust me, he had it coming. I've been through the mill of programs, counseling, all that. And I'm stuck here serving this community for another two years. I hope that satisfies you.

SYLVIA

It's fine with me. I am curious about how you continued to work in this field after that. I would think...

ALICIA

It was a ticklish situation for them. Lots of people thought I should get a medal.

SYLVIA

(Smiling)

So I hear. I sense a very delicate political arrangement here. And some heavy pull somewhere.

SYLVIA

Thanks for your support. But we were talking about the volatile Señorita Rosas.

SYLVIA

She has violence and anger issues.

ALICIA

I was there when she got shot, did you know that? And when Cam got hit. God, that was a day from hell.

She shudders slightly at the memory, recovers.

ALICIA

You should have seen Rosas. She strutted out there like Gunfight at the OK Corral. She's a gunslinger.

SYLVIA

She's all of that, all right.

ALICIA

But I don't think it's all that OK. Cops like her get people hurt.

SYLVIA

We agree. I'm trying to help her. That's why I want these files.

ALICIA

And what, exactly, is your relationship with her?

SYLVIA

I'm assigned to her evaluation.

ALICIA

Of gunshot wounds. That has nothing to do with this material. I think it's a personal matter.

SYLVIA

It is. I'm very interested in seeing her get it together.

Alicia studies her for a moment, comes to a conclusion.

ALICIA

So little Ms. Nailcakes is a muff-muncher? Now it all makes sense.

SYLVIA

You read her history and talk about her like that? Boy, you're some kind of social worker.

ALICIA

The kind who thinks backgrounds explain, but don't excuse.

SYLVIA

Well, to answer your bitchy, unprofessional question, it remains to be seen if she's queer or not. I certainly am.

ALICIA

Look, no disrespect or anything, okay? Actually, you made my day.

SYLVIA

Like I said, we'll see. If all you've got going for you is being heterosexual, it might not be enough.

ALICIA

Look, I said, no disrespect intended. I hope she's okay. I really do. Here: good luck.

She leans forward and pushes the files at Sylvia, who scoops them up and slides them into a shoulder bag.

SYLVIA

She's already turned some big corners away from solving everything at gunpoint.

INT. SYLVIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Rosas sits on the bed, a twelve gauge riot gun across her thighs. Beside her is another box of shotgun shells, this one labeled: "DEER SLUGS". She racks several shells into the shotgun's magazine, then stands and moves into the closet with the shotgun and the rest of the box.

EXT. TRUCK RENTAL OFFICE - DAY

Seen through glass doors, Rosas, in jeans, warm-up jacket and Dodgers cap, takes a receipt and keychain from a Desk Clerk. She walks through the door just as a two ton rental truck pulls up.

The Driver steps down, waves her in. Rosas climbs up, adjusts seat and mirror, fastens her seat belt.

INT. SYLVIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sylvia and Rosas face each other over a kitchen table. The files from Alicia are spread out between them and Rosas is very attentive to them and to what Sylvia is saying.

SYLVIA

It doesn't explain anything away. But it gives you a lot to help make your own explanations.

ROSAS

And that'll help straighten me out?

SYLVIA

Have you ever heard that knowledge is power? It's really true about self-knowledge. It's almost like we do screwed-up things just to find out what the story is.

ROSAS

And you've got my story for me there in those files?

SYLVIA

More like a piece of a puzzle. I think I can fill in some blanks.

Rosas starts to reply, but her cellular phone rings. She looks at Sylvia apologetically, answers the phone.

ROSAS

Rosas. Let me...

Her face hardens up like a door slamming. She gives Sylvia a blank look, cups the phone.

ROSAS

Sorry, Syl. I have to take this.

INT. HOODLUM'S VAN - NIGHT

Hoodlum and ShyBoy slump low in the front seats of the van, listening to crappy barrio MUSIC as they creep along a street lined with warehouses. Hoodlum holds a cellular phone to his head.

Through the windshield Fletcher's Camaro is barely visible, edging through the gate of an warehouse yard.

HOODLUM

It's him all right. *No cabe duda.*  
So look, you owe us, okay? Okay?

He lowers the phone, snaps it shut.

HOODLUM

Man, what a straightup bitch.

INT. SYLVIA'S APARTMENT- BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sylvia sits on the pillow of her bed, watching aghast as Rosas dresses out for action, delicate lingerie disappearing under a Kevlar vest and generic khakis.

She straps on her six-shooter in a lowslung, legstrap nylon SWAT holster, the Glock at the small of her back. A second automatic hangs under her left arm. On the right side of the shoulder rig is a carefully sculpted hanger.

Rosas slides the closet open and pulls out a black duster-style overcoat. The pistolgrip riot gun hangs inside it. Sylvia is freshly horrified.

SYLVIA

That's been there all this time?  
Hanging in my closet?

ROSAS

I've been hiding here, too, maybe.  
Now I'm going back out to be me.

Sylvia points to the shotgun, fighting hysteria.

SYLVIA

That's who you are? No, Novi, that was your closet. That was where you hid from yourself by hurting other people. Can't you see that?

Rosas stops, looks at her, thinking it over.

ROSAS

Maybe you're right. I don't know.  
Maybe I'll find out.

SYLVIA

Or you'll be found dead. Or kill  
somebody else. Oh, Novi, you've  
come so far. Don't slip back  
into... that.

Rosas hangs the shotgun under her right arm, pulls on the  
duster, practices her reach for both twelve gauge and  
pistol. She checks her rig in the mirror, fluffs her hair.

Sylvia comes off the bed, approaches Rosas with some  
caution. She's beside herself.

SYLVIA

No! I won't let you do this.  
I'll... I won't clear you for  
duty. You're not operating  
legally, Rosas.

Rosas turns slowly, displaying her combat-operational mode  
to Sylvia, who shrinks from the sight.

ROSAS

Any of this look legal to you?

Sylvia summons her bravery, stands up to her.

SYLVIA

I'll call the station, Novi. I'll  
follow you. I'll do anything to...

Rosas puts her hands on Sylvia's shoulders. Lightly,  
affectionately. Firmly.

ROSAS

A girl's gotta do what a girl's  
gotta do.

She kisses Sylvia lingeringly on the lips, then steps away,  
turns and exits the bedroom.

LIVING ROOM

At the apartment door, Rosas does a last minute check-over,  
pulls handfuls of shells from the duster pocket for a look,  
pats her pockets, checks her flashlight beam.

Sylvia stands behind her, stricken, but resigned. Rosas  
turns to her, apologetically.

ROSAS

However this comes out, I won't be  
coming back. To stay, I mean.

SYLVIA

I know I'm too old for you. I was hoping you'd get older, too. But this isn't the way that happens.

ROSAS

No, it's that I'm too young. Too mixed up. I figured out I need my own identity. I love you, Sylvia. I'm sorry.

SYLVIA

(Tearfully)

Don't be. It's what I do: patch up cops until they're strong enough to dump me.

ROSAS

It's not...

SYLVIA

It's okay, Novi. You barely even scare the crap out of me anymore. I have my eye on a cute young suicide bomber.

Rosas smiles, tears up, steps toward her. Sylvia, choked up, motions her away.

SYLVIA

Go on, go louse up your recovery. Get your tits blown off.

ROSAS

One thing, though. If I do come back, you'll know it's for real. And so will I.

She turns, exits, softly closes the door behind her.

BEDROOM

Sylvia stands on the bedroom lanai, looking down at the parking lot. Rosas strides into view, unlocks the rental truck, swings up into the cab, starts up and pulls out.

At the lot exit, the truck signals a turn before pulling into the street and disappearing into the night.

SYLVIA

Always signal turns. The law is nothing it not a collection of small observances.

She steps inside, gets a candle from the collection by the bed, sets it in the window and lights it. She looks outside a minute, then kneels in front of the candle.

SYLVIA

Is there a novena for the living?

EXT. HILL ABOVE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Hoodlum's barrio van is parked in a dirt lot on a hillside overlooking the same warehouse. Rosas coasts up in her rental truck, steps down and approaches the van from the blind spot, shotgun ready.

INT. HOODLUM'S VAN - NIGHT

ShyBoy hits on a small glass pipe just as the side doors of the van wrench open and Rosas flows into the van with her shotgun sweeping the interior and coming to rest pointing at the back of Hoodlum's head.

He chokes, tosses the pipe out the window.

Rosas takes a kneeling position behind and between them, stares through the windshield at the warehouse below.

ROSAS

What's our situation, here?

HOODLUM

We're sitting in my van with some hardon bitch pointing shotguns at our heads.

ROSAS

I'm protecting and serving you assholes. What's up down there?

HOODLUM

Your boyfriend got there early. Drove this magnumed-out Camaro into the warehouse. He's the surprise party, I'd guess.

SHYBOY

The sellers got here, too. I didn't recognize any of them and the guys her *novio* works for are supposed to be buying.

ROSAS

They have cars inside?

HOODLUM

Just one, a fucking Hummer. You see the two outside?

ROSAS

Hard to miss a Mercedes and Lexus sitting on the street in this area. Any more lookouts?

HOODLUM  
We didn't see any.

ROSAS  
Good. I'll take it from here. You two stay here. Inside the van.

HOODLUM  
Look, you're going to...

ROSAS  
Stay here in the van, both of you. I'm serious.

HOODLUM  
Yeah, but hey, you owe us, right?

Rosas exits the van. Hoodlum raises his voice so she can hear him outside.

HOODLUM  
Right?

Rosas appears at the van window.

ROSAS  
Quiet, you idiot! Stay here.

HOODLUM  
But we got it comin', right?

ROSAS  
Right. Sure. Now shut up and sit tight.

The cholos look at each other as they hear the rental truck quietly start and creep away.

HOODLUM  
That *placa* bitch is going to fuck us over, *mano*.

SHYBOY  
Yeah, you bring a rental truck to a thing like this, you got to figure moving some weight.

HOODLUM  
Shit, knowing her it's full of ammo. She'll destroy the dope, kill every motherfucker in the area code.

SHYBOY  
Then give us the money, right?

HOODLUM

Yeah, right. You coming?

SHYBOY

Let me get my shit. Protect our investment.

He tugs a pistol from under the seat, sticks it in his waistband. The two cholos exit the van.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Inside the warehouse, the Hummer is parked in a clear space on the concrete floor, its headlights illuminating a pile of footlockers. A Seller's Thug sits nearby at a battered steel table. Several other Thugs are in evidence around the Hummer.

There is indication of bad faith in the upper walkways and rafters: several concealed Shooters with assault rifles and even infrared night vision goggles.

EXT. STREET SCENE - NIGHT

The buyers arrive, cautiously driving two Mercedes up the street and through the gate into the yard. They ghost by the sellers' lookout cars, which look menacing but empty.

QUICK SHOT of the rental van interior shows their drivers lying cuffed and unconscious.

A third car trails them, takes up a sentinel position on the street. All quiet so far.

Suddenly Rosas leaps down from the top of a wall, her duster streaming behind her. She lands in a squat beside the curb window of the sentry car, her shotgun pointing at the lookouts inside.

She tosses them plastic cuffs, signals wordlessly for them to secure themselves to the wheel and each other. She reaches in to take their guns and cellular phones, tosses them over the wall.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Rosas prowls in the dark, slinking along walls and catwalks, spotting positions of the concealed Shooters, on the lookout for Fletcher or other bad surprises.

She sees a slight dispute over the footlockers.

MAIN SELLER

Look we've got exposure here. You show us some money before we open up anything.

The Main Buyer gestures to an Underling holding a large metal camera case.

MAIN BUYER

You're exposed? There's three million right here. And my ass.

MAIN SELLER

So you show me yours, I show you mine.

MAIN BUYER

That's what I'm saying.

MAIN SELLER

What are we, virgins here? Okay, we both open up, give a peak, then lock back up until we're sitting down and dealing. Is that cool?

He nods, an underling carefully lifts one of the trunks, sets it down close to the Buyer.

Meanwhile, Hoodlum and ShyBoy creep along the periphery of the warehouse, checking out the scene and whispering to each other in excitement.

SHYBOY

*Barbaro!* Look at all that, shit, *mano*.

HOODLUM

Fuck the shit. He said three million! Three motherfucking *million!*

SHYBOY

Wait up, *carnal*. There's the blow, there's the money. Where's Rosas? And where's that machine gun *vato?*

Unfortunately, their big eyes for the prize cause them to overlook one of the hidden Shooters. Who spots them in the green glow of his nightscope, seeing two intruders with guns in their belts. He opens fire.

Bursts of automatic fire blast out of the darkness, bouncing off iron and concrete. Hoodlum and ShyBoy are caught like rats, pinned down and hit.

ShyBoy screams, grabbing his bleeding forearm. Hoodlum grunts and curses as bullets rip through his legs and shoulder. Both lie helpless, awaiting death.

But lucky for them, death has other fish to fry. The warehouse erupts into a mass slaughter. The Sellers by the Hummer have guns out instantly, spitting cones of flame as they hose down the cars of the Buyers. The Buyer Underling with the money case is hit and goes down.

The Buyers are also throwing down with a vengeance. The Main Seller takes a hit, then a flurry of impacts, and slumps over the table. The Hummer is jumping and losing parts under the fire from the Buyers' cars.

But the advantage is with the Sellers, their concealed snipers pouring fire from above. The Buyers are trapped in a withering crossfire.

Until Fletcher, also wearing sniperscope goggles and carrying two assault rifles, makes his move. Flitting like a phantom in the dark, he surgically eliminates snipers. He fires steadily, precisely. It's raining men.

Rosas is also in play, dodging through the support beams firing at Fletcher. He eludes her in the darkness.

He also triggers a grenade launcher attached to one of his weapons: an M-79 grenade streaks across the warehouse and blows the Hummer apart. Dazed gunmen stagger away from it but Fletcher scythes them down.

Rosas fires at the point the grenade emerged from, but hits nothing. She runs towards the point, shotgun pointing ahead from one hand, the Glock in the other.

Hoodlum is bad off. ShyBoy, less seriously hurt, kneels beside him, tugging at him. He stops when a pistol touches the top of his head. A WOUNDED SELLER stands over him.

WOUNDED SELLER

Who the fuck are you, asshole?

HOODLUM cranes his neck to look up, past the terrified ShyBoy, at the gunman.

HOODLUM

You talk to the father of your children like that, *pendejo*?

The Wounded Seller moves his pistol to point at Hoodlum, his face contorted in rage.

His face contorts even more as it slightly slows the passage of a twelve gauge steel slug. His head explodes and he is no longer much of a threat.

ROSAS (O.S.)

I told you little idiots to wait in the van.

ShyBoy falls over on his back, staring at her. Hoodlum is shaking with pain and fear. Rosas squats beside them.

ROSAS

Stay here! Keep quiet! You morons.

She stands again, surveying the charnel house around her.

SHYBOY

Shit, the suitcase of money's gone.

Rosas raps him on the head with her Glock.

ROSAS

I said shut up, dammit.

But he's right. The case is gone and she can hear footsteps running through the dark warehouse. She runs off in another direction.

As soon as she leaves, Hoodlum starts inching his painful way towards the footlockers, leaving a smear of blood.

ShyBoy stays where he was, shaking his head. He hisses out a warning whisper.

SHYBOY

No, *carnal*. We're out of here.

Hoodlum continues crawling to the trunks.

HOODLUM

You shittin' me? Here's the stuff.  
Help me, we can get it.

ShyBoy sits, frozen. He looks towards the exit, then starts toward Hoodlum. Then he takes a look at Hoodlum's condition. He's not giving any more orders.

SHYBOY

Fuck that, *ese*. Let me help you  
out of here. *Vamanos*.

HOODLUM

Fuck you, you piece of shit.

Slowly, ShyBoy pulls away from Hoodlum. He uses his good arm to push to his feet, staggers away clutching his arm.

HOODLUM

*Vas a ver*, chickenshit. You're on  
your own.

Hoodlum continues, reaching the closest footlocker. Triumphantly, he pulls himself to his knees, grabs the carry strap, and tugs it towards himself. It jumps forward, weightless, and knocks him over. Empty.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Fletcher makes it to the shed where his Camaro is stashed under a tarp. He moves behind it, scans for pursuit, pointing his gun over the hood.

Seeing nobody near him, he drags the tarp off, jumps in, and burns rubber for the main gate.

EXT. WAREHOUSE YARD - NIGHT

The Camaro squeals around a corner, straight shot at the gate... which is completely blocked by Rosa's Rental truck.

Frustrated, Fletcher looks around, gets out and approaches the truck, case in one hand, assault rifle in the other.

Halfway to the truck he freezes, exposed, as a quick series of shots blow holes in his tires, windows and engine compartment. The fusillade goes on and on.

He stands still, sizing it up. Rosas is in a concealed, protected position, pointing the shotgun at him.

FLETCHER

I see you started believing in automatic firepower. That a Glock?

A louder report sounds and a large hole appears in the front of the car. A blast of steam suggests a pierced radiator.

FLETCHER

Slugs, huh? Not many people think of that. You're my kind of shooter, honey.

ROSAS

Drop the gun and the case. Hands behind your head. Shut up.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Hoodlum manages to drag himself to the final footlocker, which he hefts and cannot lift. Hoohah, the mother load. He gives a savage grin and pulls himself around to open it. There is no padlock. Hoodlum laughs.

Hauling himself to his knees, he unsnaps the catches. He spreads his hands to the ends of the trunk, savoring victory. Dramatically, he throws open the lid.

EXT. WAREHOUSE YARD - NIGHT

Even out in the yard, the explosion is pretty impressive. Fletcher is startled, Rosas doesn't flinch an inch.

ROSAS  
Dynamite dope.

FLETCHER  
Professional risks.

ROSAS  
That briefcase is a bomb, too.

FLETCHER  
Get real, gorgeous. How could you possibly know that?

ROSAS  
Same way I knew you'd be here and came to take you in.

FLETCHER  
"Take you in"? Are you for real?

ROSAS  
Drop the case and move away from it. Drop the gun, raise your hands.

ROSAS  
You telling me you don't want to share, SweetCakes? It's millions.

ROSAS  
Drop it, put your hands up.

FLETCHER  
You disappoint me, Sunshine. Where's your sporting blood? You're just trying to avoid your attraction to me.

ROSAS  
I'm trying to avoid killing you.

FLETCHER  
(Laughing)  
That is so sweet. You do care.

ROSAS  
It's part of my recovery.

FLETCHER  
What? CopAnon? You're better than this. Stop hiding: call me out.

ROSAS  
You're already out. This isn't a game of chicken and I'm not Wyatt Earp. I'm a police officer.

FLETCHER

You gotta be shitting me. You're making what, forty a year? You know what you and I could make in the private sector? And have a lot of fun doing it, Baby.

ROSAS

Less than forty, but it's enough. They pay me real money, not a bag of explosives now and then.

ROSAS

It's not a fucking bomb, Rosas.

ROSAS

Then you won't mind if I pop a cap.

She fires, he pulls the bag behind his body.

FLETCHER

Shit! What's wrong with you?

ROSAS

Where's your sporting blood? Fine. Drop your gun. Last time I tell you. You're under arrest.

He turns his back, the case hanging behind his legs, and slowly walks away.

FLETCHER

Know what I think, Rosas? I don't think you'll shoot me in the back.

ROSAS

No, I'll shoot you in the legs. Remember?

He takes a few more steps.

FLETCHER

Will you? Because I'm faster than you, remember?

He busts an exceptional move, whirling and throwing the case at her, along with a burst of automatic fire. At the same time he jumps on the car, trampolining up to grab a dangling piece of angle iron and swing out of her line of fire.

Rosas shots hit the case, warping it open and blasting it against the warehouse wall.

Rosas heaves a breath, checks her pistols, racks the riot gun, and heads into the warehouse, crouched like a hunter.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Rosas cautiously stalks through the warehouse, her shotgun pointing ahead of her like the sniffing muzzle of a hound.

She and Fletcher play a silent cat/mouse game, in shots that use the features of the location to advantage. They are pros: this is not the typical chase scene where idiots bang away at nothing. It's all suspense as both shooters angle for the kill shot.

Rosas sees a hint of movement and covers it, but there is no shot. Dispassionately, she moves on.

Fletcher tosses a bit of debris across the building, whanging into sheet metal. But it draws no fire. He nods happily to himself, glides deeper into the building.

Rosas comes to a ladder, examines it thoughtfully, shakes her head and moves on.

Fletcher comes to a place that suits him, looks around carefully. There is a large slice of bare floor in front of him, the sidewalls visible. A blind alley.

He moves through a small doorway and turns to face the open space from the darker interior.

FLETCHER

Hey, Rosas!

In the shadows, Rosas turns, points at his voice.

FLETCHER

This is a perfect place to discuss  
a better future, sweetheart.

Extremely cautious, Rosas inches towards him.

FLETCHER

You're all I'd ever want in a  
woman. And I don't think you've  
found any serious male matchups.  
We're a perfect couple.

Rosas stands at one end of the open area, scans it.

FLETCHER

In a perfect world, we'd be mates.  
Running together, doing whatever we  
like, taking whatever we want.  
Making love like wild carnivores.

Rosas eases into the exposed space, back to the wall.

FLETCHER

We should really talk about a partnership. Take a test drive.

Rosas is committed to the open area now, moving forward protected only by whatever cover she can generate by shooting.

FLETCHER

Think about it, OK? Get back to me.

He thrusts an assault rifle through the doorway. He has the drop on Rosas, but is protected behind the doorjamb.

Rosas freezes, the shotgun pointing at the corner that shelters Fletcher's body.

FLETCHER

Who knows, maybe that perfect world's right around the corner?

The Mexican standoff continues for a long moment, Rosas fixed on her shot, the rifle unwavering.

FLETCHER

I could cut you in half right now, honey. But that's the last thing I want. Drop the shotgun. Now.

Rosas sizes it up, drops the gun. Carefully, she reaches to her lapels and sheds the duster. She stands exposed and ready, pistols holstered.

Fletcher eases out of the doorway, covering her.

FLETCHER

I'm surprised you'd get caught in the open like that. Unless you're interested in the same thing I am.

ROSAS

You're under arrest. Drop the gun.

FLETCHER

Okay.

He lowers the assault rifle, lets it fall to the floor.

He faces her in classic showdown pose, pistols in sight.

FLETCHER

We can still kiss and make up.

ROSAS

I'm not really into makeup.

FLETCHER

Well, then podnuh...

EXT. WAREHOUSE YARD - NIGHT

ShyBoy bursts out of the warehouse door, eyes on the gate and escape from horror. But as he stumbles towards the gate he sees a gleam by the wall. Slowing, he spots the damaged metal case. He screeches to a halt.

Shivering with fear, he approaches the case. He sees money sticking out. He looks around, dives on the case, opens it.

The sight of millions of bucks stops him, a holy experience. His face slack and gentle as a lover's, he reaches to touch the money. Then grabs handfuls, stuffing it in his pockets.

He realizes he can't stash it all. He looks around, then grabs the case up, holding it to his chest with both arms, and runs to the gate, where he skins under the rental truck.

He is on his back beneath the truck when he hears a single shot from inside the warehouse.

SHYBOY

Oh, shit.

He scrambles out from under the truck, hears pounding and yelling from the truck body. He looks one direction and sees two pissed-off guys cuffed in a car, yelling at him. He runs the other way.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. CRIME SCENE - NIGHT

Two squad cars are at the scene already, light bars strobing. Sirens indicate more are on the way.

DISPATCHER (O.S.)

(Urgent, crackly)

...report shots fired. Officer  
down...

The arrival of an aid car drowns out the car radio.

Amid the confusion and light show, another car pulls up to the scene. A Cop steps to the window, leans down to speak.

SCENE COP

Yeah, Kocherhans is busted up. He  
fell down an airshaft and popped a  
few caps to get some attention.

INT. SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

Cole laughs, in relief and scorn.

COLE

He always was a dork.

SCENE COP

Really. Well, it's handled. Go ahead and clear. Drop by anytime.

As Cole pulls the car away from the scene, he turns to Rosas, sitting in uniform, shaking her head in amusement.

ROSAS

He likes attention: now he's got all he can handle.

COLE

Gee, sorry, Nova. You've been back a week and we still haven't found you any perps to waste.

ROSAS

Listen...

COLE

For awhile I thought you were going to have to plug Alicia, when she found out you were back in my car. But she dealt with it.

ROSAS

Alicia's all right. Does she really worry about me jumping your bones?

COLE

No, she worries about you getting my ass shot off.

ROSAS

Tell her not to worry. My roomie's a really good doctor.

A heavy pause.

ROSAS

Are you worried about me getting you killed?

COLE

I think it's more like you're on a suicide mission.

Another long pause.

ROSAS  
Actually, I'm getting a handle on that. Sort of.

COLE  
Glad to hear it.

ROSAS  
I'm getting some help.

COLE  
Cool. Can't wait to tell all the guys.

ROSAS  
Okay, maybe I could waste just one more, then quit.

COLE  
Good idea. Taper off.

ROSAS  
Believe it or not, I learned something from that Fletcher asshole.

COLE  
Not to tackle a machine gun with a sixgun? Me, too.

ROSAS  
That I don't want to be like him.

Cole shoots her a glance, looks back to his driving.

COLE  
Figured that out, did you?

ROSAS  
Listen, Cam, when I was on leave I broke the law. Seriously. A lot.

COLE  
Wow. Of all people. Was it fun?

EXT. STREET SCENE - NIGHT

Seen from above, their patrol car moves slowly down an arterial, approaching a congested area.

ROSAS (V.O.)  
Not what you'd call fun. I'm not going to do it again. But... The reason I told you... I don't know... It's just that...

COLE (V.O.)  
Things aren't as black and white as  
you thought?

ROSAS (V.O.)  
It looks like nothing is.

COLE (V.O.)  
Welcome to the human race.  
(Beat)  
I still feel the same about  
department regs, though.

ROSAS (V.O.)  
Yeah, me too.

COLE (V.O.)  
I probably shouldn't ask, but I  
think I got a right. You also  
getting some of your more personal  
shit a little more squared away?

ROSAS (V.O.)  
Yeah. For now.  
(Beat)  
But we're not gonna talk about it.

COLE (V.O.)  
Good.

The car dwindles, gets lost in the lights of the traffic.

FADE OUT: