

GANGLAND

Pilot

"Por Vida"

Written by
Don Michael Paul

January 6, 2004

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

"WHAT UP GANGSTA" by 50 CENT fades up pulling us into the energy of Saturday night. The City of Angels as seen from high above. Its steel and concrete canyons rising up, glistening against the rain-swept landscape. From Chavez Ravine to Venice and all points east, west, north and south. It's beautiful from up here, almost peaceful. Almost. THE CAMERA holds a beat before plunging into the middle of the urban-scape and onto the corner of...

EXT. 3RD & FIGUEROA - NIGHT

A BLACK ESCALADE rolls to a stop under the vapor lamps in the warehouse district of Los Angeles where after hour's parties rule the night. The street we're on is a fusion of gangsters, low riders, and young men and women chasing the night. All ethnicities are represented. A STREET THUG, who we'll come to know, emerges from a doorway and moves to the Escalade. He's trailer-trash white, gut-tough, tatted up, and riding the pulse of this party street. He knocks on the window. The window rolls down slowly revealing only A PAIR OF EYES. 50 CENT'S HARDCORE HIP HOP pounds from the stereo.

THUG

Got the money?
(THE EYES answer with
a nod)
Let's do this.

The doors open, and out steps a serious-looking crew led by the eyes, NINO SANCHEZ, 21, Latino, with attitude and style. This guy is completely in command of who he is and what he's doing. He's followed by a thugged-up clique of adrenaline junkies: ALECIA GUZMAN, 22, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, is a tough player who carries some working-class baggage from a L.A. proper upbringing. MICHAEL STRETCH, 22, black, pierced and tattooed, is a ghetto child with a durag and a perennial case of cool from a lifetime working the streets. Flanking him is KEVIN MACK. Kevin's white, 21, killer good-looking, fresher than the rest, but working hard to earn his stripes. The thug leads them to a side door where several bouncers man the list holding eager club goers at bay. He gives a nod to the bouncer and just like that, they're inside.

INT. AFTER-HOURS CLUB - NIGHT

The crew moves through the crowd made up of models, actors, poseurs, and dopesters high on "Ecstasy." This is the fringe of Los Angeles club life, and it is rocking to 80 DBs of bass-heavy, techno dance music. The dancing is as overt as the crowd, and the dress code is "anything goes" as long as it's minimal. The crew moves down a hallway towards a vault-like door. The thug looks into A SURVEILLANCE CAMERA.

THUG

Cantera, it's me, open up.

THE ELECTRIC LOCK is released, and the door slides open.

INT. LOFT SPACE - NIGHT

Large, open, a wall of windows. The thug enters followed by Nino, Alecia, Michael and Kevin. A heavy-duty, drug-running gang from the Inland-Empire fills the room. These are "THE D'BACKS," and the serpentine skin art on their arms identify them as such. EDDIE CANTERA moves through his men. Cantera thinks he's a rock star because he "cooks" the best Ecstasy and methamphetamine on the Pacific Rim. He sizes up the whole crew, makes Nino for the leader.

CANTERA

Where's the money?

NINO

Where's the product?

Cantera walks to a table where twenty-five hermetically sealed bags full of little blue pills are piled up.

CANTERA

Twenty-five packages, ten thousand
100 milligram hits of XTC per bag.
(wicked smile)
Want a taste?

NINO

We don't taste, we test.
(smile, then)
Never get high on your own supply,
my man. It's bad business.

Nino motions for Michael, who steps forward with A TEST KIT. He crushes one of the blue pills on the table with a knife and scrapes the fine powder into a two-grain phial. He uses a dropper to drop chemicals into the sample.

CANTERA

You got the manpower to deal this
off?

NINO

We throw a wide net. Michael and
Alecia work the State schools: San
Jose, Humboldt, Fresno.

ALECIA

(dry)
Go Bulldogs.

NINO

I work the Universities from Santa
Cruz to Berkeley.
(motions to Kevin)
Kevin's our white-collar guy. His
network deals Stanford, Menlo Park,
and the Silicon Valley. Our bench
is pretty deep.

Cantera turns to Kevin and looks him over. Kevin averts his eyes, wipes a bead of sweat from his brow. There's blood in the water, and Cantera's a shark. He presses Kevin.

CANTERA
You tapped into the pain of those
dot-comers, huh?

KEVIN
We've offered them an alternative
to chardonnay.

CANTERA
Ever work the bridges at Los Altos
or the bars on Stinson Park?

Kevin cuts him a look, hesitates. Michael looks up from the test phial and interjects, speaking to Nino.

MICHAEL
This dope is tight. Minimum 6-1
hit on the street.

CANTERA
(back to Kevin)
You didn't answer my question.

MICHAEL
We don't work the bridges.

CANTERA
I didn't ask you.

All eyes back to Kevin.

KEVIN
We push Stinson Park Friday and
Saturday nights, take a road-trip
sometime, I'll show you the setup.

Cantera's eyes flash, and he pulls a gun from his waistband and sticks it in Kevin's face. The D'Backs draw, too.

CANTERA
Stinson Park in the Silicon Valley
doesn't exist.
(down and dark)
Why are you lying?

KEVIN
Just playing along with your game.

Back goes the hammer on Cantera's gun.

CANTERA
Are you 5-0?
(no answer)
ARE YOU 5-0?

Just then, A SWAT TEAM comes rappelling through the windows. Glass shards shower the room.

Nino uses this distraction to disarm Cantera and pistol-whip him across the face opening a gash on his cheek. Cantera goes down. Hard. One of the D'Backs squeezes off a couple rounds, but he's downed by a quick burst of automatic gunfire from one of the SWATs.

Cantera and his gang are outgunned, and they know it. They surrender their weapons. Another group of SWAT move through the vaulted door. They're led by a tough African American man. This is SGT. MARK KITCHENS, 40ish, hardened, driven by the extremes he deals with everyday. Think Sam Jackson. He is the handler for this anti-gang crew.

Kitchens surveys the scene, settles in front of Cantera.

SGT. KITCHENS
The answer to your question is yes,
Eddie. He is 5-0. Gang Task Force
to be exact, LAPD.

THE THUG, who led our crew here, covertly inches his way back into the shadows. Nino drags Cantera to his feet.

NINO
You're busted.

The SWAT team gathers weapons and starts herding Cantera's men up. As this is happening, THE THUG bolts and smashes through a back door. Sgt. Kitchens goes after him.

INT. SWITCHBACK STAIRWELL - NIGHT

The thug runs like hell taking three, sometimes four steps at a time. Sgt. Kitchens is gaining. Shafts of light stab through the windows casting an eerie vibe. The thug trips, somersaults down the stairs. Sgt. Kitchens takes two steps at a time and is right there to pick him up.

Sgt. Kitchens spins the thug and finds himself face-to-face with a smiling JEFFREY ATKINS. Jeffrey is pure street, with loads of attitude. He is a deep-cover "GTF" agent, and one of Sgt. Kitchens long-time coverts.

JEFFREY
You're getting slow, old man.

Sgt. Kitchens backs away, looks up and down the stairwell to make sure they're alone. Jeffrey shakes off the fall.

SGT. KITCHENS
Good work, Jeffrey. Taking this
gang down was a big-time bust.

JEFFREY
The new guy almost jammed it up.

SGT. KITCHENS
I'll take care of him.
(beat, then)
You okay?

JEFFREY

It's all good. I've been working the Venice Lowriders. Something heavy's going down soon.

SGT. KITCHENS

Need anything from my end?

JEFFREY

No, just do it and let me get out of here.

(Sgt. Kitchens
hesitates)

C'mon, do it already.

Sgt. Kitchens reluctantly pulls his 9mm, chambers a round.

SGT. KITCHENS

Right or left?

JEFFREY

Left.

Sgt. Kitchens aims at Jeffrey's left arm and fires, as WE SMASH CUT TO...

OPENING CREDITS.

A highly-stylized visual mosaic of gang culture driven by slamming hip-hop. PAN ACROSS animated stop-frame photos of various gangs including: *18th Street, Mara Salvatrucha, Geer Gang Crips, Blood Peace Stones, Tortilla Flats, The Asian Boyz, Crazy Riders, Armenian Power, Crenshaw Mafia, Nazi Lowriders*, to name only a few. As they flash their symbols. Anarchy. The last photograph is of our Gang Task Force, a small gang of their own, but with very different motives.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

A gang "placa" representing the 18th Street Gang adorns the wall in colorful graffiti. It's dark, musty, peeling paint. What's left of the floor is littered with needles, hypes and all kinds of drug paraphernalia. Abandoned, unlivable. A LARGE METALLIC CLAW tears through the roof and pulls away one entire side of the house. THROUGH THIS:

CHIEF BLAIR (V.O.)

Los Angeles is 470 square miles in size. Those boundaries are divided by 1300 criminal street gangs with approximately 200,000 members. Gang violence is the most pressing issue law enforcement faces in this city, it claims one life per day...

EXT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

THE MASSIVE BULLDOZER levels the small house on West Second Street. The debris is loaded into a line of 10-wheelers. Neighborhood kids watch the demolition.

Newly-appointed Los Angeles Police Chief WILLIAM BLAIR, 60, Irish Catholic, powerful, is giving serious face time to TV NEWS REPORTERS. Sgt. Kitchens and his handlers are nearby.

CHIEF BLAIR

...and since I've taken over here, gang suppression has become my top priority. If you take part in that violent lifestyle, we're going to bust you. It's just that simple.

(turns to the house)

The demolition of this crack house is symbolic of this attitude. It's been under surveillance for a year, and we've made seven arrests. The time and manpower hasn't netted the results. So the city bought it, and we're tearing it down to the ground. This is our way of telling the gangs we've had enough...

As Chief Blair continues with the press, Sgt. Kitchens steps away and dials his cell phone.

INT. BEACH SIDE APARTMENT, HERMOSA BEACH - DAY

Kevin is sleeping when his phone rings. He's jarred awake, grabs the handset.

KEVIN

Yeah, this is Kevin.

Kevin rises, throws his feet on the floor revealing a tanned and toned NUDE GIRL sleeping beside him. She is this week's model. Literally. INTERCUT.

SGT. KITCHENS

Meet me at Roscoe's in an hour,
and pick up Michael on your way.

As Kevin gets a dial tone in his ear.

INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT - DAY

Flowers, balloons, ribbons, all the frills. A Mexican combo plays a waltz. Girls in white bouffant lace dresses. Boys in tuxedos. An familial celebration, a "Quinseanera" to be exact. This is the Mexican version of "Sweet Sixteen" only it happens on a girl's 15th birthday.

In the middle of the dance floor, waltzing with his daughter is JAVIER ZARAGOZA, 45, tuxedoed, handsome and hard. The only thing belying his outward appearance is the wicked gang tattoos coming out from under his tuxedo and wrapping around his neck. Zaragoza is the leader of the 18th Street Gang. His daughter, CHRISTINA, looks up at him adoringly, as the father-daughter waltz ends. Applauds.

CHRISTINA

Thanks for the party, Papa. It's perfect.

ZARAGOZA

Only the best for my little girl.

CHRISTINA

I'm not little anymore.

Zaragoza catches eyes with one of his henchmen, RAFAEL RIOS, who nods to him from across the room. Rafael is Zaragoza's enforcer and keeps the gang's food chain in balance. Then:

ZARAGOZA

Feliz Cumpleanos, Christina.

CHRISTINA

Te amo, Papa.

Zaragoza kisses his daughter. A 15-year old Mexican boy, PABLO, approaches.

PABLO

Can I have this dance?

ZARAGOZA

Be respectful, Pablo.

PABLO

Si, senior.

Zaragoza joins Rafael, and they go into a nearby office.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

A 50" PLASMA SCREEN TV plays the interview Chief Blair gave to the press. THE BULLDOZER can be seen in the background demolishing the crack house. Zaragoza lights his cigar.

ZARAGOZA

Is that one of my houses?

RAFAEL

Si, it's on West Second.

ZARAGOZA

The one across from Belmont High?

RAFAEL

A big money maker. Chiva, dust,
weed, some rock.

Zaragoza turns up the volume with his remote.

CHIEF BLAIR

(filtered, mid-speech)

...this house is not a home, and it
will no longer be a conduit for the
18th Street Gang to sell drugs to
our children. It's time this city
puts them out of business and gives
the streets back to the people...

Rafael nods, as a young man, SHANDS TOLIFERO, 24, peeks his head in the door. He's big, tough, jailhouse tats from the "gladiator academies," Chino and Tracy.

TOLIFERO

Sorry to bust in, wanted to pay my
respects before I roll.

ZARAGOZA

What's the rush?

TOLIFERO

I gotta meet my parole officer.

ZARAGOZA

Are you clean?

TOLIFERO

Not even a beer in eight months.

ZARAGOZA

Stay strong. I'd hate to see you
get violated back to Chino on some
parole beef.

(to Rafael)

Take him, Raffi, make sure he gets
there on time.

TOLIFERO

We still on for tonight?

ZARAGOZA
I told you we were. That means we
are. Por Vida.

Tolifero shakes Zaragoza's hand.

TOLIFERO
Por Vida.

Zaragoza nods, as Rafael goes with Tolifero. He turns back to Chief Blair's video image, leans back in his chair.

ZARAGOZA
(sotto voce)
Out of business? We'll see.

As Zaragoza draws on his cigar, his eyes darken.

INT. BOXING CLUB - DAY

Old-school, musty, young fighters learning their skills with trainers watching over them. Alecia is beating the hell out of a punching bag; a daily ritual. This girl is driven by some inner force, and her body shows it. Ripped.

Her trainer/father, LUIS GUZMAN, 53, ex-prize fighter with a face that tells the story of his life, holds the bag.

ALECIA
What's on your mind, dad?

Right, left, right.

LUIS
You're dropping your left.

ALECIA
It's more than that. Give it up
and let's get it over with.

LUIS
You didn't come over to the house
on Sunday, your mother was upset.

ALECIA
I was busy. I'll be there next
week.

LUIS
Bring the new guy, will you?

Alecia continues to pummel the bag and notices NINO moving towards them.

ALECIA
What new guy?

LUIS
I know you, Alecia, every time you miss family Sundays you've got some new guy. The family's excited, we want to meet him.

NINO
We gotta roll.

Alecia stops, pulls off her training gloves.

ALECIA
Dad, this is Nino.

NINO
Nice to meet you.

LUIS
Is this the new guy?

ALECIA
No, we work together.
(a quick kiss, then)
Love you.

Alecia moves off with Nino.

NINO
You got a new guy?

ALECIA
No new guy, Nino.
(a sock on the arm)
Only you.

INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT, HOLLYWOOD - DAY

Michael shaves in front of the mirror shirtless and grooving to "GHETTOMUSIAK" by OUTKAST. This guy is yoked, draped in fresh, Gold's-Gym muscles. His back, chest and arms are heavily painted. Serious ink. He rinses the shaving cream, a goatee remains. Think Mekhi Phifer. A KNOCK on the door.

Michael crosses the room and opens the door. LISA, a pretty African-American girl, who is smarter than she is beautiful, enters and quickly shuts the door behind her.

LISA
I missed you last night.

MICHAEL
Work went late.

She immediately starts kissing him, pressing her face to his, hands moving down his chest seductively.

LISA
(between kisses)
Know what today is?

Michael knows, teases.

MICHAEL
Wednesday.

LISA
It's our three-month anniversary.

MICHAEL
I've got us a room at The Standard
tonight.

Lisa's face lights up, more kissing. Just as it's about to
get hot and heavy there's A LOUD KNOCK. Lisa's face sinks.

LISA
(whispers)
My father.

Lisa gives him one last kiss and hides. Michael opens the
door to reveal Lisa's father and Michael's landlord, BILL.
He's 50ish, retired U.S. Marine, conservative in khakis and
a polo shirt. Bill looks at Michael like he's road kill.

BILL
Rent's late. Again.

Bill cranes his head, trying to see inside.

MICHAEL.
Sorry, Bill. I've been slammed
with work.

Michael pulls a wad of bills out of his pocket and peels off
five one-hundred dollar bills. Bill eyes Michael's wad.

BILL
Lisa in there with you?

MICHAEL
No, sir.

BILL
Stay away from her. She's got one
year left at UCLA, and I don't want
her distracted. There's an element
out there that can do that.

MICHAEL
Believe me, I'm not the "element"
you should be sweating, Bill. I'm
a T-Mobile sales rep. Come down to
the store. Let me hook you up with
a killer plan. I'll promo you one
of our wireless e-mail devices.

Just then, KEVIN comes down the hall.

KEVIN
Hey, man, we gotta hit it.

BILL
I'm watching you.

Bill disappears down the hallway.

MICHAEL
(to Kevin)
Give me a minute.

Michael closes the door and puts on his shirt. Lisa comes out of hiding.

LISA
Sorry, my father's a little psycho.

MICHAEL
I think he's gone past a little.

LISA
He thinks you deal drugs.

MICHAEL
Tonight at six. There'll be a room
key at the front desk.
(as he's leaving)
See you then.

INT. ROSCOE'S CHICKEN AND WAFFLES - DAY

Michael and Kevin across from Sgt. Kitchens.

SGT. KITCHENS
What happened last night?

KEVIN
It was my bad. I'm sorry.

SGT. KITCHENS
Think that bitch-made punk Cantera
cares about sorry? I'm sorry gets
you a double tap in the head. I'm
sorry gets your partner one of the
same. Then I got to visit your
family and explain why you're dead.
(then to Michael)
Did you school him?

KEVIN
It wasn't his fault.

SGT. KITCHENS
I wasn't talking to you.

Sgt. Kitchens eyes go back to Michael.

MICHAEL
We went over the alias. Thought I
covered it all.

KEVIN

He did. I lost my cool and mixed up my facts. Won't happen again.

SGT. KITCHENS

You only get to say that one time before I find somebody who's got the bandwidth I'm looking for. You can't be throwing back pitchers in Hermosa Beach every night trying to tap whatever hotty throws a smile your way.

(Kevin is stung)

If that's the life you want, let me know. I'll fill out the paperwork, and you'll be cruising the Strand on bike patrol tomorrow.

Kevin's at a crossroads, and he knows it. Beat, then:

KEVIN

I'd like to gut this out.

Sgt. Kitchens cuts him a look, turns to Michael.

SGT. KITCHENS

Next time he's not prepped, that means you're not doing your job. This will not happen again.

Off Michael's nod.

EXT. RAMPART DIVISION - DAY

A muscled-out, candy-painted GTO pulls to the curb.

INT. GTO - DAY

Tolifero turns to Rafael.

TOLIFERO

Thanks for the lift.

RAFAEL

No worries, ese. I'll be here when you're done.

Tolifero nods, jumps out of the GTO and goes inside. Rafael pulls into traffic and makes a right on Alvarado Street.

EXT. ALVARADO STREET - DAY

Rafael jumps out of the GTO and pops the trunk. He grabs A BLACK DUFFEL BAG and goes into a commercial building across from Rampart.

INT. COMMERCIAL BUILDING - DAY

Rafael bypasses the elevator and takes the stairs. When he gets to the second floor, he moves down a hallway and stops at a door. He pulls A LOCK PUNCH from his pocket, inserts it into the lock and slams it with A CUT-DOWN SLEDGE HAMMER. And just like that, the door is sprung and Rafael moves into an empty office space.

INT. RAMPART DIVISION, HALLWAY - DAY

Tolifero is led down the hallway by a uniformed officer when Sgt. Kitchens comes through the door at the end of the hall.

SGT. KITCHENS
I'll take him from here.

Sgt. Kitchens opens a door to a stairwell, and they enter.

INT. EMPTY OFFICE SPACE - DAY

Rafael moves across the polished cement towards the window. He pulls surveillance gear out of his duffel bag, and snaps together A DIRECTIONAL MICROPHONE. Rafael positions the mic in A PARABOLIC DISH and plugs into A DIGITIZED AMP. He dons A HEADSET and scans the facade of the Rampart building just across the alleyway. VOICES filter through his headset, ringing phones, the station radio dialed into the streets, a cacophony of sound.

INT. RAMPART DIVISION, STAIRWELL - DAY

Sgt. Kitchens and Tolifero moving down.

SGT. KITCHENS
Why is Rafael Mendoza dropping you off?

TOLIFERO
Relax, he gave me a lift. You're paranoid.

SGT. KITCHENS
It's my job to be paranoid.

TOLIFERO
I've been nine months dancing with Zaragoza. I'm cutting in smooth.

SGT. KITCHENS
That's what worries me. It's hard to play the game that long.

TOLIFERO
It's what I do, boss.

Sgt. Kitchens leads him through the basement door.

INT. GTF OFFICES, BULLPEN - DAY

The guts of Rampart, and the nerve-center for the Gang Task Force. An open room with glassed-in cubicles. Pictures and charts graphing gang activity decorates one entire wall. A mugshot of JAVIER ZARAGOZA sits atop a pyramid of pictures fanning down in sequence; the Gang Task Force's version of the most-wanted list. There's a large plexi-glass GRID MAP OF LOS ANGELES in the middle of the room on casters. It's broken down into quadrants, each one labelled with the gang controlling the turf within its boundaries.

A STATION RADIO crackles, clueing us into every call, every crime going down on the streets. Sgt. Kitchens and Tolifero head in. We walk and talk them across the room.

TOLIFERO

Word is Cantera got mowed down last night? Everybody's talking, nobody knows nothing. Was that you?

SGT. KITCHENS

Yeah, Nino fronted the op, Guzman rode shotgun with Stretch and one of our new guys.

TOLIFERO

How is Nino?

Nino moves out of an office with Alecia.

NINO

Better looking than you, my man.

They embrace; these guys go back to the academy.

TOLIFERO

Hey, Guzman, I hear you got a new guy.

Nino turns to Alecia and puts it to her.

NINO

Yeah, same here. What's the deal with this new guy?

Alecia kills Nino with a look.

SGT. KITCHENS

Enough. What do you got for us?

INT. EMPTY OFFICE SPACE - DAY

Rafael fiddles with some dials on his DIGITIZED AMP trying to dial in THE VOICES behind Rampart Division's walls. He sweeps the directional microphone on a steady, diagonal line. NOISES and VOICES hit him from everywhere. Then, he hears TOLIFERO'S VOICE. Pay dirt. He holds the parabolic dish rock steady and listens.

TOLIFERO (V.O.)
(filtered)
I'm riding on a big score tonight.

SGT. KITCHENS (V.O.)
(filtered)
Guns, drugs, what?

TOLIFERO (V.O.)
(filtered)
Don't know, Zaragoza keeps it close
to the vest. Heard something about
the merch coming in from Juarez.

SGT. KITCHENS (V.O.)
(filtered)
Mexican Mafia.

Rafael's eyes go black.

INT. GTF OFFICES, BULLPEN - DAY

Sgt. Kitchens, Tolifero, Nino and Alecia.

TOLIFERO
You want to move on this one, you
better man up.

Sgt. Kitchens turns to Nino and Alecia.

SGT. KITCHENS
Requisition a couple of cars, and
let's get prepped for a revolving
tail.
(then to Alecia)
Bring Stretch and Mack up to speed.

NINO
Be safe out there.

Tolifero nods, as Alecia and Nino leave.

SGT. KITCHENS
There's somebody else here to see
you.

Sgt. Kitchens leads Tolifero to an office and opens the door revealing a pretty Latina woman, LYNDA. She is dressed upscale, professional. For a moment, they just look at each other, then Tolifero moves to his wife. They embrace. Sgt. Kitchens closes the office door, leaving them alone.

INT. COMMERCIAL BUILDING - DAY

Rafael exits the empty office space with his duffel bag and moves quietly down the corridor. He dials his cell phone.

INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT - DAY

The Quinseanera's in full swing. The band plays "LA BAMBA." Zaragoza watches the kids dance alongside his wife, CLAUDIA. The moment is interrupted when Zaragoza's cell rings. He pulls it off his hip and glances at the plasma screen which flashes the name "Rafael." Zaragoza moves away from his wife and answers the cell.

ZARAGOZA
Que pasa, Raffi?

INT. COMMERCIAL BUILDING - DAY

Rafael on the move. INTERCUT.

RAFAEL
Your insider was right. He's 5-0.

Rafael enters the staircase, and Zaragoza does a slow burn.

INT. GTF OFFICES, OFFICE - DAY

Lynda and Tolifero alone.

LYNDA
I've missed you so much.

TOLIFERO
This job's almost over, baby. I'll be home for Thanksgiving.

LYNDA
We've got a lot to catch up on.

TOLIFERO
How's school?

LYNDA
The kids are driving me crazy this year. You know, third graders.

TOLIFERO
Yeah.
(beat, then)
I've got to go.

He holds her. Tight. Neither one wants this moment to end. As they embrace, we see Sgt. Kitchens watching them from the bullpen beyond.

EXT. RAMPART DIVISION - DAY

Tolifero moves to the GTO and gets in with Rafael.

RAFAEL
How was it, ese?

TOLIFERO

I'm good for another two weeks.

Rafael smiles, and makes a quick left onto West Temple. As the GTO drops into the flow of traffic, we see A SEDAN slide out of a side street and trail the GTO by a couple cars. In the driver seat is NINO. ALECIA rides shotgun.

EXT. MACARTHUR PARK - DAY

This once great park in the center of town has been bisected by Wilshire Boulevard and divvied up by twenty-five violent gangs. Gang-bangers work the park "slinging rock." The GTO pulls to the stop. Rafael turns to Tolifero.

RAFAEL

I gotta shake these little vatos
for some street tax.

(offers a cigarette)

Have a smoke, I'll be right back.

Tolifero takes the cigarette. Rafael jumps out and heads into the park where A TEENAGE DEALER works the benches. Tolifero gets out, lights the cigarette and relaxes under a swirl of blue smoke. He notices THE SEDAN pull to a stop one street over. He acknowledges Nino with a look.

Tolifero turns and sees A CAPRICE pull to the curb on the other side of the park. Michael and Kevin are inside.

INT. CAPRICE - DAY

Michael gives Tolifero a small nod.

KEVIN

How'd this guy get in so deep?

MICHAEL

He's a dancer, man. Sgt. Kitchens sent him to Chino and celled him up with Zaragoza's nephew. They did a few months hard time, and the nephew vouched for him.

KEVIN

You ever been that deep?

MICHAEL

Couple times. You'll go there if you stay in the game long enough.

KEVIN

Undercover's one thing, but going in deep and living with the enemy day in, day out. Not being able to see your family for months at a time. That's hardcore, man. Don't know if I got that in me.

Michael looks at Kevin, understanding his struggle.

MICHAEL

You'll either dig the action, or you won't. I've seen guys who live for the juice on the street. It's in their DNA. But if you don't got it, you don't got it. That's cool.
(a smile, then)
Something tells me you got it.

As Kevin thinks about Michael's words.

INT. SEDAN - DAY

Nino turns to Alecia.

NINO

So, tell me. Who's this new guy?

ALECIA

How many time do I have to say it? There is no new guy.

NINO

C'mon, give it up. Let me hear about your man management.

ALECIA

There's nothing to give. I got no one special. What about you?

NINO

Same, no one special.

They hold a look, then something pulls Alecia's focus.

ALECIA

Who's this?

Nino scans the urban landscape. He sees what Alecia sees: A HOODED FIGURE crossing the street towards Tolifero.

INT. CAPRICE - DAY

Michael and Kevin also see THE HOODED FIGURE.

EXT. MACARTHUR PARK - DAY

Tolifero turns, as THE HOODED FIGURE pulls a gun and FIRES three shots. Tolifero is drilled at point-blank range. It's shocking how quickly this happens. No warning.

Rafael stops rousting the teenage dealer and turns, just as Tolifero slumps against the GTO and slides to the asphalt.

THE HOODED FIGURE takes off.

INT. SEDAN - DAY

Nino immediately jumps from the car.

NINO
Call it in.

Alecia keys the police radio and calls in officer down, as Nino takes off after THE HOODED FIGURE.

INT. CAPRICE - DAY

Michael and Kevin are stunned, but Michael goes on instinct and fires up the car. He slams the pedal down and takes off across the park.

EXT. MACARTHUR PARK - DAY

The Caprice jumps the curb and tears across the grass with pigeons scattering out of its way. THE HOODED FIGURE sees the car bearing down and cuts left into A MEXICAN MARKET.

Nino is gaining ground, pulls his 9mm.

The Caprice slides to a stop and spills Kevin and Michael.

INT. MEXICAN MARKET - DAY

THE HOODED FIGURE darts in and out of shoppers, ping-pinging his way through the crowd. Nino, Michael and Kevin haul ass through the sea of people, moving against the tide.

THE HOODED FIGURE crashes headlong through the back door.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - DAY

THE HOODED FIGURE runs like hell down the loading ramp, and jumps off the end. He flies through the air, lands halfway up a high chain-link fence, and scurries for the top. Nino, Michael and Kevin bust out the door giving chase.

THE HOODED FIGURE quickly climbs the fence and leaps to the other side. But, as he's clearing the top his .38 drops to the pavement on the opposite side of the fence.

THE HOODED FIGURE runs around a corner.

Nino, Michael and Kevin stop at the chain-link fence. Nino has his weapon trained, but THE HOODED FIGURE is gone.

As Kevin notices the .38 lying on the ground.

EXT. MACARTHUR PARK - DAY

Alecia holds Tolifero. He tries to speak. No words. Then, he reaches out with his hand. Alecia takes it, as his head slumps against her. Alecia cradles him, devastated.

GANGLAND: "Por Vida" 4/10/08

21

HOLD ON Shands Tolifero. He's dead.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. MACARTHUR PARK - DAY

Cherries bath the scene, as several black-and-whites, and A MEDICAL EXAMINERS VAN clog the street. The area around the GTO is roped off with yellow crime-scene tape. A uniformed officer questions Rafael, who's body language tells us he's playing dumb. Sgt. Kitchens' car pulls to a stop. He jumps out and goes into a two-story building.

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

Nino, Alecia, Michael and Kevin watch the crime scene below from behind some neon signage. Sgt. Kitchens bursts through the rooftop door and approaches. He is controlled, anger is underneath.

SGT. KITCHENS

What the hell happened?

Alecia takes the lead, she points to A LIQUOR STORE below.

ALECIA

We think the shooter came out of that liquor store. He unloads three and takes off.

SGT. KITCHENS

Work the entire block, get an I.D., surveillance video, anything that breaks this thing. Go.

(Alecia takes off)

Description, eye witnesses?

MICHAEL

We all saw it.

KEVIN

Shooter wore a hood.

SGT. KITCHENS

What's the vibe; Zaragoza, or was it a rival gang thing?

MICHAEL

Guy busts off three at point-blank range in the middle of the day. He was tipped to this spot, nothing about this says ritual to me.

KEVIN

We recovered the weapon, S&W .38.

MICHAEL
Ballistics tagged it for
processing, but we crosschecked the
serial number against the firearm's
database, and got a hit. You'll
never guess who it's registered to.
(off his look)
Harold Wayland.

SGT. KITCHENS
The defense attorney?
(a nod)
Go lean on him, ask why his gun is
killing my men.

Michael and Kevin take off. Sgt. Kitchens turns to Nino who
is visibly shaken. Nino can't hold it anymore. His veneer
cracks. He turns, leans against the wall.

NINO
It happened so fast. None of us
had time to get in front of it.

Sgt. Kitchens is right there with him, but keeps focused.

SGT. KITCHENS
It's not your fault, Nino. It's a
rough game we play.

NINO
I was the best man at his wedding.

Sgt. Kitchens puts a reassuring hand on Nino's shoulder.

SGT. KITCHENS
Want me to pull you off this one?
(Nino shakes his head)
Good, you're on Zaragoza. Nobody
knows him better.

As Sgt. Kitchens throws a look to Rafael Mendoza still being
questioned on the street below.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY

Alecia across from THE CLERK, 45, corpulent, pockmarked and
not happy about being a minimum-wage player.

THE CLERK
Look, all I remember is some punk
kid wearing a hood reading a comic
book. "*X-Men*" I think.

Alecia makes a mental note and gives the store a quick once
over spotting several SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS.

ALECIA
Get me the surveillance tapes.

The clerk grumbles, and moves into the back room.

EXT. MACARTHUR PARK - DAY

Sgt. Kitchens approaches Rafael Mendoza who's still being questioned by the uniformed officer.

SGT. KITCHENS
Rafael Mendoza.
(on his turn)
Sergeant Mark Kitchens.

RAFAEL
Yeah, I remember you from the old Rampart CRASH unit. Still putting crimes on innocent people?

SGT. KITCHENS
(smiles it off)
No, I was one of the good ones.

RAFAEL
There weren't any good ones in that unit.

SGT. KITCHENS
Any idea who the shooter was out here today?

RAFAEL
The Crenshaw Mafia's not happy about the drive-by last Thursday. They're laying it on our doorstep. There's a lot of shooters, and even more reasons to lay somebody down. It's how the game is played.
(beat, then)
Am I under arrest, or can I go?

Sgt. Kitchens nods to the uniformed officer.

SGT. KITCHENS
Cut him loose.

Rafael gets in the GTO and takes off. As he's driving away, Sgt. Kitchens looks down at the bloodstained asphalt and THE TAPED OUTLINE marking where Tolifero died.

EXT. GARAGE, VENICE CANALS - DAY

JIMMY RICKETTS and his "Venice Lowriders" posse are gathered around a work bench. The heavy-metal chords of "PILCHER'S SQUAD" by PRIMUS plays from an I-POD docking-station speaker hooked up to a chopper. This is an Aryan gang with swastika tattoos and damaged brain cells.

JEFFREY ATKINS is amongst them.

STU SMITH acts as score-broker and a fence for Ricketts.

STU

On Thursdays the bank gets cash deposits to cover the payroll for several textile plants, the South Bay refineries, and the Cerritos auto center. One day a week, on Thursday, the armored car company delivers the full whack.

RICKETTS

How much is the score worth?

STU

Five point six, seven. Somewhere in that neighborhood.

RICKETTS

That's a nice neighborhood.

STU

Sixty-forty split. That gets you a detailed diagram of the route with times and cross streets. Plus I'll take care of washing the money.

RICKETTS

Start the process.

STU

You'll have the details tonight.

Stu turns and goes. Ricketts refocuses on his crew.

RICKETTS

This is pure smash and grab. We'll pick a spot for the take-down, blow the back and haul as much as we can as fast as we can.

JEFFREY

We're going to need LAPD's air and be on a clock for this to work.

RICKETTS

That's why you're here.

(then to his men)

Let's move some mountains and touch the sun, boys. Get to work.

(back to Jeffrey)

Got a minute, Jeffrey?

Jeffrey nods, as the Venice Lowriders fire up their Harleys and roar off. Jeffrey goes into the house with Ricketts.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Ricketts moves into the front room with Jeffrey.

RICKETTS

What happened with Cantera?

JEFFREY

I dropped off the buyers and the heat came down.

Then, a couple of Lowriders come out from behind Jeffrey and grab him. Jeffrey is strong and drops one with a head-butt. The other Lowrider spins him with a punch.

Ricketts throws him into the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Jeffrey comes crashing in. Ricketts nails him with a right that sends him smashing through the glass shower door into the bathtub. Jeffrey's cut. Ricketts pulls a .45 from his waistband, as Jeffrey pulls his 9mm. A standoff.

RICKETTS

Did you narc him out?

JEFFREY

I'm not a narc. I drew gunfire, man. Almost got whacked, took a nine millimeter in the arm.

Jeffrey pulls up his sleeve to reveal a nasty entry wound that is crudely stitched. Ricketts looks it over, then:

RICKETTS

Funny how you're the only one got out of there.

JEFFREY

You're losing it, dude. Cantera acts like a rock star, runs around promoting himself. Only thing he didn't do was go on Oprah. He was the razor-blade through his own wrist.

(Ricketts thumbs back his hammer)

Want to get it on? We can both eat a double tap right now. But then you got to ask yourself, which one of your morons has the skills to torch six inches of ballistic steel and get you closer to five million. I know a Hell's Angel out of Oxnard lives for this kind of job.

Play the tension. Ricketts believes him and lowers his .45. He smiles, pulls Jeffrey out of the bathtub.

RICKETTS

I like a guy who stands tall even when he's overmatched.

Jeffrey's gamble has paid off, but he's not done.

JEFFREY

Next time you doubt my loyalty and
stick a gun in my face...
(down and dark)
You better pull the trigger.

Jeffrey means it. Ricketts knows it.

INT. WAYLAND'S OFFICE, LOBBY - DAY

Michael and Kevin are approached by HAROLD WAYLAND. Harold looks down his nose at them and keeps moving. He's a sleaze bucket with a tanning-bed tan and bleached teeth.

WAYLAND

If you want to talk you'll have to
do it fast, I'm due in court on a
triple homicide.

Michael and Kevin follow Wayland.

KEVIN

You own a Smith & Wesson .38, Mr.
Wayland?

WAYLAND

Yes, I do. Why?

KEVIN

Your gun killed a cop today.

This gives Wayland slight pause, only slight.

WAYLAND

Sorry to hear that.
(beat, then)
It was stolen over ten months ago.
Haven't seen it since.

MICHAEL

You file a report?

WAYLAND

Sure did. Beverly Hills P.D.
(goes out the door)
Good luck finding your killer.

INT. CHURCH, PICO-UNION DISTRICT - DAY

JAVIER ZARAGOZA crosses himself before the alter and steps up to the priest. The children's choir sings A HYMNAL.

THE PRIEST

The body and blood of your saviour
Jesus Christ.

The priest places the communion wafer into his mouth. Then Zaragoza sips from the priest's chalice and moves back down the aisle. On his way, he sees Rafael slip into the pews.

Rafael simply nods letting him know the job is done.

Zaragoza makes sure his wife and kids are seated and slides in next to them. He kneels in prayer.

Meanwhile, in the back of the church, NINO has been watching from a distance, covertly tucked in the darkness next to the confessional. The children's choir reaches a crescendo, and Nino hones in on Zaragoza.

INT. CAR - DAY

ON SGT. KITCHENS, as he drives east on the 110 freeway. The back side of downtown is a wall of steel and glass moving past. He does his best thinking while he's driving, and his face shows duress. He hits a stored number on his cell.

INT. SMALL HOUSE, BELLFLOWER - DAY

The house is very quiet, simple and clean, not trying to be anything but what it is, a nice single-family home. Ring. The phone breaks the quiet. This is the house Sgt. Kitchens is calling. THE CAMERA glides through the kitchen clocking everything it sees. A dripping faucet, school books on the table. Ring. Into the living room, a pillow and blanket on the couch, somebody slept here last night. The phone is the only thing disrupting this peaceful journey. Ring.

As THE CAMERA settles in front of A PICTURE of Lynda and Shands Tolifero. Smiling, hopeful, a fresh young couple.

INT. CAR - DAY

Sgt. Kitchens gets no answer and clicks off his cell. After a beat, he slams his fist against the dash. The culmination of a day that has gone terribly wrong.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS POLICE STATION - DAY

A DETECTIVE moves to Michael and Kevin with A POLICE REPORT.

THE DETECTIVE

Here it is, home invasion on Camden Drive in Beverly Hills. The owner is Mr. Harold Wayland. He reported some stolen jewelry and loose cash. They pinched a .38 special, too.

MICHAEL

Any suspects, leads?

The Detective refers to his police report.

THE DETECTIVE

They turned a partial print off the point of entry, not enough to get a match. No help here, sorry.

EXT. 5TH & HILL STREET - DAY

Hookers and pimps crawl out of their holes getting ready for the after-work crush. ROBERTA, late twenties, pretty if you like them down and dirty, walks Hill in stiletto heels and a mini. She's an 18th Street Ruka (Gang chick) and the tattoo covers her arm. Alecia turns the corner, dressed in a pair of lowrider jeans, a wife-beater T and a pair of red Pumas with a Von Dutch cap thrown on backwards. Funky sexy.

ALECIA

Hey, girl.

ROBERTA

You're look is too fresh for this zip code, Chavala. Sell that ass in the 90210.

Alecia smiles. Roberta is her long-time snitch.

ALECIA

The shooting in MacArthur Park. You hear about it?

ROBERTA

Everybody's heard about it.

ALECIA

Point me in the right direction.

ROBERTA

Hit me with some grease, and I can get you close. You'll have to dig for the rest.

ALECIA

Dig where?

Alecia slips Roberta a hundred bucks.

ROBERTA

A clika called YK12.

ALECIA

The Young Kings.

ROBERTA

Si, bunch of barrio rats trying to be hard. They pimp dime-baggies and nickel-rocks on 8th and Broadway. They've been tagging the walls all day. Somebody's crossed over, might be your shooter.

A pimped-out Nova pulls to the curb. THE DRIVER tosses a look to Roberta, as she slides in for the ride.

EXT. FREEWAY UNDERPASS - DAY

Underneath the interchange where the 5, the 10 and the 110 freeways meet in East Los Angeles. Commuters grind through rush hour above. This is the guts of the city and it's not pretty. A CAR turns onto the dirt lurching towards us on its soft shocks. Sgt. Kitchens pulls to a stop, gets out.

Jeffrey moves out from behind a massive cement girder.

JEFFREY

I heard Tolifero got put down.
(a nod, then)
Sorry, man. He was a good one.

SGT. KITCHENS

Yeah, it's hard.
(beat, then)
How's your arm?

JEFFREY

Not a problem.

SGT. KITCHENS

What do you got for me?

JEFFREY

The score I've been tracking got a green-light for tomorrow. It's a cowboy job on an armored car moving payroll. Strictly smash and grab.

SGT. KITCHENS

I'll get SWAT to prep the scene.
Got a location?

JEFFREY

Not yet, but I will. Right now, I need a torch-man. Somebody who can rig a shape charge with enough juice to blow an armored car.

SGT. KITCHENS

What's the alias?

JEFFREY

Hell's Angel out of Oxnard, did time with him at Tracy.

SGT. KITCHENS

It has to be Kevin.

JEFFREY

The new guy?

SGT. KITCHENS

He's the only one fits the profile.

JEFFREY

Can't you requisition somebody from Major Crimes?

SGT. KITCHENS
It's not their party.

JEFFREY
If I flame out because he wets the
bed again, it's on you.

SGT. KITCHENS
He'll be ready.

Jeffrey nods and takes off into the dark. Sgt. Kitchens
gets into his car; there's something he has to do.

INT. SEDAN - NIGHT

ON KEVIN, as he rides shotgun. He stares out the window as
the sedan moves through muted neon that is Sunset Boulevard
in the early evening. Michael knows what Kevin's thinking.

MICHAEL
Get over it.

KEVIN
What're you talking about?

MICHAEL
It's hard when an agent goes down,
but you have to put it behind you,
and you have to do it now. We've
got work to do.

KEVIN
Just like that?

MICHAEL
He rolled hard, and I'm sorry he's
gone, but his life meant something.
That's what you have to remember.

KEVIN
Could've been me last night.

MICHAEL
And it could be me tonight. It's
what we signed up for.

Then, Michael's cell RINGS, and he clicks it on.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Sgt. Kitchens driving south on the 405 towards Long Beach.

SGT. KITCHENS
Michael, any luck on the murder
weapon?

INTERCUT as needed.

MICHAEL
Dead end. Wayland checks out.

SGT. KITCHENS

You and Kevin be at the station in
an hour. Grab some coffee, it's
going to be an all nighter.

EXT. THE STANDARD HOTEL, SUNSET BOULEVARD - NIGHT

The sedan pulls to a stop and Michael jumps out.

MICHAEL

Give me five minutes and hit me on
my pager.

Michael runs up the sidewalk and enters the hotel.

WE STAY WITH Kevin, as he watches Michael disappear into the
hotel. His eyes drift back out to the nighttown flashing by
on Sunset Boulevard.

As the weight of Tolifero's murder crushes in on him.

INT. THE STANDARD HOTEL, SUNSET BOULEVARD - NIGHT

Michael moves down the hallway and lets himself in a room.

INT. THE STANDARD HOTEL, SUNSET BOULEVARD - NIGHT

Michael closes the door behind him. The sexy vibe of "DOWN
4 U" by JA RULE and ASHANTI filters softly through the room.

MICHAEL

Lisa?

No answer. Michael moves deeper into the room. A CANDLELIT
TABLE is setup by the window with two champagne glasses, and
a bottle of Cristal on ice. Lisa moves out of the darkness
and sneaks up on Michael. She moves to the rhythm of the
music and wraps her arms around his chest. Sexy.

LISA

Finally, it's just you and me. No
father, no work, no drama.

He turns, and she covers him with kisses. Michael is caught
up in her seduction. She's made herself beautiful, barely
covered in a slinky Gucci dress, and she feels good after a
hard day. Michael pulls focus, regroups.

MICHAEL

I can't do this tonight.

LISA

Don't play me like that.

MICHAEL

I'm not playing. I got some whack
meeting with a client who flew in
just for the night. Got to do the
dinner thing, hit some clubs.

LISA
You can't be serious. I got all
G'd up, put on my hooker heels.

MICHAEL
I'll make it right with you.

LISA
I can call a friend, we'll hook up
with you guys later.

Michael thinks fast, and it just comes out.

MICHAEL
My client's a woman.

LISA
You're going out clubbing on our
anniversary with another woman?

MICHAEL
She's business.

LISA
Is this business cute?

MICHAEL
You're important to me, Lisa. I'm
not going to do anything to kill
the flow we've got going, trust me
on this.
(Michael's pager
beeps)
I'm late, I gotta bounce. Order up
room service. They got my credit
card imprint downstairs.

And he's out the door. Lisa stands there for a moment, very
disappointed. Then, she goes to the phone and dials.

LISA
Is this the spa?
(beat, then)
Great. What's your most expensive
treatment?

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, LONG BEACH - NIGHT

Sgt. Kitchens pulls into the lot and parks. A POP-WARNER
FOOTBALL TEAM practices under the lights on the field. He
gets out of his car and walks into the school.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, LONG BEACH - NIGHT

Sgt. Kitchens walks down the hall looking in each classroom.
His footsteps echo on the polished floor. A single light at
the end of the hall burns. Sgt. Kitchens approaches, looks
through the small window in the door.

Inside her classroom, cleaning up after a long day is LYNDA. Sgt. Kitchens watches for a moment, forming the words in his head. Then, he focuses himself, enters. She looks up, and we watch the scene play through the window.

Sgt. Kitchens moves to her. We don't hear his words, but we know they've been heard when Lynda sits slowly, as if an invisible hand has pushed her deep into the chair. Anguish. Sgt. Kitchen's just stands there, unsure what to do.

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK gaining perspective on this chilling tableau.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. STREET, PICO-UNION DISTRICT - NIGHT

A pick-up soccer game under street lights. JAVIER ZARAGOZA plays with a bunch of neighborhood kids. It's a tough game. Zaragoza passes the ball to PABLO, the boy we recognize from page 8. Pablo cuts around the half-backs and kicks the ball through the goalie's hands. The ball bounces away.

Pablo jumps into the air celebrating. Zaragoza high-fives him and takes off after the ball. The ball rolls to a stop wedging itself under A SILVER VAN parked across the street.

INT. SILVER VAN - NIGHT

State-of-art surveillance gear, and NINO sitting behind the video monitors watching Zaragoza run right towards him. He has A ND OFFICER with him. THE POLICE RADIO squawks.

NINO
Clear the air.
(another crackle)
Kill the rover.

The ND officer shuts down the police radio. Total silence.

EXT. STREET, PICO-UNION DISTRICT - NIGHT

Zaragoza approaches the silver van and kneels, grabbing the ball out from underneath the chassis. He stands and catches his own reflection in the van's back window. One-way glass.

INT. SILVER VAN - NIGHT

Nino looks at Zaragoza, all that separates them is a pane of one-way glass. The ND officer shifts in his chair. There is a small CREAK. Nino winces, hoping Zaragoza didn't hear. Zaragoza pauses, and returns to his game.

Nino exhales, breathes easier. Then:

NINO
This is their real estate. They
make us, we're dead. Got it?

The ND officer nods an apology.

INT. GTF OFFICES, NIGHT - NIGHT

Sgt. Kitchens with Michael and Kevin.

SGT. KITCHENS
Any experience with shape charges,
plastic explosives, C4?

KEVIN

No, sir.

SGT. KITCHENS

You've got about 15 hours to get experienced. You're going under with Jeffrey on a payroll heist as a demolition's expert.

(now to Michael)

You're his handler Michael. I've got an explosives engineer coming over to prep you on the job. He'll need some temporary prison-yard ink and a back story.

MICHAEL

White supremacist?

SGT. KITCHENS

Hell's Angel from Oxnard.

MICHAEL

Who's the mark?

Sgt. Kitchens moves to the most-wanted list on the wall and points out a picture of JIMMY RICKETTS.

SGT. KITCHENS

Jimmy Ricketts.

MICHAEL

The Venice Lowriders.

(Sgt. Kitchens nods)

They got no love for the brothers.

SGT. KITCHENS

No they don't. They'll be going in strong, cowboy style. Anybody gets in the way, for any reason, they'll put them in a body bag.

(to Kevin, pointed)

This is your second-chance, Kevin. I told Jeffrey you had the stomach for this kind of action. If you don't, I need to know now.

Kevin is overwhelmed. Before he can answer, a ballistics tech, PIEFFER, 30ish, a four-named New England wasp sticks her head out of the ballistics lab. She is over-educated, over-qualified, and so beautiful it's hard to believe she can coexist with this rough-and-ready bunch. But she does, and she loves her job. Think Emily Procter.

PIEFFER

Hey, Sergeant, ballistics are in on the Tolifero shooting.

Sgt. Kitchens nods and turns back to Kevin. Kevin looks from Michael back to Sgt. Kitchens. Then:

KEVIN

I can handle it.

SGT. KITCHENS
Good. Get to work.

Michael and Kevin take off, as Sgt. Kitchens moves across the bullpen and goes to the ballistics lab.

INT. GTO OFFICES, BALLISTICS LAB - NIGHT

Sgt. Kitchens enters and Pieffer gets down to business.

PIEFFER
I pulled several latents off the weapon, but the shooter's not in the system.

SGT. KITCHENS
A virgin.

PIEFFER
There was also some trace evidence of a tar substance I pulled off the stock. I ran it, and it came back positive for *creosote*.

SGT. KITCHENS
What's that?

PIEFFER
It's a highly-toxic chemical most commonly used in the U.S. as a wood preservative, but this sample was a coal tar pitch. Its primary uses are in roofing tar and asphalt.

SGT. KITCHENS
We've got a gang-banger who works for a living.

PIEFFER
There's more. The coroner pulled a .38 slug from Tolifero's chest and sent it over. I ran it through the National Ballistics Network. I got a cold hit. Check this out.

Pieffer hits a few buttons on her computer and projects two images onto A LARGE PLASMA SCREEN. The monitor shows the striation marks on two bullets - a ballistic fingerprint.

SGT. KITCHENS
LANs and grooves align perfectly.

PIEFFER
The bullet that killed Tolifero is on the right. The one on the left was recovered from a gang-related drive-by eight months ago.

SGT. KITCHENS
The same gun fired both bullets.

PIEFFER

Yeah, so I pulled the evidence log from the drive-by. The shooter is in Men's Central awaiting trial.

Good news in a bad case.

SGT. KITCHENS

Any progress on the liquor store surveillance video?

PIEFFER

We isolated an image, but it wasn't clear enough for an I.D. Working on the enhancement now.

Just then, CHIEF BLAIR enters wearing his civvies, no I.D.

CHIEF BLAIR

Got a minute, Sergeant?

Sgt. Kitchens nods, and they go into the bullpen.

INT. GTF OFFICES, BULLPEN - NIGHT

Chief Blair and Sgt. Kitchens settle around a desk.

CHIEF BLAIR

What happened out there today?

SGT. KITCHENS

Zaragoza made one of my long-time coverts and had him whacked.

CHIEF BLAIR

How was he made?

SGT. KITCHENS

Don't know.

CHIEF BLAIR

If you need some help, anyone with a badge will throw in on this.

SGT. KITCHENS

I've got everybody on it I need.

CHIEF BLAIR

I like you, Sergeant, you're a good cop. And I know you got a bum deal being associated with that Rampart CRASH scandal. But this unit can't fail like that one did. Make it work, or somebody else will.

Sgt. Kitchens meets Chief Blair's eyes, nods.

SGT. KITCHENS

We'll get this guy.

CHIEF BLAIR
Good, let me know when you do.

EXT. 8TH & BROADWAY - NIGHT

Alecia stands in front of some freshly sprayed graffiti. It reads: "YK12." She pulls her cell and hits speed dial.

ALECIA
Nino, it's me, do me a favor.

INT. SILVER VAN - NIGHT

INTERCUT as necessary. Nino talks with Alecia on his cell. The ND officer is in the b.g. making coffee on a hot plate.

NINO
Shoot.

ALECIA
I need you to run the YK12 clique against our database and see what the computer spits out.

Nino spins and works the Mobile Digital Terminal behind him. Beat. The MDT processes the data and comes back with a list of names and addresses.

NINO
Here it is. They're about twenty strong. 16-years old and under, no priors, no wants, no convictions on any of them, baby gangsters.

ALECIA
I think one of them just grew up.

NINO
I'll hit your Blackberry with these names and addresses.

Nino makes a couple key strokes, and just like that the list is sent to Alecia on the information superhighway.

ALECIA
Hey, Nino, I know you and Tolifero were close. If you need to talk, let me know.

Nino sees something on his surveillance monitor.

NINO
Thanks, I've gotta go. Talk to you later.

Nino clicks off his cell, turns, and looks at the monitors. A pretty Mexican woman walks down the sidewalk and knocks on a door. Nino clicks his mouse, and THE NIGHT-VISION CAMERA TIGHTENS ON the woman. This is CELINA RAMIREZ. Zaragoza answers the door, and she enters. Nino puts on his headset.

INT. ZARAGOZA'S HOUSE, PICO-UNION DISTRICT - NIGHT

Zaragoza and Celina cross into the living room of this old Spanish house. Claudia comes out of the kitchen.

CLAUDIA
Hola, Celina.

CELINA
Hola. This is for Christina. I'm
sorry I missed her Quinseanera.

Celina gives Claudia a simply wrapped box.

CLAUDIA
Gracias.

Zaragoza knows exactly why she's here. He crosses to a desk and pulls A STACK OF 100-DOLLAR BILLS out of the drawer. He hands \$25,000 cash to Celina. She slips it into her purse.

ZARAGOZA
How's your husband?

CELINA
I miss him very much.

ZARAGOZA
He's a strong man, you must be the
same for your children.

CELINA
(a nod)
Por vida.

ZARAGOZA
Por vida.

Zaragoza kisses her on the cheek, and she leaves.

INT. SILVER VAN - NIGHT

Nino pulls off his headset, turns to the ND officer.

NINO
Put a tail on that woman. Find out
who she is, and why she misses her
husband.

The ND officer nods and slips out of the van.

EXT. DEMOLITION FIELD - NIGHT

TIGHT ON AN ARMORED-TRUCK DOOR. Kevin is in the middle of rigging a shape-charge. Once the explosive is in place, he sticks the detonator into the C4, attaches a fuse wire and unspools the wire on the run.

As we WIDEN, we see the armored-truck door is a mock up, and AN EXPLOSIVES ENGINEER shadows Kevin's every step. Michael clocks the test run with a stop-watch. We INTERCUT all of the above with...

INT. TATTOO PARLOR, BACK ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON AN ARM half-painted with elaborate tattoos. The arm is Kevin's, and he's getting painted with temp-ink by a sexy female tattooist named TAT-2. She's on the downside of 30, full paint, full body, cigarette dangling. Michael sits across from them pointing out black-and-grey designs.

EXT. DEMOLITION FIELD - NIGHT

Kevin reaches the safe zone and detonates the shape-charge with a remote. The explosion is powerful; a large fireball roils, lighting up the night sky. A perfect square hole is blown in the armored-truck door.

Kevin turns to Michael, and Michael turns to the explosives engineer. The explosives engineer nods.

Kevin Mack is ready.

INT. TATTOO PARLOR, BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Tat-2 throws the dial on the stereo blasting the parlor with METALLICA. In A SERIES OF RAPID-FIRE CUTS, Kevin's arms are transformed into full sleeve prison-yard tats. The inkwork is given tempo by the music. Tat-2 finishes by using A PIERCING GUN to fire A STUD into his ear. HARD CUT TO...

EXT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT BUILDING, HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

Michael and Kevin move quietly down the hall carrying Pink's take-out bags. Michael unlocks the door and pushes it open. It CREAKS. Michael winces, turns and sure enough BILL comes out of his apartment wearing a bathrobe.

BILL

Better not be selling drugs on my property.

MICHAEL

Hardest thing I have in there is a six-pack of Corona. Want to come in, we'll throw one back?

BILL

It's four a.m.

MICHAEL

I don't sell drugs, Bill. I sell cell-phones at T-Mobile.

Bill looks at Kevin and all his hardcore tattoos.

BILL
He doesn't look like he's shopping
for a wireless plan.

Bill slips back into his apartment.

KEVIN
That went well.

EXT. STREET, PICO-UNION DISTRICT - DAYBREAK

A pre-dawn orange band cracks the horizon. A DRUNK staggers down the street and leans against THE SILVER VAN. It's THE ND OFFICER. He takes a long drink from his bottle and bangs on the side of the door twice. A signal. The door cracks ever so slightly, and he surreptitiously climbs inside.

INT. SILVER VAN - DAYBREAK

The ND officer settles next to Nino.

ND OFFICER
Celina Ramirez, 1447 North Union
Street, apartment 12.

Nino enters the name into his Mobile Digital Terminal.

EXT. MEN'S CENTRAL JAIL - DAY

Alecia waits in front of 441 Bauchet Street sipping a cup of coffee. Sgt. Kitchens rounds the corner and joins her.

SGT. KITCHENS
Any breaks last night?

ALECIA
No, I knocked on a bunch of doors,
got nowhere.

Sgt. Kitchens cell chirps; he passes A FILE to Alecia, as they move into the prison.

SGT. KITCHENS
Read this, you're on point.
(into the phone)
Yeah, this is Kitchens.

INT. SILVER VAN - DAY

Nino on his cell.

NINO
Zaragoza had a visitor last night,
Celina Ramirez. I ran her, and she
came back clean. But her old man's
got a jacket two inches thick; he's
an 18th Street veterano locked down
in County on a 181.

INT. MEN'S CENTRAL JAIL - DAY

Sgt. Kitchens and Alecia move down a corridor.

SGT. KITCHENS

Sounds like the Ramirez family is on Zaragoza's payroll.

NINO

How do you mean?

SGT. KITCHENS

The same thirty-eight that killed Tolifero was used by Juan Ramirez in a drive-by eight months ago. I'm over here at County now getting ready to lean on him about it.

INT. MEN'S CENTRAL JAIL, VISITING ROOM - DAY

JUAN RAMIREZ across from Alecia and Sgt. Kitchens.

SGT. KITCHENS

Why was your wife visiting Javier Zaragoza last night?

JUAN

He's a family friend. Known him since we were kids in Oaxaca.

ALECIA

Got a trial coming up, huh, Juan?

Alecia offers Juan a cigarette. He takes it, fires it up and leans back. He is street hard and pure to the faith.

JUAN

They got nothing. I'll be street side in a couple weeks.

ALECIA

They have a murder weapon, Smitty and Wess .38. It was used to kill a cop yesterday. Ballistics pulled your prints off it. Striations on the bullet matched the slug that killed your drive-by victim.

(putting the screws to him)

You getting street side looks iffy.

JUAN

You're lying.

ALECIA

I don't lie. Now, if you help us break our case, we'll help you.

JUAN

Don't need your help, popo.

ALECIA

Don't be such a hardass, Juan, I'm tired, and the guy behind me is my boss. Make me look good, tell me who you left the gun with, and I'll get the D.A. to knock you back to a murder-two beef. With that, you might get street side again in this lifetime. Whadd'ya say?

Juan says nothing.

EXT. GARAGE, VENICE CANALS - DAY

The Venice Lowriders are gathered around Ricketts who traces the route of the armored truck on a map. Jeffrey and Kevin pull up outside in a beat-up Ford Bronco. They jump out and move up the driveway. Ricketts intercepts them at the curb.

RICKETTS

This the demo guy?

Jeffrey nods. Ricketts strips Kevin clean with a look.

KEVIN

Name's Kevin Sharp.

RICKETTS

Jimmy Ricketts.

This is a new Kevin. Harder, older, edgier.

KEVIN

I know. I heard your story from Willie Bell in D-block. He said you were into some heavy scores.

RICKETTS

You bring your rig?

KEVIN

It's all setup.

RICKETTS

Six inches of ballistic steel in less than one minute. That's all the time you have.

KEVIN

I'll blow the box in forty seconds if my cut goes up.

Kevin smiles a cocky smile. Ricketts smiles back, he likes this guy. As he leads Jeffrey and Kevin inside, we PUSH IN ON A SECOND-STORY WINDOW across the alley.

INT. LOFT SPACE - DAY

Michael has been listening on a headset to Kevin's exchange with Ricketts with A SURVEILLANCE TECH manning the high-tech recording equipment. Michael smiles; his protégé did good.

EXT. 1447 NORTH UNION STREET - DAY

Sgt. Kitchens and Alecia pull up in front of an apartment building and get out of the car.

ALECIA

I knocked on this door last night.
One of the Young Kings lives here.
(checking her
Blackberry)
Pablo Ramirez.

Sgt. Kitchens gives her a look.

SGT. KITCHENS

Pull Nino off Zaragoza, and get him
over here for backup.

Alecia pulls her cell and punches in a number.

EXT. APARTMENT 12 - DAY

Sgt. Kitchens knocks on the door with Alecia. A 14-year old girl, REYNA, opens the door.

SGT. KITCHENS

Is your mother here?

Before Reyna can answer, Celina comes up behind her.

CELINA

Can I help you?

Sgt. Kitchens badges her.

SGT. KITCHENS

I'm Sergeant Kitchens with the Gang
Task Force. I have a few questions
regarding your husband.

CELINA

I've already told the police what I
know.

SGT. KITCHENS

We're just following up.

ALECIA

Where did your husband keep his
gun, Mrs. Ramirez?

CELINA
(in denial)
My husband didn't have a gun, he's
not a killer.

Alecia looks inside the apartment and sees an "**X-Men**" comic book on the table. Her mind spins, then:

ALECIA
Maybe your son knows where it was
kept. Can we ask Pablo?

Then, PABLO comes out of the bedroom.

Pablo stops in his tracks when he notices Sgt. Kitchens and Alecia in the door with his mother. He's wearing A HOODED SWEATSHIRT and CHINOS with ROOFING TAR all over the front.

Sgt. Kitchens clocks the roofing tar. Pablo locks eyes with him and bolts back into the bedroom slamming the door behind him. Sgt. Kitchens draws his weapon and goes after him with Alecia on his tail.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Pablo locks the door and goes to the window.

INT. APARTMENT 12 - DAY

Sgt. Kitchens and Alecia get to the bedroom door and flank either side of the doorjamb. Sgt. Kitchens gives Alecia a nod and rears back kicking the door off its hinges.

Alecia tumbles into the room gun drawn just as Pablo jumps out of the open window.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Pablo flies through the air and crashes down on A DUMPSTER. He somersaults off the top and bolts down the alley. Alecia follows, landing hard on the same dumpster and giving chase.

Then, THE SILVER VAN skids to a stop sealing off the alley. Nino bolts out of the passenger-side door.

Pablo cuts to his right, and goes over a wooden fence. Nino is quick and follows him.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Pablo lands in a planter, stumbles, but gets his footing and runs through the dirt tearing down a clothesline as he goes. Nino is faster, stronger and gaining. Alecia's behind them. Pablo tears down the side yard and busts through a gate.

Nino smashes through the swinging gate in his wake.

EXT. SIDE STREET - DAY

Pablo jumps a hedge and heads east across the lawn with Nino only steps behind him. Pablo's getting winded. Nino steps it up a gear and dives at Pablo. They go down. Hard. Nino quickly overpowers the boy and slaps on the cuffs, as Alecia rolls up.

Sgt. Kitchens slides his car to a stop and approaches.

Pablo lays there with his face buried in the grass. We HOLD ON Pablo Ramirez. A tear rolls down his cheek.

This killer is just a boy.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. GTO OFFICES, BALLISTICS LAB - DAY

Pablo Ramirez is processed by Pieffer. These are FAST CUTS, jump starting us back into the action. We hear a hard FILM ADVANCE and SHUTTER. Mugshot, flash. Both profiles, flash, flash. Pablo's inked and printed. A sample of the roofing tar is swabbed from his Chinos. And we SMASH CUT TO...

INT. GTF OFFICES, INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

A VIDEO IMAGE of a scared, but still defiant Pablo fills the screen. PAN OFF the video to find Pablo sitting across from Sgt. Kitchens giving a videotaped confession.

SGT. KITCHENS

Did Zaragoza order the job?

PABLO

Nobody tells me who to hit.

SGT. KITCHENS

Did he go into his wallet, or were you just "clicking in?"

PABLO

This ain't about no money.

SGT. KITCHENS

You killed a cop, Pablo. Know what that means?

PABLO

Yeah, I'll be tried as a juvenile, and get thrown in the system until I'm 25. Then, I'll get paroled and put into a work-release program.

SGT. KITCHENS

You learn that from your father?

PABLO

My dad's in jail because of sucios like you.

SGT. KITCHENS

No, your dad's in jail because he's a cold-blooded killer. He's a lost cause. But you're not. With some hard work, you can still turn your life around. Do the right thing, Pablo. Give me Zaragoza, and I'll make sure you're protected.

PABLO

I'm not a hater.

Pieffer sticks her head in.

PIEFFER
I need a minute.

Sgt. Kitchens moves into the viewing room with Pieffer.

INT. GTO OFFICES, VIEWING ROOM - DAY

Sgt. Kitchens and Pieffer in front of one-way glass.

PIEFFER
The kid works as a day laborer for a local roofing contractor. That's why the coal tar pitch makes sense. The sample I pulled off the murder weapon matches the sample from his pants. That's the good news, ready for the bad?
(Sgt. Kitchens nods)
His prints aren't on the gun.

SGT. KITCHENS
I have a full confession.

PIEFFER
People lie, fingerprints don't.

Sgt. Kitchens can't believe it, he turns looking at Pablo on the other side of the one-way glass.

SGT. KITCHENS
He's taking this bust and burning himself. Why?

PIEFFER
Maybe this will clear it up.

Pieffer hands over a grainy black and white photograph.

SGT. KITCHENS
What is it?

PIEFFER
The isolated image from the liquor store surveillance tape. We spent all night compressing the pixels and sharpening the image.

Sgt. Kitchens looks down at the photo. His face goes slack. He looks back at Pablo, as it all becomes horribly clear.

EXT. SOUTH SAN PEDRO STREET & EAST 7TH - DAY

Minimal traffic, close to the freeway on-ramp. PULL BACK to reveal Michael and the SWAT team looking down on this quiet little intersection from the roof across the street. Michael turns to the SWAT Captain.

MICHAEL

This is the spot, set it up.

The SWAT Captain and his men confer about positioning.

EXT. 110 FREEWAY - DAY

AN ARMORED TRUCK travels east.

INT. ARMORED TRUCK - DAY

The downtown skyline rises up through the windshield. Nino drives with Alecia. They're dressed as uniformed couriers.

NINO

About this new guy?

ALECIA

We've been through this, there is no new guy.

NINO

I know. I was thinking maybe you take me to dinner at your parents on Sunday.

Alecia cuts him a sidelong glance.

ALECIA

You trying to get with me, Nino?

NINO

I was thinking about it.

Nino smiles and takes the Washington Street off-ramp.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

It's abruptly quiet. A BLACK FORD f350 DUALY is parked and idling. Three men sit inside. Ricketts, Jeffrey and Kevin.

INT. FORD F350 - DAY

Ricketts pulls three full-head rubber masks out from behind the seat. He gives THREE-EYED KID to Jeffrey, THE KILLER CLOWN to Kevin and keeps SATAN'S BRIDE for himself.

A UNIDEN DIGITAL POLICE SCANNER is mounted under the dash. POLICE CALLS are on at a low level.

Ricketts slides a CD into the stereo.

RICKETTS

Let's move some mountains and touch the sun.

As "COWBOY" by KID ROCK fills the cab.

EXT. WASHINGTON & MAPLE STREET - DAY

The armored truck barrels along, makes a left onto Maple and passes the alley where the black f350 waits. Ricketts pulls THE DUALLY into traffic behind the armored truck. We're on the backside of L.A. and traffic is sparse.

A BLACK VAN edges out of a side street and slips in front of the armored truck.

INT. ARMORED TRUCK - DAY

Nino watches THE BLACK VAN through the windshield and checks his rearview mirror. THE DUALLY pulls into the outside lane and starts gaining.

NINO

It's going down, get ready.

Through the windshield, they watch the back doors to THE VAN swing open and one of the Venice Lowriders emerges wearing a full-head rubber DRACULA mask. Behind him are several other masked Lowriders, PRETTY WOMAN, TWISTED FACE and WARLOCK. Dracula raises A SHOTGUN and fires.

EXT. MAPLE & 9TH - DAY

The first blast of 12-gauge buckshot rips through the grill, and into the radiator. Water and smoke erupt. One of the next several blasts takes out the front tire.

Kid Rock's power chords and white-trash lyrics give tempo to all the action.

INT. ARMORED TRUCK - DAY

Nino does his best to control the armored truck, but the steering is gone.

INT. FORD F350 - DAY

Travelling with Ricketts, Jeffrey and Kevin.

JEFFREY

Why are we taking them down here,
this isn't the spot?

RICKETTS

Change of plans. Keeps everybody
honest.

EXT. MAPLE & 9TH - DAY

The armored truck charges forward like a wounded prehistoric beast. It jumps the curb, tears up a fire hydrant and slams into a bus shelter before grinding to a hard stop.

INT. ARMORED TRUCK - DAY

Radiator smoke billows. Alecia grabs the radio mike.

ALECIA
(into radio)
211, repeat 211, we're being taken
on the corner of Maple and 9th.

Through the windows, Alecia and Nino watch Dracula, Pretty Woman, Three-Eyed Kid and Warlock pour out of the black van and surround them with weapons trained.

INT. FORD F350 - DAY

Ricketts listens to THE POLICE SCANNER.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
(radio filter)
Car 83, what's your ETA to the 211
in progress Maple and 9th?

CAR 83 (V.O.)
(radio filter)
Car 83. ETA is four minutes, over.

Ricketts starts the stopwatch which hangs on a string around his neck. He turns to Kevin.

RICKETTS
Four minutes, do your magic, Kevin.

Ricketts pulls on his SATAN'S BRIDE mask and jumps out.

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

Michael hears the call on THE POLICE RADIO and calls out to the SWAT Captain.

MICHAEL
They switched spots. Let's move.

Michael runs for the rooftop door.

EXT. MAPLE & 9TH - DAY

Kevin in his KILLER CLOWN MASK rigs the shape-charge on the armor-plated back door of the armored truck using a pair of suction cups. He sticks the detonator into the C4 explosive and attaches the fuse wire. He unspools the wire.

Kevin takes cover behind the dually. Ricketts and Jeffrey join him, as the other Lowriders duck behind the black van for cover. Kevin looks to Ricketts and presses the remote.

The shape-charge is detonated. The armored truck is lifted off its tires, as the inward blast tears the door apart.

INT. ARMORED TRUCK - DAY

Nino and Alecia are rocked, tossed and turned. It rains deposit slips.

EXT. MAPLE & 9TH - DAY

Kevin's on an adrenaline high.

KEVIN

What a freaking rush, man!!

Ricketts looks at his stopwatch 41...42...43...

RICKETTS

Forty-three seconds.

(a wink)

Impressive.

Then, he takes off towards the back of the armored truck.

EXT. SOUTH SAN PEDRO STREET & EAST 7TH - DAY

Michael and the SWAT team pile into their vehicles and take off with tires screeching.

EXT. MAPLE & 9TH - DAY

Dracula and Pretty Woman keep their shotguns aimed at Nino and Alecia pinning them inside the truck.

Ricketts jumps out of the back of the armored truck carrying a moneybag. Ricketts looks at his stopwatch and calls out.

RICKETTS

90 seconds left. Move it.

Three-Eyed Kid, Warlock, Kevin and Jeffrey pick up the pace. It's an assembly line. They throw the moneybags in the back of the Ford Dually.

INT. ARMORED TRUCK - DAY

Nino turns to Alecia.

NINO

If we don't step up, they're going to get away with this.

Alecia covertly hands a CS-GAS GRENADE to Nino. The cab of the armored truck is high so all of this is hidden from the masked Lowriders view. Now, they pull RE-BREATHERS from underneath the dashboard. Then, they share a look, crack the bulletproof windows and quickly toss the CS grenades.

EXT. ARMORED TRUCK - DAY

Nino's grenade hit the asphalt spewing a nasty cloud of gas. Dracula is immediately enveloped and buckles at the waist.

NINO

GO!!!

Nino kicks his door open and immediately knocks Dracula to the ground.

Alecia's CS grenade has rolled to the feet of Pretty Woman, nothing happens. A dud. Pretty Woman looks down. Alecia takes a chance, and kicks her door open. It connects with Pretty Woman knocking him back. And just like that, she's out the door. With a series of RAPID-FIRE PUNCHES, Alecia disarms Pretty Woman and KOs him with a sweeping roundhouse.

Nino and Alecia quickly handcuff them with plastic handcuff strips. Two down, three to go.

With their weapons drawn and using their re-breathers, they creep through the smoke towards the rest of the masked gang.

SIRENS can be heard in the distance. Ricketts jumps out of the armored truck with the final load.

RICKETTS

(calling out)

That's it, we're out of here.

Nino moves through the smoke like an apparition and puts his gun to Rickett's head. He spits out his re-breather.

NINO

Hands it the air.

Ricketts stops, holds onto the bags. Nino rips the mask off his head. Twisted Face and Warlock approach guns ready.

TWISTED FACE

(cuts in; cool)

Drop the gun!!!!

Nino holds steady. Jeffrey and Kevin come up behind Twisted Face and Warlock and pistol-whip them. The masked Lowriders go down. Jeffrey and Kevin cuff them with handcuff strips. Rickett's knows Jeffrey ratted him out; his blood boils.

RICKETTS

(to Jeffrey)

You've been setting up on me all this time?

Jeffrey pulls off his Three-Eyed Kid mask.

JEFFREY

Yeah, you got punked.

Ricketts drops the money and sweep kicks Nino in the kneecap with one lightning fast move. Nino buckles. Ricketts pulls his .45 and puts it to Nino's head. Alecia comes out of the smoke around the other side of the truck with her 9mm.

ALECIA

Don't do it, Ricketts.

Ricketts whirls on her using Nino as a shield.

RICKETTS

Drop the gun, or he's dead.

Alecia takes a bead.

ALECIA

Right now you're looking at five to ten. Pull that trigger and it's a death sentence. Be smart and stand down.

Then, the SWAT trucks slide sideways sealing off the eastern escape route. A black-and-white, CAR 83, seals off the west and spills two cops. Michael and the SWAT team pile out.

RICKETTS

Tell them to get out of here right now, or I'll waste him.

(thumbs the hammer
back)

DO IT NOW!!!

Nino gives Alecia a look as if to say...

ALECIA

No deal.

Ricketts finger tightens on the trigger. Alecia lets go of one hammered-on shot. And WE GO WIDE to include the entire landscape, as Ricketts slips to the asphalt and beyond.

The SWAT team quickly rushes in with Michael.

Nino gives Alecia a quick look of thanks. She nods a simple acknowledgement. Then Michael, Jeffrey and Kevin join them.

MICHAEL

You okay?
(Nino nods, then)
Good work, Kevin.

JEFFREY

Not bad for a punk-ass rookie.

Kevin smiles; the validation feels good.

MICHAEL

Let's get this scene processed and cleaned up.

Michael, Kevin and Jeffrey disperse. Alecia moves to Nino.

ALECIA
Whadd'ya think, should we do this
family dinner on Sunday or what?

Off Nino's smile.

INT. APARTMENT 12 - DAY

ON REYNA, as she sits on the couch reading the "**X-Men**" comic book. She doesn't even look up from the page when THE KNOCK is heard. Celina crosses the room and opens the door to find Sgt. Kitchens standing there with a uniformed officer.

SGT. KITCHENS
Hello, Mrs. Ramirez.

CELINA
Where's my son?

SGT. KITCHENS
He's still downtown.
(this is hard)
We need to take your daughter with
us for questioning.

The uniformed officer goes inside and handcuffs Reyna.

CELINA
She's just a girl, she has nothing
to do with this.

SGT. KITCHENS
I wish that were true.

The uniformed officer leads Reyna down the hallway, and Sgt. Kitchens follows. As Reyna is being taken away, she looks back at her mother who watches from the doorway. Celina's shattered, everybody she loves has been stripped from her. Reyna is forced to pull her eyes when Sgt. Kitchens marches her out the door and away for a very, very long time.

INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT - DAY

Sgt. Kitchens enters and scans the place. He spots Zaragoza sitting at a booth eating with Rafael and crosses to them.

ZARAGOZA
Sergeant Kitchens.
(smile, then)
Can I get you a cerveza?

SGT. KITCHENS
No, thanks.

ZARAGOZA
Uno mas cerveza, Rafael.

Rafael nods and leaves. Sgt. Kitchens slides into the booth opposite Zaragoza. These two have a serious history.

SGT. KITCHENS

This is a nice place you got here,
you've done well.

ZARAGOZA

Gracias. The city paid me off for
the unlawful incarceration lawsuit.
The number was generous.
(small silence)
Thanks to you, my friend, and your
Rampart CRASH scandal.

This is an open wound, and Zaragoza has picked the scab.

SGT. KITCHENS

Those were bad times, but things
are different now.

Rafael sets a beer in front of Sgt. Kitchens and leaves.

ZARAGOZA

Things are different for me, too.
I got a beautiful family, I'm out
there generating a positive role
model for the kids. I'm what they
call an urban advocate.

SGT. KITCHENS

Yeah, you even teach Sunday school.

ZARAGOZA

These are my streets, my people, I
own them, I'm in their bloodstream,
and they are in mine. You come
around looking to bust me back, you
should know I will never go.

(leaning in)

They say you're a good cop who got
caught up in a bad unit, and I know
you've got this new Chief of Police
riding you bareback, but I am not
your comeback bust.

SGT. KITCHENS

You killed one of my boys.

ZARAGOZA

I lose boys out there every week.
You have to pay to play.

Sgt. Kitchens and Zaragoza hold a look. It doesn't last
long, but it means a lot. Then:

SGT. KITCHENS

I'm taking you down, and next time
it'll be for good.

(beat)

Thanks for the beer.

Sgt. Kitchens gets up and leaves, as Zaragoza watches him go
knowing he's in for the fight of his life.

EXT. JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY - DAY

A sprawling, two-story concrete structure surround by barbed wire. Reyna steps off a Sheriff's bus with a bunch of other tough-looking female delinquents who are chained together.

As Reyna's led inside for processing we INTERCUT WITH...

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

It rains. A PRIESTS eulogizes Shands Tolifero in front of his casket. In attendance under their umbrellas are Lynda, Sgt. Kitchens, Chief Blair, Alecia, Nino, Michael, Jeffrey and Kevin.

The priest finishes his eulogy and flowers are placed on the casket by our crew. Everyone pays their private respects as MUSIC gives life to all of the above.

INT. JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY - DAY

ON A BARRED DOOR, as it is slammed shut in front of Reyna's face. PUSH IN ON her, as she stares onto the lonesome tier. A view she will have for all of her young life.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

The casket is lowered into Shands Tolifero's final resting place. Our crew along with Chief Blair gives Lynda their condolences. Sgt. Kitchens is last in line. No words can quell what she's feeling.

Sgt. Kitchens doesn't even try, he simply takes her into his arms and holds her. And we DISSOLVE THROUGH TO...

INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT, HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

Michael has done his best to make his place romantic. Lots of burning candles, soft music, take-out Chinese food. Lisa and him sit on pillows on the floor eating with chopsticks.

The sultry strains of "FALLIN" by ALICIA KEYS adds some soul to the romance.

MICHAEL

So what do I have do to get your
old man to stop sweating me?

LISA

Lose the earrings, join the Marine
Corps and get your tattoos lasered
off.

They laugh, kiss. Their moment is interrupted by A KNOCK. They get very quiet hoping it will go away. Then ANOTHER KNOCK followed by A VOICE.

THE VOICE
LAPD, open up.

Michael gets up and opens the door. There in the hallway stands BILL with Sgt. Kitchens.

BILL
That's him.

SGT. KITCHENS
Michael Stretch?

MICHAEL
Yes, sir.

Sgt. Kitchens badges Michael and extends A SEARCH WARRANT.

SGT. KITCHENS
Hollywood Vice. We have a warrant
to search your premises.

Behind Sgt. Kitchens, barely containing themselves are Nino, Alecia and Kevin. Michael swings the door open.

MICHAEL
What're you looking for?

Nino, Alecia and Kevin enter with Sgt. Kitchens who leaves the door open a crack. They start searching the place.

SGT. KITCHENS
Mr. Sinclair seems to think you're
trafficking illegal substances.
(beat)
Are you, son?

MICHAEL
No, sir. I work for T-Mobile. You
can check my employment records.

SGT. KITCHENS
Already did. They said you're one
of their top producers.
(across the room)
Got anything, Kevin?

Kevin is rifling through the kitchen and fridge.

KEVIN
A six-pack of Corona, and couple of
limes.

Bill cranes his neck, peeking his head in the door.

BILL
Check the bedroom.

SGT. KITCHENS
Relax, Mr. Sinclair, we've got this
handled.

Alecia is snooping around the candles and take-out food.

ALECIA
What're you celebrating?

LISA
It's our anniversary.

ALECIA
Yeah, how long?

LISA
Three months.

ALECIA
(facetious)
How sweet.

Michael hangs his head; he's going to get razed over this.
Nino comes out of the bedroom.

NINO
This place is clean, sir.

SGT. KITCHENS
Sorry to break up your party. I'll
let Mr. Sinclair know you're clean.

Alecia, Nino and Kevin leave. Sgt. Kitchens is the last to go, but gives Michael a covert wink before leaving him alone with Lisa. Lisa turns to Michael.

LISA
I'm sorry.

MICHAEL
No sweat, let's just forget about
it, okay?

Lisa nods, kisses him. Then, a whisper.

LISA
(seductive)
I'll make it right with you.

She kisses him some more. THE CAMERA PULLS BACK through the window and then further into the night. Sgt. Kitchens, and his crew can be seen talking with Bill on the sidewalk.

U2's "BEAUTIFUL DAY" takes over the soundtrack, as we fly up and away, pulling further and further into the night leaving all the quarrels and guests of this great city to be pounded out on the streets below...

THE END