

ALIAS

"Welcome Home"

by

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ACT ONE

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Frantic footsteps pound on the shiny pavement.

SYDNEY BRISTOW clumsily runs from an unseen pursuer. Her eyes wide with fright.

VOICE (O.S.)

Sarah? Sarah.

She rounds a corner and stops a moment. Catching her breath. The alley, eerily silent. Only her labored breathing breaks the quiet. She starts to relax, convinced she's lost her pursuer.

From nowhere, a hand clamps on her shoulder. She SCREAMS.

INT. PRIVATE CIA PLANE - AFTERNOON

Sydney bolts upright with a barely contained scream. Instinctively, she grabs the hand on her shoulder and twists around to face...

MICHAEL VAUGHN. Though surprised, he counters her move and extracts his hand before she can break it.

VAUGHN

Sydney! It's just me.

She blinks a couple times then looks around the empty plane. She finally relaxes in her seat.

SYDNEY

How long have I been asleep?

VAUGHN

Just over ten hours. I didn't want to wake you -- Bad dream?

Sydney pulls a blanket up to her chin with a small shaky smile. Some fear still lingers in her eyes.

SYDNEY

I don't remember.

Vaughn studies her skeptically. His shoulders slump heavily. He takes a deep breath.

CONTINUED:

VAUGHN

We're about an hour out. There've been...changes I should tell you about --

Sydney's eyes flick to his wedding ring before she can stop them.

He catches her glance and tucks his hand out of sight.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

-- about Sloane.

SYDNEY

-- you guys got him, right? I mean he can't still be running around free.

VAUGHN

He's taken over.

SYDNEY

What does that mean? Taken over?

VAUGHN

He deciphered Rambaldi. He's become the most powerful man in the world.

SYDNEY

How is that possible?

INT. WORLD ORGANIZATION - BOARDROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Stuffy looking MEN and WOMEN, Delegates, sit at long tables. Flags of the countries they represent and their names are posted on the placards in front of them.

VAUGHN (V.O.)

He has the ear of every industrialized country in the world. Il Dire. It's made him like a prophet. Everyone clamors to keep him happy. Keep him on their side.

They all stare with rapt fascination at ARVIN SLOANE who addresses them from a podium. He nods slightly, signalling the end of his presentation.

Thunderous applause erupts from the delegates. Those closest to him fight politely to shake his hand. He plays at being humble.

INT. PRIVATE CIA PLANE

Sydney stares at Vaughn in stunned disbelief.

SYDNEY

He's never on anyone's side. Except his own.

VAUGHN

(shrugs)

He's changed. He's a businessman now.

SYDNEY

A businessman? What's his business? Assassination?

INT. MONASTERY - CONRAD'S ROOM - NEPAL - DAY "COUNTDOWN"

Sloane reads the single sheet of paper.

VAUGHN (V.O.)

Zero point energy.

INT. PRODUCTION PLANT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Thousands of tiny red balls free float over metal half spears on conveyor belts.

TECHNICIANS in Haz Mat gear man huge metal freezing chambers. A group of balls go into the freezers. They come out the other side frozen in mid air above the metal. Technicians pack them in boxes.

Not missing a beat, LOADERS pack the boxes on trucks.

Sloane watches the operation from on high in an observation chamber.

VAUGHN (V.O.)

He learned how to harness its power. Every household has their own circumference.

INT. PRIVATE CIA PLANE

Sydney eyes Vaughn. Absolutely horrified.

CONTINUED:

<p>SYDNEY</p> <p>Zero point energy comes from the circumference --? The very thing that nearly <u>killed</u> you is now in everyone's <u>homes</u>?</p> <p>-- everyone just goes <u>along</u> with this?</p>	<p>VAUGHN</p> <p>-- Yes --</p> <p>-- The virus was a by product of miscalculation. The bacteria die on the assembly line -- -- It's a cheaper, less labor intensive energy source.</p>
--	--

Sydney just stares at him unable to believe what she's hearing.

SYDNEY  
You sound like you...approve.

VAUGHN  
(shrugs)  
Zero point energy has changed the  
world.

SYDNEY  
At least tell me Sloane has been  
punished for his crimes.

Vaughn looks away.

Sydney leans forward urgently; studying him.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
Vaughn. Tell me the CIA brought him  
down. He is running his...  
business...from prison, right.

VAUGHN  
The CIA...well...Syd, The CIA works  
for Sloane.

Sydney exhales hard and fast.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. LAX TERMINAL

Vaughn hurries towards the curb, preoccupied with looking for their car. Sydney rushes after him dodging other PASSENGERS.

SYDNEY

Vaughn! Wait a minute.

She catches up to him at the curb.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

How can you knowingly work for the very enemy I thought we were fighting?

VAUGHN

Nothing's really changed.

Sydney can only stare at him. She backs a step away from him.

SYDNEY

I can't believe...He's a murderer! Surely you can't condone...

VAUGHN

He's been pardoned. It's just water under the bridge, now. I strongly suggest that you try to put aside these...negative feelings if you want your job back.

SYDNEY

Want my job back? I will never work for that man, that monster, again! I don't see how...

VAUGHN

-- don't be hasty, Sydney.  
I'm sure you've been through a lot --  
-- these feelings are inappropriate, but understandable --

SYDNEY

-- I've been through a lot?  
-- inappropriate?  
understandable? What is wrong with you?

VAUGHN

It'll pass.

They stare at each other at an impasse.

CONTINUED:

A dark sedan stops at the curb in front of them. Vaughn gives her a comforting smile.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)  
Just talk to your parents before  
you make a final decision. Okay?

SYDNEY  
My...parents?

Sydney stares at him in utter horror.

He reaches for her arm to help her in the car. She flinches away. Gets in the car unaided. Vaughn's content mask slips a little. Hurt flicks over his features. The mask settles firmly back in place as he climbs in after her.

INT. ROTUNDA

CIA AGENTS, all really young, bustle about with urgent efficiency mixed with a little fear. Brittle smiles permanently reside on their faces.

JACK BRISTOW confers with a couple AGENTS at a computer terminal. He smiles and pats one on the back before moving away. Guided only by the instinct of a father, he freezes. Then turns around to see...

Sydney. Vaughn stands unobtrusively behind her as she looks around; reorienting herself. She spots Jack. She gives him a shy, "Hi, Dad" smile then starts towards him.

Jack grins ear to ear.

JACK  
Sydney? Sydney!

Arms outstretched, he nearly runs across the room to her. Her steps falter a bit in confusion. She meets him halfway. He sweeps her off her feet and into a huge bear hug; swinging her around.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Oh, baby. It's good to have you  
home.

SYDNEY  
Hi Dad.

Jack sets her on her feet. He holds her at arms length to get a good look at her. Sydney can only stand awkwardly and let him.

CONTINUED:

JACK  
You're really here!

He kisses her and hugs her tightly again. Sydney tenses in the tight embrace. She hugs him back.

SYDNEY  
Dad? It's okay.

JACK  
Of course it is, sweetheart.  
Vaughn, get everyone. We'll be in the briefing room.

Vaughn nods with a teary smile. He takes off down the corridor.

INT. ROTUNDA - BRIEFING ROOM

Sydney studies Jack closely. He ushers her into a chair.

JACK  
Sitsitsit. Oh I can't tell you how worried I...we...all were.

SYDNEY  
Dad, are you okay?

JACK  
I'm wonderful. Now that I have my little girl home.

The door flies open. Vaughn leads WILL TIPPIN, ERIC WEISS, MARCUS DIXON, MARSHALL FLINKMAN and IRINA DEREVKO inside. After they all file inside, Vaughn takes a long look at Sydney. He slips out, closing the door behind him.

Sydney does a slight double take at Irina's appearance. She looks at everyone else for any telltale signs that Irina doesn't belong in this welcome home party.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Look who's home.

Sydney stands as Irina pulls her into a warm, tender embrace.

IRINA  
My sweet darling baby. Welcome home.

SYDNEY  
Thanks, Mom.

CONTINUED:

Sydney eyes Jack over Irina's shoulder.

Jack's wonderfully happy expression betrays nothing. He wipes at a tear. Irina tears herself away from Sydney. She joins Jack along the side.

Will greets Sydney. She hugs him tightly and closes her eyes

INT. SYDNEY'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM "THE TELLING"

Sydney falls by the tub. Sees Will lying bloody and unconscious in it.

INT. ROTUNDA - BRIEFING ROOM

She smiles in an unsuccessful attempt to keep the tears from falling. She finally pulls herself away from Will.

SYDNEY

Hi.

WILL

I missed you so much.

Sydney wipes at a tear. Her gaze lands on her parents. They stand together, arms casually looped around each other.

Will steps away and Marshall sweeps her up in a hug before she can question the sight further.

MARSHALL

I tried to come up with the perfect greeting-- You've been gone...so long...and I missed you but -- All I've got so far-- It's good to see you, Syd.

SYDNEY

Thank you, Marshall. It is perfect.

He moves away to make room for Dixon. He just hugs her, too choked up to actually speak. Sydney smiles.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Hi, Dixon.

Weiss gives her a big smacking kiss along with his hug.

WEISS

You can use Vaughn's old desk.

CONTINUED:

Sydney looks around at all the smiling faces of her friends and family.

SYDNEY

Thanks, but...Where's Vaughn?

JACK

He probably had to get back to work. I'm sure you're tired. I'll drive you home. Tomorrow is soon enough to jump back into all of this.

Jack turns to Irina.

JACK (CONT'D)

Hold the fort?

IRINA

Of course.

Jack beams at her, then gives Irina a passionate kiss. She gives as good as she gets.

Sydney blinks in complete shock.

WEISS

I keep telling you two to get a room.

JACK

Ready?

INT. BRISTOW HOUSE - FRONT ENTRANCE

Jack ushers Sydney in the front door. She looks around the completely normal looking front room.

Pictures of Jack and Irina adorn the walls. Pictures of Sydney at various ages interspersed among them.

SYDNEY

You and Mom are back together?

Jack takes a deep breath and looks at Sydney. Some sadness creeps in his expression.

JACK

Your "death" was very hard on both of us.

CONTINUED:

SYDNEY

So just like that you've forgotten everything that woman has --

JACK

Please do not refer to her as "that woman." She is your mother.

Taken aback, Sydney can only stare at Jack. She just barely keeps her jaw from dropping to her chest.

SYDNEY

You've forgotten everything that Irina Derevko has done.

JACK

Sydney, please. That tone. We've moved past it.

SYDNEY

It's a little late to start parenting now.

Jack grits his teeth.

JACK

I'm really happy you're home, but your mother and I are not going to put up with this attitude.

SYDNEY

What is wrong with you?

JACK

Let me show you to your room.

SYDNEY

My...room?

INT. BRISTOW HOUSE - STAIRWAY

Jack leads Sydney upstairs.

JACK

Your apartment has been leased. Your mother and I would love you to stay with us until...you get settled.

SYDNEY

I don't understand. How can you forgive Mom so easily?

INT. BRISTOW HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Jack sighs.

JACK

I know this is a lot to take in. I wish I had time to explain--

INT. SYDNEY'S ROOM

Jack shows her into the frilly girly-girl room. He picks up a Walkman from the dresser and tosses it on the bed.

JACK

I can't be away too long. You should get some rest. Your mother recorded some lullabies for you. We'll see you at dinner.

INT. ROTUNDA

Jack walks through, reading a file. KENDALL hurries to catch up with him. He waves a clipboard.

KENDALL

I just got the duty roster for tomorrow.

Jack nods and keeps walking.

KENDALL (CONT'D)

Sydney's on it.

JACK

Yes. I put her there.

KENDALL

Isn't it a little soon? She hasn't even been back twenty-four hours.

JACK

She'll be up to speed by then.

KENDALL

It's not a matter of if she's up to speed or not, Jack. She's been gone for two years. Two years. Not a word. We know nothing about where she was, what she was doing. We don't even know that her disappearance wasn't voluntary.

CONTINUED:

Jack whirls on Kendall. He takes a moment to calm himself; pastes on a smile. More than an hint of danger still lingers in his eyes.

JACK

You are not suggesting that Sydney's disappearance was anything other than out of her control.

KENDALL

We have to look at all the possibilities--

JACK

That isn't one of them.

Kendal stares at Jack for a long moment.

KENDALL

I hate to think about this as much as you... We need to learn more about where she was and what happened to her. That's the bottom line--

JACK

I seriously doubt that.

The bottom line is we're short handed. Regardless of anything else, she is the best.

Kendall only looks at Jack. Finally he backs down; hating to admit defeat.

KENDALL

Team only. No leads, no solos. Any sign something's off, pull her.

JACK

Done.

EXT. SYDNEY'S COLLEGE CAMPUS

Sydney strolls idly around the grounds. She urgently searches the faces of the other students swirling by her. They pay her no attention.

INT. SYDNEY'S ROOM - EVENING

Drained, Sydney drags herself in the room. She collapses on the bed next to the Walkman. After a moment she picks it up; starts to toss it away, but stops to look at it skeptically.

CONTINUED:

SYDNEY

Lullabies.

INT. ROTUNDA - MORNING

Sydney walks in, a light spring in her step. She smiles and greets her CIA CO-WORKERS, both old and new.

IRINA (V.O.)

Sydney. Please forgive us the abruptness. We needed to bring you up to speed quickly and we can't afford the emotion this conversation would evoke if done in person.

INT. SYDNEY'S ROOM - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

Sydney frowns and adjusts the headphones, but keeps listening.

IRINA (V.O.)

Vaughn undoubtedly told you about Sloane. What he couldn't...tell you is that Sloane is infinitely more dangerous today than when you disappeared two years ago.

INT. ROTUNDA

Sydney drops her bag at her desk next to Dixon. He looks up at her and smiles. He stands and walks with her to Will's desk.

IRINA (V.O.)

He assembled Il Dire, an infallible detector of the one human element which cannot be controlled -- Pure emotion. Sloane uses it to exploit the world's leaders as he sees fit.

Will joins Sydney and Dixon.

IRINA (CONT'D)

The result? Sloane is now viewed as a skilled diplomat, worldwide. In exchange for his extraordinary abilities the governments of the world have chosen to absolve him of all guilt.

The three of them get Marshall and Weiss.

CONTINUED:

IRINA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Only a few of us who have  
experienced his treachery first  
hand are left to bring him to  
justice. We hope that you are still  
among our ranks.

They all head to the briefing room door where Irina waits  
with an approving smile. The group disappears inside.

INT. ROTUNDA - BRIEFING ROOM

The group files inside and sits around the table.

Jack is already seated at the head; a pile of Op packets  
beside him. The top one has Sydney's name on it.

Irina closes the Briefing Room door with a decisive click  
before taking a seat at the table herself.

Jack, the stoic Spy Daddy Jack, stands.

JACK  
Welcome home, Sydney.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. ROTUNDA - BRIEFING ROOM

Jack presses a button. A picture of a slightly Asian looking MAN appears on the monitors in front of each chair.

JACK

Dr. Estevao Qing Lian. Nuclear physicist with a lab in Macau.

A map of Macau replaces the doctor's picture on the monitors.

JACK (CONT'D)

We just received Intel confirming that he's been working on a project that will sabotage the circumference.

DIXON

Sabotage how?

JACK

It drains the energy moments after the extractors are applied. It will shoot a virus through the wiring and render entire households, businesses, Agencies -- powerless. Infected parties have to switch back to electricity until the virus is eradicated.

WILL

And costs will skyrocket again.

IRINA

Exactly. Your mission is to infiltrate Dr. Quin Lian's lab and confiscate the prototype. You'll destroy his research before leaving.

Jack points to the map.

JACK

Bridges connect the two islands of Macau to the mainland. His lab is located on the underbelly of this bridge.

Jack circles the western most bridge on the map.

CONTINUED:

IRINA

Your counter mission is to...

SYDNEY

Hold on...Isn't he listening?

Jack grins at her.

JACK

He has become too arrogant. He  
relies on Il Dire for his...Intel.

Sydney nods her understanding. Marshall points at the door.

MARSHALL

Bug killer. Just in case...

IRINA

...protect Dr. Qing Lian and his  
research from yourselves. He's  
developing a product that will  
lengthen the life of the  
circumference.

JACK

Dixon you're on point. Sydney and  
Will round out your team.

Sydney shoots Will a surprised look. He grins sheepishly.

Jack distributes the Op packets to the team.

IRINA

A Casino yacht will cruise under  
the lab tomorrow. The team will  
board it just off the coast of  
China. See Marshall for your op  
tech. Good luck!!

INT. ROTUNDA

The group files out of the briefing room. Sydney links arms  
with Will as they walk toward his desk.

SYDNEY

You're in the field now?

WILL

I was going to tell you --

CONTINUED:

SYDNEY

Last I remember you were applying  
for Senior Analyst.

Will looks away for a moment.

WILL

It was really hard -- Your...  
disappearance. I wanted...needed...  
to do something to honor your  
memory. And Francie's.

SYDNEY

She's...?

Will nods. Tears well in his eyes, too. She takes his hand.  
Holds it like a life line.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Could you take me...? Do we have  
time?

Will squeezes her hand. Leads her away.

EXT. CEMETARY

Alone, Sydney kneels by a headstone; tears streaming down her  
cheeks. She gently touches the engraving which reads:  
"Frances Calfo. You are missed."

Will steps closer, puts a comforting hand on Sydney's  
shoulder. He kneels next to her. Sydney tries to wipe the  
tears away.

SYDNEY

You never found her body. How do  
you know...?

WILL

At the restaurant. We found blood.  
Hers. With traces of her...grey  
matter...in it.

Sydney stares at Will, horrified. His own grief, still fresh  
and raw in his eyes. Sydney swallows hard. Will squeezes her  
hand. Forces a smile to his face.

WILL (CONT'D)

We have to be careful. Il Dire  
will...

Sydney nods. She tries to summon a smile.

CONTINUED:

SYDNEY

I still have you. I was afraid...

WILL

I'm pretty tough. The neighbors  
heard the shots. Called the police.

Sydney sits back on her heels, brow furrowed in deep thought.  
Will watches her closely.

WILL (CONT'D)

Vaughn spent every spare moment he  
had at my bedside. When he wasn't  
out looking for you. I thought,  
"what a great guy."

SYDNEY

He is a great guy.

WILL

Then I realized, he was just  
hanging around to see if I  
remembered anything -- That might  
lead him to you.

Sydney looks at Will; hope flaring briefly in her eyes. It  
dies just as quickly.

WILL (CONT'D)

You should talk to him.

SYDNEY

We talked.

WILL

No, Syd. I mean really talk. You  
both need to...

Their beepers go off.

Sydney looks at hers, grateful for the interruption.

SYDNEY

We've gotta go.

BLACK SCREEN: The word "MACAU" scrolls across. Push in  
through the "C".

EXT. CASINO YACHT - DECK

Sydney and Dixon, in formal evening attire, board the Yacht amid a crowd of similarly attired GUESTS. Sydney hangs lovingly on Dixon's arm while he hangs on her every word.

Dixon guides her among the noisy slot machines.

SYDNEY  
Honey, we're home.

INT. ROTUNDA

Irina, Jack, Weiss and Marshall sit around a Sat Com speaker.

IRINA  
Copy that, Sweetheart. Baby Boy,  
what's your twenty?

EXT. BRIDGE

Will, wearing hip waders, raincoat and a tackle gear hat, waddles towards the middle of the bridge with his bucket and fishing pole.

Lights from the approaching yacht shine behind him.

WILL  
Down for a nap.

He puts the bucket down and prepares to cast his line.

Two CHINESE MEN give him odd looks as they pass. One chuckles and taps his friend.

CHINAMAN  
(in Chinese)  
He'll catch a cold before he gets a  
fish.

Will smiles at the guy.

WILL  
(in Chinese)  
Then I can really get away from the  
missus.

The men nod sympathetically and continue on.

EXT. CASINO YACHT - DECK

Sydney's eyes widen and she looks at Dixon.

CONTINUED:

SYDNEY

Since when does Will speak Chinese?

DIXON

Lots of things have changed.

His statement kills some of her amusement.

Dixon forces a brittle smile to his lips as he stares out over the expanse of ocean. He lights a cigar with a cigar lighter.

SYDNEY

How are you doing? Since...

DIXON

Diane?

Sydney nods.

DIXON (CONT'D)

It gets a little easier everyday.

Sydney studies him for a moment. Finally, she squeezes his hand and gives him a sad smile.

SYDNEY

No it doesn't.

DIXON

Time to move.

Sydney and Dixon look up to see the bridge looming closer and closer to the boat.

SYDNEY

We're in position.

EXT. BRIDGE

Will watches the yacht pass underneath him.

WILL

Copy that.

INT. ROTUNDA - MARSHALL'S SPACE (FLASHBACK)

Marshall holds up the fishing pole for Will to see.

MARSHALL

Just a normal fishing pole, right?  
Not right. See here?

CONTINUED:

He points to the button that releases the line to cast it.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

Normally you'd press this little baby here to cast your line. On this model, it casts the line and emits a high frequency pulse that'll interrupt the energy flow of any circumference within a mile radius.

He presses the button. Immediately, the offices plunge into complete darkness.

Frightened and confused shouts come from other PERSONNEL. Muttered curses and CRASHES interspersed throughout.

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

Oops. It only lasts a minute. So you'll use these...

He pauses in the still pitch black room.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

I'll show 'em to you in a minute...

EXT. CASINO YACHT - DECK

Amidst the darkened confusion on the yacht, Dixon and Sydney click their heels together. Air bursts from their soles, propelling them upward into the sky.

INT. ROTUNDA - MARSHALL'S SPACE (FLASHBACK)

The lights flick back on. Marshall, Will, Sydney and Dixon all blink in the sudden brightness.

MARSHALL

See? One minute.

He holds up two pairs of shoes.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

Looks like regular shoes. Except I modified them with air propulsion soles. Click the heels together and...whoosh. You're flying.

Sydney picks up a three inch jeweled pump.

SYDNEY

You're kidding.

CONTINUED:

Marshall beams under her admiration.

MARSHALL

Welcome to the future. Although...  
not so far that these babies are in  
every closet. Remember, one minute  
of darkness. Don't want to freak  
everybody out.

DIXON

How do we turn them off?

MARSHALL (V.O.)

The other reason...You'll have  
enough power to get you to the  
bridge and an additional thirty  
seconds to get inside.

EXT. UNDER THE BRIDGE

Dixon and Sydney rocket up to the lab.

Beneath them, the yacht lights flicker back to life. The  
guests cheer. Resume partying.

INT. ROTUNDA - MARSHALL'S SPACE (FLASHBACK)

Marshall gives them a concerned look.

MARSHALL

You have to get inside the  
generator room before the pressure  
runs out. And...well...you know...  
gravity. The yacht will be gone.  
And the water is shark infested.

Will looks at the others.

WILL

See. For a moment there. I was  
actually jealous.

EXT. UNDER THE BRIDGE

Dixon and Sydney pull out electric screw drivers. They loosen  
the access panel.

Sydney pushes through just as her air runs out. She catches  
herself on the ledge. Dixon quickly pushes her inside. He  
scrambles in himself.

INT. GENERATOR ROOM

Dixon flicks open the cigar lighter. He attaches it to an exposed cable. Looks to Sydney to confirm she's ready. At her nod, Dixon snaps the lighter on the cable.

MARSHALL (V.O.)

Cigar lighter? Maybe not. It's a surger. Snap it on an electrical cord and zzzzzt! The power shuts down, locks disengage. You'll have thirty seconds to get to your positions. Well, really 28.2. The backup lights take 1.8 seconds to engage. Pretty cool, huh? I was thinking about doing that around here...just for fun. But then I remembered it only works on electrical power. Bummer.

INT. GENERATOR ROOM

Dixon and Sydney are plunged into complete darkness. The door locks CLICK open. 1.8 seconds later, the yellow backup lights come on. Sydney yanks the door open. The two of them rush into...

INT. LAB - CORRIDOR

They sprint down the corridor. At an intersection, they split up; going opposite directions.

INT. LAB - RESEARCH AREA

Sydney bursts inside...

INT. LAB - OFFICE

Dixon ducks inside...just as the lights come back on. As if nothing happened.

INT. LAB - LIVING AREA

DR. QING LIAN wakes up; looks around the room semi alert. He relaxes back into his chair and picks up his book.

INT. LAB - OFFICE

Dixon sits at a terminal and hits a couple keystrokes. He inserts a CD and boots it up.

CONTINUED:

MARSHALL (V.O.)

This CD has all the data you'll need to eat through the files. And it'll also give you control of the lab's security system.

On the computer monitor: Uploading virus.

Dixon sits back in his chair to wait.

DIXON

I'm in.

INT. LAB - RESEARCH AREA

Sydney looks around the sterile room packed with wires, cables, and chips in an organized chaos. She rushes to a glass enclosed case.

The prototype, a long tubular, hollowed out, wood-like object, sits nestled inside.

SYDNEY

I've located the prototype.

DIXON (O.S.)

Copy that.

The case's locks disengage with a click. Sydney pulls open the door. Carefully removes the prototype.

SYDNEY

Got it. Preparing to set the explosives. Meet you in a moment.

DIXON (O.S.)

Leaving to get the target now.

INT. LAB - LIVING AREA

Dr. Qing Lian lounges in his easy chair, feet up, engrossed in a book.

Dixon slips in the room and lurks in the shadows behind him. Silently, he uncaps a small jar and digs out a tiny bit of gel with a gloved finger.

MARSHALL (V.O.)

And this baby here...a little sleeping aide. In case you...have trouble with the good doctor.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

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

Smear a little under his nose.  
He'll be out like a light.

Dixon quickly grabs the unsuspecting man around the throat from behind. In the same fluid motion, he spreads the gel under the doctor's nose. Dr. Qing Lian immediately drops to sleep. Dixon eases his grip.

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

A little more on his nose and he'll be out long enough for you guys to...you know..escape. Nasal passages are most susceptible, but skin is vulnerable too. There're no side effects... but you'll go down, too. Momentarily...

Dixon liberally covers the man's nose with the gel. He puts the book aside and pulls a sheaf of papers from his jacket. He puts them on the man's lap and arranges the doctor's left hand around a nearby pen. The papers are labeled, "Circumference Longevity."

DIXON

I'm ready for you, Mountaineer.

INT. LAB - RESEARCH AREA

Sydney's brow is furrowed in concentration as she struggles to connect the explosives.

SYDNEY

I need another moment...

She shakes her head trying to clear away the fuzziness. With a determined frown, she snaps the last wire in place. With a relieved half smile, she picks up the prototype. Sydney stands, turns to see...

SARK. He stares at her with his trademark amused expression. Only it's not quite the same. There's annoyance, grief and hatred behind it.

Sydney stares back. A confused, not quite comprehending expression on her face.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Who...?

SARK

You're in the field again already.  
Good.

CONTINUED:

The last word is in sharp contrast to the disappointment and frustration in his voice.

Her eyes widen in recognition.

SYDNEY

Sark...

INT. LAB - LIVING AREA

Dixon stands at attention.

DIXON

Wha...

SYDNEY (V.O.)

...is here!...

DIXON

Get out of there, Syd!

INT. LAB - RESEARCH AREA

Sydney stands rooted in place. Staring at Sark. Trying to comprehend his appearance. Then -- her expression softens -- to a warm smile.

SYDNEY

Hi.

She sways forward slightly. As if to walk towards him, but suddenly freezes. Her smile gives way to confusion, then hatred.

Sark watches the shifts in her with a shrewd eye.

SARK

Interesting. How you were able to return to your life so easily. It's actually quite -- remarkable.

SYDNEY

As always...love to chat with you...

Her voice trails away and her confused look returns. She shakes it off.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

But gotta go.

CONTINUED:

Her hand closes around a long sharp wire. She hurls it at him. As he ducks, she leaps at him with a flying kick. Even caught off guard, he instinctively blocks the kick. Sark launches a punch of his own.

Sydney blocks it with her shoulder. She follows through with an elbow to his jaw. He spins with the blow and kicks her in the gut. She flies backwards. Landing hard against the table. The prototype drops from her hand. Skitters away.

Sark rushes at her. Sydney jumps to her feet in time to counter the first in a series of lightening fast punches. He lands several. Knocks Sydney back to the floor.

Winded and confused, she rolls out of the way before he can land a kick. She sweeps his planted foot from under him. Sark goes down. Hard. A furious rage crosses his features.

Sydney takes that moment to scramble after the prototype. Sark anticipates her. He scoops it up just before she can reach it. Sark pulls out a gun. Points it at her and steps out of striking distance.

SARK

Now, now, Sydney. That wasn't very...sportsman-like.

She crouches on the floor; staring down the barrel of his gun. His hand trembles, belying his cool, calm words. He looks dispassionately at the prototype.

SARK (CONT'D)

It seems I have something you want.  
And you...you.

His finger tightens on the trigger. His loss of cool really beginning to show. He works to calm down.

SARK (CONT'D)

You took something of mine.

SYDNEY

What are you talking about? I never...

SARK

Goodbye, Sydney.

He aims the gun at her head. Sweat actually beads on his brow as he hesitates a moment. True regret shadows his eyes. Suddenly, it's outweighed by grief. He pulls the trigger.

CONTINUED: (2)

Simultaneously, Dixon tackles him from behind. The bullet goes wide.

Sydney flinches; checks for the wound. Finds none. She springs towards the explosives and sets the timer for sixty seconds.

Sark tries to fight Dixon off. He holds his own.

SYDNEY  
Dixon, gotta go!

Dixon smears a little gel on Sark's exposed neck. Immediately, Sark goes slack. He gives them a confused look. Dixon tries to pry the prototype from Sark's hand. He can't.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
Leave it! Come on.

Dixon gives up. He and Sydney run for the door.

The timer clicks down to forty-eight seconds.

At the door, Sydney pauses to look back at Sark. Regret heavy in her eyes and heart. Dixon rushes by her. He pulls her out.

DIXON  
Move, Syd!

Alone in the room, Sark's eyes go to the timer.

It clicks from forty-two to forty-one seconds.

Sark tries to gather himself. He scoots towards the door. He closes his eyes in defeat. Just lays still.

INT. LAB - CORRIDOR

Dixon and Sydney run down the corridor. Sydney struggles to keep up.

DIXON  
Ready for extraction.

EXT. BRIDGE - SERVICE DOOR

Dixon bursts outside. Sydney on his heels.

A car screeches to a halt in front of them.

Not missing a beat, Dixon dives into the back seat; Sydney follows.

CONTINUED:

Will squeals the tires as he roars away.

Sydney looks out the back window. She flinches as the explosion rocks the bridge. Flames shoot up into the air.

Dixon takes in her horrified expression. He reaches over and gently takes her hand.

DIXON

It's okay. We made it.

She looks at him with a small, sad smile.

SYDNEY

The prototype -- It was still...in there.

BLACK SCREEN: Los Angeles scrolls across the screen. Push in through the "N."

INT. VAUGHN'S OFFICE

Vaughn sits behind a small desk piled high with files and reports. He wearily props his elbow on his desk and holds a phone to his ear.

Sydney appears in the doorway. A ghost of a smile plays briefly on her lips before she enters uninvited.

Vaughn does a slight double take at her appearance then holds up a finger.

VAUGHN

Yes sir. I'll get right on that.

He sighs. She sits.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

I understand. Needed to be done yesterday.

He pulls the phone from his ear just before the other party slams his phone down. Sydney raises an eyebrow at the BANG.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

The shippers mixed up the addresses of ten of our vendors. Naturally, it's a life and death situation.

SYDNEY

Of course.

CONTINUED:

VAUGHN  
How did you find me?

She slants him a look.

SYDNEY  
You do remember where I work,  
right?

He blushes. They share a smile.

INT. VAUGHN'S OFFICE - CORRIDOR

ALICE VAUGHN walks down the corridor with a spring in her step. A picnic basket dangles from her arm. She nods at a passing WOMAN.

Suddenly, her steps freeze. The smile slides from her face.

At the end of the corridor, Sydney and Vaughn share a laugh.

Stunned, Alice stares at them for a moment longer. She turns and flees.

INT. VAUGHN'S OFFICE

Sydney and Vaughn's laughter fades away into uneasiness. Vaughn watches her expression darken.

SYDNEY  
What are you doing here?

VAUGHN  
I needed...a change. That's all.

SYDNEY  
Of course. I don't know what I was  
thinking. Coming here like this.

She stands. Heads for the door. Vaughn hurries to stop her.

VAUGHN  
You came for an explanation. At  
least let me give you that.

SYDNEY  
What's to explain? I know all I  
need --

CONTINUED:

VAUGHN

No you don't!  
 (calmer)  
 No. You don't.

SYDNEY

I really didn't come here for this.

VAUGHN

Then why, Syd?

Sydney fights to keep the smile on her face.

SYDNEY

Okay fine. If it makes you feel better. By all means tell me how you took up with another woman the minute my back was turned.

VAUGHN

The minute your back was turned? You act like you were only away for a weekend. It was two years, Syd. Two years!

SYDNEY

I thought you loved me. Did you even bother to search for me? Before taking up withwithwith... whoever?

VAUGHN

Alice.  
 -- And yes I did search. All of us searched.

SYDNEY

(flinches)  
 -- Alice?

Sydney presses on.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Oh you searched? For how long? A minute? Maybe two --? Why keep it up when there's Alice waiting in the wings? I didn't give up on you. How could you give up on me?

VAUGHN

We searched for months.  
 -- she wasn't waiting in the wings.  
 -- I found your body! What was left of it. In Chile.

He can only stare at her. Naked anguish all over his face.

Sydney's glare softens. Her hand starts to reach for him. She catches herself; snatches it back.

CONTINUED: (2)

Vaughn fights to regain his composure and looks around.

VAUGHN  
Where were you?

Sydney drops his gaze. She stares blankly at the wall. When she catches his eye again, hers are full of confused misery.

SYDNEY  
(quietly)  
I don't know.

INT. VAUGHN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Alice sits curled up on the couch. Her red eyes puffy and swollen. She watches Vaughn let himself in the house furtively.

ALICE  
How was your day?

Vaughn starts guiltily. He forces a smile to his face as he looks at her. He joins her in the room. He sits in an armchair and flips on a light.

VAUGHN  
Hey, hon. Same old boring stuff.  
What're you doing in the dark?

ALICE  
Oh. So no dead girlfriends popped  
by for a quick reminisce.

The color drains from Vaughn's face.

ALICE (CONT'D)  
How could you do this to me?  
Why didn't you at least have  
the decency to tell me--  
How long has this been going  
on behind my back?

I'm sure you're glad to help  
her with that--

Yeah. I could see that.

VAUGHN  
Wait a minute! I just found  
out myself.  
There is nothing going on.  
Behind your back or  
otherwise. She's having  
difficulty settling in.  
That's all.  
--That isn't fair, Alice. I  
was just as blind sided as  
you.

Alice pauses to take a calming breath. She trembles with fury. Wipes away a stray tear.

CONTINUED:

Vaughn stares back at her angrily.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I've made up my mind. You can have  
her. The baby and I will be just  
fine without you. Better, in fact.

Off Vaughn's shocked, upended, life altered expression we...

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. PARK - DAY

PEOPLE lounge about having fun. They toss frisbees, chase balls or picnic in the bright sun.

Jack, Irina and Sydney stroll along the path, successfully imitating a happy family. Their casual easy-going demeanor a sharp contrast to the conversation.

SYDNEY

I'm not sure what happened. It was like...I wasn't me for a moment.

IRINA

Has this happened often?

SYDNEY

No. Just suddenly seeing Sark like that -- It threw me.

At the mention of Sark, Irina flinches slightly; almost imperceptibly.

JACK

Perhaps we were a bit hasty putting you back in the field. I'm reassigning you to Sigma Team.

SYDNEY

Sigma Team? You can't ground me. I belong in the field.

JACK

I'm sorry, Sydney, we can't risk it. You of all people know how important our... We can't hazard a weak link -- You're not 100% either. I cannot in good conscious jeopardize the team.

SYDNEY

Of course I know!  
-- I'm not a weak link.

And I can't not be a part of the team!

JACK

I'm sorry --

IRINA

Hey!

The both stop to look at her. Irina gives Sydney a stern look.

CONTINUED:

IRINA (CONT'D)

I agree with your father, Sydney.  
There's too much we don't know. You  
don't even know what happened to  
you. It's affecting your work.

SYDNEY

I disagree--

JACK

Listen to your mother, Syd.

IRINA

But I also understand that this is  
something you have...need...to do.

JACK

We cannot risk...

IRINA

So I propose a compromise of sorts.  
Talk to Dr. Barnett. Contingent  
upon a clean bill of health, you  
may stay in the field. Until then,  
you're assigned to Sigma Team.

SYDNEY

But --

JACK

But --

IRINA (CONT'D)

Take it or leave it. Both of you.

Jack and Sydney stare at each other, clearly unhappy with  
Irina's terms.

EXT. SLOANE'S HOUSE - ROSE GARDEN

Sloane busies himself tending the roses. A few live bushes  
are interspersed among mostly dead ones. He heaves a heavy  
sigh.

SLOANE

You just don't look the same  
without Emily.

He waters a bush. Checks the soil.

Sark steps into the garden. Very much alive. Winces in pain  
with each step while Sloane's back is to him. He straightens  
his spine.

CONTINUED:

SARK

You were right. The Rambaldi Shell was quite effective in an explosion.

SLOANE

As evidenced by your continued well-being, I see.

Sloane doesn't bother to turn around.

Sark's jaw tightens minutely. Behind Sloane's back.

SLOANE (CONT'D)

You would not have needed the Shell had you gotten rid of her as I asked.

SARK

For that. I apologize. I did not anticipate the...depth of her stubbornness.

Sloane whirls to face him. Sark barely has time to conceal his pain.

SLOANE

There was no anticipation necessary. You and your vengeful scheme. You had only to follow my instructions. Nothing more. Nothing less.

SARK

If I may, sir, she began to break free over six months ago. I had no other course of action, but to deviate...

Sloane waves a disinterested hand. Returns to his roses.

SLOANE

Move on. How do you propose she be contained? It is impossible for her to disappear again. Not so soon after her return.

SARK

I do have a couple cards left to play. You will not be disappointed.

CONTINUED: (2)

Sloane cuts his eyes at Sark. He gathers up his tools and goes inside the house. Sark stares after him.

INT. ROTUNDA

Jack, Irina and Sydney return to the office. Jack and Sydney split and go separate ways. Irina watches them go with an exasperated expression. She shakes it off and heads in a third direction.

Sydney stops at Dixon's desk. He stops gathering his things long enough to give her a concerned look.

DIXON  
Everything okay?

SYDNEY  
(overly cheery)  
Just peachy keen.

He gives her an amused smile.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
What's going on?

DIXON  
Will and I are headed out. See ya  
when we get back?

SYDNEY  
(nods)  
Stay safe.

INT. DR. BARNETT'S OFFICE

Sydney sits silently across from DR. JUDY BARNETT. Dr. Barnett regards her thoughtfully.

DR. BARNETT  
Tell me what happened with...  
(consults clipboard)  
Mr. Sark?

SYDNEY  
He surprised me. End of story. He  
died -- that is no longer a factor.

Her tone softens with regret and sadness as she talks of Sark's death.

Dr. Barnett immediately picks up on the change.

CONTINUED:

DR. BARNETT

How do you feel about that? His death, I mean.

SYDNEY

There was no love lost between us. He didn't deserve...

DR. BARNETT

Do you feel guilty?

SYDNEY

I did my job.

DR. BARNETT

So you don't feel anything at all.

SYDNEY

He would've...executed me.

Sydney's voice lowers as her explanation actually dawns on her.

Dr. Barnett studies her shrewdly.

DR. BARNETT

How do you feel about that?

SYDNEY

Grateful. To Dixon.

DR. BARNETT

You've been away a long time. How are you readjusting?

Sydney pauses to think.

SYDNEY

Everything's so different. To me? I've only been gone a day. In reality, it's been two years.

DR. BARNETT

Can you tell me about the last two years?

An unexplainable fear settles in her eyes. She shakes her head in an effort to clear it away.

CONTINUED: (2)

SYDNEY

It's a blank. I mean, I can't grasp anything concrete. It's more feelings than actual memories.

DR. BARNETT

What kind of feelings?

EXT. ALLEY (FLASHBACK)

Sydney looks around frantically. A shadow looms before her.

VOICE

Sarah!

INT. DR. BARNETT'S OFFICE

Sydney pauses to take a deep, calming breath.

DR. BARNETT

Sydney?

SYDNEY

Fear...mostly. I can't explain it or comprehend...why. It's just... there.

Dr. Barnett studies Sydney for a long moment.

DR. BARNETT

I see. I'd like to see you on a more regular basis. I'm very concerned about the missing two years. Until we know exactly what happened, I'm going to recommend that you be assigned to a desk.

SYDNEY

No! You can't...

(deep breath)

My work-- It's all I have left that feels...normal.

Dr. Barnett regards her, true sympathy in her eyes.

DR. BARNETT

I'm sorry, Sydney. I cannot in good conscious risk the lives of other agents.

Sydney stares at the doctor for a long moment. Finally, she nods her acceptance.

INT. ROTUNDA - MONITORING STATION

Sydney slows to a halt at the edge of the station. GARY, a good looking, muscle bound man stands over MAX, a skinny twig of a man who types furiously on a computer. Max ends his keystrokes with a flourish. He wipes sweat from his brow.

MAX

That should get it.

GARY

Good. Well heelllloo.

Gary turns to look Sydney up and down. She keeps a smile firmly affixed to her face as she shakes his hand. He holds it a bit too long.

SYDNEY

Sydney Bristow. I've been assigned to Sigma team.

GARY

That's us. Gary Layland.

MAX

I'm Max...

Sydney tries to shake Max's hand. Gary steps in between them forcing her attention back to him. He points to a large stack of memos and a distribution list.

GARY

It's good to meet you. First, we need to copy and distribute this pile to the people on this list.

Sydney moves to pick up the stack. Gary brushes her aside.

GARY (CONT'D)

Lemme help you with that little lady.

Sydney grits her teeth, but steps aside to let him pick up the paper. She gives Max a last smile then follows Gary from the room.

INT. ROTUNDA - COPYING ROOM - LATER

Gary stands to the side by an enormous stack of paper while Sydney runs the Xerox machine. Sydney works at keeping an interested expression on her face.

CONTINUED:

GARY

...so I should be in the field soon. I mean, I'm way past ready. Bad guys better watch out for big Gar.

SYDNEY

That's...ambitious. You were telling me about Irina Derevko. Have you met her?

GARY

It's just a matter of time. I am on the fast track after all.

SYDNEY

So you don't know how she came to work here. I thought she was a fugitive a while back.

He gives her a condescending smile. Shakes his head tolerantly.

GARY

Everyone's heard that rumor. Apparently, she was under deep cover. I don't believe it though.

She works to contain her excitement.

SYDNEY

You think she's still a traitor?

GARY

(laughs)

No way a chick that hot is a traitor.

Sydney turns her back to him and makes a show of pulling copies from the sorter. She rolls her eyes.

GARY (CONT'D)

Besides, can you even imagine her somewhere "spying." Contrary to popular belief, the field isn't some little bake sale. Life or death is on the line. One mistake? Your goose is cooked.

Sydney flinches a little at the description. She flips idly through a set of documents and bites her tongue.

CONTINUED: (2)

GARY (CONT'D)

So. What do you hope to do, little lady? Have lots of babies?

Sydney's eyes widen. She flips back a couple pages.

GARY (CONT'D)

Hello? Earth to Cindy. Are you listening to me?

SYDNEY

Actually. No. I've got to go.

GARY

What do you mean? You can't just leave.

She sways a tiny bit.

SYDNEY

I'm not feeling all that great, suddenly. I think it's the copier fumes. I'm just going to get some air.

EXT. SYDNEY'S OLD APARTMENT

Sydney stands on the front porch. She stares uneasily at the door. The strangeness of the situation makes her hand tremble as she raises it to knock on the door.

A MAN opens the door. He gives her an appreciative look, then grins.

MAN

May I help you?

Sydney rustles up an I'm-a-complete-ditz smile. She bats her eyes a little.

SYDNEY

Hi. I'm really sorry to bother you. I used to live here. I was wondering if...

The man eyes her warily then steps back, opening the door wider.

MAN

And you'd just like to see it again. Old times sake.

CONTINUED:

SYDNEY  
Something like that.

INT. SYDNEY'S OLD APARTMENT - BEDROOM

Sydney leads the way into the room. She fights not to cringe as she walks through the doorway. She pastes her smile back on. Glances at the man following her through the mess that's now his bedroom.

SYDNEY  
I was away when my roommate packed.  
She didn't know where I kept my  
diaries.

MAN  
It's no trouble at all. But we  
cleaned pretty thoroughly before we  
moved in.

Sydney glances around at all the junk. She opens the closet door.

SYDNEY  
I hid them pretty well.

INT. SYDNEY'S OLD APARTMENT - CLOSET

Sydney feels along the wall. Her fingers snag a protruding nail. She works it free and a board pops loose. She slides a box out of the wall and opens it.

Money in every currency is stuffed inside. Along with two small swords.

SYDNEY  
I didn't know of her tendency to  
spy until after we moved in  
together.

MAN (O.S.)  
That's always the way. I have a  
nosy roommate, too.

Satisfied everything's in place, Sydney closes the box with a decisive snap.

INT. ROTUNDA

Jack and Kendall monitor a map of Europe behind an ANALYST. A red dot blinks over Spain.

CONTINUED:

JACK  
...copy Bull Dog. We got you.

Another AGENT rushes up to Kendall; whispers urgently in his ear. Kendall nods tightly. The agent steps away quickly.

KENDALL  
I warned you she wasn't ready,  
Jack.

Jack looks at Kendall.

KENDALL (CONT'D)  
Sydney has just taken off on an  
unauthorized, unapproved mission.  
If she can't follow orders...

JACK  
What are you talking about? I  
reassigned her to Sigma team.

KENDALL  
Where she got her hands on  
unfiltered information.

JACK  
It's useless until analyzed.

KENDALL  
We're talking Sydney here. She can  
analyze in her sleep. Combined with  
her level of clearance...

Jack tries to look sheepish. Kendall eyes him shrewdly.

JACK  
Where'd she go?

KENDALL  
The Caribbean. Montserrat to be  
exact. But you already knew that,  
didn't you? Get her some backup.

INT. GROCERY STORE

In a trace-like state, Vaughn pushes a nearly full cart down an aisle. He pauses to pick out a large bouquet of roses.

Jack pushes a cart from the opposite direction. Stops close to Vaughn. Neither man acknowledges the other one.

CONTINUED:

VAUGHN  
Whatever it is, the answer is no.

JACK  
It's Sydney. She needs help.

Vaughn tries to walk away. His feet don't carry him very far.

VAUGHN  
I'm sorry. I just can't--

JACK  
She's gone to Montserrat to meet  
the last Rambaldi descendant.

Vaughn can't help but shoot Jack an interested glance.

JACK (CONT'D)  
She doesn't have the Intel or  
equipment she needs to come back  
alive.

VAUGHN  
And you just let her go?

JACK  
Of course not. She left on her own.

Vaughn drops all pretense and openly studies Jack. Finally,  
he sighs.

VAUGHN  
What do you need me to do?

BLACK SCREEN: Antigua appears then scrolls across. Push in  
through the "G."

INT. HELICOPTER

The PILOT checks his gauges and starts through his take off  
procedures.

Sydney boards with her bag of gear.

SYDNEY  
I'm set.

PILOT  
We leave momentarily.

SYDNEY  
Is something wrong?

CONTINUED:

PILOT

Nope. Just waiting on second passenger.

Sydney's hand freezes with anxiety as she tries to fasten her seat belt.

SYDNEY

This is supposed to be a single charter.

PILOT

(shrugging)  
The boss say I wait. So I wait.

SYDNEY

That's unacceptable.

She drops the seat belt and starts to gather her bag. She throws the door open just as Vaughn runs up. Sydney blinks in shock.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

What are you...?

He hops in.

VAUGHN

We're ready.

PILOT

Sure?

Sydney's puzzled look dissolves into a small relieved smile. Vaughn gives her a tiny smile of his own.

VAUGHN

We're sure.

BLACK SCREEN: Montserrat appears then scrolls across. Push in through the "A."

EXT. LANDING PAD

The pilot sets the helicopter down outside a Villa. Vaughn opens the door and hops out. He turns to help Sydney climb down.

The pilot leans out.

CONTINUED:

PILOT

Alright then. Give a holler when you're ready. Pick you up right here.

Vaughn nods. They sling their gear over their shoulders and stroll away. The helicopter lifts off. With no one around, they put on their game faces and head for the jungle.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Sydney and Vaughn slow to a stop where the jungle seems to come to an abrupt end. They exchange nods then jump off the cliff.

Halfway down, they open their parachutes. Land gently on the ash covered beach. They shed their parachutes and start jogging inland.

EXT. STONE CAVE

Sydney and Vaughn silently check out the outside of the stone dwelling.

Suddenly, a stone door swings open. MELEENA RAMBALDI pokes her head out.

MELEENA

Are you two planning to nose around all day or you wanna come in?

Sydney and Vaughn exchange surprised looks. They quickly turn to reserved amusement. Vaughn follows Sydney inside.

INT. MELEENA'S HOME

Meleena closes the door behind them. She gestures for them to sit.

Sydney and Vaughn take in the surprisingly homey decorations. They sit on a homemade couch complete with flowered upholstery.

MELEENA

I've been expecting you for some time.

SYDNEY

How...?

MELEENA

You are the one.

CONTINUED:

Vaughn and Sydney exchange looks.

MELEENA (CONT'D)

The Prophecy. Pappi Milo foresaw your existence. You already know that don't you?

SYDNEY

We didn't come about the Prophecy. We came to...

MELEENA

The Prophecy is the answer you seek. You are the one.

Sydney and Vaughn exchange looks.

SYDNEY

I'm not a traitor. I will not render the U.S. Government unto utter desolation.

MELEENA

My dear. Who said anything about your government?

VAUGHN

Our government has been the greatest power for...well...a long time.

MELEENA

(laughs)

You Americans. Your government was a great power. Now it is just another cog in the wheel of an even greater power.

SYDNEY

Who is this power?

MELEENA

That I do not know. But I can tell you that the power became obsessed with Pappi Milo and his work. It ruthlessly acquired the artifacts for own personal gain. It has no respect for life. Human or otherwise. You trusted it -- Until it proved untrustworthy.

Sydney and Vaughn stare at each other.



ACT FIVE

INT. MELEENA'S HOME

Vaughn frowns.

VAUGHN

But wait. She's seen "the beauty of the sky behind Mount Subasio."

Meleena gives them an amused look.

MELEENA

Impossible. That referred to a yearly festival in the village. The festivities were always best viewed...enjoyed...from Mount Subasio.

SYDNEY

A festival?

MELEENA

Organized by the Maloti clan. The festival died along with the last member of the family. Five years ago. You cannot get away from your destiny.

A rumbling begins to sound in the distance. Meleena sits up straight. Listening.

MELEENA (CONT'D)

I have told you all I can. You must go!

SYDNEY

But...

Meleena jumps from her seat. Urges Vaughn and Sydney up as well.

MELEENA

Now! The two of you must leave. You will be trapped here for the next eight months if you do not. That you cannot afford.

VAUGHN

What do you mean trapped?

CONTINUED:

MELEENA

The volcano. She is erupting. Head  
for the water. You'll be safe.

Meleena ushers them out the door. She grabs Sydney's hand.

MELEENA (CONT'D)

Do not be afraid of your destiny  
child. It was chosen for you.

EXT. STONE CAVE

Vaughn looks around uneasily. Finally his gaze stops roving.  
Shock and fear freeze on his face.

In the distance, a volcano spews molten lava in the air. More  
liquid rock cascades down the sides of the mountain. Heading  
straight for them. At an unbelievably brisk pace.

Vaughn tugs on Sydney's arm.

VAUGHN

We gotta move, Syd.

INT. MELEENA'S HOME

Meleena still holds Sydney in a death grip.

MELEENA

There is safety in the enemy not  
knowing what you know. Go. Now!

EXT. STONE CAVE

Meleena releases Sydney. Pushes her clear of the door and  
closes it tightly.

Sydney looks up to see the lava racing towards them. She and  
Vaughn take off in a mad sprint over the flat coastal  
terrain. Just barely keeping a respectable distance between  
them and the lava.

The molten core flows over Meleena's home slowly gaining on  
them.

Sweat pours over them. Their breathing, labored in the  
oppressive heat.

SYDNEY

Shallow...breaths!

Vaughn nods.

CONTINUED:

The water looms up ahead. So close. Yet so far.

The lava closes the distance between them. It incinerates everything in its path.

Hot, exhausted, Vaughn begins to slow down.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Come on.

He nods. Struggles to keep up.

The lava literally on his heels.

They head for where they dropped their parachutes. Still running, Sydney leans down to scoop up a pack. She fights to unhook it from the parachute.

Vaughn's second wind kicks in. He catches up to Sydney. Together, they struggle with the clasps. The parachute drags heavily behind them.

The lava catches up to the parachute. It bursts into flames. Fire streaks down the ropes towards them.

VAUGHN

In the water!

Together they splash into the Caribbean. The flaming parachute streaks behind them. The lava directly on their heels.

Finally, the clasps unlatch. The parachute drops away. The lava still gains, only marginally slowed by the water.

Sydney and Vaughn share a last desperate look. They dive underwater.

EXT. CARIBBEAN - UNDERWATER

Sydney and Vaughn swim just beneath the surface. Behind them, the lava flows into the water making it boil. Steam rises in heavy clouds.

Tiredly, Sydney and Vaughn push forward. Sydney works the pack loose while Vaughn supports it. Perfect teamwork.

Suddenly, it springs open. The air filling pack propels itself towards the surface. Sydney and Vaughn hold on for dear life; way too exhausted to make it on their own.

EXT. CARIBBEAN - SURFACE

Sydney and Vaughn's heads pop up into the glorious air. Both take in deep refreshing breaths of the cooler air.

Vaughn finishes inflating the boat. He helps Sydney inside then climbs aboard himself. They collapse tiredly.

Sydney summons up enough energy to turn on the tiny propellers. She sets them in the direction of Antigua.

SYDNEY

I love Marshall.

Vaughn can only nod his agreement. Sydney falls tiredly beside him. Vaughn studies her for a long moment.

VAUGHN

I have really lousy timing.  
You were right. I should've  
known --  
I made a mistake. I'm sorry.  
-- it isn't. I'm not sure  
how, but I'd like to make it  
up to you --

SYDNEY

-- no. How could you?  
Vaughn. It's okay. --  
  
-- what are you saying --

She stares at him.

VAUGHN

It's complicated...with Alice -- I  
have to believe we can work this  
out.

SYDNEY

Are you sure that's what you want?

VAUGHN

I'm tired of wasting time, Syd. I  
almost lost you...again...tonight.  
I realized...nothing is guaranteed.  
Especially in our line of work.

Sydney smiles tenderly at him. She fights tears.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

What?

SYDNEY

You said "our line of work."

VAUGHN

I guess I did, didn't I?

CONTINUED:

She gives him a gentle kiss on his cheek.

SYDNEY

I think you have fantastic timing.

He smiles back at her.

BLACK SCREEN: Los Angeles scrolls across the screen. Push in through the "L."

INT. ELEVATOR

The doors open into a posh lobby. Alice steps off. She pauses a moment; takes a deep breath to gather her courage. Approaches the Reception desk.

The RECEPTIONIST greets her with a kind smile.

RECEPTIONIST

May I help you?

ALICE

I'm...uh...Alice Vaughn.

The receptionist's eyes flicker slightly. She smiles even more brightly.

RECEPTIONIST

Mrs. Vaughn. You're right on time.

She picks up the phone and punches in a three digit code. Hangs up.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

We'll be with you momentarily.

Alice nods. She starts to turn and take a seat.

SARK (O.S.)

Mrs. Vaughn?

Alice spins back around to see Sark striding towards her wearing a doctor's coat.

SARK (CONT'D)

If you'll follow me. We'll get started.

Alice takes a deep breath. After a long moment she nods and follows him. He holds the door for her to enter. It closes behind them, revealing the New Life Fertility Clinic sign mounted on the wall.

INT. ROTUNDA

Vaughn and Sydney return. Sydney glances around tentatively.

Jack glances up from a file he's going over with another AGENT. Immediately his gaze locks with Sydney's.

Guilt settles on hers. She shakes it away. Faces him defiantly.

Vaughn catches the exchange. Sydney touches his arm.

SYDNEY

Get the others. We'll meet you in the briefing room.

VAUGHN

See you in a moment.

Sydney gives him a smile. She catches Jack's eye again. Slightly jerks her head towards a semi-private corner.

Jack meets her there.

JACK

I have to be able to trust you --  
Your behavior suggests otherwise.

Incentive to work with Dr. Barnett --

SYDNEY

-- You can.  
You're trying to take away the last normal thing left in my life.  
Incentive? You think I like having this gaping hole in my mind. Not knowing what's going to pop out of it?

JACK

My point exactly!

Sydney opens her mouth to respond. A voice behind her stops her cold.

SLOANE (O.S.)

Sydney. Welcome home.

Anger, dismay and hatred all flit over her face. They give way to a smile as she turns to face Sloane.

SLOANE (CONT'D)

It's really good to have you back.

He folds her in a gentle hug. Jack looks on with a fatherly grin.

CONTINUED:

Sydney looks absolutely revolted. She forces herself to relax and hug him back.

SYDNEY  
It's good to be back.

SLOANE  
Good. When I think about what  
you've been through -- How awful...

SYDNEY  
Actually, I don't remember anything  
at all.

SLOANE  
Good, good. I'm sure you're anxious  
to get back to work.

She glances at Jack.

SYDNEY  
Actually. Dr. Barnett has me on  
restricted duty. Until, I'm able to  
remember --

SLOANE  
I'm sorry to hear that. I know your  
work means the world to you.

SYDNEY  
There'll be plenty of time for that  
later. After I recover...If I  
recover...

She lets her words trail away sadly.

He gives her a concerned, but confident smile.

SLOANE  
I have every faith in you. In your  
ability...to heal.

He glances at Jack. As if to say, "This is how to be a good  
father."

Sydney catches the exchange between them. She nods in  
acceptance of Sloane's faith. Turns to Jack.

SYDNEY  
Oh, Daddy. We've got that  
briefing...

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK  
Yes, of course.

SYDNEY  
We've got to go. It's always a  
pleasure seeing you.

Somehow, Sydney keeps the comment from sounding like a curse. She threads her arm through Jack's as they walk away. Jealousy flits very briefly over Sloane's features.

INT. CAR

Sark sits behind the wheel. He closely watches the elevator doors.

INT. ELEVATOR

Sydney and Vaughn step on. The doors close. Vaughn punches a button. Sydney looks at him curiously.

SYDNEY  
Well...?

VAUGHN  
Kendall approved it. I start  
yesterday.

SYDNEY  
You're okay with that?

Vaughn gives her a reassuring smile, though some doubt lingers in his eyes.

VAUGHN  
Very okay.

INT. CAR

Sark watches as Sydney and Vaughn step out of the elevator. He nods in their direction.

SARK  
As promised. There she is.

INT. GARAGE

Sydney and Vaughn walk towards his car. She studies him thoughtfully.

SYDNEY  
What are you not telling me?

CONTINUED:

Vaughn sighs.

VAUGHN  
About...Alice. She's...

A car door slams behind them. Sydney and Vaughn turn to check out the source of the noise.

CLIVE DELANEY, a solid bulk of a man hurries towards them.

CLIVE  
So it is true. You're here.

He sweeps Sydney up in a big hug. Swings her around. Vaughn looks on in stunned surprise.

Sydney wiggles her way out of Clive's embrace.

CLIVE (CONT'D)  
I didn't believe...But here you are.

SYDNEY  
Who are you?

CLIVE  
You and that sense of humor.

He turns to Vaughn; eyes him slightly suspiciously.

CLIVE (CONT'D)  
Who is this? You wouldn't be stepping out on me, now would ya, Sarah?

Sydney's eyes go wide. Some of Clive's amusement fades. He looks at Vaughn much more closely.

SYDNEY  
What did you call me?

CLIVE  
Sarah, hon, maybe you should tell me why you are here.

Sydney stares at him speechless. Clive's gaze flicks to Vaughn.

CLIVE (CONT'D)  
You puttin' on a show for him?

CONTINUED: (2)

SYDNEY

No. I don't know you.

Deep hurt takes up residence on Clive's face. He opens the back door of the car. Leans inside. The tinted windows conceal what he's doing from their view.

Uneasily, Vaughn shifts so he's slightly in front of her. His hand goes to the gun holstered at the small of his back.

Clive straightens out of the car again. He holds CLARK, a sleeping toddler, in his arms.

CLIVE

I s'pose you don't know him either?

Sydney stares transfixed at the child; slowly shakes her head.

SYDNEY

Why would I?

CLIVE

Oh for heaven's sake! What kind of mother forgets her own child?

At Clive's raised voice, Clark stirs awake. He looks around sleepily.

Vaughn looks at Sydney in horrified fascination.

SYDNEY

You must have me mistaken for...

CLIVE

I'd never mistake my wife.

Vaughn stutters back a step away from her. Really studies Sydney closely.

Clark gets his bearings. His gaze lands on Sydney. He smiles sweetly.

CLARK

Mama.

Off Sydney's horrified, disbelief...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW