

ALIAS

"Welcome Home"

by

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ACT ONE

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Frantic footsteps pound on the wet shiny pavement.

SYDNEY BRISTOW runs from an unseen pursuer. She looks different. Not confident in her ability or training. Frightened.

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...

VAUGHN. He's surprised, but counters her move and extracts his hand before she can break it.

VAUGHN  
Sydney! It's just me.

She blinks a couple times as his face finally registers in her sleep fogged brain. She looks around the empty plane. Getting her bearings.

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. She's unsure why.

SYDNEY  
I don't remember.

CONTINUED:

Vaughn studies her skeptically. Saddened at the loss of their bond. He takes a deep breath.

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. MONASTERY - CONRAD'S ROOM - NEPAL - DAY

Sloane reads the single sheet of paper.

VAUGHN (V.O.)

Zero point energy.

INT. PRODUCTION PLANT

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.

CONTINUED:

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.

<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 --</p> <p>-- 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. How can he tell her this?

Sydney leans forward urgently and studies him. Knowing she's not going to like what he's got to tell her.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
Vaughn. Tell me the CIA brought him  
down.

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

CONTINUED:

Sydney exhales hard and fast. It's as if he'd literally just punched her in the gut.

END OF ACT ONE

CONTINUED: (2)

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)

Explain this to me. How can you knowingly work for the very enemy I thought we were fighting?

VAUGHN

It's not so bad. Nothing's really changed.

Sydney can only stare at him. Who is this man? Where's the real Michael Vaughn? 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?  
-- 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. Unable to take in everything.

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

On the surface, things appear unchanged. The office looks no different. CIA AGENTS bustle about with the urgent efficiency of having their lives on the line, not just their jobs. All conceal the constant threat with brittle smiles.

JACK 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. Is this really my father? 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.

CONTINUED:

Jack sets her on her feet. He holds her at arms length to get a good look at her. Uneasy with this sudden shift in her father, Sydney can only stand there awkwardly and let him.

JACK  
You're really here!

He kisses her and hugs her tightly again. Sydney tenses in the tight embrace. She hugs him back. Torn between enjoying his obvious delight of her return and the thought that this overly affectionate man can't be Jack Bristow.

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. The change in him completely unsettles her. 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, WEISS, DIXON, MARSHALL and IRINA inside.

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.



CONTINUED:

IRINA

My sweet darling baby. Welcome home.

SYDNEY

Thanks, Mom.

Sydney eyes Jack over Irina's shoulder. Is this for real? What's going on here?

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

Will greets Sydney. She hugs him tightly and closes her eyes as she tries to fight off the horrible memory of finding him bloody and unconscious in her bathtub. The horror of losing Francie tightens their embrace further. She smiles in an unsuccessful attempt to keep the tears from falling.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

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 is --  
 -- 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.

CONTINUED: (2)

WEISS

We saved your desk.

Sydney looks around at all the smiling faces of her friends and family. She can't help, but feel a little disturbed that none of them seem to care that they work for Sloane.

SYDNEY

Thanks, but --

JACK

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 passed 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

You need to go to you room and think about this for a while.

SYDNEY

Go to my -- room?

JACK

Yes. Go! Right now, young lady.

He pulls out his gun and points it at a disbelieving Sydney.

SYDNEY

Dad? What are you doing?

JACK

I'm sorry Sydney. You need a time out. Go!

INT. SYDNEY'S ROOM

Still at gunpoint, Jack herds Sydney inside.

SYDNEY  
You don't need to do this.

JACK  
Apparently I do. Have a seat.

Sydney eyes him. Trying to figure the best way to get by him.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Don't Syd. Just obey for a change.

SYDNEY  
You are not my father.

Hurt, Jack flinches a bit. Seeing the weak spot, Sydney presses forward.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
What did you do to him? If you hurt my father, I will kill you!

Jack nearly smiles at the fierce protectiveness he hears in her voice. The old stoic Jack slips forward.

JACK  
Enough!

Sydney stares at him more confused than ever.

Jack picks up a Walkman from the dresser and tosses it on the bed.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Listen up and pay attention. I want you to get some rest. Your mother recorded a lullaby for you. We'll see you at dinner.

Jack backs from the room. Stoic Jack rears up again. He says almost sarcastically.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Welcome home, honey.

He closes the door behind him. Electronic locks click into place. Sydney springs at the door. She pounds on it with balled fists.

INT. HALLWAY

Heavily, Jack leans against the doorway for a long minute. He reholsters the gun and pushes his emotions back behind his stoic Spy Daddy facade. He starts to walk away. Each time her fists hit the door, his steps get heavier, but he keeps going.

INT. SYDNEY'S ROOM - EVENING

Sydney stops pounding on the door and looks around her posh prison. Her gaze lands on the Walkman. She picks it up and looks at it skeptically.

SYDNEY

Lullabies.

With nothing more to lose, she puts the headphones on.

INT. ROTUNDA - MORNING

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

IRINA (V.O.)

Sydney. Please forgive us the ruse.  
This was the only way to bring you  
up to speed as quickly as required.

INT. SYDNEY'S ROOM - EVENING

Sydney sits heavily on the bed and listens.

IRINA (V.O.)

Vaughn undoubtedly told you about  
Sloane. What he didn't -- couldn't -  
- tell you is that Sloane is  
infinitely more dangerous today  
that 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.

CONTINUED:

IRINA (V.O.)

Because he's responsible for bringing zero point energy into existence, the governments of the world have chosen to absolve him of all guilt.

Will joins Sydney and Dixon. The three of them get Marshall and Weiss.

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 Vaughn waits with an approving smile. The groups disappears inside.

INT. ROTUNDA - BRIEFING ROOM

The group files inside and sits around the table.

Jack is already seated at the head; Irina at the foot.

Vaughn closes the Briefing Room door with a decisive click before taking a seat at the table himself.

Marshall executes a few commands on a keyboard. The video monitors flicker almost imperceptibly. The feed shows the group sitting around the table.

Jack, the stoic Spy Daddy Jack, stands.

On the monitor, he remains seated.

JACK

Welcome home, Sydney.

END ACT TWO

CONTINUED:

ACT THREE

INT. ROTUNDA - BRIEFING ROOM

Jack retakes his seat to match the video feed. Marshall switches it back to real time.

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 them of energy moments after the extractors are applied. It shoots viruses through the wiring and can 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.

CONTINUED:

Jack circles the western most bridge on the map. He casually flicks his pen around so it points slightly at Marshall.

Marshall loops the video feed again.

Jack stands.

JACK (CONT'D)

Your counter mission is to protect Dr. Qing Lian and his research from yourselves. He's actually developing a product that will lengthen the life of the circumference. If he's successful we'll be less dependent upon Sloane for energy and cut his profits.

He sits. Marshall does a couple keystrokes. The monitors again go to real time.

JACK (CONT'D)

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

Sydney shoots Will a surprised look. He grins sheepishly.

Jack distributes Op packets to the team.

JACK (CONT'D)

A Casino yacht will cruise under the lab tomorrow. The team will board it just off the coast of China. You'll leave in an hour. 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 --

SYDNEY

How'd that happen? Last I remember you were applying for Senior Analyst.



CONTINUED:

Will looks away for a moment.

WILL

It was really hard -- your disappearance. I wanted -- needed to do something to honor your memory.

Touched beyond belief, Sydney fights tears. She hugs Will.

Behind them, Vaughn watches. Jealousy flickers across his face for a moment. He gets it under control.

But not before Sydney notices. She takes a longer moment than necessary to step away from Will.

Vaughn grits his teeth and moves away to join Weiss.

SYDNEY

So catch me up. What else has changed around here?

Will's gaze flicks to Vaughn. He gives Sydney a knowing look.

WILL

You should talk to him --  
He took it harder than all of  
us.

SYDNEY

There's nothing to say --  
I can see that.

WILL

Look...I'm just saying that you should get all the facts before jumping to conclusions.

Sydney looks across the room where Vaughn and Weiss go over Intel. As if sensing her scrutiny, Vaughn glances up. Their gazes lock and hold for a long moment. Hope blossoms briefly in her eyes. She shakes it off and refocuses on Will.

SYDNEY

I already have the one most crucial piece of Intel.

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

EXT. CASINO YACHT - DECK

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

CONTINUED:

Sydney turns her head and spots Dixon already on board and mixing with another group of guests. He acknowledges them with a barely perceptible nod of his head.

Vaughn guides her in the opposite direction and among the noisy slot machines.

SYDNEY

We're in place, Bootcamp.

INT. ROTUNDA

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

IRINA

Copy that, Mountaineer. Bulldog,  
what's your twenty?

EXT. BRIDGE

Will, wearing hip waders, raincoat and 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

All set, Bootcamp.

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 Vaughn.

CONTINUED:

SYDNEY

Since when does Will speak Chinese?

VAUGHN

Lots of things have changed.

His statement kills some of her amusement. Vaughn watches her expression darken. He's at the end of his sanity.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

Why won't you let me explain?

SYDNEY

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

VAUGHN

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

SYDNEY

We are not doing this here.

VAUGHN

Then where, Syd? When?

Sydney fights to keep the smile on her face. Her curiosity is killing her. She'd rather pull out her tongue than admit it.

SYDNEY

(forced smile)  
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.

From a distance, Sydney and Vaughn still appear to be a normal loving couple.

EXT. BRIDGE

Will heaves a heavy sigh.

WILL

I didn't mean to ask now.

EXT. CASINO YACHT - DECK

Vaughn looks around the other oblivious GUESTS. He feigns having lascivious thoughts and pulls her into a semi secluded corner.

CONTINUED:

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

SYDNEY

(flinches)

Alice.

-- Alice?

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

EXT. CASINO YACHT - RAILING

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.

DIXON

Guys. Not here.

EXT. CASINO YACHT - DECK

Not to be deterred, Sydney presses on. The flood gates have  
 finally opened.

SYDNEY

VAUGHN

Oh you searched? For how long? A minute? Maybe two --? Why keep it up when there's <u>Alice</u> waiting in the wings? I didn't give up on you. How could you give up on me?	We searched for <u>months</u> .  -- she wasn't <u>waiting</u> in the wings. -- I found your <u>body!</u>
--	--

Sydney glares at him unable to hold her cover under the  
 pressure. She's finally asked the question that had been  
 plaguing her the most. But she's unprepared for the answer.

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

The full weight of his ordeal hits her. Completely lances her  
 anger. Her expression softens.

Vaughn remembers where they are. He fights to regain his  
 composure and looks around.

CONTINUED:

The guests around them talk, laugh and gamble. None seem to have noticed their whispered spat.

The lines of communication have open a tiny crack between them.

VAUGHN  
Where were you?

His burning question. The one on everybody else's mind as well.

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

SYDNEY  
(quietly)  
I don't know.

Vaughn's own expression softens as he takes pity on her. He lets Sydney off the hook. For now.

IRINA (V.O.)  
Are we good?

Sydney's eyes widen as she realizes the argument was shared with all her friends and family. She blushes. Her gaze locks with Vaughn's.

VAUGHN  
We're good.

DIXON (O.S.)  
Time to move.

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

SYDNEY  
Copy that.

She and Vaughn exchange a look of truce. She lets him guide her towards the rear of the yacht. Dixon joins them.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
We're in position.

EXT. BRIDGE

Will watches the yacht pass underneath him.

CONTINUED:

WILL

Copy that.

INT. ROTUNDA - MARSHALL'S SPACE

Marshall holds up the fishing pole for Will to see.

MARSHALL

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

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 are plunged  
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 realizes that it's still pitch black in the 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, Sydney and  
Vaughn 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, Vaughn and  
Dixon all blink in the sudden brightness.

MARSHALL

See? One minute.

He holds up three pairs of shoes.

CONTINUED:

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.

Marshall beams under her admiration.

MARSHALL

Welcome to the future. Although...not so far that these babies are in every closet. That's one reason to remember you'll only get one minute of darkness. Don't want to freak everybody out.

VAUGHN

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 the generator room.

EXT. UNDER THE BRIDGE

Dixon, Sydney and Vaughn all 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 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 other three.

CONTINUED:

WILL

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

EXT. UNDER THE BRIDGE

The three all 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 and Vaughn quickly push her inside. They scramble in themselves.

INT. GENERATOR ROOM

Dixon flicks open the cigar lighter. He attaches it to an exposed cable. Looks to Sydney and Vaughn to confirm they're ready. At their nods, 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, Vaughn 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. They three of them rush into...

INT. LAB - CORRIDOR

They sprint down the corridor. At a three way intersection, they split up; one goes each direction.

INT. LAB - RESEARCH AREA

Sydney bursts inside...

INT. LAB - OFFICE

Dixon ducks inside...



INT. LAB - LIVING AREA

Vaughn slips inside...just as the lights come back on. As if nothing happened. Vaughn melts into the remaining shadows.

DR. QING LIAN looks around the room semi alert. He settles back into his chair.

INT. LAB - OFFICE

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

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

Okay, guys. 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.

VAUGHN

(whispers)

Copy.

INT. LAB - LIVING AREA

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

Vaughn 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 run into...have trouble with the good doctor. Smear a little under his nose. He'll be out like a light.

Vaughn 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. Vaughn 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. Be careful not to let the gel touch your skin though. There're no side effects... but you'll go down, too.

Vaughn 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."

VAUGHN

I'm ready for you, Mountaineer.

INT. LAB - RESEARCH AREA

Sydney's brow is furrowed in concentration as she struggles to connect what used to be a relatively simple explosive device.

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...

CONTINUED:

SARK. He stares at her with his trademark amused expression on his face. 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.

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

SYDNEY

Sark...

INT. LAB - LIVING AREA

Vaughn stands at attention.

VAUGHN

Wha...

SYDNEY (V.O.)

...is...

INT. LAB - OFFICE

Dixon types furiously on the keyboard. He pulls up the security cam image of Sark and Sydney in the lab.

SYDNEY (V.O.)

...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. A smile usually reserved for Will and Francie.

SYDNEY

Hi.

CONTINUED:

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 as an unexplainable sense of déjà vu hits her. She shakes it off.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

But gotta go.

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 punches 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. It 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.

CONTINUED: (2)

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.

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

Sydney flinches; realizes she wasn't hit. She springs towards the explosives and sets the timer for sixty seconds.

Sark tries to fight Vaughn off. Vaughn holds his own.

SYDNEY

Vaughn, gotta go!

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

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Leave it! Come on.

Vaughn 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. Vaughn rushes by her. He pulls her out.

VAUGHN

Move, Syd! Dixon we're on our way.

DIXON (O.S.)

Copy.

CONTINUED: (3)

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

Vaughn and Sydney run down the corridor. Sydney struggles to keep up. Dixon joins them at a junction. All three run flat out.

DIXON  
Ready for extraction.

EXT. BRIDGE - SERVICE DOOR

Vaughn bursts outside. Sydney and Dixon on his heels.

A car screeches to a halt in front of them.

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

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.

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

VAUGHN  
It's okay. We made it.

She looks at him with a small, sad smile.

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

Vaughn gives her an understanding look. The lines of communication opening up between them once again. He nods. Puts an arm around her. She leans against his chest. Fighting tears.

Will watches them in the rearview. His face, an expressionless mask.

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

INT. VAUGHN'S CAR - DRIVING - NIGHT

Sydney and Vaughn ride in the car. An awkward silence between them. He studies her for a moment. Turns his gaze back to the street just as she looks at him. She looks out the passenger window. He glances over at her. So much to say. No courage to say it. He sighs and pulls the car over.

SYDNEY  
Thanks for the ride.

VAUGHN  
You're welcome.

She hesitates another moment, then climbs from the car.

Vaughn watches her go with a heavy heart. He works to gather his courage. Jumps out the car to go after her.

EXT. BRISTOW HOUSE - FRONT PORCH

Vaughn catches up to Sydney just as she turns the key in the lock and opens the door.

SYDNEY	
Did I forget something?	
VAUGHN	SYDNEY
I have really lousy timing.	
You were right. I should've known --	-- no. How could you?
I made a mistake. I'm sorry.	Vaughn. It's okay. --
-- it isn't. If you'll let me. I'd like to correct it --	-- what are you saying--

She stares at him. Not sure what's he's getting at. She hopes, but is afraid to at the same time.

VAUGHN  
I'm filing for a divorce tomorrow.  
I should never have drug Alice in this mess.

SYDNEY  
Divorce? Are you sure?

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.

CONTINUED:

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

I can't go on -- working -- so close to you -- and not-- So I'd like to make it up to you. If you'll let me.

Sydney smiles tenderly at him. She fights tears. She closes the distance between them and gives him a gentle kiss on his cheek.

SYDNEY

I think you have fantastic timing.

He smiles back at her. He opens her door and ushers her inside. He squeezes her hand in thanks, then gently pulls the door closed between them.

INT. VAUGHN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Vaughn slowly opens the door. He looks around furtively then catches himself. He shakes it off and steps all the way inside.

ALICE (O.S.)

Sweetie? Is that you?

Vaughn freezes in his tracks. He snaps himself out of it and closes the front door.

VAUGHN

Uh, yeah. Hon.

He grimaces as much at his guilty tone as the hastily tacked on endearment. Vaughn straightens his spine and goes in search of her.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

Where are you?

INT. VAUGHNS' BEDROOM

Alice folds laundry from the pile spread out all over the bed.

ALICE

Up here. The new washer and dryer are wonderful. I can't believe we waited this long to buy them.

He appears in the doorway. Vaughn watches her for a moment trying to figure out what to say.

VAUGHN

I can't either.



CONTINUED:

She beams up at him. Her smile fades a little as she takes in his serious expression.

ALICE  
Is everything okay?

VAUGHN  
We need to talk.

Alice tightly grips the pair of boxers she'd just picked up to fold. Instinctively knowing she's not going to like what's coming.

ALICE  
Michael? What's wrong?

He hesitates another moment. How to tell her this?

VAUGHN  
You remember Rita?

Alice relaxes a little. Releases the breath she'd unconsciously held. The dead chick you were in love with? Yeah. She's dead.

ALICE  
The woman you worked with? The one who died?

VAUGHN  
Yes.

ALICE  
Oh, sweetie, come here. Is it an anniversary or something?

She skirts the bed to give him a comforting hug. Vaughn steps away; avoiding her.

VAUGHN  
Of sorts. We found her. She's alive.

This news hits Alice like a blow. She staggers back a bit; sits hard on the bed. Vaughn kneels in front of her.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)  
I'm really sorry to put you through this. I know it's hard. You've been a wonderful wife. I appreciate...

CONTINUED: (2)

She slaps him. Hard, across the cheek. He doesn't bother to block the blow. He deserves that and much worse for what he's doing to her.

She pushes him away; hops up to put some space between them. Forgetting the stinging pain in his cheek, Vaughn slowly stands up to face her.

VAUGHN (CONT'D)

I can't say it enough. I'm sorry.  
I've never misled you about my  
feelings for her.

A single tear slides down Alice's cheek. She nods shakily.

ALICE

No. You've always been painfully  
honest about...HER. You plan to  
take up where you left off?

Vaughn studies her for a long moment. He nods. She turns away so he can't see how every word kills a little more of her soul.

VAUGHN

I plan to file for a divorce  
tomorrow.

She wipes away her tears. Closes her eyes and takes a deep breath. When she opens them again, the hurt has been replaced by a steely determination tinged with fury. She whirls back around to face.

ALICE

Sounds like you've already got a  
plan.

He shrinks a little under her accusing stare.

ALICE (CONT'D)

So tell me? What do you plan to do  
about our baby?

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

END ACT THREE

CONTINUED: (3)

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.

SYDNEY

I belong in the field. It's the only time I feel..normal.

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 can't 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.

SYDNEY

But it's not...

JACK

Listen to your mother, Syd.

IRINA

But I also understand that this is  
some 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  
can stay in the field.

SYDNEY

But --

JACK

But --

IRINA (CONT'D)

No buts! Take it or leave it. Both  
of you.

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

EXT. SLOANE'S HOUSE - ROSE GARDEN

Sloane busies himself tending the roses. A few live bushes  
are interspersed between 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 steels  
himself.

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. He can't hide his complete disinterest in Sark.

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 already is. He gathers up his tools and go inside the house. Leaving Sark staring 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 on her face. She shakes it off and heads in a third direction.

Sydney stops at Dixon's desk. He gives her a concerned look.

DIXON  
Everything okay?

SYDNEY  
(overly cheery)  
Just peachy keen.

He gives her an amused smile.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
Have you seen Vaughn?

He shakes his head. She looks around the room. Spots Vaughn walking around a corner. Brow furrowed, engrossed in a file. A small smile touches Sydney's lips. At least something can go her way today.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
Never mind.

She approaches Vaughn.

He doesn't see her coming until she's almost on him. Unconsciously, he quickly looks around for an escape route. He catches himself.

Unfortunately, she does too. Sydney's welcoming smile fades a tiny bit.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)  
Hi.

VAUGHN  
Hi.

He meets her gaze for a brief moment. He glances away uncomfortably.

Sydney frowns at his reaction.

CONTINUED:

SYDNEY

What's wrong?

VAUGHN

Nothing. You?

An awkward silence settles between them again. Sydney opens her mouth to question him.

Weiss hurries over to them. He waves a file folder in the air.

WEISS

Briefing room. Now.

He moves off to gather the others.

Sydney and Vaughn look at each other. The business at hand immediately outweighing any issues between them. They head for the briefing room.

INT. ROTUNDA - BRIEFING ROOM

On the Security Monitor: The team sits around the table, talking.

In the actual room, Weiss excitedly distributes packets of Intel.

WEISS

The Sigma team was monitoring traffic in the Caribbean. They came across a sailor telling a story of a woman on the island of Montserrat.

He loads a map of Caribbean on the individual monitors. Circles Montserrat.

WEISS (CONT'D)

Apparently, the sailor was seriously injured while rigging his boat. The line caught his arm, nearly tearing it off and flinging him overboard. He washed up on shore where a woman not only nursed him back to health, but applied a treatment that regenerated his arm.

WILL

You mean healed.

CONTINUED:

WEISS

I mean the arm wasn't there, now it is.

Weiss pulls up a picture of the SAILOR grinning from ear to ear. He proudly holds up his arm with a nasty scar circling 7/8 of it.

JACK

This is important because...?

WEISS

The woman...who saved him. Her name is Rambaldi.

Weiss grins as his bombshell hits everyone in the gut.

DIXON

You don't seriously think --

WEISS

She is the last descendant of Milos Rambaldi.

IRINA

You have confirmation?

WEISS

Yes.

He switches the screens to a sketch of MELEENA RAMBALDI, an old woman wearing a shapeless dress, and stares with haunted, knowing eyes.

Sydney conceals the shiver that runs up her spine.

WEISS (CONT'D)

The sailor is an accomplished artist. While he was recovering, she told him stories of Rambaldi Artifacts. Ones we've discovered and others of which we didn't know existed.

IRINA

What exactly are you proposing?

He looks around the room at the expectant faces of his colleagues.



CONTINUED: (2)

WEISS

Rambaldi is the cause of our current situation. Maybe he's our solution as well.

They all stare at him and each other for a long moment. What's there to lose?

SYDNEY

I'll go.

She tears her gaze away from Meleena's haunting eyes. She gives Jack a challenging look. He stares back at her unmoved.

JACK

See Dr. Barnett first.

They stare at each other. Neither willing to back down.

The rest of the group gives her a surprised look. Vaughn can't help the concern that springs to his eyes. Sydney tears her gaze from Jack's in time to catch Vaughn's expression. Takes it as a positive sign.

SYDNEY

I'll see her now.

IRINA

We'll have the mission specs in one hour.

Sydney nods.

They all look at the security monitor and match their position. Marshall switches it back to real time. They leave the room.

Vaughn scurries out before Sydney can catch him.

INT. DR. BARNETT'S OFFICE

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

DR. BARNETT

I understand you wanted to talk to me.

SYDNEY

My mother insisted I talk to you.

CONTINUED:

DR. BARNETT

I see. You disagree with her?

SYDNEY

I don't have anything to talk about.

DR. BARNETT

Not even 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.

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 seriously considers the question for a long moment. Guilty? Completely.

SYDNEY

I did my job.

DR. BARNETT

So you don't feel anything at all.

SYDNEY

I hate it happened. There was no choice. If not for Vaughn, he would've...executed me.

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

Dr. Barnett studies her shrewdly.

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. BARNETT  
How do you feel about that?

SYDNEY  
Grateful. To Vaughn.

DR. BARNETT  
Tell me about the argument.

SYDNEY  
It was silly. A readjusting kind of thing.

DR. BARNETT  
And have you? Readjusted to being back?

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?

Sydney struggles to remember. Unsuccessfully. An unexplainable fear settles over her. She shakes her head in an effort to clear it away.

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

Sydney looks around frantically. A shadow looms before her.

VOICE  
Sarah!

INT. DR. BARNETT'S OFFICE

Sydney pauses. Forces her attention back to the question at hand. Which is more to her advantage? Admission or Omission?

CONTINUED:

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)  
It's all I have left that  
feels...normal.

Dr. Barnett regards her, truly sympathetic.

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

Sydney walks in, looks around. Will hurries over to her. He  
hands her a packet.

WILL

Everything's a go. Your tickets...  
and other...stuff. A car is waiting  
to take you to the airport.

Sydney turns the packet over in her hands. Torn. Should she  
do it?

WILL (CONT'D)

Syd? You okay?

She looks at him with a smile.

SYDNEY

Yeah. I just can't believe we found

--

CONTINUED:

WILL

-- I know. Get moving. Vaughn's waiting for you downstairs.

Sydney nods. She gives him a smile and a quick hug.

SYDNEY

Bye.

INT. GARAGE

Sydney steps out of the elevator. She looks around. Indecision weighing her down. Can she get away with this?

Vaughn leans against the car to her left. He smiles at her.

Heart breaking, she approaches. She can't do this to him. Risk his life?

VAUGHN

Ready?

SYDNEY

I can't.

His smile fades.

VAUGHN

Is this about before? I can explain... What's wrong?

INT. DR. BARNETT'S OFFICE

Dr. Barnett types up a report. She reads over it, then prints it out.

INT. GARAGE

Sydney takes a steadying breath.

SYDNEY

Dr. Barnett. She's...concerned -- No more field assignments until I remember the last two years.

VAUGHN

What? We need you. Your father obviously agrees. You have your tickets.

Sydney looks away guiltily.

CONTINUED:

SYDNEY

I got them from Will. They don't know -- I'm telling you because it's your life on the line if I go. I can't risk that.

Vaughn's face softens at her concern. Guilt replaces it. Sydney watches him curiously.

VAUGHN

My life isn't on the line. Even if it were -- I trust you, Syd.

INT. ROTUNDA

Dr. Barnett comes in, report in hand. Looking for Jack. She approaches a nearby AGENT. He points to Jack where he talks with Irina.

INT. GARAGE

Sydney smiles at his quiet reassurance.

SYDNEY

(urgently)  
We should go. Before --

Vaughn glances away. Steels himself to share his news.

VAUGHN

Wait. You may change your mind after I tell you... Alice is pregnant.

Sydney's jaw nearly drops to the floor. She quickly catches it. Regains her composure.

SYDNEY

So that's why you've been avoiding me all day. It's okay. I understand. You have to stay with her.

INT. ROTUNDA

Dr. Barnett hands Jack her report. The three of them quietly confer. He looks up, knowing Sydney's nowhere around. He takes off at a near run towards the elevators. Irina follows.

INT. GARAGE

Vaughn sighs heavily.

CONTINUED:

VAUGHN

I can't...I've been trying to figure out how to tell you that I'm leaving her anyway -- and not have you hate me for it.

She gives him a sad smile.

SYDNEY

I could never hate you, Vaughn. But are you sure? I don't want to come between you and your...child.

The full impact of this life changing event starts to hit her.

VAUGHN

I was serious. We've wasted too much time already. I don't want to... I won't waste anymore.

He opens the car door for her. She lets him take her arm to help her inside. He follows. The car pulls away.

The elevator doors open just as the car leaves the garage. Jack rushes out. Looks around. Irina holds the door open.

IRINA

Let her go, Jack. Vaughn will take care of her. Besides, I have a feeling this is something she needs to do.

Jack looks at Irina. What she says makes sense. But it's still his baby out there. With some difficulty, he gets back on the elevator.

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

EXT. CARIBBEAN - NIGHT

Two parachutes float down out of the dark sky.

Sydney and Vaughn gently land on the ash covered beach. They shed their parachutes and start jogging inland. Shed their jumpsuits on the way.

EXT. STONE CAVE

Sydney and Vaughn, now wearing civilian clothes, silently check out the outside of the stone dwelling.

CONTINUED:

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

MELEENA

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

Sydney and Vaughn exchange surprised looks. They quickly turn to reserved amusement. Sydney proceeds Vaughn 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 completed with flowered upholstery.

MELEENA

I've been expecting you for some  
time.

SYDNEY

How...?

MELEENA

You are the one.

Vaughn and Sydney exchange looks. Surely she isn't referring to the Prophecy.

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.



CONTINUED:

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. Arriving at the same conclusion.

SYDNEY

Sloane.

VAUGHN

Sloane.

Sydney gives him a tiny smile. It fades as another thought steals over her.

SYDNEY

Or my mother.

END OF ACT FOUR

CONTINUED: (2)

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. You  
cannot afford that.

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

Remember. There is safety in the  
enemy not knowing that 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!

CONTINUED:

Vaughn nods.

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 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. Above them, the lava forms a crust. It's forward momentum finally slowing.

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 Puerto Rico.

SYDNEY

I love Marshall.

Vaughn can only nod his agreement. Sydney falls tiredly beside him.

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

INT. ELEVATOR

The door open into a posh lobby. Alice steps off. She takes a moment 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 almost Unnoticeably. 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.

CONTINUED:

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 hoping to avoid Jack for a little while longer.

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

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

You're not the only one to blame here.

Sydney gives him a smile. Shakes her head. 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!

CONTINUED:

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

SLOANE  
Sydney. Welcome home.

Anger, dismay and hatred all pass through her. 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 slips into character; looks on with a fatherly grin.

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.

His voice drips with only concern for her mental well-being. Gives no hint that he knows exactly what she went through even if she doesn't.

SLOANE (CONT'D)  
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.

CONTINUED: (2)

SYDNEY

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

She lets her words trail away sadly. With the sole purpose of putting Sloane at ease.

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...

JACK

Yes, right.

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 his features as he watches.

INT. CAR

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

INT. GARAGE

The elevator doors open. Arm in arm, Sydney and Vaughn step out.

INT. CAR

Sark nods in their direction.

SARK

As promised. There she is.



INT. GARAGE

Sydney and Vaughn walk towards his car.

SYDNEY  
I appreciate the rides. But  
eventually I'm going to have assert  
some independence.

Vaughn smiles down at her.

VAUGHN  
Eventually.

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

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

CLIVE  
What are you doing here?

Sydney and Vaughn exchange confused looks. Neither know to whom he's speaking.

VAUGHN  
Excuse me?

CLIVE  
I'm not talking to you.

One mystery cleared up.

SYDNEY  
Who are you?

CLIVE  
What do you mean, who am I? You  
know exactly...you know what. Just  
get in the car.

VAUGHN  
I don't think so.

CLIVE  
Stay out of this.

SYDNEY  
I don't care who you are. Don't  
talk to my friends that way.

Clive pauses and takes a deep steadying breath.

CONTINUED:

CLIVE

I'm at the end of my rope. You just up and disappeared. I didn't know where you'd gotten to. And now I find you with...with him. What am I supposed to think, Sarah?

Sydney's eyes go wide. She stares at him. Trying hard to place him.

SYDNEY

What did you call me?

CLIVE

Sarah. What is wrong with you? Are you saying you don't even know who you are either?

Sydney stares at him speechless. She can't think of a single thing to say. Deep down she knows he is a clue who'll lead her to the missing two years.

Clive gives up. 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.

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

CLIVE (CONT'D)

You don't remember him either?

Sydney stares transfixed at the child. Slowly she shakes her head.

SYDNEY

No. I don't.

CLIVE

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

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

Vaughn looks at Sydney in horrified fascination. This is absolutely not happening.

CONTINUED: (2)

SYDNEY

You must have me mistaken for  
someone else.

CLIVE

I'd never mistake my wife for  
someone else.

Vaughn stutters back a step. Looks at Sydney. Hoping against  
hope it isn't true.

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

CLARK

Mama.

Off Sydney's horrified, disbelief...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW

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